



Louis Chenu Père et Filles

Savigny-Les-Beaune, Burgundy, France

History of the Winery

Domaine Louis Chenu Père et Filles is a family estate dating back five generations. The first vines were planted in 1914. Currently, great-great granddaughters of Louis Chenu, Caroline and Juliette Chenu are the winemakers and vineyard managers for the estate, after taking over from their father, also named Louis, who still helps out around the cellar. All of the estate's 9.5 hectares of vines are within the Savigny-les-Beaune appellation, and the bulk of the production is Premier Cru. Until Juliette and Caroline took over the estate, everything was sold to a négoce, which is why this estate of 90+ years is lesser known than some of its neighbors, such as Chandon de Briailles and Simon Bize. Today, the winery is certified organic and low-intervention in the cellar, but makes a traditional style of Burgundy that leans toward elegance and delicacy in the wines.

JS & Louis Chenu Père et Filles

We had the great pleasure to visit the domaine in February 2023, where Juliette and Caroline received us with a full tasting through the 2021 vintage, as well as a few older cuvées which were a real treat to try. It is a true family estate, with the tasting room connected to the house and the cellar just across the courtyard. Louis Chenu waved a brief hello on his way somewhere, and we were joined by Juliette's son Jean as well, a spirited young twenty-something and the next generation of the winemaking team. As the sisters guided us through the 2021 vintage and its wines, the dynamic between Juliette and Caroline was electric, fast-paced, and a little combative in a charmingly sisterly way; it is clear they are two strong personalities that make a great team. They described their duties as being pretty distinct, with Caroline spearheading the vineyard management and Juliette more focused on the cellar and winery relations. The whole family participates in the harvest duties, of course.

Viticulture

The domaine is certified organic since 2006 and carries out an entirely manual harvest. Soils range widely and include sand, marl, calcareous clay, limestone, and volcanic soils. Plantings are almost all Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, but also include a small amount of Pinot Blanc and Aligoté. Vines range in age from 30 years to over 100 years.

Vinification

- Traditional Burgundy vinification: whites are direct pressed and fermented/aged in barrels, reds are destemmed, crushed, macerated at cold temperatures for several days pre-fermentation and then foot trodden regularly
- All wines are vinified with indigenous yeasts at cool temperatures
- Generally, red wines are aged for 18+ months in French oak barrels, white for 12+ months
 - Barrels range in age depending on the cuvee
- Reds are neither fined nor filtered, whites are lightly filtered
- Sulfur levels are generally low and range from 25-80 mg/l depending on the cuvee.

Wines



2021 Les Bruchots Bourgogne Blanc

100% Chardonnay from 30-year-old vines on a parcel called “Les Bruchots.” This parcel is located higher up in the Chenu holdings, toward the border with the Hatues Côtes de Beaune. The soil is stony, clay and limestone. Grapes are pressed directly and fermented/aged in 2-4 year old barrels. ~70mg/L SO₂



2021 Savigny-Les-Beaune Blanc Les Saucours

From Marl soils predominantly, from the approximately 5% of all Savigny-les-Beaune vineyards that are planted with white varieties. Vines are around 80 years old. This wine includes about 10% Pinot Blanc, a real rarity to see in Burgundy these days. Direct pressed, fermented and aged in barrels, mostly older in age. ~80mg/L SO₂



2022 Bourgogne Rouge

From the site “Les Boutières,” grown on deep clay and limestone soils, “Les Chevrières,” and “Les Périères,” grown on rocky soils. Vines are 55 years old. Destemmed and macerated for 10 days with regular pump-overs. Fermentation with indigenous yeast, aged for 12 months in 1-3 year old barrels. Unfined/unfiltered. SO₂ between 30-80mg/L.



2021 Savigny-Les-Beaune 1er Cru “Aux Clous” Rouge

This Cru lies half-way up the hillside (between Guettes and Serpentières) and is composed of several different soil types: red clay on the upper levels and pebbly soils below. It is exposed perfectly to the south. Destemmed and macerated at cool temperatures during fermentation. Aged in mostly older barrels. ~90mg/L SO₂



2020 Savigny-Les-Beaune Vieilles Vignes Rouge

A blend of five small parcels with vines between 30 and 60 years old. Destemmed and macerated at cool temperatures during fermentation. Aged in older barrels. ~35mg/L SO₂.



2020 Savigny-Les-Beaune 1er Cru “Les Haut-Jarrons” Rouge

“Jarrons” meaning “tree branches” is situated on the middle of the hillside and is planted in deep, sandy soils. The most structured of the Chenu wines. Destemmed and macerated at cool temperatures during fermentation. Aged in barrels of mixed ages. ~60mg/L SO₂