

Stephen Tanzer

## Domaine Corinne & Jean-Pierre Grossot

Grossot picked quite early in 2009 as he was afraid of losing acidity. He believes that his young '09s have good nervosité but, for him, 2008 is generally a crop of wines with more tension. The difference in acidity levels between 2009 and 2008 here may be a bit higher than at many other Chablis estates. According to Grossot, the 2009s are carrying between 3.5 and 4.0 grams per liter of acidity, while the 2008s have 4.7 to 4.9. It was clear from my tasting that the 2009s will give considerable early pleasure, while the 2008 cru bottlings will require patience. Tasting in this cellar is always a bit of a challenge, as it's not always decided by June how various tanks of wine will be combined and bottled. (I omitted notes on a couple of samples I tasted, because it was not yet clear how they would be bottled.)

2009 Chablis Pale yellow. Bright lemon aroma with a metallic aspect. Tight on the palate but at the same time juicy and fruit-driven. Firm acidity and a note of menthol give the finish a youthfully bitter edge, but I suspect this will give relatively early pleasure. From a second tank: Pale, green-tinged yellow. Aromas of lime and menthol, with a metallic nuance. Broader and more minerally than the first sample, without that wine's fruitiness. More clay in the soil here. Both of these samples seem a bit hard-edged on the back. 85-87

2009 Chablis La Part Des Anges Pale yellow. Pure, vibrant aromas of lime and powdered stone. More taut than the two basic village examples and a step up in intensity. Offers a felicitous combination of fruit and minerality. Finishes juicy, firm and long. In a rather backward style for the year, but not at all tart. 87-89

2009 Chablis Cote De Troemes Bright pale yellow. Sexy nose combines ripe apricot, honey and spices; more exotic and open than the preceding village wines. Then fat and sweet in the mouth, with peach and apricot flavors dominating. A bit youthfully aggressive on the end, with a firm, lingering lemony nuance, but not at all heavy. This will give early pleasure. 87-90

2009 Chablis Vaucoupin (these vines were picked near the beginning of the harvest) Pale, green-tinged color. Steely aromas of lime and crushed stone lifted by white flowers. Dense, juicy and penetrating, with lively flavors of minerals and white flowers. Quite tactile and a bit saline on the very dry back end, coating the palate with mineral dust. 89-91

2009 Chablis Mont De Milieu Bright, pale, green-tinged yellow. Musky, reduced aromas of lime, stone fruits and wet stone. Very ripe and rich in the style of the year (this is 13.3% alcohol and has a relatively high pH), with a sweet peachy flavor dominating. Generous and fine-grained. The same wine from a 600-liter barrel, which will comprise one-third of the final blend, showed sexy nectarine and spice aromas, similar fat and richness in the middle palate, and a distinct suggestion of succrosité to its peach and nectarine flavors. These two components should blend nicely. (The Chablis Fourchaume had recently been racked and was still in a state of disorientation at the time of my visit.) 89-92

2008 Chablis (\$24; the second mise, bottled in January of this year) Sexy, expressive nose offers lemon, lime, white truffle, white flowers and a note of vanilla. Supple and sweet but with racy acidity giving cut to the middle palate and grip to the lingering finish. But there's nothing tart or hard about this village wine. Grossot noted that the first bottling was a bit more nerveux 88

2008 Chablis La Part Des Anges Bright, pale yellow. Some gingery oak spice on top of aromas of citrus oil and orange blossom. Broad, spicy and quite dry, and taut in the style of the vintage. Finishes long and uncompromisingly dry, with very good grip. This needs at least a couple years in the bottle. Forty percent of this wine was vinified in barriques; normally this is done entirely in tank. 88(+?)

2008 Chablis Les Fourneaux (\$35) Pale, bright, green-tinged yellow. Cool, brisk aromas of lime, crushed stone and menthol. Intensely flavored, precise and gripping; this really perfumes the mouth with citrus and stone flavors. Builds impressively on the back end, but finishes with superb delicacy. This has delivered on its early promise. 91

2008 Chablis Vaucoupin (\$25; done entirely in stainless steel) Dried fruits, hazelnut, ginger and a whiff of musky, smoky reduction on the nose. Fat and broad but quite dry; this is richer than normal for this cuvee, even massive. Impressively concentrated but I found myself wishing for a bit more mineral cut and grip. A subsequent bottle tasted in New York showed similar mid-palate stuffing but considerably more stony cut, a lively lemony character and a more precise yet equally tactile finish. My score is for this second sample. 90

2008 Chablis Fourchaume Bright, pale yellow with green highlights. Ripe but laid-back nose offers scents of honey, menthol and underripe pineapple. Juicy, intense and firm, with very good penetration to the citrus peel, pineapple and crushed stone flavors. This was yet another example of a very firm, dry, classic and invigorating Fourchaume that I tasted this year in Chablis, with excellent acidity for a slow evolution in bottle. (Not long ago I viewed Fourchaume as a "southern" style of Chablis that had a tendency to be honeyed and soft, but it's clear that many owners here are now much more careful about picking fruit on the early side.) The uncompromising, perfumed finish offers excellent length. 90(+?)

2008 Chablis Mont De Milieu (\$40) Bright pale yellow. Subtle aromas of lemon ice, orange peel and metallic minerality, plus a suggestion of dried fruits. Rich and broad but gripping and light on its feet; offers a classic combination of volume and mineral lift. Lively acidity lifts and extends the finishing flavors of fruit and dusty stone. Very suave Chablis. 92