

## BURGUNDY

A few of the most exciting wines in the world come from **Burgundy**.

### + Geography of Burgundy:

**Burgundy (Bourgogne)** begins a hundred kilometres south from Paris and spreads itself down to Lyon. It stretches on 360 kilometres (225 miles) and 28715 Hectares. It is a region with various soils, divided in numerous districts: Chablis, Côte d'Or (divided in Côte de Nuits and Côte de Beaune), Côte Chalonnaise and Maconnais.

### + History of Burgundy:

The production of wine begun when the Roman invaded the region. Later, during the sixth century, one king gave his vineyards to the church. At the time of the French Revolution, most of the best Burgundy wines were produced by monasteries.

One of the consequences of the revolution in **Burgundy** was the confiscation of the vineyards from the church to the republic and their fragmentation in small plots (lots). Nowadays, the system of small vineyard still prevails in Burgundy.

### + Burgundy wine making

**Burgundy** wines are of a velvety and subtle red or of a sensual and characteristic white.

**Burgundy** is a region with various soils, divided in numerous districts: Chablis and Grand Auxerrois, Côte d'Or (divided in Côte de Nuits and Côte de Beaune), Côte Chalonnaise and Maconnais.

The main grapes in **Burgundy** are Pinot Noir for red wine and Chardonnay for white wine

### + The vineyards of Burgundy

**The Châtillonnais** is the most northern vineyard of Burgundy, neighbouring the most southern Champagne vineyard called "vignoble de l'Aube". It produces both white and red "Bourgogne" regional appellation and is a perfect area for the Crémant de Bourgogne (sparkling wine, rosé or white, made from "still wines" by the traditional method.)

**The Chablis and Grand Auxerrois vineyards** are close to the town of Auxerre. The Chablis Vineyards are half way between Dijon and Paris. They are spread over limestone hills (collines calcaires) separated from time to time by the charming river 'Le Serein'.

**La Côte de Nuits** (hillsides - coteaux) are made up of a narrow (étroite) band of hills twenty kilometres long and at some points just 200 to 300 metres wide. Its altitude varies from 230/260 metres to the south and 270/300 metres around Dijon, on sharp slopes - versants pentus (up to 25%).

It covers 2500 hectares over 16 different villages.

Within a few kilometres the following villages can be found: Marsannay, Fixin, Gevrey-Chambertin, Morey-Saint-Denis, Chambolle-Musigny, Vougeot, Vosne Romanée, Nuits Saint Georges.

**La Côte Beaune** : Over about 20 kilometres only, between Ladoix-Serrigny and the magnificent Maranges hills, the greatest dry white wines in the world are too be found next to red wines of great reputation. The fame of the **Côte de Beaune vineyards** is closely linked to its capital, Beaune, which is the true historical and economical headquarters of Burgundy wine growing.

**La Côte Chalonnaise** is the natural continuation of the "Côte d'Or", which reproduces the same characteristics of the main geological formations - which leave their mark on the types of wine. This area constitutes one of the most beautiful wine growing areas in Burgundy. The vineyards spread over a stretch (étendue) of 25 kilometres long and 7 kilometres wide, between the Côte de Beaune to the North and the Maconnais mounts to the South.

Today, the **Mâconnais vineyards** mark the southern border of Burgundy. They stretch over 35 kilometres between Sennecy-le-Grand and Saint-Véran, and 10 kilometres wide, delimited to the west by the Grosne Valley and to the East by the Saône valley

### **Classification in Burgundy**

In 1415 an edict of King Charles VI stated that "Wines which are called Bourgogne are wines produced above the "Pont de Sens" (Bridge of Sens, a city just north of Chablis). He divided wine into two categories: High-Bourgogne and Low-Bourgogne.

Nowadays, the laws of August 1st, 1905 and May 6th, 1919 rule the appellations in Burgundy. Territories composed of small crops (récoltes) called "climates" compose the appellations. That way we get the appellations Beaune, Chablis, Nuits, Meursault...

### **Our Burgundy wines are produced under 100 different appellations :**

- 23 regional appellations (50.6% of the production) group together all those bearing (portent) the word 'Burgundy' in their denomination.
- 44 communal appellations (37.9% of the production). Benefiting from most favourable placements, a certain number of villages are renowned for the consistency and the quality of their production. They therefore legally give their name to wine produced from their land and gather 640 climates classed as 1<sup>st</sup> growth (see below\*.)
- 33 Grands Crus (vintage) appellations (1.4% of their production). Amongst (parmi) the climates of a few villages, some have always benefited from great renown due to the quality and the originality of the wines they produce. The wines which come from these illustrious land parcels achieve the supreme distinction of 'Grand Cru' (Great Vintage). On the wine's label, only the climates name followed by the mention 'Grand Crus' appears.

**\*640 climates are classed in the First Vintage** (premier cru) category (10.1% of production). The areas of production of these local appellations are divided into numerous sectors called localities or climates. Some localities can be distinguished by the type and the level of quality of the wines they produce and achieve the first vintage status. (Premier Cru). On the label, the mention 'premier cru', followed by the name of the locality is indicated after the name of the village.

**Bourgogne Wine and food**

**Burgundy red wines** (of the pinot noir grape variety) are excellent with beef, game such as pheasant and boar, roast of pork and delicate cheeses.

**White wines** go very well with snails (Burgundy snails!), shrimps (crevettes) and goat cheese.

**FOCUS ON SOME FAMOUS VINEYARDS****Chablis (and Petit Chablis, Chablis Premier Cru, Chablis Grand Cru)**

The village of **Chablis** gives its name to one of the most famous white wine in France. Chablis is located at the north-west of the Burgundy region.

**Chablis** wine is brisk (vif) and fruity, dry and with a refreshing acidity. Chardonnay grapes grow on a limestone soil rich with fossils.

**Côte de Nuits**

**Côte de Nuits** is not an appellation but a wine region producing great red wines such as Chambertin, Morey-Saint-Denis, Chambolle-Musigny, Vougeot, Vosne-Romanée and Nuits Saint-Georges. They are all robust and elegant red wines with an intense and fragrant (parfumé) bouquet.

The **Côte de Nuits Villages** appellation applies to (s'applique) the wines coming from Prémieux to Corgoloin just south of Nuits Saint-Georges. The 'terroir' there is known for the purity of the limestone. A few wines from Fixin are also in the appellation. **Côte de Nuits Villages** are great value red wines, very fruity and should be drunk before 5 years.

**Gevrey Chambertin**

**Gevrey-Chambertin** is the largest appellation in Côte de Nuits. Gevrey-Chambertin is also one of the most famous wines in France.

The location of the vineyard is crucial in **Gevrey-Chambertin**. The red wines - red wine only in Gevrey Chambertin - range from just average to supreme.

The best Gevrey-Chambertin grands crus are Chambertin and Clos de Bèze. They are among the finest French red wines.

**Côte de Beaune**

The **Côte de Beaune** begins just a few miles south of Nuits Saint-Georges, around the village of Ladoix.

The **Côte de Beaune** appellation is given to wines coming from the city of Beaune but also from 16 villages around Beaune such as Auxey-Duresses, Chassagne-Montrachet, Ladoix, Saint-Romain and Savigny les Beaune.

Red **Côte de Beaune** are noticeable (identifiable, perceptible) for their aroma and their warm (chaleureux) bouquet. They have a tendency to a slightly lighter body and a quicker maturation than the Côtes de Nuits.

The white wines of Côte de Beaune are straw-yellow, robust, thick and smooth, dry.

**Côte de Beaune Villages** is a different appellation. Wines from all the Côte de Beaune area can substitute their local appellation with this regional type of appellation.

**Volnay**

**Volnay** produces only red wines. They are well-structured and elegant. The white wines made in the Volnay area are sold under the Meursault appellation. Note that red Volnay-Santenots wines are actually (en fait) coming from Meursault !