



Wednesday 9 September 2009
Day Two

How do you press without a press?



The weather was still sparkling on the Côte this morning, a “fruit” day in the lunar calendar. The pickers were in a joyful mood at 8am as they attacked the second harvest of **Le**



Clos Blanc in the area known as the Pointe du Triangle. A few hours later, the sorters were

surprised to see a lot more brown-skinned rather than golden Pinot Gris passing along the vibrating table among the few bunches of Pinot Blanc. These historic varieties are part of Le Clos Blanc and offer a subtle contribution to one of the facets of its character; the roundness of the wine, counterbalancing its minerality born from the limestone.

The afternoon continued a kilometer lower down, in the Crotots plot at Vougeot, which goes into our **Bourgogne Terres de Famille**. Two thirds of the grapes for this wine come from the Côte de Nuits and the remainder from the Côte de Beaune, a sacred balance for the Domaine. Then it was back to Le Clos Blanc to finish the day with spirit – or indeed prayer – in the Contre le Mur section of Le Clos Vougeot.

Over on the Côte de Beaune, the team dedicated itself to **Beaune La Montée Rouge** which this year will not be sporting its own *appellation*. These beautiful Pinot Noirs are destined for the eighth vintage of our **Fête de Famille** Crémant de Bourgogne. This is another original and expressive creation from the Domaine, drawn from this hillside vine beside the woods in a fresh valley exposed to the harshly invigorating and structure-giving north wind.

Ninety minutes later and a different landscape in the neighboring village of **Savigny-Lès-Beaune** to harvest **Les Marconnets**, where a wonderful surprise was awaiting us. This great steep-sided vineyard is quite damp and frequently suffers attacks of grape-worm which often encourages rot. But today, it provided us with almost-perfect quality grapes, just 6% of which were discarded upon sorting in the winery. In the past, we’ve rejected up to 40% of the crop. The pickers filled 300 crates which were quickly destalked and carefully placed in their wooden vat.

In the winery, the Clos Blanc harvested the previous day took only six hours to settle whereas last year it needed twice as long and in 2007, as much as 24 hours. But this magnificent matter has transformed into such a fine, slightly tannic and promising juice that it isn’t necessary to clarify it any more at the risk of altering its personality.

Then at 9pm, panic broke out. While it was being cleaned, the press coughed up a strange-looking “V”-shaped piece of metal with holes in. It turns out that the part is a drain through which the juice flows during pressing – in other words, indispensable. We shall have to wait until tomorrow before it can be repaired, so fingers crossed that can happen at dawn. There are 300 cases of wonderful grapes waiting to deliver their promises. A worried Pierre will no doubt be preparing for a disturbed night’s sleep tonight...