

International Wine Cellar lauds the 2007s and 2008s of Domaine Jean-Pierre Grossot

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Domaine Jean-Pierre Grossot. “Both 2008 and 2007 benefitted from longer vinifications,” said Jean-Pierre Grossot. “Time in *cuvée* rounded out the wines.” Acidity levels were even higher in 2008 than in 2007, he added, with a couple wines carrying a full five grams per liter. Grossot did a bit less chaptalization in 2008 and described the new set of wines as denser and richer than the 2007s, a year in which the maturity was “a little difficult,” owing in part to hail events. Still, Grossot pointed out, “12% potential alcohol is enough to make classic Chablis, and in 2007 we had up to 12.7% or 12.8%.” Grossot added that the point of Chablis is to make “balanced, dense wines at modest alcohol levels. We don’t have a *metro* here; we have to drive home from dinner.”

2008 Chablis: Pale, green-tinged color. Pungent, musky aromas of citrus peel and minerals. Densely packed, rich and fruity, with complicated banana and saline nuances. The saline quality carries through on the dry finish. A serious village wine in the making. From another tank: High-pitched, more aromatic nose offers lemon, stone and menthol. Dense and minerally, with noteworthy texture and *sucrosité*. Longer and fatter than the first sample but not quite as brisk. The ultimate blend should make a good village wine. 86-89. 2008 Chablis La Part des Anges (15- to 18-year-old vines on a hillside next to the premier cru Fourneaux): Greenish yellow. Lime, mint and powdered stone on the nose. Dense, supple and sweet, with nicely harmonious acidity giving cut and shape to the rich lemon and lime flavors. Plenty of palate presence here. Finishes with lovely length and lift. Offers a good marriage of fruit, finesse and taut minerality. A second *cuvée* showed good gingery lift on the nose but was considerably more austere in the mouth. 87-90. 2008 Chablis Vaucoupin: Bright yellow. Fruity aromas of crystallized lemon peel and orange blossom. Fat, chewy and stuffed with fruit, though not yet especially complex. There’s a tactile, palate-coating quality and a lovely sugar/acid balance to the wine’s vibrant orange and pineapple flavors. Finishes very long, with subtle mouthcoating minerality that stimulates the taste buds. Offers a lot of texture and flavor for a wine with 12.5% alcohol. 90-92. 2008 Chablis Les Fourneaux: Pale, bright yellow. Rather wild aromas of ripe musky citrus fruits and minerals. Rich, silky and smooth, with firm minerality giving lift to the mid-palate and accentuating a slight youthful bitterness on the back end. Less fat and fruity than the Part des Anges, but saline, firm, vibrant and suave. 90-92. 2008 Chablis Côte de Troëmes: Pale,

green-tinged yellow. Subtle citrus aromas are complicated by musky ginger and quinine. More saline and less sweet in the mouth than the foregoing samples; shows a floral element but comes across as tight and rather inexpressive today. Nicely structured but a bit unformed, finishing with good but not outstanding length. (The Fourchaume showed good inner-mouth aromatic character and was mouthfilling without being heavy, but was in a rather confused state following a racking the day before my visit.) 88-90. 2008 Chablis Mont de Milieu: Pale, green-tinged color. Precise, complex nose hints at spices and medicinal herbs. Dense, ripe and fat; tactile yet fine-grained. Pungent flavors of grapefruit and pineapple complicated by nutmeg and ginger. Still a bit youthfully sharp, but the horizontal, chewy, palate-saturating finish offers terrific lift and reverberates in the retronasal passage. This manages to be both sweet and unevolved. 91-93. 2007 Chablis Côte de Troëmes (bottled in September of 2008): High-pitched aromas of lemon, flowers and minerals. Firmer and more minerally than the basic Chablis, finishing with more grip. Quite pure but very reserved today and in need of another year or so of patience. Incidentally, there was no separate Part des Anges bottling in 2007 as production was cut by hail and Grossot did not find the wine different enough from the regular village *cuvée* to merit being bottled on its own. 87(+?)?. 2007 Chablis Les Fourneaux (\$30; less hail here than in the parcel that normally goes into the Part des Anges): Pale yellow. Ripe aromas of minerals, spices and toast. Dense, supple and ripe, combining an almost salty minerality with good *sucrosité*. Fairly full in the mouth, but finishes with good rather than outstanding length. Grossot told me he found his '07s a bit sharp and acid at first (he preferred the 2006s), but appreciates them more today, now that they have gained in personality. About one-third of this wine was aged in various wood containers, none of them new. 89. 2007 Chablis Fourchaume (bottled in December of 2008): Good pale yellow. Reticent aroma of crystallized lemon peel with a whiff of honey. In a supple style but quite closed and inexpressive today, showing a strong wet stone quality and rather brisk acidity on the back end. I don’t find the

normal fruit of this premier cru: will this improve in bottle? 88(+?)?. 2007 Chablis Vaucoupin (\$30; done entirely in stainless steel, like the Fourchaume, and bottled in December '08): Complex nose offers citrus fruits, smoky chicken broth and subtle stony minerality; classic Vaucoupin. The attack offers fresh peach and apricot fruit, with the minerality returning in the perfumed middle palate. Offers a subtle mouthdusting texture and finishes with sneaky flavor intensity and lingering aromatic character. This youthful, complex wine should offer very good aging potential. 90. 2007 Chablis Mont de Milieu (\$35; bottled in April of 2009): Good pale yellow. Bright aromas of lemon, crushed stone, smoke and menthol, plus a lactic hint and a suggestion of *barrique*. The fullest and silkiest of these 2007s, offering intriguing notes of fresh herbs and linden tea in the middle palate, then firming up on the long back end and finishing with notes of lemon and licorice. Serious, soil-driven wine, from a crop held down by three different hail events. 91. Also recommended: 2007 Chablis (85).