



International Wine Cellar

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White Burgundy 2012: Domaine Leflaive

By Stephen Tanzer

"The flowering in 2012 was stretched out by adverse climatic conditions from June 6 to June 25, noted winemaker Eric Remy, with 50 millimeters of rain falling on the 6th. There was substantial *coulure* and *millerandage* and mildew arrived quickly. Along with the effects of some frost in mid-April and then again in mid-May, plus hail on June 30 and August 1 and the loss of some grapes in a period of heat in early August, the domain-wide production here was just 23 hectoliters per hectare — or roughly half the level of the previous year. 'Rot was the only problem we didn't have in 2012,' Remy concluded. The harvest took place between September 14 and 21, with grape sugars ranging from 12.5% to 13.3% for the crus and only a few cuvees requiring modest chaptalization. As to the wines themselves, Remy describes 2012 as 'a hyper-classic vintage for aging. The wines really saturate the mouth, and *elevage* will bring more size and precision. The vintage favored well-drained hillside vineyards, where the soil warmed up faster between the rains.' He compared the 2012s to the 2010s for their clarity and energy."



2012 Domaine Leflaive Puligny-Montrachet

"(aging in 15% new oak): Greenish-yellow. Subtle aromas of peach and flowers. Supple, dry and classic, with stone fruit and floral flavors lifted by a citrus hint. Juicy, perfumed village wine with a tight finish featuring saline minerality. 88-90"



2012 Domaine Leflaive Puligny-Montrachet Clavoillon

"(tasted near the end of its malolactic fermentation): Peach and a grilled note on the nose and palate; still a bit lactic. Fatter and sweeter than the village wine but suaver too. Finishes broad, quite dry and long. This struck me as like a baby Batard. 90-92"

"(The Meursault Sous Le Dos d'Ane was in the early stages of its malolactic fermentation at the time of my visit.)"



2012 Domaine Leflaive Puligny-Montrachet Les Folatières

"(malo two-thirds done): Bright yellow. Complex, showy aromas of stone fruits, acacia flower, minerals and sexy lees. Rich and plush but not overly sweet; a step up in texture and length from the Clavoillons. Wonderfully spherical premier cru with a long, tactile finish. 91-94"



2012 Domaine Leflaive Puligny-Montrachet Les Combettes

"(malo virtually finished but not yet sulfited): Good medium yellow. Musky stone fruits, hazelnut and a sexy sulfidey nuance on the nose. Rich and full but classically dry and serious, with firm minerality giving the wine cut and framing the finish. But not quite as long as the Folatières. This wine has 13.1% alcohol, 4.6 grams per liter acidity and a very low pH of 3.0, according to winemaker Remy. 91-93"



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2012 Domaine Leflaive Puligny-Montrachet Les Pucelles

"Pale, bright yellow. Ripe, rich aromas of peach fuzz and grilled nuts, plus a distinct cyanic peach pit note. Offers impressive volume without undue weight, with the fruit currently in the deep background as the malo is in its latter stages. Best today on the subtle, slowly mounting finish, which displays terrific mineral grip. This should age gracefully and last well. 92-95"



2012 Domaine Leflaive Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet

"Pale, bright yellow. Tight, reserved nose hints at hazelnut and nutty oak; the fruit is shy today following the recent end of the malolactic fermentation. Dense and tactile, with intense peach and lemon flavors supported by strong minerality. This rich wine boasts lovely balance from the outset but its back-end density and chewiness suggest that it will reward medium-term aging. My sample left behind a whiff of white truffle in the empty glass. 92-95"



2012 Domaine Leflaive Bâtard-Montrachet

"Bright medium yellow. Sexy aromas of peach, nectarine and brown spices, plus hints of wild cherry and fraise des bois. Quite full, rich and powerful, with a distinctly tactile quality to the saline iodine and mineral flavors. This ripe, brooding wine finishes with inexorable persistence. This has 13.45% alcohol and a post-malo pH of 3.1, according to Eric Remy. 93-95"



2012 Domaine Leflaive Chevalier-Montrachet

"Fresh aromas of white peach, pineapple, lime and crushed stone. Rich, thick and full but with a pungent vein of stony minerality running through the wine and giving it energy and lift. Wonderfully silky and fine-grained grand cru with superb volume and a slowly building, extremely long finish. Before I tasted this approximation of the final blend, I tried the two components of this wine, from the top and lower parts of the vineyard. The Chevalier du Haut, which was near the end of its malo, showed an almost painful spine of acidity and minerality and a rather strict, calcaire-driven finish of lemon oil and iodine. The Chevalier du Bas was distinctly more floral and smoky on the nose and sweeter and more lush in the mouth, without quite the mineral tension of the first sample. But these two components should be extremely complementary. 94-97"



2012 Domaine Leflaive Montrachet

"(there's just a single 114-liter barrel of this juice; malo finished): Strong spice notes of nutmeg and mace are lifted by a pronounced floral element. Tightly wound and penetrating; much less opulent and silky today than the Chevalier-Montrachet, showing outstanding cut and ripeness to the citrus, stone fruit and spice flavors. This very discreet wine comes across as almost tannic today. Remy expected to rack it into a stainless steel tank shortly after my visit. 94-96"