

LES DE LA ROCHE
GRAND CRU
PIERRE BERNSTEIN

2012



“When I was introduced to Olivier Bernstein’s burgundy, I knew that I was tasting something extraordinary, the wines were so pure and stylistic. Olivier Bernstein’s passion for Burgundy expresses itself like a symphony, filling your senses with beautiful notes and harmonies. Bernstein sources from the finest sections of grands and premiers crus, where he maximizes the greatness of these elite vineyards with such purity and precision. Without hesitation, I knew Bernstein’s wines belonged in the Wilson Daniels portfolio to accompany the world’s most heralded Burgundies.”

*Jack Daniels
President & Founder*

OLIVIER BERNSTEIN
PREMIERS & GRANDS CRUS
2012 VINTAGE OFFERING

HISTORY

From Mozart to Great Wines

Born in Touraine to a family where good taste, a sense of nuance and a flair for performance and being different have always been strong values, Olivier Bernstein was surrounded by classical music while growing up. Bernstein's grandfather founded the music publishing house, Bärenreiter, which is the industry standard for works by Mozart, Bach, Schubert and Haydn. His parents directed publication of several major classical music labels that are the sine qua non for the most demanding music lovers.

Bernstein himself was in the midst of a career in international management with the TGV, traveling the world for the rail industry, when "the culture of taste" in which he had been raised eventually caught up with him. Wherever he found himself – Asia, North America, South America, Europe – wine was the connection to his homeland and a burgeoning passion. He devoted his free time to exploring vineyards, meeting vintners, working the harvests and taking part in winemaking. Finally, realizing his life was about to change trajectory, he obtained a degree in viticulture and oenology in Beaune.



Winemaking becomes a Profession

In 2002, at the age of 35, Bernstein realized his dream of becoming a winemaker. He purchased an abandoned Mas (literally, "farmhouse") and selected eight hectares (19.77 acres) of old vines in Roussillon in the south of France. To create his Mas de la Devèze, Bernstein bought a tractor and did all the work himself, learning by doing. His small production delighted some of France's finest restaurants – Pierre Gagnaire, Marc Veyrat, Lasserre, Le Meurice, Taillevent, Ledoyen, Le Crillon – and sold out quickly. Working through good importers, Le Mas de la Devèze swiftly established itself across five continents. Bernstein spent the next five years perfecting his methods in his new profession – vigneron. He remains devoted to the values that the Bernstein family considers essential: hard work, unrelenting rigor and creativity.

"To have become a winemaker through choice rather than because of familial expectation is a distinctive – and liberating – position to be in," says Olivier Bernstein, whose passion led him to a complete career change and new life in the vineyards.

Returning to his First Love: Burgundy

The desire to once again work with Pinot Noir was too strong to resist. Olivier Bernstein had never forgotten his brief stint with Henri Jayer during the vinification of the 2002 vintage. His considerable knowledge of Burgundy and the winemakers there – during the past ten years he has regularly tasted at such prestigious estates as Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, Bernard Dugat-Py, Armand Rousseau, Emmanuel Rouget, G. Roumier, Anne Gros, Jean François Coche-Dury, Jean Marie Raveneau – enabled Bernstein to return to his first love: Burgundy.

In 2007 Bernstein created the négociant house which bears his name and produces very small quantities of very high quality Premiers and Grands Crus exclusively. Bernstein works closely with select growers of very old vines; he and his team manage the viticulture in each climat. In 2012 he was able to purchase – a wonderful opportunity and rare occurrence in Burgundy – in Mazis-Chambertin Grand Cru and Gevrey-Chambertin Premier Cru "Les Champeaux," the vines with which he had been working for several vintages.



Bernstein's seven Grands Crus and three Premiers Crus are produced from old vines which are fundamental to the quality of his wines. All the Bernstein vineyard plots, save one, are at least 40-years-old; most are between 60- and 80-years-old.

"Viticulture is the very basis of everything. I primarily select very old vines which are naturally balanced and which give small yields. . . work in the vineyard is absolutely fundamental – and unstinting," explains Olivier Bernstein.

SIGNATURE

The Very Best Grapes Possible

“Viticulture is the very basis of everything. We cultivate selected plots of old vines (40-years of age or more) and truly very old vines (60- to 80-years-old) that are naturally balanced and give small yields. To get grapes of excellent quality and perfect health, the work in the vineyard is absolutely fundamental – and unstinting. Aerating the rootstock, trimming the leaf canopy, green harvesting, fall harvest at perfect maturity using small trays (*les caissettes*), selection of only perfectly healthy grapes – these are some of the techniques which aim at a single objective – to obtain the very best grapes possible. Through this work, we hope to eliminate all the grapes at risk of not attaining sufficient phenolic maturity, and at the same time, those whose condition of health would not be optimum. The elimination of these grapes in the months preceding harvest is a precondition for obtaining wines that are pure and balanced. For us, the work is done in the vineyards. It is impossible to make a great wine without a great grape,” affirms Bernstein.

Bernstein’s seven Grands Crus and three Premiers Crus have a wealth of old vines, which are fundamental to the quality of his wines. All the Bernstein vineyard plots, save one, are at least 40-years-old; most are between 60- and 80-years-old. While officially acting with négociant status, Olivier and his team take responsibility for the vineyard work on their plots, avoiding chemical treatments, adhering to “*lutte raisonnée*” or reasoned intervention only when necessary. Grass grows between the vines to reduce rainwater saturation and encourage soil microbial health. The team passes through the vineyards at the time of the veraison to thin out any bunches which do not meet Bernstein’s rigorous quality requirements. This enables him to pick healthy grapes at optimum ripeness and good phenolic maturity.

The Magic of Winemaking and Barrel Aging

“Next the grapes are sorted a second time in my winery in Gevrey-Chambertin in order to eliminate any undesirable ones that made it through the first sorting. Vinification is gentle so that the delicacy of the Pinot Noir is respected.

“The making of each wine is adapted to the vintage, the crus and the quality of the grapes. Our cellars, located in Beaune at 4 rue Jean Belin, are where the wines are aged in new oak barrels from the Bercay forest (Jupilles), made by master cooper Stéphane Chassin, who comes to taste the new vintage before deciding what type of toast will suit each individual wine. (The premier and grand cru wines are matured in new wood from the start.) When they are ready, our wines are bottled by hand, without filtration or fining, bottle by bottle, cru by cru.”

“Then there is the magical part, totally intuitive and personal, which shapes and defines the wine. Each vintage is unique, and the choices – such as the date of harvest, type of vinification, length of time in the barrel – all contribute to finishing and personalizing the wine.”

2012 Vintage Report

“The birth of this vintage was not altogether smooth: There was considerable disease pressure from oïdium and mildew in the spring, an uneven flowering, repeated hailstorms during the summer (Gevrey-Chambertin, fortunately, was somewhat spared) and finally a scalding of real consequence in our parcels, following unusually warm weather at the end of August. The harvest was to be small in quantity throughout the region, but for our old vines, yields are always low.

“In terms of quality, however, 2012 is a superb vintage, thanks to the intensive work done in the vineyards and to the quality of the leaf canopy that allowed us to achieve beautiful phenolic maturity in our old vines – the essential factor for our wines. The condition of health was very good, and once again we harvested earlier than our colleagues, from September 19 – 25.

“After a last sorting in the winery, we destemmed on average 50% of the harvest. Extractions were lighter than in 2011, the skins thicker and the pectin maturity less advanced. Tartric acidity was good, malic acid was weak due to the hot nights at the end of August that led to a more intense combustion of the organic acids. We chose to ferment 50% of the harvest with the stems (whole-bunch vinification) for all the cuvées and even 80% whole clusters for the Bonnes-Mares, as this practice gives an aromatic elegance to the wines. This is only possible when the stems have ripened properly, and it is a tribute to the meticulous work of our team in the vineyards and to the age of the vines.

“Cuvaision lasted an average of 18 days, starting with a cold maceration for five to seven days. Fermentation followed naturally, with indigenous yeasts. We performed no punch-downs of the cap, only occasional pump-overs. All transpires gently at the winery, without forced extraction. After having assembled the press wine with the free-run juice, all the wines were put in barrels made from new oak from the forests of Bercay (Jupilles) and of Fontainebleau. The barrels are built by master cooper Stéphane Chassin, each year in accordance with our specifications and the characteristics of the vintage. The wines are not generally racked while aging, which lasts 14 to 18 months. Bottling is done, as a rule, at the end of March or beginning of April without fining or filtration.

“In the final analysis, 2012 is a superb vintage, balanced and sensual. The wines during élevage are astonishingly accessible.”
– Olivier Bernstein



“The premier and grand cru wines are matured in new wood from the start. This takes place in the new Bernstein headquarters, some marvelous reconditioned old cellars in the heart of Beaune,” writes Jasper Morris MW, Burgundy Wine Director for Berry Bros. & Rudd and author of “Inside Burgundy,”

The quality of the oak barrels is critical to the wine. Bernstein sources his barrels from master cooper Stéphane Chassin, who works with him in selecting the right wood and most suitable toast for each cuvée. The oak is from Jupilles forest in the Sarthe and from Fontainebleau.

LES VINS 2012

CHAMBOLLE-MUSIGNY
1^{ER} CRU "LES LAVROTTES"
OLIVIER BERNSTEIN

2012

CLOS DE LA ROCHE
GRAND CRU
OLIVIER BERNSTEIN

2012

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN
1^{ER} CRU "LES CHAMPEAUX"
OLIVIER BERNSTEIN

2012

BONNES-MARES
GRAND CRU
OLIVIER BERNSTEIN

2012

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN
1^{ER} CRU "LES CAZETIERS"
OLIVIER BERNSTEIN

2012

MAZIS-CHAMBERTIN
GRAND CRU
OLIVIER BERNSTEIN

2012

CHARMES-CHAMBERTIN
GRAND CRU
OLIVIER BERNSTEIN

2012

CHAMBERTIN CLOS-DE-BÈZE
GRAND CRU
OLIVIER BERNSTEIN

2012

CLOS DE VOUGEOT
GRAND CRU
OLIVIER BERNSTEIN

2012

CHAMBERTIN
GRAND CRU
OLIVIER BERNSTEIN

2012

Chambolle-Musigny "Les Lavrottes" 1er Cru

Our total production: 400 cases of 6 bottles.

The only young vines of the domaine (15 years old), the "Lavrottes" is a very small vineyard situated below Bonnes-Mares. The name of this climat comes from the fact that there once was a lava quarry here which is now filled in. To our knowledge, we are the only ones to bottle this climat under its lieu-dit name. It is in some ways our "Monopole."

Gevrey-Chambertin "Les Champeaux" 1er Cru

Our total production: 200 cases of 6 bottles.

In 2012 we were able to acquire ownership of the parcel which we had been working since 2007. These are old vines, 55 years in age. "Champeaux" signifies "small parcels of vines or small pieces of ground."

Gevrey-Chambertin "Les Cazetiers" 1er Cru

Our total production: 400 cases of 6 bottles.

The "Cazetiers" is located high on the slope near the châteaux (castles) and means "fortified point or place." Here we work with very old vines, 80 years old.

Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru

Our total production: 250 cases of 6 bottles.

We have an assemblage of vines of 40 years in age from several parcels in Charmes-Chambertin and Mazoyères-Chambertin. It seems that it was the trees that have given their names to these parcels.

Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru

Our total production: 300 cases of 6 bottles.

Very old vines, 80 years in age, situated in the midst of the more prestigious Clos de la Bourgogne that was constructed by the monks of the Abbey of Cîteaux and dates back to 1098.

Clos de la Roche Grand Cru

Our total production: 300 cases of 6 bottles.

This Grand Cru in the village of Morey-Saint-Denis owes its name to the presence of rocks which crop up on the surface of the soil. The vines in the parcel which we work are at least 50 years old.

Bonnes-Mares Grand Cru

Our total production: 275 cases of 6 bottles.

The only other Grand Cru of Chambolle-Musigny (with Le Musigny), the origin of this climat is not certain. One can, nevertheless, think of "Bonnes-Mères," the vines probably having belonged to a religious order. The land that we work is situated in the commune of Chambolle-Musigny, with vines attaining some 50 years in age. To note is that the harvest of this Grand Cru was 80% whole-cluster fermented this year.

Mazis-Chambertin Grand Cru

Our total production: 375 cases of 6 bottles.

Here we have gathered very old vines of up to 80 years in age in parcels in Mazis-Haut and in Mazis-Bas, of which we are proprietors – as with "Les Champeaux" – since 2012. The Grand Cru of Gevrey-Chambertin got its name because of the existence of a hamlet that disappeared during the Middle Ages. "Mazis" derived from "Mas," signifying a country house.

Chambertin Clos-de-Bèze Grand Cru

Our total production: 250 cases of 6 bottles.

Adjacent to Mazis-Chambertin, this clos, which belonged to the Abbey of Bèze, is one of the oldest in Burgundy, dating from the 7th century. We cultivate a parcel of old vines with an average age of some 60 years. "A hand of iron in a glove of velvet" is often said of the wines from this climat.

Chambertin Grand Cru

Our total production: 250 cases of 6 bottles.

The story is that the renaming of Clos-de-Bèze inspired a neighbor of the clos to become a vigneron. Monsieur Bertin, whose name of German origin means "the son of Bert, the Brilliant", planted vines in his field, rather than grains. He used seedlings from his neighbors and adopted their methods of working the vineyard. Success was not long in coming and ended with naming the field ("champ") of Bertin, "Chambertin." We cultivate a parcel of old vines 60 years in age in this climat.



Olivier Bernstein has restored the stone structure and cellars at 4 rue de Jean Belin, Beaune, which were built in the fifteenth century as a grange belonging to the Hospice de Beaune. Here the wines are aged for 14 to 18 months, on average.

"I try to make pure, balanced wines that combine both mouth-filling depth and magnificent delicacy," explains Bernstein in describing his winemaking style.



by Antonio Galloni (Jan 2014)

Olivier Bernstein

“Olivier Bernstein recently moved into his current winery, an attractive, open, two-story, loft-like space in the center of Beaune. Bernstein’s family built a successful music publishing business specializing in classical music scores. Still very well versed on the virtues of the world’s top orchestras, Bernstein remains deeply influenced by music. Bernstein’s passion for wine proved more interesting than a successful career in management and eventually led to a small side business selling high-end wines to collectors. From there, the next step was studying winemaking and viticulture. Since then, Bernstein has put together a remarkable micro-négociant operation that now includes a few estate vineyards, including parcels in Mazis and Champeaux. The Bernstein wines are made in a fruit-driven style that is all about texture and volume. As these notes show, Bernstein’s wines are incredibly exciting. None of the 2012s had been racked at the time of my visit. . . . let me simply add that the bottled wines can be very reduced for some time after bottling. Readers are best off cellaring young Bernstein Burgundies for at least a few years after release, and then giving them plenty of air.”

2012 Mazis-Chambertin Grand Cru 95-97

The 2012 Mazis Chambertin Grand Cru is surprisingly rich and compact in this vintage. With time in the glass, the typical Mazis rose petal and sweet red cherry notes begin to emerge. The 2012 is sensual, layered and totally impeccable from the very first taste, with a long, creamy finish and fabulous overall balance. This is a great, great showing. (2022-2037)

2012 Chambertin Clos-de-Bèze Grand Cru 94-96

A wine of endless layers of flavor, the 2012 Chambertin Clos de Bèze, wraps around the palate with gorgeous depth and pure texture. Sweet tobacco, wild flowers, new leather and succulent red cherries all blossom on the close. The inclusion of 50% whole clusters gives the Bèze gorgeous aromatic lift that works as a counterpoint to some of the richer flavors. An exotic mélange of blue and black-toned fruit, violets, spices and menthol all blossom on the finish. I very much like the intensity here. (2020-2032)

2012 Chambertin Grand Cru 93-95

An addition to the range, the 2012 Chambertin flows across the palate with plenty of Bernstein’s signature richness. The 2012 is expressive and enveloping in texture, but more reserved in its aromas and flavors. The Chambertin is also a bigger, broader wine than the Bèze, but a bit less complex and nuanced, at least today. Given Bernstein’s success with his other vineyards, it will be interesting to see what he does with this fruit going forward. (2020-2032)

2012 Bonnes-Mares Grand Cru 94-96

The 2012 Bonnes-Mares is one of the most reticent wines among the Grand Crus. Here it is the wine’s inner tension and pure sense of energy that stand out most. Violets, crushed rocks, graphite and plums are all layered into the powerful, imposing finish. The 2012 was fermented with 80% whole clusters, and it still needs time to fully come together. . . glimpses of brilliance come through, suggesting what lies ahead. (2022-2037)

2012 Clos de la Roche Grand Cru 92-94

The 2012 Clos de La Roche hits the palate with a rush of blue/black fruits, smoke, tar, licorice, violets and spices. Deep, rich and powerful, the 2012 possesses tons of intensity, but less in the way of finesse. . . there is plenty of potential for the future. (2022-2037)

2012 Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru 93-95

Iron, crushed rocks and rose petals meld into expressive red fruits in the 2012 Clos Vougeot. At once layered but also deeply expressive, the 2012 impresses for its balance and sense of harmony. The 2012 is a bit tense and compact, but all the elements are in the right place. This should be a fabulous bottle once the elements meld together a little more fully. (2022-2032)

2012 Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru 92-94

Dark and explosive in this vintage, Bernstein’s Charmes-Chambertin is totally vibrant and pulsating in 2012. Freshly cut flowers, mint, spices, tobacco and sweet red cherries flesh out in a textured, totally inviting Burgundy oozing with class. Savory herbs and sweet tobacco linger on the close. (2022-2032)

2012 Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru « Les Cazetiers » 92-95

Bernstein’s 2012 Gevrey-Chambertin Les Cazetiers is seriously rich, powerful and concentrated, with a core of intense fruit that is going to need time to fully blossom. Still, there is a purity to the Cazetiers that is impossible to miss. Sweet floral and spice notes flesh out on the voluptuous, textured finish. The Cazetiers is distinguished for its superb density and structure. (2022-2032)

2012 Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru « Les Champeaux » 91-93

The 2012 Gevrey-Chambertin Les Champeaux is all about brightness, energy and focus. Graphite, menthol, spices, violets are all very much alive in the glass. Always one of the more vibrant wines in the range, the Champeaux is going to need at least a few years to fully come together. Insistent veins of graphite-infused minerality give the wine much of its tension and focus. (2018-2032)

2012 Chambolle-Musigny 1er Cru « Les Lavrottes » 89-91

Dark red cherry, spice, new leather and menthol flesh out in the 2012 Chambolle-Musigny Les Lavrottes. This is an especially dark Chambolle endowed with tremendous depth. The 2012 is ample and broad, with plenty of power but less in the way of Chambolle sexiness, which is not entirely surprising as Lavrottes lies just below Bonnes-Mares. (2017-2032)



“Olivier Bernstein is a new name but one that is unlikely to be overlooked for long.”
– Jancis Robinson

“34 ‘Don’t Miss’ Wines from the 2012 vintage,” by Allen Meadows: Olivier Bernstein 2012 Bonnes-Mares Grand Cru, 2012 Chambertin Grand Cru and 2012 Mazis-Chambertin Grand Cru (Burghound, Issue 54, April 2014)



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Allen Meadows'

BURGHOUND.COM

The ultimate Burgundy reference

Maison Olivier Bernstein

"Olivier Bernstein considers 2012 to have produced 'some really lovely wines that are already approachable and seductive. In fact every time that I taste them I am surprised by just how open and forward they are. I am honestly not sure how they will age but they're so good already that I am also not sure that anyone will really care.' Bernstein noted that on average his line-up of wines was vinified with around 50% whole clusters. As he did last year he underscored that because his wines are bottled with slightly higher levels of CO₂, he suggests that readers decant them if they're going to open bottles early on."

2012 Chambolle-Musigny "Lavrottes" 1er Cru: (from 15+ year old vines). A very pretty nose is composed of various red berry fruit scents along with plenty of floral nuances. There is both good verve and detail to the subtly mineral-inflected middle weight flavors that terminate in a clean, cool and balanced finish that is trimmed in just enough wood to notice. A Chambolle of delicacy and finesse. (89-91)/2019+

2012 Gevrey-Chambertin "Champeaux" 1er Cru: (from 70+ year old vines). While not quite as aromatically elegant as the Lavrottes this is more complex with a well-layered mix of plum, dark berries, earth and a hint of the sauvage. There is evident minerality to the delicious and vibrant middle weight flavors that are supported by phenolically ripe tannins on the balanced, long and stylish finish. An understated and harmonious effort. (90-92)/2020+

2012 Gevrey-Chambertin "Les Cazetiers" 1er Cru: There is enough wood to notice framing the very fresh essence of black cherry, earth and plenty of sauvage character. There is excellent volume and richness to the medium-bodied flavors that possess very fine depth and superb persistence on the impeccably well-balanced finish. (90-93)/2022+ Outstanding ♥

2012 Charmes-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes Grand Cru: (from both Charmes and Mazoyères). It's interesting when a wine that is reduced seems aromatically fresh all the same, which is the case here. There is good energy and fine detail to the bigger and richer middle weight flavors that possess good but not special depth yet the length is terrific. This is fashioned in a restrained, even cool style, particularly in the context of the 2012 vintage. (90-93)/2022+

2012 Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru: An exceptionally fresh nose combines notes of plum, dark berries, floral and earth hints. There is a lovely sense of underlying tension to the vibrant and intense medium weight flavors that possess a very clean mouth feel on the firm and well-balanced finish that is somewhat less austere than usual. This should be excellent. (91-94)/2024+

2012 Clos de la Roche Grand Cru: There is enough reduction present to push the fruit to the background. While there is excellent size, weight and richness to the middle weight flavors, the mouth feel is relatively refined thanks to the fine grain of the tannins. The highly persistent finish is both well-balanced and impressively complex while displaying focused power and plenty of punch. I quite like this as it's fashioned more in the style of a gymnast than a body builder. (92-94)/2024+

2012 Bonnes-Mares Grand Cru: (from terres rouges in Chambolle). A deft touch of wood sets off the extremely fresh aromas of plum, dark currant spice and violet hints. There is good power and the same fine focus exhibited by the Clos de la Roche to the medium-bodied flavors that are shaped by phenolically mature and fine-grained tannins, all wrapped in a seductively textured yet notably firm, complex and long finish. I very much like the sense of harmony here. (92-95)/2024+

2012 Mazis-Chambertin Grand Cru: (from Mazis Hauts and Bas and includes more than just domaine fruit in the blend). A brooding and fresh nose displays notes of extract of plum, cassis, spice and plenty of sauvage character. There is a highly appealing intensity to the mineral-driven, muscular and mouth coating big-bodied flavors that possess excellent length where the tannins are perfectly integrated on the dusty, serious and mildly austere finish. Patience required. (92-95)/2024+

2012 Chambertin Clos-de-Bèze Grand Cru: There is plenty of floral character to the markedly spicy mix of very fresh red berry fruit liqueur aromas that are trimmed in a background application of oak. The cool, pure and restrained middle weight flavors exude a fine minerality that adds lift to the delicious, round and impressively long finish. I like the underlying material and while this is a good deal less complex than several wines in the range, my score offers the benefit of the doubt. (91-94)/2024+

2012 Chambertin Grand Cru: Here the nose is actually quite similar to that of the Bèze save for the fact that the aromas are slightly cooler and more restrained as well as a bit less spicy. There is more minerality to the powerful, intense and beautifully well-delineated medium-bodied plus flavors that possess an abundance of mouth coating dry extract before culminating in an explosive, notably firmer and more persistent finish. This should be terrific in time. (93-95)/2027+



Olivier manages the vineyard work for all but one of his vineyard sources and has purchased two of the vineyard plots he has worked with since the start – Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru “Les Champeaux” and in Mazis-Chambertin Grand Cru – which is a major stroke of genius and good fortune in this day and age.

“The whole process, from the vineyard to the bottle, lasts around 30 months, during which we have a thousand decisions to make which will influence the wine – and in those choices, there must be no compromise,” Bernstein states unequivocally.

Maison Olivier Bernstein

By Stephen Tanzer

"Olivier Bernstein has recently started working with the national importer Wilson-Daniels in the U.S. market. He will send his 2012s Stateside first, as he considers them to be very accessible, with the 2011s following afterwards. . . Bernstein harvested on the early side in 2012, from September 19 through 25, picking fruit with potential alcohol in the 12.2% range and chaptalizing moderately (the wines will be bottled with 12.8% to 13.2% alcohol). He told me that the grape skins were actually riper in 2011 than in 2012, and compared the 2012s to the 2010s, which he said featured incomplete phenolic ripeness due to heat at the end of August. But the 2011s, he went on, are less charming, and overripeness could be a factor in the earlier vintage. Bernstein describes the 2012s as 'sensual, red-fruit wines, almost suspicious in their early appeal. The color came easily in 2012, but we had to be careful with extraction to avoid throwing the wines off balance with tough tannins.' He vinified with 50% whole clusters across the board because he thought the wines would be more acid than they actually turned out to be. He summarized his current view of the vintage thus: 'The main question I have is how can the '12s be so well balanced so early?'"

2012 Maison Olivier Bernstein Chambolle-Musigny "Les Lavrottes"

Musky red raspberry, currant and smoke on the nose and palate. Penetrating and energetic, showing attractive early balance and length. Here, too, the tannins are sweet and will not get in the way of early drinking. Bernstein plans to rack his wines into tanks in January and leave them there for two or three months prior to bottling them, in order "to not go too far with the wood." An excellent performance for this seldom-seen premier cru located under Bonnes-Mares. 91-93

2012 Maison Olivier Bernstein Gevrey-Chambertin "Les Champeaux"

Good dark red. Very dark aromas of blueberry, blackberry, menthol, violet and stone. Densely packed and sharply delineated, showing a crunchy berry character and lovely inner-mouth violet lift. Very fresh, intense wine with a long, perfumed finish featuring firm but suave tannins. Bernstein told me he now owns these vines, as well as his source of Mazis-Chambertin. 92-94

2012 Maison Olivier Bernstein Gevrey-Chambertin "Les Cazetiers"

Good deep red. Highly perfumed nose melds blueberry, crushed stone and a whiff of game. Juicy, precise and vibrant on the palate, with an extremely primary character to the dark fruit and spice flavors. Really outstanding energy here. Shows superb floral persistence on the very long, rising, palate-saturating finish. 92-95

2012 Maison Olivier Bernstein Charmes-Chambertin

Good deep red. Complex aromas of wild cherry, flowers, gibier and smoky minerals. Tighter and less silky than the Cazetiers and less obviously sweet today, with tobacco and smoke notes dominating in the mouth. I find this tougher on the finish than the Cazetiers, with the tannins currently showing a faint hard edge. 91-93

2012 Maison Olivier Bernstein Clos Vougeot

Good bright red. Deep, sappy aromas of dark cherry, flowers, licorice and minerals. Densely packed and vibrant, showing an urgent crushed-fruit intensity in the middle palate. Opens out and rises on the back end before late-arriving tannins clamp down on the wine. This one will no doubt require cellaring before it becomes a civilized dinner companion. 92-94

2012 Maison Olivier Bernstein Clos de la Roche

Deep, saturated red. Black cherry, underbrush, exotic spices and smoky minerality on the flamboyant nose. Silky, strong and concentrated, showing a near-perfect balance of sweetness and acidity to its dark berry and spice flavors. Wonderfully deep and vibrant wine with an explosion of flavor on the long, rising aftertaste. The tannins are thoroughly buffered by fruit. 93-95

2012 Maison Olivier Bernstein Bonnes-Mares

(this wine was vinified with 80% whole clusters, vs. 50% for the rest of these 2012s): Good deep, bright red. Ineffable, soil-driven aromas of red cherry, pepper and wild herbs. Silky on entry, then chewy with extract in the middle, with bracing acidity intensifying the pure, lightly saline flavors of crushed dark berries, sour cherry and pomegranate. Finishes with outstanding primary berry persistence and rich tannins that reach the front teeth. Remarkably, there's hardly a trace of reduction here. 94-96

2012 Maison Olivier Bernstein Mazis-Chambertin

Dark, bright red. Musky, reticent aromas of dark raspberry, underbrush, pepper and exotic spices. Penetrating, tight and very backward, with powerful minerality keeping the primary raspberry and crushed stone flavors under wraps today; not a Burgundy for the neophyte. Best today on the extremely long, slowly mounting finish, which saturates the palate with perfume. Made from 80-year-old vines, this beauty is structured for a long life in bottle. 94-96

2012 Maison Olivier Bernstein Chambertin Clos-de-Beze

Good deep red with ruby highlights. Superripe, liqueur-like cherry and raspberry aromas are complicated by fig and ineffable spices. Then dramatically more tight and vibrant in the mouth, with urgent minty lift to the perfumed flavors of boysenberry, blueberry and violet. Classically dry, intensely flavored wine with outstanding freshness and palate-staining violet and bitter chocolate perfume. This wine is still a bit unknowable at its dark center but would appear to have a great future in bottle. 95-98

2012 Maison Olivier Bernstein Chambertin

Yes, Olivier Bernstein has added four barrels of the king of wines to his collection of crus in 2012 and 2013. Good bright, dark red. Discreet aromas of wild dark berries and iron. Thick, large-scaled, dry and utterly backward. In a distinctly masculine, soil-inflected style, with its silky texture leading to a seriously sappy finish featuring big, chewy tannins and outstanding saline, juicy persistence. This will need extended cellaring. 94-97

CHAMBERTIN CLOS-DE-BÈZE
GRAND CRU
BY OLIVIER BERNSTEIN
2012

"The wines from the 2012 vintage are accessible and welcoming, sensual and exciting. They promise real greatness," avers Olivier Bernstein.

"Excellent wines. . . very little wine available. . . wines are terroir driven. . . You'll have to fight to get the great Grand Cru," advises Rusty Staub in his "Thoughts on 2012 Vintage," January 2014.

OLIVIER BERNSTEIN
PREMIERS & GRANDS CRUS

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