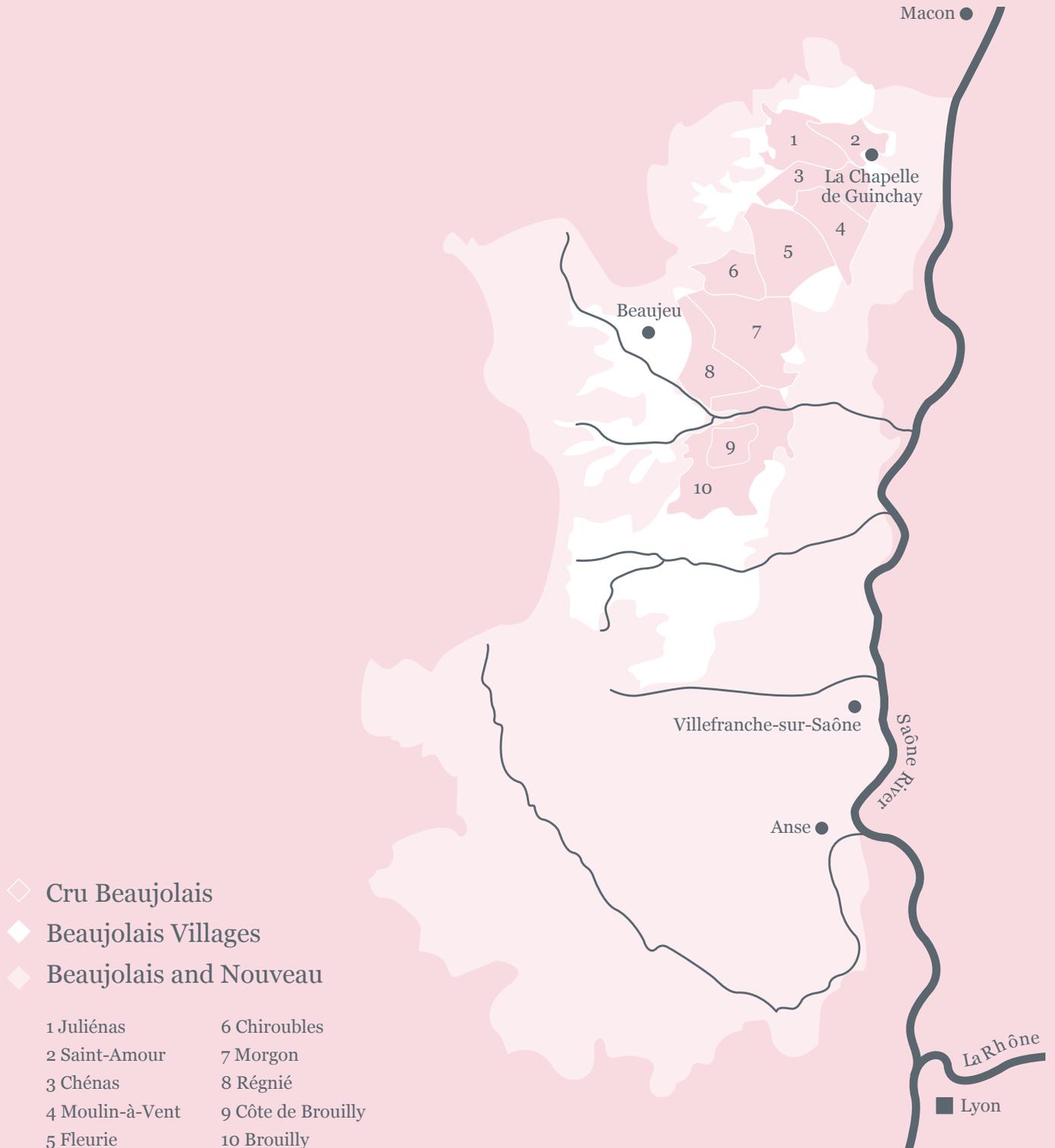


INSIGHT

Beaujolais





Beaujolais is going through a bit of a revival currently, most noticeably in North America and Canada but also here in the UK and parts of Europe. This is in part due to Burgundy prices rising and consumers looking to other regions in search of affordable wines for drinking. However the biggest reason (and in our mind the most important) is that there are some really exciting wine makers producing fantastic wines that are great expressions of the unique and different terroir throughout the region. Well known Burgundian producers have started to buy up land in the area such as Domaine Lafarge of Volnay and Louis Boillot of Chambolle, a clear sign that the region is viewed with increasing importance.

Paradoxically however there is comparatively little information or indeed available wines in the UK market, and particularly the young up and coming producers – Something Latimer hope to change not only with this report but also through tastings and offers to follow.

The Region

One hours drive North of Lyon and an hour south of Macon, the region is 34 miles long and nine miles wide with 19,000 ha under vine, which equates to around 133 million bottles per year.

Of the 10 Beaujolais Crus (St-Amour, Julienas, Chenas, Moulin-a-Vent, Fleurie, Chiroubles, Morgon, Regnie, Brouilly and Cote de Brouilly) we tasted wines from 8, as well as Nouveau 2015 and 4 Village wines. After four visits and a day and a half travel around the region we were left with a very good impression of the different styles of wine making in the region as well as the significant differences between the various Cru's. The differences between Villages and Cru's is every bit as important as those between villages in burgundy. It is important to remember that the region has a rich history in fact as recently as the 1950's the area produced the most expensive wines in France.

We returned with a feeling of excitement to not only tell our clients about what we had found, but also to buy some of these delicious, affordable and age worthy wines for ourselves! The wonderful thing about the gammay grape is that it is never too tannic or structured, meaning that although the wines will age gracefully they are almost always approachable and delicious in youth. Some will without doubt benefit from a few years in bottle and we have been assured that when mature the wines can be magnificent. Finally the price, some of the best wines we tasted on this trip cost no more than Bourgogne rouge money, yet the quality was way above village level. In our book this is a 'no brainer'.



The Different Cru's

Côte de Brouilly and Brouilly

Côte de Brouilly lies on the side of a hill with its neighbour Brouilly at the bottom. Côte de Brouilly tends to ripen quicker and thus produces a more structured, elegant wine, that is famous for its blue volcanic stones. Brouilly on the other hand produces a lighter style more for early drinking. Some 9 million bottles of Brouilly are produced every year from the 1,300ha under vine, 20% of the whole regions production.

Morgon

This is the closest to Moulin-a-Vent in terms of weight and structure and it can age nearly as well. It has a fresh mineral core, thanks chiefly to its granite soils, with lovely opulent fruit such as ripe strawberry fruit and characteristically citrus and orange.

Moulin-a-Vent

This is considered the sturdiest, most tannic, longest-lived of the Crus Beaujolais. It is not unheard of to enjoy 50-year old Moulin-a-Vent, however this is still Gamay, not a tannic grape by nature and most examples are still very approachable in youth.

Fleurie

Fleurie, is more perfumed and delicate, The 'Fleur' in Fleurie meaning "flower" is no mistake as the wines are characterised by a distinct floral note, violets often came up in our tasting notes.

Chénas

Chénas is a less known region but one of our best tastings of the whole trip. Granite in the steep slopes at the higher areas and clay elsewhere, the wines we tasted were opulent rich and very moreish but with great minerality and balance. "Brac de la Perrière, the first wine historian of the Beaujolais region, said of Chénas in 1769 that it was one of the best vine-growing areas in the region." (Jancis Robinson.com)

Julié纳斯

Julié纳斯 to the west of Fleurie tends to be a richer sturdier style and often makes wines of good ageing potential. The wine's signature profile is deep red cherries, which transform with a few years of bottle age into nuanced flavours that veer towards cassis. It is however quite a diverse Crus with different soil structure throughout thus wines with different expressions of their terrior.

St. Amour

St. Amour is the most northerly Cru, bordering the Mâcon region of Burgundy. At its best, St. Amour is an intensely red-fruited wine, bearing a bit of a resemblance to its much more expensive cousin to the north.

Young wine makers

Latimer Vintners are proud to have allocations en-primeur from some of Burgundy's most celebrated producers such as Hudelot Noellat and Sylvain Cathiard. Alongside this we have also discovered some of the most exciting up and coming talent Paul Pillot, Bachelet Monnot, Coquard loison Fleurot and Odoul Coquard. What links all of these producers however is that they are under the age of 40. This is something we feel we should make more noise about, as it is these people that are innovating and making some of the most exciting wines from the region. Not to mention that they are good, fun people to work with who are eager and passionate about the region they live in. It is therefore very exciting that three of the Beaujolais producers that we visited were also what we would define as 'young Winemakers'. Family run estates brimming with passion and excitement for the region they live and work in.



David Beaupere *Julienas*

In 2008 Clement David Beaupere took over the family Domaine which until then had not operated as a fully commercial wine making business. The 4ha original vineyard was rented out to farmers and the wine sold through the negociant system. His father (a local doctor) made a small amount of wine from the estate for personal consumption, and sold a little on but it was not the main family business. Clement himself initially started out a career in finance but as a child of Julienas decided he wanted to use his passion for Beaujolais to develop the family domaine and help further the revival of Beaujolais.

The estate is made up of the original 4ha 'La Bottiere' Vineyard situated directly behind the house, plus two more recently acquired parcels that Clement rents on a long term basis. Renting Vineyards in Beaujolais, as we found out is quite common, however at the domains we tasted where they did not own rental was very much on a long term basis. They worked the vines themselves, ploughed the ground, picked and so on, basically they do everything except own the land. It is important to explain this, as it's very different from the negociant system we so often see where grapes are bought in or vineyards are worked by others.

Of Clements 'rented' plots he has; 'Vayolette' which is situated high on a steep south facing slope above the village, planted with vines up to 50yrs old. The soil structure here is unique and is thick with a blue stone natural to the area, which lends a wonderful minerality to the finished wines. The second parcel is a 1.4 ha plot in the Cru of Moulin-a-Vent, and his vineyard straddles both this AOC and Chenas. The wine here is more delicate and feminine due to the aspect and soil but still has a lovely rich and robust style that you would not necessarily associate with Beaujolais.

Clement has been working since 2012 using organic principles and the 2014 vintage for 'Croix de la Bottieres' was his first year as certified organic, a small piece of history it turns out as he is now the first estate in Julienas to ever be awarded this certification.

Julienas Croix de la Bottiere 2015

Perfumed with an elegant feminine style, crushed red fruit with a lovely purity. Balanced, fresh and vibrant with well-formed structure, very fine and long. Delicious and moreish.

Unit	Duty/Tax	Unit Price
12	Inc Duty/VAT <i>Also available In Bond</i>	£144.00



Richard Rottiers *Moulin a Vent*

Richard Rottiers is a good friend of Clement Beaupere, in fact after running over time on our tasting and vineyard visit Clement drove over to Domaine Richard Rottiers in Moulin-a-Vent to not only show us the way, but to make sure he understood why we were late. Imagine that happening in Bordeaux...

Richard is from Chablis, where his family run a Domaine, but after working in wineries in New Zealand, South Africa and California his love of Gamay grape led him to settle in Beaujolais. Richard rents five hectares of vineyards from all over the Moulin-A-Vent crus, all with different soil structures and altitudes and some with up to 60yr old vines. He also works organically and was one of the contributing reasons for his friend Clement turning to Organic farming. His wines were powerful, intense velvety and stylish, but all fresh with minerality and class. A very talented wine maker who truly understands the grape he is working with and the different characteristics of the plots he has.

Lastly it would not be right if we did not make a mention of the incredible homemade sausage that he produces from local pigs. It was quite simply the best we have ever tasted. Made only a week before we ate it, it was soft, moist and incredibly flavoursome, yet very light. We were wondering if we could import it along with his wines!

▼ **Moulin-a-Vent 2014**

Very fresh with pure raspberry fruit alongside some notes of cocoa and spice. Excellent concentration of fruit extremely elegant with chocolate and cherry coming through in the mouth lovely acidity.

Unit	Duty/Tax	Unit Price
12	Inc Duty/VAT <i>Also available In Bond</i>	£155.00

▼ **Moulin-a-Vent Cuvee Dernier Souffle 2014**

Again there is a wonderful purity here but with a really mineral backbone, the vines are grown on granite and you ca almost taste it. This is very precise and a real joy to taste well balanced with real potential if you can resist it.

Unit	Duty/Tax	Unit Price
12	Inc Duty/VAT <i>Also available In Bond</i>	£174.00

▼ **Moulin-a-Vent Cuvee Champ de Cour 2014**

This is heading more toward pinot in style, darker cherry fruit with a real depth. There is more concentration here but the purity is retained also more structure with fine tannins.

Unit	Duty/Tax	Unit Price
12	Inc Duty/VAT <i>Also available In Bond</i>	£210.00



Domaine Thillardon Chenas

This estate is run by two brothers Paul Henri and Charles who are again friends with both David and Clement above. This was perhaps our best tasting, not only because they provided us with an unexpected and delicious local lunch of meats and cheese, but because their wines were so pure and intense, unlike any Beaujolais we had ever tasted. The Domaine sits on the side of a hill just outside the village of Chenas and like David Beaupere the only plot that they own, les Chassignol, is situated behind the house. This is a steep hill with a granite and clay soil structure which they hand plough using horses, the vines are up to 60 years old, producing intense brooding and concentrated wines, yet an incredible fresh mineral core and identity. The remaining six plots are rented in the same fashion as both David and Clement whereby they work the vineyards organically, five of the plots are in Chenas and one in neighbouring Cru of Moulin-a-Vent.

Thillardon's wines are organic and use many of the principles of natural wine making and that process allows the terroir and the Gamay grape to express its self in the best possible way. The quality is certainly there across the range with some really polished age worthy and pure wines, therefore it must be working.

Chenas 'Chassignol' 2014

More serious and showing really well, cherry and raspberry fruit, spice and black pepper. Very well defined fruit character balanced by fresh racy acidity and a fine structure. Huge potential.

Unit	Duty/Tax	Unit Price
12	Inc Duty/VAT Also available In Bond	£220.00

Chenas 'Les Boccards' 2014

Brown sugar on the nose with Strawberry and raspberry fruit, lovely mineral character and again very precise. This is potentially showing the best of all the wines although may lack some of the intensity of the Chassignol, more structure.

Unit	Duty/Tax	Unit Price
12	Inc Duty/VAT Also available In Bond	£180.00

Chenas 'Les Carrieres' 2014

A real minerality on the nose alongside raspberry and loganberry fruit some spice and black pepper. Very precise and linear, great concentration of fruit and real flintiness, understated but beautiful.

Unit	Duty/Tax	Unit Price
12	Inc Duty/VAT Also available In Bond	£144.00

Chenas 'Les Vibrations' 2014

A bigger and more burly style, more rhone than burgundy. Very intense with really concentrated hedgerow fruit and not as precise as the Carrieres but more powerful.

Unit	Duty/Tax	Unit Price
12	Inc Duty/VAT Also available In Bond	£174.00



Summary

What we liked most of all about the wines we tasted was the very evident differences between Cru. The style of wine maker may have differed but the nuances and different terroir stood out.

There are wines that will be great to drink now, and ones that will be very interesting to follow over the next 10-15 years, some for white meat, for red meat, fish and some for enjoying without food.

Overall we hope that this brief introduction and snapshot has been of interest to you and perhaps changed a few opinions, we are very excited to be able to offer these for sale and we hope you will be too.

