



CHÂTEAU DU
MOULIN-À-VENT

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Château du Moulin-à-Vent 2009 Moulin-à-Vent (89) points

"Representing a proportion of carbonic maceration and of tank élevage, the Château du Moulin-à-Vent 2009 Moulin-à-Vent mingles resin and brown spices with its ripe, dense black fruits while permitting a sense of marrowy underlying meatiness to emerge and add some depth to a satisfyingly persistent finish. There is a fine streak of tannin, and I would expect (speculative though this judgment is in lieu of a track record) that one will be entertained over the course of at least the next several years. (Material destined for the 2010 displayed a focus, vivacity, and fruit skin invigoration I found welcome even though some awkwardness to the oak component was discernable in a couple of potential barrel lots.) 89 points."

"Jean-Jacques Parinet – along with his vineyard and cellar manager Guillaume Berthier, and commercial director Gilles Herr – is out to revive an estate whose 74 acres (and slightly more numerous parcels) arguably constitute collectively the largest single share of top acreage in the Moulin-à-Vent appellation, and to render wines that will be flatteringly compared with those the great Pinots of the Côte d'Or. I have some reservations as to whether the extent of fermentative extraction and wood exposure (or perhaps the choice of barrels) in these new wines from the ancient Château du Moulin-à-Vent will prove entirely or consistently beneficial, but only time can tell as they evolve in bottle. Certainly the 2009s – for which the new team was essentially entirely responsible, having taken over in March of that year – are impressive in their relatively opaque, sweetly-ripe, oak-inflected way; whereas the success of similar élevage and oak-integration in the lighter 2010 vintage remains to be seen. Fruit is rigorously sorted on two tables; the must and young wines moved via gravity; and lots are assembled from barrel relatively soon before bottling – which for the 2009s took place in summer of the following year – and any not making a stringent cut will be sold-off rather than chosen for that final blend. I could not yet give a useful account of the two largest eventual bottlings from 2010s. . ."

—David Schildknecht, *The Wine Advocate*, #196, August 2011

Château du Moulin-à-Vent 2011 Moulin-à-Vent (90-91) points

"Raised in older barriques as well as tank and sourced primarily from the Les Caves, La Roche and Le Moulin-à-Vent lieux-dits, Château du Moulin-à-Vent's 'grand vin' 2011 Moulin-à-Vent – which I last tasted from tank soon after its assemblage and just ahead of its end-of-year bottling – features richly ripe black raspberry with distilled framboise and holly berry overtones. A bite of black pepper and clove adds to the piquancy on a firm palate and reinforces the spicy influence of toasty (albeit here previously used) barrels. While less alluringly savory or floral (for now, at least) than its ostensibly lesser 'Les Terrasses du Château' sibling, this undeniably musters more sheer intensity and persistence, its juiciness outlasting any oak influence. Look for fine performance through 2016. 90-91 points."

—David Schildknecht, *The Wine Advocate*, #207, June 2013

Château du Moulin-à-Vent 2011 Moulin-à-Vent Champ de Cour (89-90+) points

"Representing 8,000 bottles due to have been bottled this spring, the Château du Moulin-à-Vent 2011 Moulin-à-Vent Champ de Cour projects effusively fruity boysenberry and black raspberry tinged with mint, nutmeg, cinnamon and caramelized resin. Expansive and softly textured on the palate, it picks up a slightly drying spot from wood tannin in its finish, although juiciness of ripe berries still comes through in an impressively sustained finish. Where, though, are the mineral, floral or carnal dimensions one anticipates from the best of Beaujolais and indeed finds alluringly manifested in so many of this wine's stable mates? Perhaps they are simply covered over for now – or were when I tasted in December. The theory on which the team here has proceeded – if it can take more wood, then it needs more wood – is certainly a familiar one, but I remain skeptical in practice, even if I don't doubt that this bottling will continue projecting sweet berry fruit at least through 2016. And as for the theory that a great, ageworthy wine needs time in bottle to properly express itself, the finest and most long-lived Beaujolais of my cellaring experience were mostly also compellingly delicious as youngsters too. 89-90+ points"

—David Schildknecht, *The Wine Advocate*, #207, June 2013

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Château du Moulin-à-Vent
2011 Moulin-à-Vent Croix des Vérillats
(91-92) points

"The team here, expressing their satisfaction with last year's rendition, says they did not change any significant elements of fermentation for the Château du Moulin-à-Vent 2011 Moulin-à-Vent Croix des Vérillats, and in its élevage only the much more substantial reliance on 350-liter rather than 228-liter barrels. Tasted just ahead of its anticipated end-of-2012 bottling, this evinces cherry and black raspberry with distilled overtones; satisfyingly saline, roasted red meat and chalky undertones; brown spices and vanilla from barrel; and a fine spread of tannin that might well reflect the change made in cooperage. As it takes on air, alluring perfume of wisteria and violets rises from the glass, persisting inner-mouth. The 10,000 bottles of this long-finishing beauty should be well worth seeking out and savoring at least through 2018 (though, to be sure, it is the Chateau's intention that these prove significantly longer-term vins de garde, and perhaps their expectations will be borne out, though I'm unprepared to predict that). 91-92 points."

"Jean-Jacques Parinet's team (see my extended introduction in Issue 196 for more on them) continues their ambitious revival of this venerable estate as well as the consolidation of its former vineyard surface. The Château now farms a total of 92 acres following acquisition of the formerly (and briefly) Girardin-owned Tour du Bief property, the wines from which will be issued under a separate label that I was not yet able to see, so for now I am reporting on them as part of and under the name of Château du Moulin-à-Vent. . . Around half of the Château du Moulin-à-Vent vineyards are now farmed under an organic regimen, which will expand to soon encompass its entirety; and about half the fruit is sold off in bulk so as to retain only the best for estate production, a ratio that may or may not change much depending on how the vines and soils respond to their relatively new owner and the market responds to his wines. I have already expressed in Issue 196 my reservations about the way the new-ish 350- and (for Champ de Cour 50% new) 228-liter barrels have influenced some of these wines. I worry lest the frequent flattery directed toward them as 'Burgundy-like' will over-influence the domaine's approach in the cellar and handicap its ability to reveal the unique distinction of Gamay on great granite soils. I certainly have no reservations, though, about the practice of relatively late-bottling and of late-release for wines intended to be cellared, and the 2011s are only now – in spring, 2013 – poised to enter the market. By any standards, the Château du Moulin-à-Vent wines are already impressive. . ."

—David Schildknecht, *The Wine Advocate*, #207, June 2013

2012 Couvent des Thorins
Moulin-à-Vent
(89) points

"The 2012 Moulin-a-Vent Couvent des Thorins undergoes complete carbonic maceration and spends 11 months in tank. It has a light, slightly earthy, underbrush-tinged bouquet with darker fruit than the La Rochelle. The palate is medium-bodied with supple ripe tannins. There is good weight in the mouth, a fleshier Moulin-a-Vent compared to its peers with a pleasant saline finish. This is very fine. Drink now-2021. 89 points"

"The historic Chateau du Moulin-a-Vent traces its roots back to 1732, its name deriving from the windmill that crowns the hill of 'Les Thorins.' Indeed, the estate was known as Château des Thorins until the introduction of the AOC in 1936. The celebrated French poet Alphonse de Lamartine is said to have fallen head over heels for the property and the daughter of its proprietor, Philiberte Pommier. In 2009, Jean-Jacques Parinet acquired the estate and he set about replanting 70,000 vines and overhauling the old wine cellar. There are now 37 hectares of vines that are treated *lutte raisonnée*, with attention paid to specific terroirs within the vineyard, and that was borne out in a selection of very fine 2012s, which made the most of a very challenging vintage. Most of these wines are due for release in the United States in 2015 with the exception of the Couvent des Thorins. Importer: Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA."

—Neal Martin, *The Wine Advocate*, #213, June 2014