

Cellar Notes: 2005 Burgundy, Part 2

Mommessin Clos de Tart, G. Roumier, Leroy and Romanée-Conti

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The quality of the 2005 vintage for red Burgundy is stupendous. It is simply the best young vintage I have tasted in my 17 years working in the wine business. In late January and early February, I visited more than 30 top domaines and négociants, tasting more than 500 wines.

(While I was there, I chronicled my tastings in numerous [blogs](#); I also wrote a [preliminary report](#) based on my visit last June.) I tasted the wines non-blind, in either the cellars or offices of the domaines and négociants. Although some wines were bottled, the majority were barrel samples and not finished wines.

Following are my cellar notes from a selection of domaines and négociants. These short profiles serve as an update on the latest happenings at each property along with a general assessment of their respective 2005 wines. In the following cellar notes, I have used a score range to indicate potential quality. Part 2 (of three) features Mommessin Clos de Tart, Domaine G. Roumier, Domaine Leroy and Domaine de la Romanée-Conti. [Part 1](#) features domaines from Gevrey-Chambertin and Morey-St.-Denis; for a report on the entire vintage, see the [2005 Burgundy Barrel Tasting](#).



Andrew Kist

Sylvain Pitiot of Mommessin Clos de Tart brought in a consistently high-quality crop in 2005.

Mommessin Clos de Tart

Under Sylvain Pitiot's direction since 1995, Clos de Tart has become an exciting *grand cru*. In 2005, the quality was so high, it is unlikely that any barrels will be declassified into the second wine, Morey-St.-Denis La Forge. The yield was about 1.5 tons per acre.

"[2005] is the first time we didn't use the sorting table. All the grapes were clean, so they went right into the destemmer," said Pitiot.

Well, not all the grapes. With the 2005 harvest, Pitiot experimented with a small lot of whole-cluster fermentation. "It was interesting to do this experiment because we had time. There was no stress, all we had to do was put the grapes in the vat," he said.

The **Clos de Tart**, from an approximate blend of all the different cuvées, is extremely complex, with floral, blackberry, black cherry and spice aromas and flavors. It shows fine depth, harmony and beautiful texture (95-100).

Domaine G. Roumier

Christophe Roumier had racked his Bourgogne and Chambolle-Musigny to prepare for bottling a week before my visit, but the other reds were still in barrel.



Mick Rock/Cephas

Christophe Roumier

"2005 is a vintage of classicism," he said, "with very good maturity, which you see in the range of aromas and flavors. It's similar to 2002, close to the same levels of acidity and tannins, but there's more richness in 2005."

The 2005s here are wines of great purity and finesse, and they're well-structured, with fine depth and intensity to the fruit.

The **Chambolle-Musigny** is full of vibrant cherry and floral notes, with lovely balance and harmony (89-91). The **Morey-St.-Denis Clos de la Bussière** is a more solid wine--rich and structured, with black cherry flavor and good length (89-91). Roumier bottled the **Chambolle-Musigny Les Combottes**, normally part of the village cuvée, separately in 2005. Beautiful aromas of flowers and cherries greet the nose (89-91). It's round and a little grander than the Chambolle cuvée.

The **Chambolle-Musigny Les Cras** offers a more mineral expression, being higher on the slope, with less topsoil. It's also denser, showing violet and black currant flavors, refined and very long (92-94). A rich, tender **Charmes-Chambertin** (92-94), with cherry and currant notes, preceded the more tightly wound, mineral-infused **Ruchottes Chambertin** (92-94).

The **Chambolle-Musigny Les Amoureuses** was a little closed, and though I sensed the concentration, the nuance of flavor will need time to develop. The finish is great, so this could potentially be classic (92-94). Roumier's **Bonnes Mares** is dark, dense and brooding, yet classy, exhibiting blackberry, black cherry and mineral notes that are intense, lingering on the finish (95-100). The **Musigny** is floral, with wild red fruits, very fine, elegant and well-structured (95-100).

Domaine Leroy

Lalou Bize-Leroy made a superb range of Burgundies in 2005. Rich in fruit and beautifully balanced, they were showing extremely well, despite being bottled in late December. "*C'est magnifique*," said Lalou Bize-Leroy of the vintage. "It's very consistent, with good acidity and good balance." The yield averaged about 1 ton per acre.

These are just a few highlights from the 23 wines tasted. All the wines were bottled in late December.

The **Vosne-Romanée Aux Genavrières** has sappy fruit that coats the mouth, like eating perfectly ripe grapes from the vine. It's spicy and harmonious, with a long finish (92-94). The **Savigny-lès-Beaune Les Narbantons** shows just how good this appellation gets in 2005. It's sleek and refined, with cherry, floral and mineral notes (92-94).



Mick Rock/Cephas

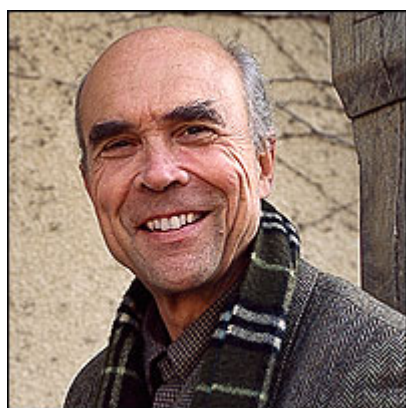
Lalou Bize-Leroy

The **Nuits-St.-Georges Aux Boudots** is lush and expansive, full of black cherry, chocolate, coffee and spice flavors supported by velvety tannins (92-94). Wild cherry and berry notes mark the ripe, aromatic **Vosne-Romanée Aux Brûlées**, whose long finish picks up a smoky accent. (92-94). I like the finesse and length of the **Vosne-Romanée Les Beaux Monts**, a complex young wine featuring red and black cherry, floral, spice and mineral elements (95-100). The **Corton Renardes** impresses with its tension between wild and refined, with more intensity as we move up the hierarchy to *grand cru*.

All the *grands crus* are amazing young wines. Though the nose is reserved on the **Romanée-St.-Vivant**, it's fresh and vibrant, even racy, with the refinement typical of this site (95-100). The **Richebourg**, on the other hand, is opulent and mouthcoating, packed with cherry, blackberry and exotic spices (95-100). The **Musigny** is refined and intense, offering complex floral, black currant and mineral expressions, with a fabulous finish (95-100). The **Chambertin** is grand and aristocratic, exhibiting concentration, but also grace. The flavors evoke black cherry, tobacco and spice now, with dense, ripe tannins for support (95-100).

Domaine de la Romanée-Conti

This is a stellar range of wines in a great vintage, from one of the Côte d'Or's top estates. "2005 is an excellent year, very well-balanced, with good ripeness and the tannins are very round," said cellar master Bernard Noblet. After the wines were racked last November, the lees were reincorporated into the barrels. The wines will be bottled this month.



Jon Wyand

Aubert de Villaine of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti

The **Echézeaux** shows a pure black cherry note, very silky and elegant, with a firm underlying structure. The tannins are still assertive, yet this is long and expansive on the finish (92-94). The French have a word for the texture, *fondue*, which comes from the French *fondre*, "to melt."

The **Grands-Echézeaux** is more structured, with a creamy midpalate, a core of blackberry fruit, spice and a very long finish that indicates its potential (92-94).

A fragrant nose marks the **Romanée-St.-Vivant**, whose floral, raspberry, cherry and spice flavors marry with the elegant profile. This is very harmonious, with a long, mineral finish (95-100). The **Richebourg** is generally the most open and opulent wine in the collection, and this is the case today. It's all silk, with a beam of cherry and exotic spice notes (95-100).

The **La Tâche** displays a gorgeous aroma of black currant, very deep and profound. It's concentrated yet classy, building on the palate to a long, long finish (95-100). The **Romanée-Conti** is aromatic and even riper, showing cassis, wild berries and hints of flowers. It's intense, mouthfilling and long, with supple tannins and great harmony (95-100).