

A PLEA FOR MORE CHABLIS



Wine #1: Domaine Nathalie et Gilles Fèvre Petit Chablis

Variety: Chardonnay

Appellation: Fontenay-Près-Chablis

Wine Notes: Our PETIT CHABLIS come from parcels situated on the plate between the village of FONTENAY-Près-CHABLIS and Chablis and grow on stony soils (Portlandien Limestone). Our Petit Chablis are fresh and very fruity (like English sweets), gouleyant and aromatic, pleasant and pleasant to drink. Absolutely lovely during the spring and the summer, this wine is perfect for an aperitif or with summer recipes (from sea, for example) and with meat

My Thoughts: It's just a baby Chablis. Right? Petit Chablis is the last bastion of "affordable" Burgundian wines. Often referred to as QPR (Quality Price Ratio), Petit Chablis offers so much of what makes Chablis wines so fantastic but at a lower price. It's like saying you are from Chicago but really you are from Wilmette. All of the access, all of the great city stuff, but less of the traffic. Often lighter, less ageability, but still very much the Chardonnay you didn't know you'd like. Expect to taste higher acid fruits like grapefruit and lemon citrus, no oak, and little to know tropical fruit.

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Wine #2: Domaine William Fèvre Chablis

Variety: Chardonnay

Appellation: Chablis

Wine Notes: Combining lovely fruitiness with an attractive freshness and characteristic minerality, Chablis is a wine region with global renown. Domaine William Fèvre's vineyards sit on Kimmeridgian subsoil and enjoy ideal exposures for the production of a very fine wine. Fleshy and elegant bouquet revealing citrus, white fruits and flowers aromas. The mouth is fresh, supple underscored by mineral.

My Thoughts: You will hear it time and time again how mineral-y Chablis wines are. And it is all about the soil. It's even what sets apart wines from Chablis vs. Petit Chablis. This is where we start to appreciate why Chablis is iconic in the world of Chardonnay. With its northern location relative to the rest of Burgundy and most other Chardonnay producing regions, you get the leanest, more underripe flavors found in cool climate Chards. Think green apple, brighter citrus like lemons and limes, a hint of grapefruit can even show up. But where you really notice the difference is the ACIDITY! Oh boy the acidity. So we start with William Fèvre, a world-reknowned producer that has numerous tiers/quality levels based on the source of the fruit. You start here and work your way up to see how amazing Chablis can be.

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Wine #3: Domaine Costal Chablis 1er cru Vaillons

Variety: Chardonnay

Appellation: Vaillons

Wine Notes: Hailing from one of the village's venerated premiers crus, Costal's Vaillons blends grapes from different parts of the hillside, which results in an impeccably balanced blanc. Notes of spring flowers, flint, and ripe apples come into focus, making an endlessly fascinating and delicious Chablis.

My Thoughts: What does Premier Cru actually mean? First, it is better than the basic village level vineyards, planted on hillsides to maximize ripening and sun exposure. These wines are more likely to see a little oak which is the case here, experiencing 2/3 oak but with 1/3 neutral, and 1/3 larger (less impactful). Premier Cru makes up about 10% of all production in Burgundy, skewing a little higher in Chablis to nearly 16%. Yes, you will get to experience Grand Cru as well. Let's see if you notice a difference in quality, richness, structure, and preference. We should notice a richer depth, a little more intense fruit, managed acidity but still very searing. You may even see a touch higher ABV.

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Wine #4: Marcel Servin Chablis 1er cru Montée de Tonnerre

Variety: Chardonnay

Appellation: Montée de Tonnerre

Wine Notes: Pale yellow color with grey highlights. The nose is very fine with notes of acacia flowers and white fruits. A very elegant and feminine wine. On the palate, there is a nice acid balance, and a lovely texture. The refined, intense and wonderfully sleek medium weight flavors flash a bracing salinity on the classy, balanced and wonderfully persistent finale.

My Notes: Much like William Fevre, Marcel Servin is a top producer in Chablis with bottlings ranging drastically in price (check out the last wine...). here we are tasting a wine from a top Premier Cru vineyard, again highlighting the intense quality of Chablis. Still very austere and acidic and lacking any oak here at all, this is going to be a big and interesting balance of well-structured Chardonnay that stays a little leaner due to that lack of oak.

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Wine #5: Bernard Defaix Chablis Grand Cru Bougros

Variety: Chardonnay

Appellation: Bougros

Wine Notes: This grand cru is situated on the west/south-west extremity of the seven grands crus of Chablis. Our cuvée of Bougros comes from a vine located on the top of the slope, so the exposure to the sun is excellent. The wine is fermented and aged in oak barrels with regular "batonnage". The coolness of the cellar exempts us from a cold stabilisation process: the precipitation of tartrate crystals takes place naturally during winter. Then the wine is bottled with a light filtration after 18 months ageing.

Very pleasant with flavours of flowers, honeysuckle in particular, and mineral notes, it is also full in the mouth with good length. To serve at 13°C with steamed turbot and asparagus for example

My Thoughts: Just because it is a Grand Cru doesn't mean you are supposed to love it more than the rest of the wines. As a matter of fact, with the barrel impacts, batonnage, and richness and depth this could fall into the "usual" Chardonnay. But it is FANTASTIC. This is a wine of the highest quality, the most complex and elegant flavors, each component will be balanced. Why? Because you don't eff with high quality fruit. There will be extra time spent to get this wine right. Look for the deeper flavors of lemon curd, a hint of creme brulee but all still underscored by the intensity of green apples and acidity. These two wines are just truly peak Chardonnay.

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Wine #6: Marcel Servin Chablis Grand Cru Les Clos

Variety: Chardonnay

Appellation: Les Clos

Wine Notes: Med straw-gold, slight flecks of green color. Pronounced orange, lemon and lime citrus fruits and peels, citrus florals, green apple, bosc pear, and a very strong mineral core. A clear example of the dominant superior character of Les Clos. Med+/Pronounced nose and palate, structural acidity. Long and complex finish. The real deal here, majorly good!

The Grand Cru of all Chablis wines. Francois' personal parcel is located in the heart of this famous vineyard, just above the prominent nut tree. This great location helps Francois make one of the very best Les Clos wines.

My Notes: This is THE vineyard. Not the vineyard. THE vineyard. Once you try Les Clos, there is nowhere else to go. With a few producers owning portions, there are a few opportunities to try Les Clos. We wrap up the night with another bottle from Marcel Servin. Try thinking back to the last pour of theirs. This is going to build on it. But remember, it is still Chablis. What you will possibly find is that it is just... epic. It has similar flavors, textures, but better. Deeper, pure, long lasting. It is just so freaking delicious.

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