

A Guide to the Wines of Burgundy

2020

ANSONIA WINES



Introduction

Winemaking has been a part of Burgundy for over two thousand years. From the Romans to the Benedictines to the Cistercians, denizens of the region have long prized their land as an unusually special place for viticulture. Today the wines of Burgundy are some of the most sought after in the world, prized for their elegance, refinement, and ability to communicate terroir. It is here that Pinot Noir and Chardonnay find their finest expression.

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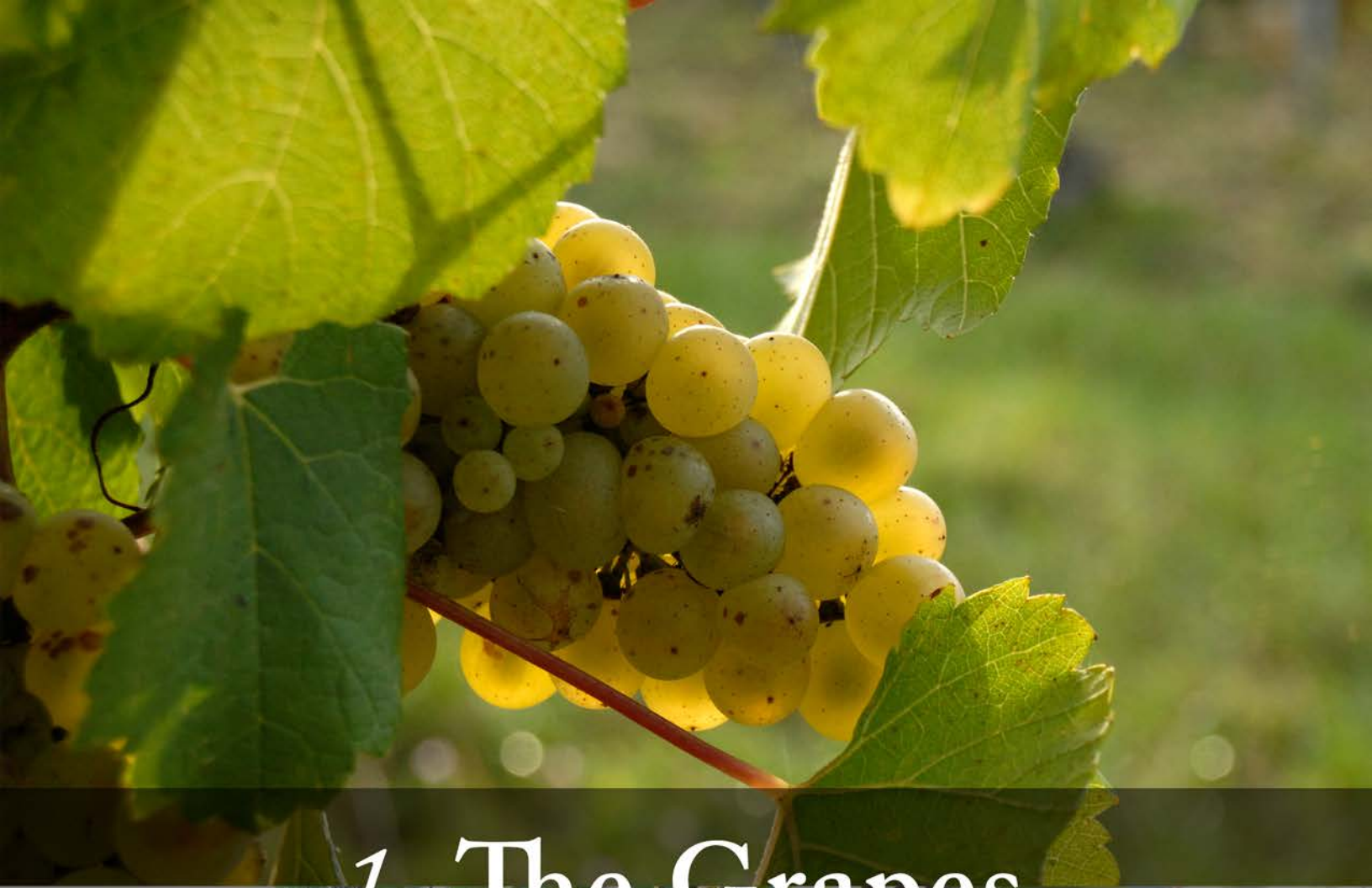
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1. The Grapes



1. The Grapes

GRAPES SUBREGIONS CLASSIFICATIONS LANDMARKS HISTORY TASTE

Pinot Noir. Pinot Noir is responsible for all of Burgundy's finest red wines. Its skin is thin and it is difficult to grow, and Burgundy is near the northern ripening limit for the grape. Yet there is no place on earth that produces such complex, ageworthy, and ethereal expressions of Pinot Noir.

Chardonnay. Chardonnay is responsible for all of Burgundy's finest white wines. It's one of the world's most widely planted varieties, but finds particular balance between richness and freshness in Burgundy.

Gamay. Gamay is the primary grape of the Beaujolais, a sub-region of Burgundy just north of Lyon. Though its reputation is unfortunately linked to the *Beaujolais Nouveau*, Gamay can produce excellent, complex wines if grown and made correctly.

Aligoté. Aligoté is an often forgotten white grape that's best known as the white wine used for a kir cocktail. It's bright and lively, and from the right winemaker can be good on its own.

2. The Subregions

2. The Sub-Regions

GRAPES	SUBREGIONS	CLASSIFICATIONS	LANDMARKS	HISTORY	TASTE
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Côte de Nuits. (*Northern half of the Côte d'Or*) Stretching south from Dijon, the Côte de Nuits produces Burgundy's finest red wines. Famous towns include Gevrey-Chambertin and Vosne-Romanée.

Côte de Beaune. (*Southern half of the Côte d'Or*) Surrounding the city of Beaune, the Côte de Beaune produces most of Burgundy's finest white wines, and some excellent reds as well. Famous towns include Meursault, Puligny-Montrachet, Chassagne-Montrachet, and Volnay.

Côte Chalonnaise. Located west of Chalon-sur-Saone, the Côte Chalonnaise produces rich whites, rugged reds, and sparkling *crémants*.

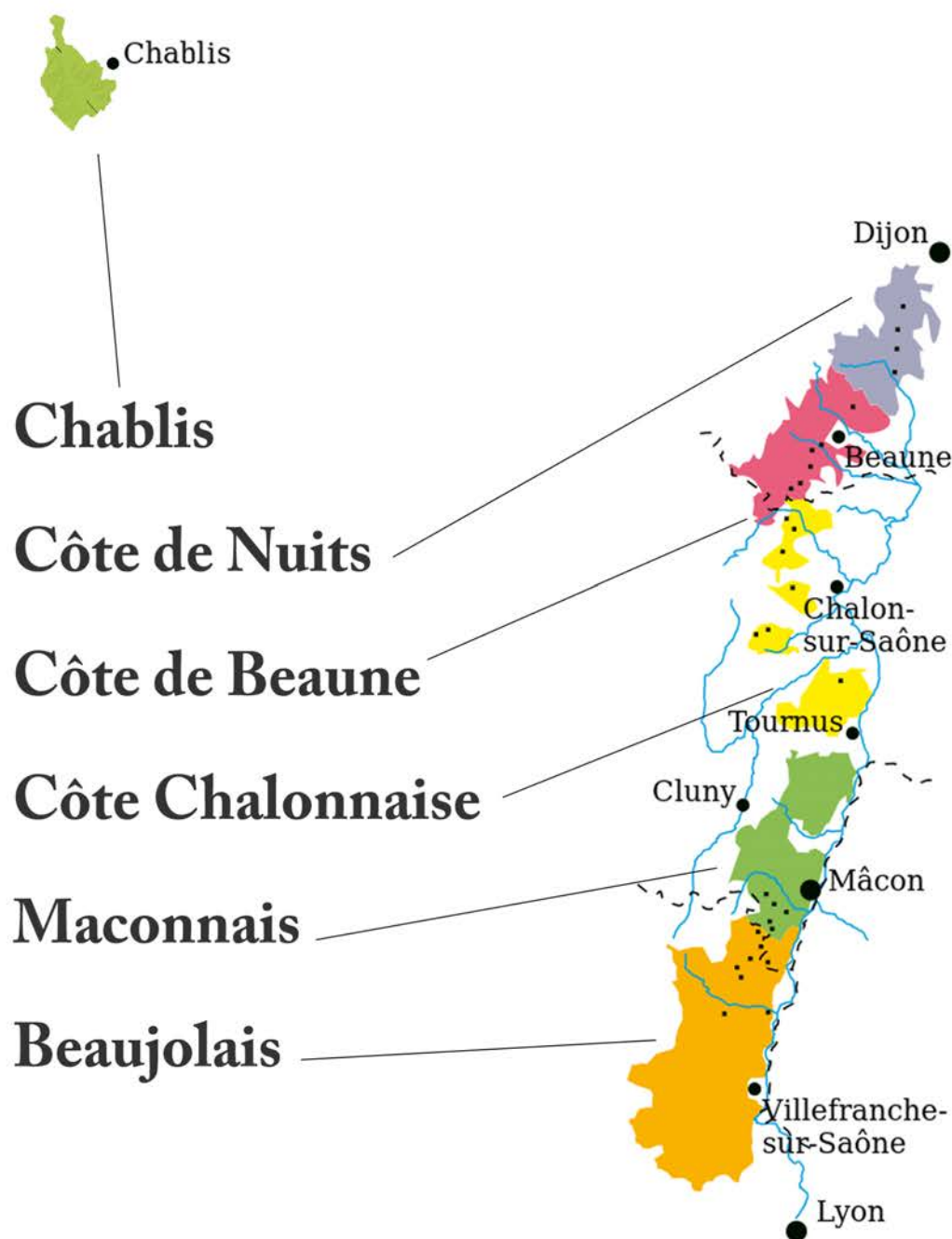
Macônnaise. Located west of Macon, the Macônnaise is known for its smooth, floral white wines from towns like Verzé and Pouilly-Fuissé.

Chablis. Chablis is a satellite region of Burgundy, about 80 miles northwest of Beaune. It's known for crisp, low-oak, mineral white wines.

Beaujolais. Beaujolais is a large region at the southern end of Burgundy. It's best known for its bright, juicy red wines made from Gamay.

2. The Sub-Regions

GRAPES SUBREGIONS CLASSIFICATIONS LANDMARKS HISTORY TASTE





3. The Classifications

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GRAPES SUBREGIONS **CLASSIFICATIONS** LANDMARKS HISTORY TASTE

In Burgundy, the location dictates a wine's classification, and most labels indicate place instead of varietal. The vineyards of the Côte d'Or, Chablis, and the Côte Chalonnaise are further divided by vineyard classifications:

Bourgogne / Hautes-Côtes. These regional classifications includes the simpler wines of Burgundy. Bourgogne usually comes from the Côte d'Or and Côte Chalonnaise, and the Hautes-Côtes come from the hills to the west of the Côte d'Or.

Village. Wines made entirely from vines within the limits of a single town may name the wine after the town. If a Village wine comes from a single lieu dit ("named place"), the label may also include the vineyard name.

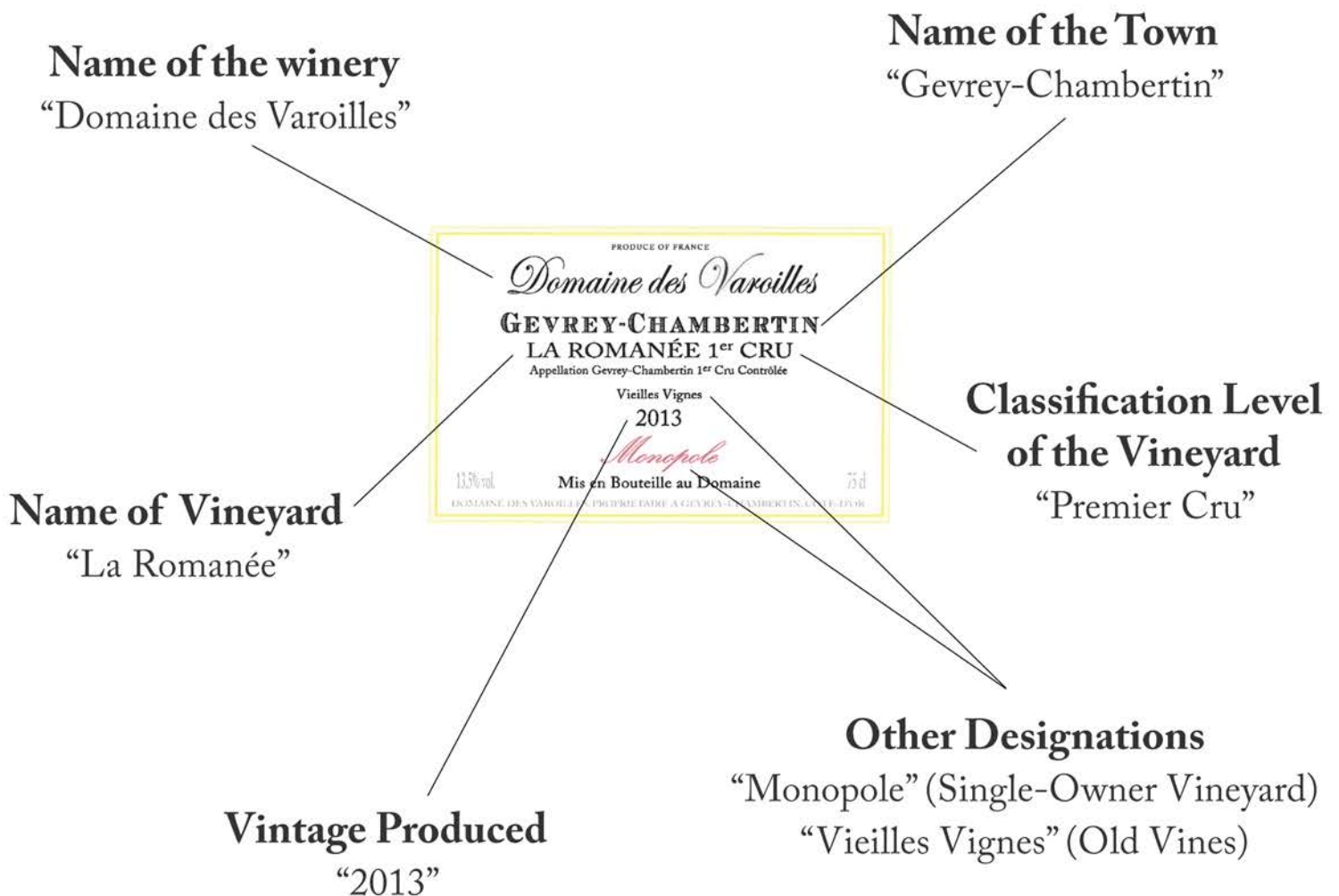
Premier Cru. Vineyards in particularly favorable locations are awarded "premier cru" status, and wine coming entirely from a premier cru vineyard may add that name to the label.

Grand Cru. Grand Cru vineyards comprise the top 1.3% of Burgundy. These represent the very most favorable locations, and most Grand Cru vineyards are famous enough that the village name is left off the label.

3. The Classifications

GRAPES SUBREGIONS CLASSIFICATIONS LANDMARKS HISTORY TASTE

How to Read a Burgundy Label



4. The Landmarks



4. The Landmarks

GRAPES SUBREGIONS CLASSIFICATIONS **LANDMARKS** HISTORY TASTE

Burgundy has been known for its wine for over a thousand years, and many of its most famous landmarks are wine-related.

Montrachet. This is a famous Grand Cru vineyard on the border between Chassagne-Montrachet and Puligny-Montrachet. It produces what most consider the finest white wines in the world.

Romanée-Conti. This vineyard (and eponymous Domaine) in Vosne-Romanée is considered the finest red wine in Burgundy.

Beaune. An ancient walled city, and the beating heart of winemaking culture in Burgundy.

Cluny. Now a small town in the Maconnais, it is home to the ruins of what used to be the largest abbey in Christendom.

Chateau du Clos de Vougeot. A 16th century chateau inside a 12th century walled vineyard originally run by Cistercian Monks.

Hill of Corton. This large hill marks the border between the Côte de Nuits and the Côte de Beaune, and is covered in Grand Cru vineyards.



5. The History

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GRAPES SUBREGIONS CLASSIFICATIONS LANDMARKS **HISTORY** TASTE

The people of Burgundy began planting vines on their hillsides in the second century BC. After Roman invasion in 52 BC winemaking continued to flourish, and by the 2nd Century AD, wine held important economic and cultural value to the region.

The 5th Century saw the fall of the Roman Empire, and the rise of Christianity in the region. Monks founded the monasteries of Cluny (909) and Citeaux (1098), and developed an intimate knowledge of the region's winegrowing terroirs. The monasteries' wines became known across Europe for their quality.

Beginning in the 14th century, the Dukes of Burgundy became politically powerful, with many relying heavily on wine for their prosperity. In 1395 Philip the Bold banished the Gamay grape to the Beaujolais, stating only Pinot Noir was worthy of Burgundy's terroir.

In the 17th Century, wine from Burgundy became the drink of choice at King Louis XIV's court. The 18th Century brought about the arrival of a new distribution regime, with *négociants* – winemakers buying grapes from farmers and crafting the wines themselves – becoming the norm.

continued on the next page

5. The History

GRAPES SUBREGIONS CLASSIFICATIONS LANDMARKS **HISTORY** TASTE

The French Revolution brought important changes to Burgundy. The powerful clergy and aristocracy were stripped of their vines, and the Napoleonic Code required land to be split among all inheriting sons (instead of just the oldest). Today's patchwork of tiny vineyards with multiple owners is a result.

In 1875 a root louse called phylloxera began to destroy the ancient rootstocks of Burgundy's vineyards. After several attempts at a solution failed, the winemakers settled on grafting their vines onto naturally phylloxera-resistant rootstock from America.

In 1935 Burgundians settled on a new system of classification called "Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée," with each vineyard classified based on its geography and history. These delinations, with few exceptions, remain largely intact today.

Today Burgundian wine is one of the most sought after commodities in the world. The *vignerons* of Burgundy combine modern winemaking technology with the centuries of experience behind them. The result is an exquisite expression of a place, its people, and its history.

A man in a brown jacket and blue jeans stands in a cellar, pouring red wine from a bottle into a glass. He is holding the bottle with his right hand and the glass with his left. In the foreground, another person's hands are visible, holding a pen and a notepad, writing down notes. The background shows several large wooden barrels and a stone wall. The text "6. The Taste" is overlaid on the image.

6. The Taste

6. The Taste

GRAPES SUBREGIONS CLASSIFICATIONS LANDMARKS HISTORY TASTE

The philosophy behind Burgundian winemaking is that grapes grown in different locations produce wines of different characters. The taste of Burgundian wine is subjective and wide ranging, but here are a few notes we find ourselves listing frequently:

PINOT NOIR

Cherry / Strawberry / Currants
Cassis / Plum / Raspberry / Violets
Anise / Cinnamon / Cloves / Pepper
Forest Floor / Mushrooms / Barnyard

CHARDONNAY & ALIGOTÉ

Lemon / Green Apple / Lime
Tangerine / Quince / Pineapple
White Flowers / Honey / White Pepper
Hazelnut / Toast / Minerals / Chalk

GAMAY

Cranberry / Raspberry / Blueberry
Violets / Chocolate / Cassis
Graphite / Minerals / Earth

About Ansonia

GRAPES SUBREGIONS CLASSIFICATIONS LANDMARKS HISTORY TASTE

Who are we?

Ansonia is a boutique French wine merchant specializing in small-batch wines from Burgundy. We're a father-and-son team importing from about 40 winemakers around France. Our wines range in style, price, and origin, but all reflect the place from which they come. Our customers range from serious collectors to casual enthusiasts.

Connections

We think people enjoy wine more when they know something about the places and people that made it. We know all of our winemakers personally, and we hope through our website and emails, you get to know them too.

Family Business

We're father-and-son wine merchants, and many of our winemakers are multi-generational domaines too. We taste every wine before we recommend it, and import wines from winemakers we consider friends.

Free Shipping

We think our customers should pay for wine, not cardboard. For states in the eastern US, shipping is free for 12+ bottles.

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Feeling Thirsty?

GRAPES SUBREGIONS CLASSIFICATIONS LANDMARKS HISTORY TASTE

The best way to learn about Burgundy is to taste it. We have several Burgundy samplers, as well as three introductory samplers to help readers get a feel for our entire portfolio.

All ship for free. Click below to learn more:



Burgundy Sampler

\$295



Introductory Trio

\$75



Introductory Case

\$295



Questions? Need Advice?

Drop us an email or give us a ring:

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