



Wines served at Le Montrachet Restaurant.

## Beautiful, Bountiful Burgundy

After spending one week on the Esprit barge in Burgundy, half of the passengers joined an equal number of new arrivals to visit some of Burgundy's best wineries and restaurants. Because the barge trip was so fantastic, I knew it would be hard to equal. We stayed in the Hostellerie Le Cèdre, in the center of Beaune, which provided an ideal location for all our visits.

There were so many highlights of this trip, I will briefly comment on the wines and meals of several. The first lunch was at La Garaudière, starting with foie gras flan with mushrooms, served with Domaine du Prieuré Savigny-lès-Beaune Blanc 2016 and followed by grilled sirloin steak, fries, seasonal vegetables, and homemade

sauce accompanied by Domaine Stéphane Ogier Côte-Rôtie 2016. Dessert was Breton shortbread and apples with caramel mousse.

We drove through the countryside and visited some of the world's most famous vineyards. The recent harvest resulted in a few grapes being unpicked so we were able to taste some throughout the afternoon journey.

Dinner was at Le Caveau des Arches. The atmosphere, food, and wine quality were superb. We started with Henriot's Blanc de Blanc Champagne and then had Vincent Giardine's Puligny Montrachet Les Folatières Premier Cru with celery and fresh crab salad. The creamy richness of the wine matched perfectly with the salad.

The main course of Charolais flank steak served with blue cheese butter and vegetables matched very well with the Albert Bichot Pommard, Clos des Ursulines 2015 from the Domaine du Pavillon. Although I would normally not match a red burgundy with this course, it was rich and full in the mouth due to the appellation and



The appetizer served at Le Caveau Des Arches.



Jim Bryant and Scott Dawson enjoy a food and wine tasting with dinner.

vintage. We finished the wine with a fresh blueberry tart which paired perfectly.

We visited Bouchard Aîné & Fils Winery in the heart of Beaune. We tasted all eight wines on the billboard and all were excellent, particularly the Corton and the Corton Charlemagne Grand Crus. Corton Charlemagne has always been one of my favorite wines and all of the producers offer excellent choices of Chardonnay which must be tasted to be believed.

The dinner that evening at our hotel was wonderful. We had an array of artfully-crafted appetizers and roasted pork tenderloin. The appetizer wines were Francois Mikulski Charmes 2011 and Domaine de L'Arlot Clos des Fôrets St. Georges 2010. The Meursault was rich and smooth and coated one's mouth with creaminess. The Nuits St. Georges

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Pork tenderloin and vegetables for dinner.

benefited from eight-years-age and was from one of Burgundy's greatest vintages. The last wine was August Clape's Cornas 2011. Clape is the most respected authority of this appellation and this wine is the most masculine or biggest wine in the world. Made from the Syrah grape, the 2011 vintage was softer than many and allowed us to appreciate it at this time.

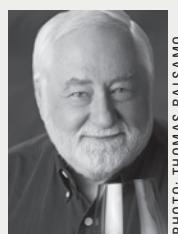
The next day we visited one of my favorite Burgundy producers—Paul Pernot. I met Paul about 20 years previously and although he was out of town, his son and granddaughter entertained us well. We tasted all of the offerings and everyone was among the best of their type. Although they had no Bâtard-Montrachet, several of us bought the next best wine, Bienvenue Bâtard-Montrachet 2016, which was autographed for us.

A fabulous lunch at Le Montrachet was just a short walk away. The ambiance was superb as were the food and wines. We dined in the country that evening at Restaurant Christian Quenelle. In every way, this experience met or exceeded our gastronomic expectations.

Before dinner, we had two very fine winery visits, the first at Jean Chartron Puligny Montrachet. We tasted 10 wines and all were superb.

We visited Chateau de Meursault for a fine tasting and discovered a rare wine that none of us knew. It was Corton-Vergennes 2016. It is so rare almost nothing is written about it. It is a Chardonnay, somewhat reminiscent of Corton Charlemagne. It was so impressive we bought every bottle.

The last meal is hard to describe. We visited Domaine Drouin-Laroze and ate in an attached, enclosed porch in a semi-private environment. We started with a salad and the best paté I've ever had, accompanied by the Côte d'Or Bourgogne 2011 (Chardonnay). We then had a fantastic beef Bourgogne which was accompanied by several Grand Cru wines—Clos de Beze 2016, Bonnes Mares 2016, Clos Vougeot 2016, and Charmes-Chambertin 2012. These superb Pinot Noirs were world-class wines and went perfectly with the beef. We had caramel and chocolate mousse to finish and stayed long to finish the great wines. What a way to finish our Burgundy adventure! A Votre Santé! 



Barrington resident Jim Bryant is pursuing his passion and love of wine as an international wine consultant. This follows a 30-year career in senior financial and general management positions at two Fortune 100 companies. He is the owner of James R. Bryant L.L.C.; contact him at [profwino@comcast.net](mailto:profwino@comcast.net).