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Burgundy's Maison Champy Gains Control of Volnay Winery

The négociant partners with two investors to buy 3 acres from Louis Boillot

Bruce Sanderson

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Less than a year after acquiring Domaine Laleure-Piot, Domaine Champy has bought control of Domaine Louis Boillot in Volnay. The 3.1 acres of vineyards includes three *premiers crus* parcels: Pommard Chanlins, Volnay Carelle Sous la Chapelle and the monopole Volnay Clos de la Chapelle. The price was undisclosed.

Champy president Pierre Meurgey heard the property was for sale last September. "Although we were not looking for more vineyards—we were still digesting the Laleure-Piot deal, which was much larger—I heard about the monopole for sale," he said. "It wasn't perfect timing, but it was too good a deal to pass up."

The purchase was agreed to in the beginning of April, but various administrative procedures were just completed. Beginning with the 2009 vintage, currently in bottle, the wines will be sold under the name Domaine Clos de la Chapelle to avoid confusion with another Louis Boillot domaine based in Chambolle-Musigny and Gevrey-Chambertin.

Domaine Champy will produce the wines. The vineyards were purchased in a partnership between a different branch of Champy and two private investors: Philippe Remoissenet, a financial consultant and real-estate investor, and Kansas City-based collector Mark O'Connell. Remoissenet was also instrumental in putting together the Laleure-Piot deal.

Champy also purchased the inventory from the 2007 and 2008 vintages and bottled the 2009s. Beginning in January, Champy's staff began converting the vineyards to biodynamic cultivation under the firm's enologist Dimitri Bazas. Full certification takes three years.

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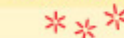
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Given the limited availability of the new wines, about 500 cases a year, Meurgey plans to find different distribution channels. “Clos de la Chapelle produces a ripe style of Pinot Noir, with great potential and a lot of elegance. We are really excited about it,” said Meurgey.

Founded in 1720, Champy has been headed by Meurgey since 1990. The domaine consists of 69 acres of vineyards, producing roughly 13,500 cases annually. Maison Champy makes an additional 20,000 cases from purchased grapes and wine.

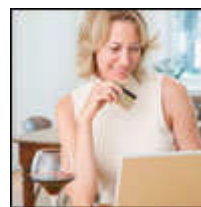
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