

ANSONIA FUTURES | July 2016



JULY 2016

We're just back from a June tasting trip in France. We managed to slip in and out between a series of rail strikes and the Brexit vote; and other than a seemingly endless parade of Burgundy rain showers, France seemed to be operating normally. It's always good to be back in France, with plenty of opportunities to enjoy the buttery croissants and coffee that have become for us Proust's madeleine of French travel. We began the trip in the Southern Rhône and worked our way north, ending up with an extended stay in Beaune. We are very excited about the wines we tasted – this offering includes wine from the Southern Rhône, the Northern Rhône, Burgundy and the Loire, and we'll have more suggestions for you in a series of fall offerings beginning in September.





Our June tasting trip coincided with the with the Chapitre d'Été of the Chevaliers du Tastevin. This is an international organization of Burgundy enthusiasts based in the Chateau of the Clos de Vougeot, an imposing edifice that looms over the huge Grand Cru vineyard of the same name. With tongue planted firmly in cheek, the members of this worldwide confrérie gather regularly to sing the glories (literally) of the great wines of the region and to celebrate them with grand dinners. Tom's a member of the Boston chapter, so we took advantage of the coincidence to attend the fête. The speechifying was all in French, of course, and salted with French wordplay so that even those with decent French skills missed many of the jokes. But the good will and enthusiasm needed no translation.

The word is out in the wine press about the upcoming 2015s. They will be excellent -- products of a year in which the weather fully cooperated, following several years when it certainly did not. But lovers of Burgundy should resist the temptation to skip over the 2014s. The white 2014s can be exceptional, with good ripeness and concentration supported by plenty of freshness to carry them down the road -- many are better than the 2015s. We like to pick a red and a white "wine of the trip" at the end of our visits, and this time the winning white was a 2008 Chassagne 1er cru from Champs Gain. It was clean, pure, precise and elegant, just singing in the glass nearly eight years after the harvest. Looking at the 2014 whites, one can see the same future. In red, the wines show

youthful structure, but they ripened more easily than in 2013 and as a result they should drink well relatively early. The 2014 red tannins are juicy and approachable, creating lovely energetic mouth feel.

With this Futures issue we're pleased to introduce four new sources -- two in Chateauneuf-du-Pape, and one in nearby Séguret. The fourth is a tiny estate in Saint-Estèphe, making rich, classic Left-Bank Bordeaux -- a place that has been missing from our portfolio. Beside the exciting 2014s in Burgundy, we also revisit two excellent, small scale sources in the Loire, one white and one red. We hope there will be something for everyone.

MW



PIERRE AMIOT ET FILS

Morey-St-Denis, Burgundy



CHRISTOPHE MESTRE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Rhône



DOMAINE SOUVERAIN

Séguret, Rhône



DOMAINE DEMOIS

Chinon, Loire Valley



ROGER BELLAND

Santenay, Burgundy



MAISON PICAMELOT

Rully, Burgundy



PIERRE ANDRÉ

Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Rhône



FREDERIC MICHOT

Pouilly-Fumé, Loire Valley



FLEURON DE LIOT

Saint-Estèphe, Bordeaux

ROGER BELLAND

Santenay, Burgundy

The Domaine Roger Belland is among Santenay's best producers, and an excellent source for wine in both colors: Roger and his daughter Julie produce easy-drinking, well-priced red wines and some very fine whites. Their 2014s are among the best he has made -- the reds are pleasant and ripe, and the whites are rich and full of tension. Belland's wines were perhaps best summed up recently by a customer, who called them "startlingly easy to drink."





The reds from Santenay are often riper and easier to drink young than their Côte de Beaune neighbors just to the north. In 2014 we thought the **Santenay 1er cru Beauregard** showed a particularly nice balance. There's ripe, dark plum and cherry fruit with an attractive mineral line and good structure underneath. This wine should drink well young and for over the next five years or so.

The Bellands also own a small plot in **Volnay 1er cru Santenots**, a vineyard on the border between Volnay and Meursault where the reds carry the name Volnay, the whites Meursault. Many think Volnay produces the finest reds of the Côte de Beaune. Certainly they lead the pack in elegance -- Volnay makes wines of great finesse. The Bellands' Santenots shows that silky elegance, and carries a lovely mix of fruit, spice and floral aromas along with a subtle stoniness. This wine, too, will drink well young.

The 2014 whites were terrific up and down the Côte d'Or, and the Bellands' wines were no exception. The 2014 **Santenay Beauregard white** is just right, with unusually good freshness supporting the richness that is typical of this wine. And it comes at a particularly reasonable price – likely because

Santenay's whites are often passed by in favor of the reds. White Burgundy fans looking for value take note.

If you prefer your white from a village known for white wine, consider the **Chassagne-Montrachet 1er cru "Clos Pitois" blanc**,

from the Bellands' *monopole* there. The wine is terrific – lush and full bodied, showing pear, peach and floral aromas, and finishing very long. We have reserved almost all of the small quantity remaining, but this will definitely be the last call for the excellent 2014.

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WINE	CASE PRICE
Santenay 1er cru blanc "Beauregard" 2014	\$320
Chassagne-Montrachet 1er cru "Pitois" blanc 2014	620
Santenay 1er cru blanc "Beauregard" 2014	320
Volnay 1er cru "Santenots" 2014	545



PIERRE AMIOT ET FILS

Morey-St-Denis, Burgundy

The 2014s at the Domaine Pierre Amiot are, as usual, well-made expressions of their terroir. The **Bourgogne** (very little available) shows attractive, straightforward cherry fruit, with just enough earthiness and structure to remind you that it's not from California. A great choice for middle-of-the-week Pinot Noir. At the village level, the **Morey St. Denis** has more of the ripe 2014 tannins, with hints of toast and earth to underlie the darker cherry fruit. This wine always seems to need a bit of time to integrate and round out, and should drink well beginning this Winter or next Spring.

The premier crus are very attractive in this vintage. The **Morey-St-Denis 1er cru Ruchots** in particular shows excellent intensity in 2014. This will be a rich and mouth-filling Morey St. Denis, with enough tannin to carry it for a long time, but the tannins are ripe and round enough to allow early drinking with some time in a carafe. Most Burgundy villages have a vineyard or two named “Charmes” (Chambolle and Meursault come to mind), and in every case the wines tend to live up to the name: open, easy and accessible. Amiot’s **Morey-St-Denis 1er cru “Aux Charmes”** fits the pattern: there’s definitely more complexity and elegance here than at the village level, and it comes with a seductive texture in a wine of medium weight. The plum fruit mingles with an attractive earthiness. We also tasted the still-available 2011. It was lovely too, with the added benefit of another few years of integration in the bottle. The 2011 and 2014 vintages were actually pretty similar in terms of weather and growing season, so buying the 2011 is a bit like pushing the 2014 forward in time. For those lacking cellar capacity or patience, it might be an attractive choice.



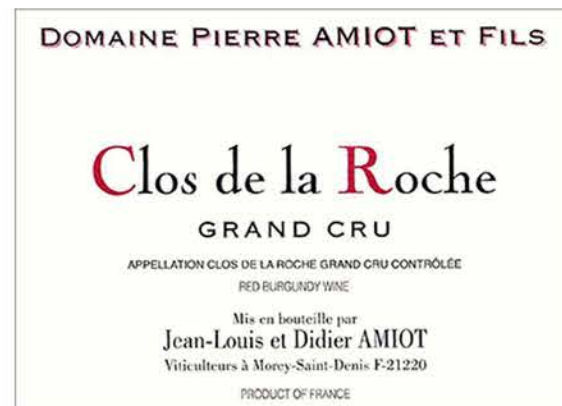
Once again the **Gevrey-Chambertin 1er cru “Combottes”** is a wine of great concentration, with potential similar to that of its adjoining vineyards, all of which are Grand Crus. (Anyone lucky enough to have some of this wine’s 2009 in their cellar should get a bottle out at the next opportunity. It’s showing

spectacularly well these days). It was surprisingly expressive for a big wine of tender age, showing dark currant fruit with some woody bramble.

right now as is usual for a Grand Cru, but the power of the wine is evident in the intense mouthfeel and the long, lingering finish. This is a wine to push to the back of the cellar for a while, but it will clearly pay keeping.

The **Clos de la Roche Grand Cru** has excellent potential. The nose is restrained

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WINE	CASE PRICE
Bourgogne 2014	\$195
Morey-St-Denis 2014	415
Morey-St-Denis 1er cru “Aux Charmes” 2014	620
Morey-St-Denis 1er cru “Ruchots” 2014	620
Gevrey-Chambertin 1er cru “Combottes” 2014	775
Clos de la Roche Grand Cru 2014	1,150
Morey-St-Denis 1er cru “Aux Charmes” 2011	630



MAISON PICAMELOT

Rully, Burgundy

Just because we finally have a Champagne producer doesn't mean we will abandon Crémant de Bourgogne. *Au contraire*, now that we see just how versatile well-made sparkling wine can be, we're reaching for a bottle more often than ever. And when we import our first *Crème de Cassis* and *Crème de Pêche* in the fall (see September Futures), we're going to want to have plenty of crémant around to make Kir (almost) Royale.

The descendants of Louis Picamelot make delicious sparkling wine in the town of Rully in the Côte Chalonnaise. Across their entire range, the wines are excellent. The Traditional “**Les Terroirs**” **Brut** is a soft, easy wine that’s made in the traditional style and offers fine bubbles. While its sugar levels are low enough to label it “Brut,” it’s in higher end of the range; hence the softer mouthfeel.

The **Crémant Rosé** is lots of fun – 100% pinot noir left on the skins overnight before pressing to provide a nice blush for the eye and a touch of strawberry fruit in the nose. Picamelot’s **Terroir de Chazot** is a “blanc de noirs,” also from 100% Pinot Noir, but fermented as a white. This is refined and elegant in the glass; it’s the wine that Alain Ducasse has chosen to offer by the glass in one of his three-star Michelin restaurants.

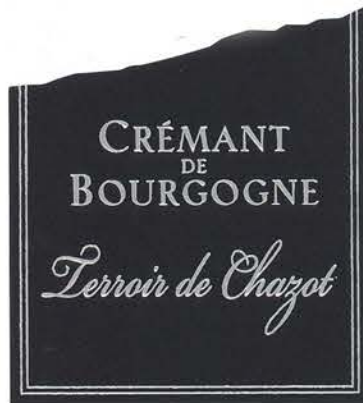


Finally, for a wine with complexity rivaling a fine champagne, consider the **Cuvée Jean Baptiste Chautard**. The 2012 is just now available, having just spent 36 months on the lees. The result is a big wine with much

complexity. We poured the 2008 vintage of this wine at Tom and Hayley’s rehearsal dinner in 2014 and it was perfect. Hubert Gaillard, who has just come to the Maison Picamelot from his post as sommelier at the

three-star restaurant Lameloise in Chagny, suggests that the wine will be an inspired match for Maine Lobster.

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WINE	CASE PRICE
Crémant de Bourgogne Brut “les Terroirs” NV	\$175
Crémant de Bourgogne Rosé NV	180
Crémant de Bourgogne “Terroir de Chazot” NV	220
Crémant de Bourgogne “Cuvée JB Chautard” 2012	250



CHRISTOPHE MESTRE

and

PIERRE ANDRÉ

Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Rhône

We have a novel choice in Chateauneuf du Pape this time: not one, but two brand new producers for your consideration. As longtime customers know, in this appellation we seem always to be on the hunt for the right combination of quality, price, and availability. This trip was a fruitful one, yielding not one but three new and highly promising Chateauneuf sources. We present two with this offering (the third will be along in October), because both styles are distinctive and delicious. Really, it's a tale of two vintages: the more structured 2013 versus the more

fruit-forward 2012. Both producers did a fine job with the respective vintages.

Christophe Mestre's **2013 Chateauneuf du Pape rouge** is a superb wine. Vinification here is traditional: half concrete cuve and half large foudres (very large wooden barrels that develop the wine but impart no oak flavor). In 2013 the floraison (flowering) was difficult for Grenache, with the result that its yields were lower than usual, allowing a more prominent place for the structure of the Syrah and Mourvedre. But there's no harshness at all here. Our notes describe Mestre's 2013 as "fine and supple;" and the balance is just extraordinary. Josh Raynolds of Vinous awarded it 90 points, calling it "sweet and seamless on the palate, offering pliant raspberry and cherry compote flavors plus a hint of anise." Last, but certainly not least, the pricing is extraordinarily good -- perhaps a virtue of being little known as yet in the US market.

We also heartily recommend the **2012 Chateauneuf du Pape rouge** from the Domaine Pierre André. In a world that is moving steadily to organic viticulture, the earliest adherents have pride of place. In this category none has more to boast of than Jacqueline André, whose domaine has been producing grapes organically since 1980 and biodynamically since 1992. Her forty acres of vines average 75 years of age, with the oldest





exceeding 140; and her terroir is enormously diverse, including all four of the appellation's soil types. Here the red is 80% Grenache, blended with 10% Syrah, 8% Mourvedre, with the last 2% from five other cépages.

Mme. André vinifies the wines in whole bunches. A long and slow cuvaision of 3 or 4 weeks precedes a long élevage in large foudres. No small oak barrels here either. After she bottles her red wines she holds them a year before putting them on the market. The result of all this – tiny yields, old vines, leisurely process – is wine built for the long haul, rich and lush and elegant. There's plenty of *gras* ("fat") but no heaviness, together with great complexity and length. According to Madame André, the drinking window for her wines begins in the third year after the harvest; they "attain their plenitude" between the fifth and the tenth; and can be held for fifteen or more, depending on the harvest.

Both producers also make excellent white Chateauneuf-du-Pape, and we're pleased to offer both from the 2015 vintage. **Christophe Mestre's white** is half Clairette and half Grenache. It has a ripe tropical fruit nose that opens rich and lovely, with good intensity and

persistence. The generous mouthfeel resolves into a bit of zip, a precision that carries it to an impressive finish. **Jacqueline André's white** is a blend of Clairette (40%), Bourboulenc (30%), Roussane (20%) and Grenache blanc (10%). The nose here is a bit more complex, with floral notes alongside the fruit. It's very nice in the mouth without being quite as unctuous as the other.

White Chateauneuf du Pape is a wine of two lives, though the first is so drinkable that it's difficult to keep the wine until its second. According to Mme. André, the first, characterized by aromatic freshness of fruit, lasts about three years; the second, characterized by a bouquet of honeyed sweetness, arrives in years 8 to 10.

This is a tough choice for anyone, but for a white to drink in the flush of youth we might give the edge to Mr. Mestre; for cellaring until that second life we'd probably give the edge to Mme. André's white. (Quantities of the latter are extremely limited, so if getting André white is important to you, let us know right away). We have little doubt that both wines will please the fans of white Chateauneuf du Pape.

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WINE

CASE PRICE

MESTRE Châteauneuf-du-Pape rouge 2013

\$270

MESTRE Châteauneuf-du-Pape blanc 2015

265



WINE

CASE PRICE

ANDRÉ Châteauneuf-du-Pape rouge 2012

\$435

ANDRÉ Châteauneuf-du-Pape blanc 2015

420

DOMAINE SOUVERAIN

Séguret, Rhône

We often get asked how we find new wines. It happens many ways, but our favorite may be local restaurants. We dine well when we travel, and in a country whose informal motto is “*L’Art et le Plaisir de Vivre*,” good restaurants are not so hard to come by. Chefs in such restaurants tend to know the local producers well, and particularly at the value end of the price scale there are often gems to be found. Domaine Le Souverain’s “Séguret Classique” is just such a wine.



The day we arrived in France, we took a long TGV ride to the South, rented our car and found our Airbnb apartment (a great way to travel there, by the way). Despite our road-weariness we ventured out to a restaurant in Séguret, a gorgeous ancient town pasted to the side of a mountain and offering a superb view of the alluvial plain in which we would be spending the next few days. To go with our light supper -- salad with magret de

canard and frites -- we wanted something that would be straightforward and drinkable, but not too fancy. Gérard Chauvin's Séguret Classique filled the bill perfectly.

We spent a few days tracking M. Chauvin down (see our Travel Video Blog), and were thrilled to discover our enthusiasm from the first night was not imagined. We were even more pleased when we discovered Chauvin's

startlingly good pricing.

The wine is a juicy red with plenty of dark earthy fruit, smooth and inviting with a pleasant acidity that delivers freshness but no bite. Serve it as we enjoyed it on the terrace in Séguret, somewhere in the 50s, and enjoy watching it open as it comes up to the ambient temperature. If you have friends along, be prepared to open a second bottle.

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WINE

Séguret 2014

CASE PRICE

\$135

FREDERIC MICHOT

Pouilly-Fumé, Loire Valley

Regular buyers will be familiar with last year's upper Loire Valley discovery in the appellation Pouilly-Fumé (just around the riverbend from Sancerre). We brought in Frederic Michot's 2014 vintage, and it instantly became the go-to sauvignon blanc for many of our customers.

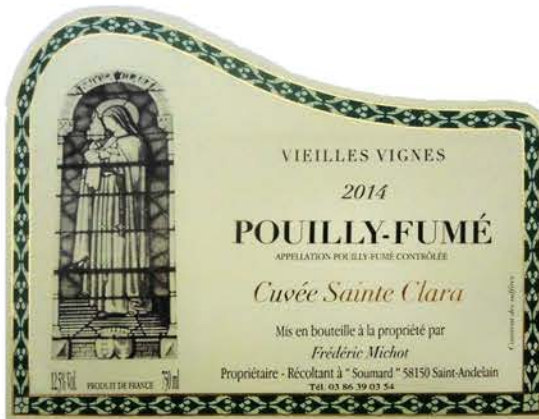


In 2015 both the regular cuvée and the old vine offering are simply delicious: they show the same pure grapefruit profile they showed last year, along with the same underlying minerality. But 2015 was a riper vintage, and so the wine is rounder. And the two wines are different enough this year that we have

decided to offer both despite the similar prices. The **regular Pouilly-Fumé** is surprisingly rich and round, almost fleshy for a wine that's often known for leanness. If you want a bit more gras (fat) in your Sauvignon, this is the wine for you. If you want the more familiar look and feel,

consider the **old vine cuvée** -- it's just delicious again. It's a little dryer in the mouth, and its minerality is front and center, with perhaps a bit more complexity. Whichever way you like your sauvignon, we suggest with high confidence that these will make you happy.

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WINE

CASE PRICE

Pouilly-Fumé 2015

\$160

Pouilly-Fumé Vieilles Vignes 2015

190



DOMAINE DEMOIS

Chinon, Loire Valley

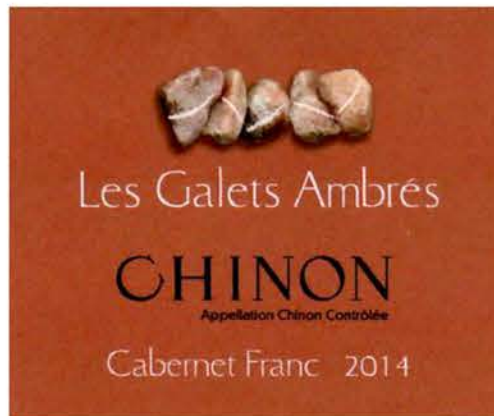
Before leaving the Loire Valley, we're pleased to offer another shot at the 2014 Chinon from the Domaine Demois. Fabien Demois is a young, enterprising winemaker whose wines get better every year. We've grown accustomed to seeing his label popping up in wine guides and trade journals of late. We discovered him back in 2010, soon after he began bottling his own wine.

Fabien has recently converted to organic agriculture. Made from pure, unoaked Cabernet Franc, these are classic, juicy red wines that show excellent depth and texture.

The **2014 Chinon** is drinking beautifully -- we ran out several months ago at our warehouse in Newton -- and we invite you to restock as we do the same. This a great hot

weather red wine -- low alcohol and lots of freshness. Look for notes of wild cherries, graphite, and black pepper; serve this a bit cool with something from the grill.

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WINE

CASE PRICE

Chinon Vieilles Vignes 2014

\$180

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JULY 2016

FLEURON DE LIOT

Saint-Estèphe, Bordeaux

Many of you have already signed up for this wine, which was featured in last Sunday's post. If you have, there's nothing more to do. But for those who have not, we repeat our comments here, so everyone has the chance to include it in their Futures purchase.

As a small père et fils enterprise, Ansonia's model fits far better with Burgundy, and we work with more than four Burgundy sources for every one from Bordeaux. But the wines of Bordeaux continue to intrigue us, and we're always on the hunt for a Burgundy-scale producer from the southwestern coast. Earlier this month we struck gold -- a small family domaine in Saint-Estèphe whose wines have never been exported to the US.



The Fleuron de Liot is a blend of equal parts Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, made from a tiny 1.5 acre plot in Saint-Estèphe. The wine is inky and dark, with plum and dark cherries in the nose. The mouth is dense and full, with solid ripe tannins and low oak, notes of cedar and licorice, and a long, velvety texture.

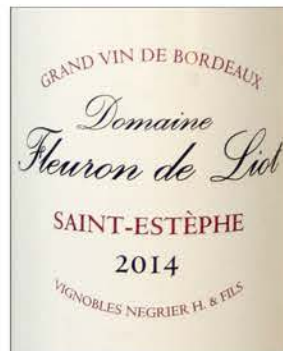
With a concentrated mouthfeel and rich, dark fruit, this wine should develop for at least

another 5-7 years. But given time to breathe, it's beautifully drinkable today -- we opened a bottle around lunch, and the glass we had after dinner (8 hours later) was the tastiest.

This wine offers a couple of advantages over much other St. Estèphe, whose biggest names require long cellaring. First, price: at \$275 a case, precise timing isn't crucial for a satisfying return on investment. The drinking

window for this wine is more opinion than fact: it's delicious now and will be even better in five years. And second, vintage: many students of Bordeaux consider 2014 the finest vintage since 2010. Particularly in the Haut Medoc towns of Pauillac and St-Estèphe, the year produced ripe, forward wines that will drink well without lengthy cellaring. We'll be putting some of this wine in our personal cellars, and we commend it to you as well.

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WINE

Fleuron de Liot Saint-Estèphe 2014

CASE PRICE

\$275

FUTURES

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JULY 2016

HOW THE ANSONIA FUTURES PROGRAM WORKS

HOW TO ORDER

Our order form is an Excel spreadsheet.
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Please submit completed order forms by email to:

info@ansoniiawines.com

The deadline to place orders from this Futures
issue is **Sunday, July 17.**

The next Futures issue will be released in September 2016.

Many thanks for your interest,



OPTIONS FOR PICKUP

Pick-up in Massachusetts.

We now store our inventory in a basement in Newton (437 Newtonville Ave), and open it up to the public on Saturday afternoons. Futures customers can pick up their orders here during Saturday open hours, or by appointment.

Pick-up in Delaware.

Many of those who aren't near Boston will choose to collect their wine in Delaware. For such people, we set times for pickup at a temporary storage location and the owners pick their wine up there over the course of the two or three weeks after it arrives.

Shipping and delivery elsewhere.

In some states we can arrange for shipping at an additional cost that varies by location (\$3.50 per bottle to the west; \$2.50 per bottle everywhere else). Some states require us to collect sales and/or excise tax. If shipping interests you, let us know the state and we will figure out if it can be done.

