

Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier (Chambolle-Musigny)

2004 Bonnes-Mares Grand Cru	red	(89-91)
2004 Chambolle-Musigny	red	(87-89)
2004 Chambolle-Musigny “Les Amoureuses” 1 ^{er}	red	(90-93)
2004 Chambolle-Musigny “Les Fuées” 1 ^{er}	red	(88-91)
2004 Musigny Grand Cru	red	(92-94)
2004 Nuits St. Georges – Clos des Fourches	red	(86-89)
2004 Nuits St. Georges “Clos de la Maréchale” 1 ^{er}	red	(89-91)
2003 Bonnes-Mares Grand Cru	red	89
2003 Chambolle-Musigny	red	86
2003 Chambolle-Musigny “Les Amoureuses” 1 ^{er}	red	90
2003 Chambolle-Musigny “Les Fuées” 1 ^{er}	red	88
2003 Musigny Grand Cru	red	92

Frédéric Mugnier, who now has his new *cuvée* up and running, told me that he was “extremely happy with the efficiency of it and his new team. We’re doing much improved vineyard work because before taking back the Clos de la Maréchale, I had 1 vineyard worker for 4 ha and now I have 9 for 14 ha, 6 of which are permanent. Thus, when something has to be done immediately, I have people available to address the problem whereas before, there were sometimes scheduling issue delays. For example, because 2004 was such a challenge, particularly treating regularly and controlling yields, I’m not sure exactly how I would have managed without the team that I have in place now. We have stopped using herbicides in the Clos, which is consistent with how we treat our other vineyards but it also requires more work, which is again another reason why I am happy to have a quality, and permanent, team in place. We also changed the system of pruning in the Clos, another project which was exceptionally labor intensive. As to 2004, we began picking on September 23rd and there weren’t really any serious sorting problems save for some from the hail, particularly in Bonnes Mares. We also didn’t really have much trouble with oidium except again in Bonnes Mares. Overall, it’s amazing giving the growing season but 2004 produced the highest sugars that I have ever seen, and that includes 1990, 1997, 2000 and 2003. Indeed, we obtained over 14% in one section of the Clos. In terms of vinification, I changed almost nothing and as an aside, I find myself changing it less and less no matter the vintage. The vintage is the vintage and as we have discussed before, it has an important role in determining the character of the wines. I don’t want to diminish that character just so that I am happier. For example, even though 2003 is a style of vintage that I don’t like very much, I would rather have it express itself and retain its individuality than try and standardize everything to a vision of what I like. Overall, 2004 is a lovely vintage that I like very much. It’s floral and very fresh with round and complete flavors that will permit the wines to be drunk young but they will last for at least 20 years, perhaps longer because there are solid tannins beneath the fruit. In fact, I find the ‘04s to be more tannic than ‘02s.” Fans of the domaine have been waiting breathlessly for word on the quality of the “new” Clos de la Maréchale and my initial impression is that the sophistication and elegance that Mugnier brings to all of his wines has worked brilliantly here. I am extremely impressed by the quality he has obtained for a first vintage, especially when you consider that Mugnier does not know the *terroir* well yet and it will be sometime before he fully understands its nuances and particularities, what sections give the best fruit and the kinds of wine that result from each sector. But I have every confidence that he will learn the inherent subtleties and be making even finer wine from the Clos going forward Note that there is also a Nuits *villages* made from young vines Clos de la Maréchale. (A Becky Wasserman/Le Serbet Selection – sbw@wanadoo.fr; Martin-Scott Wines, Lake Success, NY; Vinalia, Los Angeles, CA; Morris & Verdin, Howard Ripley and Hanson & Clark, all UK).

2004 Chambolle-Musigny: (from two different parcels of vines, one located in the *premier cru* Les Plantes, which was planted in 1968 and the second from the *villages*-level portion of La Combe d'Orveau, 60% of which is young vines and the remainder is 40+ year old vines). A nose of ultra fine and pure red pinot fruit aromas combines with fresh, sweet and beautifully detailed flavors that are textured and long. This is really an exceptionally pretty wine and Classic Chambolle in both style and character. (87-89)/2009+

2004 Chambolle-Musigny “Les Fuées”: (from 50 year old vines – this is Mugnier’s favorite vineyard in terms of its fruit quality). This too is exceptionally elegant but slightly deeper with richer fruit nuances and hints of spice and earth that lead to briar and raspberry-infused flavors that are supple yet concentrated while remaining focused on the long finish that offers notes of violet and plum plus the classic Fuées minerality. Fine intensity here as well as impeccable balance. (88-91)/2012+

2004 Nuits St. Georges – Clos des Fourches: (Clos des Fourches was the original name of the Clos de la Maréchale; from young vines). A completely different nose with fresh dark berry fruit aromas with undertones of earth and herbs that complement the round, intense and pure flavors that display almost no rusticity and a finely grained minerality, culminating in a nicely powerful and persistent finish. As Nuits *villages* examples go, this is really quite an elegant wine. (86-89)/2010+

2004 Nuits St. Georges “Clos de la Maréchale”: This is more elegant still and slightly finer with detailed, expressive and pure aromas of earth, black fruit and plum that dissolve into beautifully complex, refined and balanced flavors that also display ample finishing minerality and better overall phenolic ripeness. A really lovely effort that should age effortlessly. (89-91)/2012+

2004 Bonnes-Mares: (50% of the vines were planted in 1980 and 1988, with the remainder planted in the '50s). As one would expect, this is a bigger wine that offers a bit more aromatic complexity with attractive aromas of violets, earth and cassis that precede racy, edgy and powerful medium full flavors that are direct, indeed even rather linear on the borderline stern if not hard finish. This is built to age and a wine that I doubt will be overly approachable young. (89-91)/2014+

2004 Chambolle-Musigny “Les Amoureuses”: (from old vines of an indeterminate age). A strikingly seductive nose of spice, hoisin and anise that adds nuance to the largely black pinot fruit aromas and continue onto the sappy, rich and mouth coating middle weight flavors that possess a bit more mid-palate fat and an explosive, fresh and harmonious finish. I particularly like the transparency here and this is an exceptionally stylish effort. (90-93)/2012+

2004 Musigny: A simply sublime mix of spicy, elegant, pure and sophisticated red and black fruit aromas that blend into supple, rich and again, extremely pure, indeed crystalline medium full flavors that are restrained and backward but not stern like those of the Bonnes Mares, all wrapped in a vibrant finish of exceptional intensity. This is superbly well focused and almost etches itself into the palate though the tannic spine is well buffered by plenty of mid-palate sap. (92-94)/2016+

2003 Chambolle-Musigny: (from two different parcels of vines, one located in the *premier cru* Les Plantes, which was planted in 1968 and the second from the *villages*-level portion of La Combe d'Orveau, 60% of which is young vines and the remainder is 40+ year old vines). Very ripe yet reasonably fresh red pinot fruit aromas lead to dense, rich and very sweet medium full flavors that possess a snappy and mouth coating finish. This is a solid *villages* that displays a touch of mocha on the finish. 86/2009+

2003 Chambolle-Musigny “Les Fuées”: (from 50 year old vines – this is Mugnier’s favorite vineyard in terms of its fruit quality). This is noticeably fresher than the straight Chambolle with fruit that is quite fresh, sweet, airy and pretty giving way to detailed yet sappy flavors that offer excellent volume and length, all wrapped in a delicious and mouth coating finish. This is forward but I suspect it will age reasonably well too. 88/2010+

2003 Bonnes-Mares: (50% of the vines were planted in 1980 and 1988, with the remainder planted in the ‘50s). Elegant red berry fruit notes and while this is ripe, it’s less ‘03 in style than the prior two wines. The powerful flavors are round, delicious and sweet with dusty mouth coating tannins and a punchy, rather firm finish. This carries good definition for the vintage yet it’s generous in the mouth and rather forward for a young Bonnes Mares though it will certainly age. 89/2011+

2003 Chambolle-Musigny “Les Amoureuses”: (from old vines of an indeterminate age). This is much different as the pretty, complex and spicier black fruit aromas have a distinct floral character to them and introduce ripe and very sweet pluminfused flavors that deliver excellent density and fine purity. This is a very ripe and forward wine but one that retains a fine sense of harmony and balance due to a certain underlying reserve that was also present in cask. 90/2011+

2003 Musigny: A nose of violets, spicy red and black fruit plus a distinct note of plum leads to dense, rich and very full-bodied flavors that explode in the mouth with a complex, pure and wonderfully sappy character, all wrapped in a finish that just doesn’t quit. Class in a glass and the vintage influence is less evident here. Lovely stuff here and while it’s not classic Mugnier in style, it’s really quite an attractive effort, especially for the vintage. 92/2013+