

Burgundy, two regions to know.

unique pairings in wine and cheese



A funny thing happened to the name of this region the United States. It was used to mean generic jug wines, and too many people still associate the name with low quality wines. The truth is quite the opposite, this is one of the greatest regions in France. Burgundy has a deserved reputation as well: It is difficult to learn. The many vineyards and subtle distinctions can make even the most confident wine lover, weak in the knees. It is expensive, almost always, and worth the price only occasionally, and great only rarely. When it is great though, Burgundy is my favorite wine in the world.

Cool with a long growing region, this difficult region is home to the equally difficult red wine grape Pinot Noir. The wines from Burgundy range from very rich and intense reds in the north, to lighter reds and heavy whites in the middle and light whites and few reds in the south.

Grapes - Pinot Noir for Reds. Chardonnay for whites.

Côte de Nuits

The Côte d'Or is divided into two main viticultural regions, the Côte de Nuits being the more northerly of the two. The northernmost tip lies just south of Dijon, and the region extends down to the Côte de Beaune. Côte de Nuits that produce some of the great wines of Burgundy.



Marsannay: wine region for the production of value Burgundy.

Fixin: a village which can produce some good value wines, although they never achieve greatness.

Gevrey-Chambertin: impressive combination of muscular, weighty attitude and paradoxical perfumed edge.

Morey-St-Denis: meaty, intense wines that can be superb. Watch for overcropping and poor vinification techniques.

Chambolle-Musigny: can be marked by wonderful, floral and fragrant bouquets.

Vougeot: most classified as Grand Cru can be a tasty, full-bodied, richly fruited wine.

Flagey-Echézeaux: to the east, wines can be remarkable.

Vosne-Romanée: a fine set of vineyards produce a rich, creamy, sensuous texture.

Nuits-St-Georges: there are no other villages of huge significance.

The appellations of the Côte de Nuits are as follows:

Grands Crus: Such wines are not required to bear the village name.

Premiers Crus: a wine blended from several such sites will be labelled as Premier Cru, whereas individual vineyards will bear the vineyard name

Village Wines: A label bearing the name of a village

Sub-Village Appellations: These include Côte de Nuits Villages and basic Bourgogne.

presented by:



Côte de Beaune

The Côte de Beaune is the more southerly part of the Côte d'Or. The northernmost tip abuts onto the Côte de Nuits, and the region extends south to the Côte Chalonnaise.



Pernand-Vergelesses: a source of some good value Burgundy, but no great wines.

Aloxe-Corton: red Corton should be a muscular, savoury wine, whereas the white is a rich, intense, buttery drink.

Beaune, Savigny-lès-Beaune and Choresy-lès-Beaune: best known for red wines. The wines produced here are well fruited, tasty, sometimes quite elegant affairs.

Pommard: well structured and meaty

Volnay: better known for it's heady, perfumed and delicately textured wines.

Towards the southern end of the Côte de Beaune is most famous white wine villages.

Meursault: produces rich, complex, intense yet elegant wines. **Puligny-Montrachet and Chassagne-Montrachet** lead the pack bearing a wonderful combination of richness with mineral complexities, the latter are sometimes broader and more open, although both are lovely.

St-Romain, St-Aubin, Santenay and Auxey-Duresses: all are responsible for some value Burgundy.

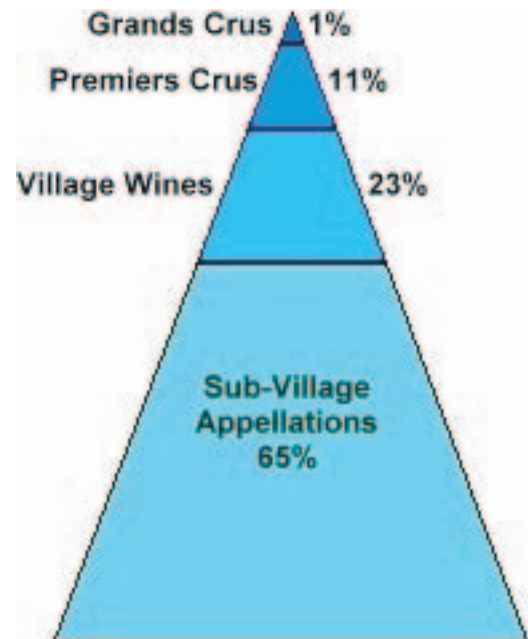
The appellations of the Côte de Beaune are as follows:

Grands Crus: are not required to bear the village name. Most villages of the Côte de Beaune have no Grands Crus.

Premiers Crus: a wine blended from several such sites will be labelled as Premier Cru, whereas a wine from an individual vineyard will bear the vineyard name, eg Pommard Premier Cru Les Petits Epenots.

Village Wines: A label bearing the name of a village

Sub-Village Appellations: may be applied to declassified wine from fourteen villages of the Côte de Beaune not including Aloxe-Corton, Beaune, Volnay or Pommard.



For Burgundy as a whole, the Grands and Premiers Crus account for about 12% of all the wine produced. Village wines account for 23%, and less prestigious appellations account for the bulk of the produce, approximately 65%. These figures are often represented as a pyramid, shown here.

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2003 Vincent Girardin Rully 1er Cru Les Cloux

Light yellow color. The Cote de Chalonaise often exhibits wines noted for soft white petals. Also known as a baby Puligny Montrachet style. This wine shows minerals, diesel, along with clover and violets. These floral notes lend an interesting accent to the fruit. Lots of fruit on the palate, juicy acids, very nice balance and finish.

“Vincent Girardin, the extremely talented owner and winemaker of this négociant house... (his) top wines, the grand and premier crus, are at the same quality level as those crafted at Burgundy’s other excellent domaines and négociants. What sets this firm apart is the bevy of delicious, eminently drinkable wines it produces from lesser known appellations.”



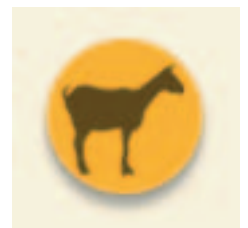
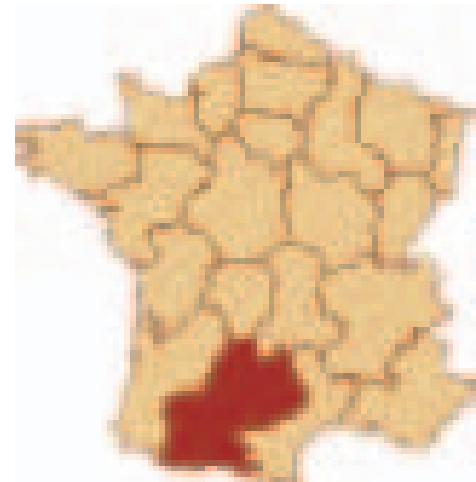
Pairing Thoughts:

The soft Chardonnay displays layers of complexity including fruits, crisp and delicate floral notes. The Tomme Grand-Mère with its creamy and chalky texture brings cream cheese to mind, now all that is left is finding a jam or preserve to throw on top. That is why I picked the peach preserve, if they would of had peach / melon preserves, well, then I would of picked that one. Absolutely fun and delightful. Enjoy!

Tomme Grand-Mère

France. Pasteurized goat's milk.

Rich and full bodied goat cheese with delicate tones of citrus. Ivory-colored, crumbly and dry, with some white and a little blue/black mold speckles on the outside. It smells a little barnyardy and very goaty. This is a great cheese. It reminds me a little of the aged Coach Farm Cones. It is tangy, salty, pasty mouth-feel, with a mild, weird rubbery, tire aftertaste.



presented by:



2003 Vincent Girardin St Aubin 1er Cru "Murgers des Dents de Chien"

Beguiling herby, minerally nose with some toasty oak. Rich, full flavoured palate shows plenty of new oak (vanilla notes) but also some taut nutty fruit. Stones in the area look like dog's teeth hence the name translation. Found in a high altitude, this area is known for producing crisp acidity with nuances of lemon curd.

Background:

Vincent Girardin continues the winemaking tradition of his father and grandfather before him, with a significant difference. The energetic and innovative Girardin has greatly expanded the number of appellations in his domaine either through inheritance, purchasing the land, or a system of leasing called "fermage". Vincent concentrates on the lesser-known appellations of the Côte de Beaune, which offer spectacular bargains, but in the past few years has added a stunning array of premier cru and grand cru wines from the most famous appellations in the Côte d'Or. Until recently, Girardin's cellar was located in Santenay, but now is based in Meursault. Vincent Girardin produces wines from Santenay, Maranges, Chassagne-Montrachet, Meursault, Pommard, Beaune, and Savigny-les-Beaunes. His own vineyards in these communes total 37 acres, with an average age of 30 years. This does not include the numerous vineyards which he cultivates and harvests, vinifying the fruit in his own cellars under the "fermage" system. Yields have averaged 40 hectoliters per hectare with severe pruning of the vines to minimize production and maximize intensity.



"Girardin's wines are vividly fresh and full of life, saturated with vibrant pinot and chardonnay fruit. Vincent Girardin's wines...test the boundaries of tradition, but never quite break them, with results that are both consistently impressive as well as a pleasure to drink. Their strength isn't delicacy and grace, but neither is it simply brawn – and in that way they offer an intellectual paradox as well.

"Vincent Girardin, the Côte de Beaune's golden boy." - Wine Spectator



Brillat Savarin

"A meal without some cheese is like a beautiful woman with only one eye." - said the famous gastronome and cookery writer Jean Anthelme Brillat Savarin. Henry Androuet, well known for his important cheese production, chose a triple cream cheese to name after him in the 1930s, in honor of the man who recommended the consumption of cheese at every meal. The idea had an immediate success and some cheese makers have kept up with the tradition.



Slightly neutral when it is fresh, this cheese can develop a pronounced taste if well matured. Its taste is soft and creamy. Slightly neutral when it is fresh, this cheese can develop a pronounced taste if well matured. Its taste is soft and creamy. During the maturing period, this cheese covers with a soft white velvet. Then small orange particles can appear.

presented by:



2003 Domaine Bruno Clair Marsannay Les Vaudevelles 100% Pinot Noir

Complex mushroom, black cherry and cinnamon nose; wonderfully balanced flavors of black cherry, cranberry and tobacco leaf; palate-cleansing finish. The soils give the red wine perfect tannins and great structure. The soil of Vaudenelles sits upon a high of slope and it gives Marsannay all in smoothness of some of the best communes to the south. The wine always shows beautiful in the nose, lovely perfume and its palate length generous. A treat from one of Burgundy's top three producers. Bruno Clair owns approximately 11 hectares in the commune of Marsannay. Unfortunately the soils of Marsannay go unnoticed and its wines underestimated.



Clive Coates describes this as the “best cellar in the village” of Marsannay, which is located at the northernmost tip of the Côte de Nuits. The domaine is one of the finest in Burgundy, and this vigneron is one to watch in the future, but he has not always enjoyed such auspicious prospects.

In “The Great Domaines of Burgundy”, Remington Norman writes: “Bruno Clair’s excellent Domaine has grown out of a certain amount of Burgundian misfortune.” When Joseph Clair married Mlle. Daü in 1910, their union formed one of the largest family-owned domaines in the Côte d’Or, Domaine Clair-Daü. The majority of their vineyards were in Marsannay, where Joseph Clair created a Pinot Noir Rosé de Marsannay which now has its own appellation and may be the finest rosé in France, outside Champagne. Domaine Clair-Daü encompassed all the family’s vineyard along the Côte, which were subsequently bequeathed to Joseph’s son, Bernard, and two daughters. In the 1970’s, the domaine suffered the too-often repeated Burgundian fate of family dissension regarding the direction each of the heirs advocated for the estate, eventually leading to the division of Domaine Clair-Daü and the sale of many vineyards to Maison Louis Jadot. Bernard left in frustration to start up on his own, and Bernard’s son Bruno was left without the domaine which he might have otherwise managed.

In 1978, Bruno Clair started to replant a parcel of his own in Marsannay, rented vineyard in Fixin, and purchased land in Morey-St.-Denis to clear and plant. Gradually he built his domaine to its present size of 21.06 hectares. The vine age ranges from 5-90 years, the oldest vines being those of La Dominode.

Fleur Verte - "green flower" of the Loire Valley

HERB COAT: Fleur Verte, a chèvre from France, is flecked with dried thyme, tarragon and crushed pink peppercorns.

Named for its appearance, Fleur Verte (“green flower”) is a wheel of about 5 pounds with a scalloped perimeter, giving it a daisy shape. Dried thyme, tarragon and crushed pink peppercorns coat the exterior and perfume the chalk-white interior. Created about 20 years ago by a Perigord dairy, the cheese smells and tastes like Provence.

Fleur Verte is aged only four days before it's wrapped for shipment, which explains its moist, delicate texture. The flavor is fresh, clean and unabashedly herbaceous, with a tangy, lemony finish.



Many similar fresh goat cheeses are at their best in summer because they are made from late-spring milk, from animals that have grazed on lush pasture. Consider offering a wedge of Fleur Verte as part of a picnic. Bring baguettes and light reds. A sauvignon blanc will also do nicely.

presented by:



2001 Vincent Girardin, Santenay 1e Cru "Clos des Mouches"

Vincent Girardin started with 2.5 ha. in 1983. He is one the most famous producer in Santenay. With this town, you can bet on good wine, you can even place some bets at the casino of Santenay.

A superb wine, most Santenay's are know for thier red fruity finishes. 100% destemmed, and cuvaision lasts 30 days, followed by elevage in barrel, from 60-80% new oak. The wine neither filtered nor fined, the 2001 starts out with a burst of sweet cherry, giving way to the firm structure of acidity & tannins. Balanced in a lean style, with good concentration and length.



Pairing Thoughts: _____

MONTBRIAC - Rochebaron - [France]

Description: Rochebaron is a wonderful alternative to many of the softer brie-blue combinations available. It is very striking in the case or on the cheeseboard with its soft, gooey texture, and blue veining outlined by the blue-gray color of the ashed rind. The flavor is complex and satisfying while being not too sharp or aggressive.

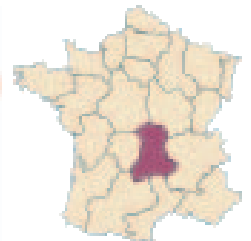
Taste: This cheese has a creamy smooth metallic flavor, with a salty bite

Rind: Soft ripened, ash rind, blue vein interior

Milk: Cow

Aged: About 2 to 4 weeks

Region: Auvergne



presented by:



2002 Bernard Morey, Maranges "La Fussiere 1er Cru" (\$29)

Lovely mix of smoke, tobacco leaf, red berry and plum; clean and crisp, with a long raspberry and cranberry finish. Keep in mind, the region of Maranges is known for a core of cedar and spiced plum fruits.

Bernard Morey is an intelligent and meticulous winemaker, whose wines have been described by Robert Parker of THE WINE ADVOCATE as "always lush, ripe, rich, hedonistic examples of burgundy."

Albert Morey, Bernard's father, retired in 1981; he divided his property between his two sons, Jean Marc and Bernard, retaining only his vineyard in Bâtard-Montrachet. Bernard's home and cellars are located in the small village of Chassagne-Montrachet and his holdings total 15 acres in Chassagne-Montrachet, Santenay and Beaune: Bernard also receives a small allocation of Bâtard-Montrachet from his father for export to favored customers.

Bernard's two sons, Thomas and Vincent, have joined their father at the domaine after completing their stage, or apprenticeship, in Bordeaux and Alsace. The Morey wines have been estate bottled since 1950. The average age of the vines is 30 years old, with yields averaging 45 hectoliters per hectare. The soil has a high limestone content. Bernard is a firm believer in harvesting as late as possible to gain the most natural alcohol and power from the grapes.

Bernard Morey's domaine is a family affair with his two sons, Vincent and Thomas. The focus on quality is evident, from a Village Chassagne Vieilles-Vignes (from 50+ year-old Chardonnay vines) to his 1er Crus-- Embrazees (forward and spicy), Morgeot (rich and ripe), Caillerets (powerful), and most recently a Puligny 1er Cru Truffiere. In 1993 he began separately bottling another 1er Cru from old vines, Vide Bourse. The reds include a fine Santenay 1er Cru, Grands Clos Rousseau, a Vieilles-Vignes Chassagne-Montrachet from old Pinot vines and a Beaune Greves.

Robert Parker has written "I would be happy to drink any wine from this domaine. Bernard Morey has always been one of my favorite producers, fashioning upfront, juicy, succulently-styled wines that tend to drink gorgeously during their first 5-7 years of life." And undoubtedly his wines are in the top rung of the village. Many white Burgundy collectors who seek out Ramonet and Niellon overlook Morey's wines simply because he has almost no property in the Grands Crus. Nevertheless, all the wines, from Bourgogne Blanc to Morgeot, are consistently as concentrated and well structured as any of the wines of the handful of top estates in the Côte d'Or.



Saint Nectaire

Made from Salers cows that feed on the very rich and perfumed volcanic pasture lands of the uplands of the Auvergne region of France. The Saint Nectaire fermier (farm) cheese is easily recognized by its green label. The aging process (affinage) is carried out in old vine cellars. At maturity the thick rind gives off a subtle, slightly pungent smell of rye straw and mushroom. The pâte should have a pronounced taste of nut, milk and the lush pasture, lands of its origin. The natural rind, covered by white, yellow or red mould according to the maturing period, hides a creamy and supple pâte.



represented by:



2002 Domaine Simon Bize Savigny-les-Beaune 1er Cru, "Aux Vegelesses"

If there was a Grand Cru to be named in Savigny les Beaune, this would be it. Deep purple red colour with immense concentration and structure. A barrage of wet leaf, forrest floor and shaved truffle leads to a full frontal attack palate of game, forrest berry and savoury overtones. Power, definition and pedigree characterize this 1er Cru but still showing finesse and elegance. Will drink at its best in 8 years.

The Bize family originate from the Savoie, only moving to Burgundy in the early 19th Century. By 1868 records describe a Simon Bize purchasing vineyards in Savigny. The next two generations - Simon and Simon - ran the domaine during the 20th Century, with the most recent generation giving way to Patrick Bize, currently in charge of the family business, in 1988. The domaine is a leader in this overlooked and underrated Burgundy commune. Patrick's grandfather was domaine bottling part of the harvest before WWII, with the entire production going into bottle by 1972.

One of the best 90 wines of Burgundy year after year. Wines from Savigny-les-Beaune exhibit a core vegetation structure and austere minerals. Very complex and worth a date with a good book or your favorite conversationalist.



Morbier from France

The first wheels of Morbier ever produced were made from milk leftover from Gruyere de Comte production. The cheesemaker would press the leftover curd from the evening production of Comte into a mold and cover it with a thin layer of ash to prevent it from both drying out and attracting flies. The next day he would add the leftover morning curd on top of the ash. The result is a two-layered semi-soft cheese with a complex fruity flavor and a slight tang. The two layers of the cheese have slightly different flavors, with the layer from the evening milking tasting fruitier than that from the morning milking. The ash not only separates the two layers of the cheese, it also serves an aesthetic purpose as it makes a dramatic presentation. Morbier is made using raw cow's milk and has a complex, bold flavor. Its yellow-ivory interior has a smooth texture, wrapped inside a creamy-brown crust. The shape is round with sides that bulge slightly ; it has a horizontal black furrow through the middle.

Morbier (meaning "small market-town") is produced in the village of Morez in the Jura mountains. Its creation dates from the 19th century. Its origin was for the personal consumption of the Comte cheesemakers. The cheese is uncooked and pressed, and allowed to mature for two months. It is then brushed with salty water. The production of this cheese is protected by a special label from the Franche-Comte; it belongs to the AOC family.

Texture: During the maturing period, the cheese develops a natural fine rind. The pale yellow pâte is supple and soft when touched, dry and sticky at the same time.



presented by:

