

southeast at top of the slope, on the limit of Auxey-Duresses where the clay is very white. This was planted before phylloxera but abandoned subsequently. I like his racy Les Duresses Dit La Parapelle. Such are the possibilities afforded by climate change. (Guillaume Lavollée has done something similar with Beaune En Lulunne, from a tricky spot on the Beaune/Pommard border.)

Moving to St-Aubin, the aromatics are spicy and the fruit is quite tropical. The lighter structure of St-Aubin benefits from crisp freshness, which some wines lack, particularly on the village side.

Premier Cru Charmois is pretty reliable whatever the vintage, and in 2022 is well-balanced, rather fragrant, peachy, and rounded. On the warm southwest slope, the fruit is more melony, with few floral notes, but picked in good time to preserve acidity and modest alcohol, Les Murgers des Dents de Chien, Sur Gamay, and En Remilly all have sufficient freshness, backed up with plenty of salty minerality. I searched for these to include in the tasting notes.

## Chalonnais and Mâconnais

A view of Vergisson, which “has benefited from climate change and comes up trumps in 2022 for those who prefer Pouilly-Fuissé with high levels of energy, precision, and sapidity.” Photography by Shutterstock.

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I particularly liked the ripe and citrusy-fresh whites from Rully. There was hydric stress in Côte Chalonnaise, but not as severe as 2020. Mercurey has benefited from climate change, when in the past it was challenging to harvest at full phenolic ripeness. Faiveley has substantial holdings in Mercurey, and Jérôme Flous believes it is now reaching the same level of quality that premiers crus in the Côte de Nuits had 20 years ago. “It is a very good vintage for Mercurey. Maybe the best I have made.”

Heading down to Pouilly-Fuissé, the premiers crus from the sunny slopes stretching between Fuissé and Pouilly are certainly luscious; from full-bodied, weighty Ménétrières, to smooth opulence in Vignes Blanches; from rich Les Clos, to the ripely rounded Au Vignerai, from the warm south-facing slope in Solutré. The 2022

vintage fulfils Pouilly-Fuissé's traditional reputation for fleshly, ripe wine. A touch on the soft side, but the calcareous soil gives sappy freshness.

I prefer minimal oak influence. Too much oak just emphasizes the traditionally extravagant Pouilly-Fuissé style. Some producers, including Jean-Philippe Bret, are using larger barrels and no new oak. Keeping wines for a second winter, as they do at Domaine Ferret, will help refine the warm style of this vintage. I liked the wines from this domaine. The 25 percent new oak may seem quite a lot, but the wines still have distinctive terroir definition, with Perrières naturally showing some snap and tension.

Vergisson has benefited from climate change and comes up trumps in 2022 for those who prefer Pouilly-Fuissé with high levels of energy, precision, and sapidity. It's home to some of my favorite *climats*—notably Les Cray and Sur La Roche—both of which have been upgraded to premier cru. Even in a hot vintage, Sur La Roche produces straight, savory, and stony wine. Les Crays shows more of the sunny influence, but its 2022s are energetic and mineral as well as ripe. (Look out for Saumaize-Michelin and Gilles Morat).

There are excellent sites that were excluded from the list of 22 premiers crus because they didn't quite meet the criteria. I draw your attention to those with the requisite limestone, but that are just too high or have a slightly cooler exposition to meet the official requirements. It's worth noting that the classification did not take climate change into consideration. The top 12 acres (5ha) of Sur La Roche were excluded, but produce fresh and racy wine under the new village name, Haut de la Roche. On a plateau between Fuissé and Chaintré, the *lieu-dit* Les Rontets, which was also considered too high for premier cru, has yielded appealingly energetic 2022s. (Château des Rontets has two very good cuvées.)

It's a good vintage in which to explore village *lieux-dits* from the cooler faces of Solutré and Vergisson, which will never make it into the premier cru ratings, but are very enjoyable nonetheless. Domaines La Soufrandière and

Héritiers du Comte Lafon have neighboring parcels in En Chatenay on the north side of the rock of Vergisson, where no doubt the biodynamic farming contributes to the lively intensity of their wines.

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