

Week of 01-01-08

Red Bag Clues:

Grape –

Purple colored grape.

Its full name is _____ Noir à Jus Blanc.

Been around at least since the 1400s. Shortly after the Black Death.

Often used as a mass production grape, but can make some fabulous wine when love and care is given.

Typically light bodied and fruity.

Typically this grape goes through carbonic maceration. This bottle did not however.

Until 2007 this grape name was misused in California. The actual grape name will appear on bottles from California now – Valdeguie.

Commonly grown in the Niagara Peninsula in Canada.

Introduced to Oregon in 1988 by Amity Vineyards.

July 1395, the Duke of Burgundy Philippe the Bold outlawed the cultivation of of this grape as being "a very bad and disloyal plant"-due in part to the variety occupying land that could be used for the more "elegant" Pinot Noir. 60 Years later Philippe the Good banned it again. Apparently someone didn't listen...

Region –

This grapes "home" due to it's perfect conditions to grow this grape.

50 kilometer stretch of hilly country – full of granite and sand.

Its underlying soils are schistous rock colored red by iron oxide.

Situated around an extinct volcano, a sub-area of this region has distinctive blue-stoned soils (grapes for this bottle come from both the main and sub regions).

Producer –

A partnership between two greats. Both well respected wine producers (one who even finished school).

This company was formed after the need to fill an order arose in 1999.

They both believe is getting the best from their project. Pruning, normal fermentation, just the right amount of oak aging and giving the grapes the time they need to become what they are in this bottle.

Answer – Potel-Aviron Gamay 2003 Côte de Brouilly



Winery Selection:

Potel-Aviron Morgon Cote du Py "Vieilles Vignes" 2005

Producer Background: Nicolas is now applying his talents for selecting, vinifying and blending pure, sensual Pinots from the Côte de Nuits and the Côte de Beaune to Gamay from the crus of the Beaujolais. He has partnered with Stéphane Aviron, whose family has long been involved in winemaking in the Beaujolais. Their wines are made in a style, and to a standard which will impress even the skeptic who thinks that Beaujolais can only be a simple, light, fragile red wine.

The philosophy of the house is to seek out the finest terroirs capable of giving wines of real concentration, depth of flavor and individuality. This begins with an extremely rigorous selection of parcels situated in the very best sites of each commune, with very old vines from 45 to 90 years of age. Nicolas and Stéphane also insist on pruning which will limit yields, a primary criterion of selection.

Vinification is traditional (largely discarded in the region), no thermovinification or carbonic maceration, to obtain the desired concentration and structure. Unusually, all the wines are aged in small oak barrels, of which up to 25% are new depending on the vintage, for a period of 10 to 11 months. The aim is to marry the tannins derived from the oak with the richness of fruit from very old vines, thus combining structure with texture and flesh. There is little or no filtration in order to conserve all the organoleptic constituents naturally present after maturation in barrel.(i.e. 12-15 g/l of



free SO₂).

These very traditional cru Beaujolais are shockingly delicious wines made utilizing the same craft and attention to detail that Potel applies to his Burgundies.

"I particularly like the Beaujolais from Nicolas Potel ... His Cote de Brouilly and his Morgon Cote du Py are both splendid wines."

---*Frank Prial, The New York Times*

Wine Type: Dry Red

Grape Type: 100% Gamay.

Country: France

Region: Beaujolais

Vinification: Morgon is unusual in that its underlying soils are schistous rock colored red by iron oxide. The vineyards lie in the commune of Villie-Morgon. Morgon has long been admired for its rich color, extract and longevity.

Mont du Py is an 1150-foot peak (the remains of a volcano), and Cote du Py is among Morgon's best terroirs. Coming from two parcels of old vines facing south, the wine is very generous, rich and relatively tannic – a striking example of Morgon and of Beaujolais. It is the largest cuvee produced by Potel-Aviron and also one of the best!

In 2005, most growers described the condition of the fruit as nearly perfect. The hot daytime summer temperatures caused the berries to develop thick skins, contributing ripe tannins and high levels of dry extract, while the unusually cool nights resulted in high levels of acidity. There was almost no rot or disease, and fermentations proceeded uneventfully. To a person, the winemakers have commented upon how the perfectly healthy and phenolically ripe fruit made their job in the winery very easy. As the wines finish their aging (elevation), all indications are that this will be a vintage that provides complete, expressive, and hugely enjoyable wines.

Tasting Notes: "Very Burgundian, with ample but silky structure carrying enticing black fig, cherry, briar and sweet

earth notes. The long, mineraly finish is fine-tuned. Drink now through 2010." **90 pts.**

-James Molesworth, The Wine Spectator, Dec. 15, 2007

Food Match: turkey, pork, grilled meats, fowl, duck, chicken.

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