

Burgundy

This week we will continue our look at the region of Burgundy. Burgundy is one of the most important wine regions in the world. This is the second article in a series of two and we will be covering the region of Côtes de Beaune, Côte Châlonnaise, Mâconnais and Beaujolais. As with the first article we will review basic information on these regions and the wines that they produce and we provide a few recommendations of wines from these regions that are presently available at various NB Liquor stores.

The first two districts that we covered in the previous article were the most northerly districts; the region of Chablis and the first part of the Côte d'Or (Golden Slope), Côte de Nuits. Let's take a look now at the next district directly south, the second part of the Côte d'Or, the district of Côtes de Beaune. This district starts between Nuits-Saint-Georges and Beaune and extends southwards to the River Dheune. Where Pinot Noir is king in Côte de Nuits, the Chardonnay grape is the ruler in Côtes de Beaune, with a few notable exceptions such as Aloxe-Corton and Pommard. As in the first two regions, the same appellation system is maintained (comprised of Grand Cru Appellations, Premier Cru Appellations, Village Appellations and Regional Appellations). Most of the Grand Cru appellations for white wine are located in this district. Names such as Corton-Charlemagne, Meursault, Puligny-Montrachet and Chassagne-Montrachet are but a few of the stellar chardonnay being produced. We also find a few producers of Bourgogne Passetoutgrain, a blend of Pinot Noir and Gamay grapes. The notion of terroir has a major effect on the wines being produced. The limestone soil, the cool climate and barrel aging give the white wines their unique freshness, with a rich and buttery mouth feel. These wines are ideal partners to luscious cream or butter sauces and seafood such as lobster make great pairings.

The next district on our journey is Côte Châlonnaise. As with the Côte d'Or, this region lies at the western edge of the broad valley of the river Saône but more southerly and overlooking the town of Châlon-sur-Saône. In this region both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay are cultivated with small quantities of Aligoté and Gamay produced. Although no Grand Cru Appellations are found in this district we do find many Premier Cru Appellations; Rully and Montagny for Chardonnay and Mercurey and Givry for Pinot Noir. The production of Crémant de Bourgogne, a sparkling wine, is a major factor in the economy of this region. Situated on three limestone patches protected by rolling hills from the frost and hail damage, the Côte Châlonnaise soil is a mixture of sand and clay and the occasional iron deposit. These factors including the various climatic conditions create a myriad of microclimates that produce wines that are fruit-forward in their youth and the use of barrel fermentation give toasty and smokey notes to the wines. One of the major factors contributing to this district success is the relative affordability of the wines compared to those produced in the Côte d'Or.

Continuing south we encounter the district of Mâconnais. This region lies between the district of Côte Châlonnaise and the most southern district of Burgundy, Beaujolais. The town of Mâcon is the capital of this district and white wines made with Chardonnay are the prime export. The region is comprised of rolling hills on limestone soil very similar to the other regions of Burgundy. What differentiates this district is that the vineyards benefit from more sun exposure, less rain and a lower risk of hail. It is in this wine district that we find Mâcon-Village, St.-Véran and Pouilly-Fuissé appellations, good examples of fruity chardonnay with notes of rich and buttery finishes. Pairings of foods with cream sauces and seafood, along with roasted chicken are nicely complimented by these wines.

Lastly but by no means least, is the district of Beaujolais that lies just north of the city of Lyon. This district is not as well regarded as the districts in the Côte d'Or but what it lacks in quality it makes up in quantity. In fact, the district of Beaujolais produces more wine in volume than all the other districts of Burgundy combined. The Gamay grape is the most planted variety and accounts for 99% of the vineyards production. Giving very fruity, low tannic and light bodied wines, Beaujolais wines are thirst quenchers and are one of the few red wines that can be paired with white meats or seafood. The appellation system of the Beaujolais district is a bit different from the other regions of Burgundy. We find three tiers of appellations, from the highest to the lowest, Cru Beaujolais, Beaujolais-Village AOC and Beaujolais AOC. The most notable are the Cru Beaujolais which is comprised of Saint-Amour, Juliénas, Chénas, Moulin-à-Vent, Fleurie, Chiroubles, Morgon, Régnié and Brouilly. The district of Beaujolais also is famous for the release of the Beaujolais Nouveau. This is a very young wine and is made to be consumed within the year. Many festivities and events are centered around the release of this wine which is on the third Thursday of the month of November.

This concludes our look at the region of Burgundy. Some of the wines from the region that are presently available and come from the districts above are:

Bourgogne: Couvent des Jacobins, Louis Jadot 2008, 750 ml \$23.49,
Chardonnay: Louis Latour 2008, 750 ml \$22.49, Pouilly-Fuissé, Joseph Drouhin
2006, 750 ml \$35.99 and Brouilly, Georges Duboeuf 2008, 750 ml \$18.79

Look for these wines at the NB Liquor selection stores in Dieppe and Vaughan
Harvey Boulevard:

Saint-Véran, Les Morats, J.J. Vincent 2008, 750 ml \$23.49 (UPC #), Pully-
Fuissé, Château-Fuissé Vieilles Vignes, J.J. Vincent 2006, 750 ml \$59.78 (UPC
#), Meursault Charmes, Bouchard Père et Fils 2004, 750 ml \$81.29, Meursault
Genévrières, Bouchard Père et Fils 2004, 750 ml \$83.99 and Savigny lès
Beaune, Premier Cru aux Clous, Domaine d'Ardhuy 2006, 750 ml \$45.99