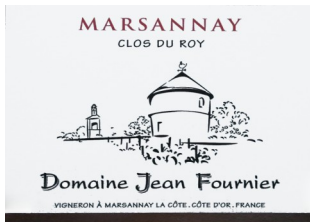
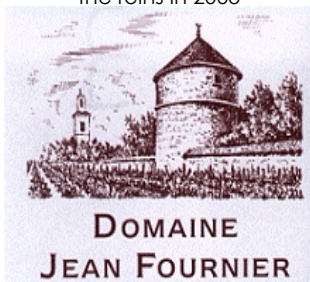


JEAN FOURNIER

Marsannay-la-Côte



Laurent Fournier assumed the reins in 2003



Laurent & Jean Fournier at work in the vineyard.



Vineyards in Marsannay



Vintner Select

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France

BURGUNDY
Côte de Nuits

OVERVIEW

Jean Fournier's son Laurent now runs this very old and excellent domaine, and as a grower who has been marinating in a quarter century of Bruno Clair's standard-bearing for the region, Laurent has done much to expand the drama found in the wines of Marsannay, which continue to remain an afterthought for most lovers of Pinot Noir. Laurent managed to rise above the extremes of his inaugural vintage (2003), and he is continuing to experiment with new as well as old methods (in good vintages he makes a *Version Originale* from old vines from the Longeroies: a minimalist, whole-cluster, low-sulfur estimation of his great-grandfather's methods—perhaps there will be another essay in '09). Fournier's wines are not typical for Marsannay (which can be a challenge when the INAO flags his wines for occasionally weighing-in above the 13.5% alcohol limit), but in redefining the perceptions of the region, he and a handful of others are expanding Burgundy's future.

Varieties:

White: Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, Aligoté

Red: Pinot Noir

Total Acreage: about 40 acres (8 of which are the white varieties)

Average Production: less than 6,000

VINEYARD/CELLAR PRACTICES

- Vineyards are now organically farmed and hand-harvested
- Grapes are sorted twice before cool, slow fermentations (as long as three weeks)
- Unique, often quite lengthy *élevage* in both large (50hL) & standard (20L) barrels

WINES

Marsannay "Cuvée St.-Urbain" Blanc

A blend of barrel-fermented Chardonnay and tank-fermented Pinot Blanc yields a smoky, incipient lime- and pomelo-like citrusiness and a lingering waxy texture.

Marsannay "Cuvée St.-Urbain" Rouge

Juice of 30-40 year-old vines from Clos du Roy, Echezots & Longeroies lays a changing array of flowers in the aroma & gives a moody character to the red fruits of this charming cuvée.

Marsannay "Les Longeroies"

The wine from this site is quite lovely, the very epitome of Marsannay with a lilting, airy character of sweet, dusty black fruit, yet it also possesses a satisfying, meaty mid-palate density.

Marsannay "Clos du Roy"

Perhaps the most cherished wine from Fournier (and all of Marsannay), this gets considerably richer with time in the bottle, bursting with cherry, plum, a marine minerality and silky texture.

Fixin "Les Petits Crais"

Marsannay producer shows 'em how to do it in Fixin! A sleek wine that, though airy & translucent in style, has a saturating, blooming expression & long finish of esterous dark chocolate.

INTRO TO MARSANNAY

Though this northernmost region of the Côte d'Or was once a hotbed of Gamay (i.e., few actually cared about its wines), Marsannay became—thanks to a brilliant marketing move by Joseph Clair in 1919—Burgundy's *de facto* producer of rosé. Pinot Noir was *in* and Marsannay Rosé was all the rage in restaurants from Dijon to Lyon to Paris for the next 25 years. But there were storm clouds ahead, as the INAO overlooked the region entirely when delimiting AOCs in the 1930s, and growers felt the rocky limestone and marl *terroir* was too good to dismiss, or even reserve for rosé alone. Decades of battling with the INAO gave way to the victory and defeat, as authorities eventually bestowed the Bourgogne Marsannay AOC in 1956, refused elevation Côte de Nuits-Villages AOC, but granted a "consolation" of full AOC status in 1987. Naturally, given this history, there are no 1^{er} or Grand Crus in Marsannay.

ACCOLADES

Fournier's 2007 Marsannay Clos du Roy gained in both richness and clarity over its first year in the bottle, although I would still recommend that it be enjoyed within the next 2-3 years. Tart edged dark cherry and plum mingle with peat, site-typical iodine and an oceanic range of other mineral notes for an especially mouth-watering savor. While relatively light in weight, this has acquired a silken texture than complements its fresh-fruitedness and minerality.

David Schildknecht, *The Wine Advocate*, #189