

Château de Santenay, Mercurey 1er Cru `Les Puillets` 2013

PRODUCER

This magnificent property, which dates back to the 9th century, is also known as Château Philippe le Hardi, as it was once owned by the first Duc of Burgundy. Philippe le Hardi is famous as the person who banned the cultivation of Gamay in the Côte d'Or, saying in his edict of 1395 that only Pinot Noir could be used in the production of red wines from the already fabled slopes. Despite its long history, the property had fallen on hard times until it was taken over by the French bank Crédit Agricole in recent years. They have invested heavily, bringing in a new team to support the general manager, Gérard Fagnoni, and putting the emphasis on quality. The property has 98 hectares of vineyard, 72 of which are in Mercurey. These are remarkably well made and good value wines from the Côte d'Or and Côte Chalonnaise.

VINEYARDS

The eight hectare 'Les Puillets' vineyard is located on the south-south west facing hillside slopes in the appellation of Mercurey. The average age of the vines is 30 years. The soils here are rich in clay, but the limestone is still very present as well as some areas of marl. These characteristics give the red wines of Mercurey power and a beautiful structure.

VINTAGE

The growing season in 2013 was a challenging one and yields were 20% down compared to 2012. Winter was mild and this was followed by a frosty and wet spring, threatening the vines with mildew and causing a very late and long flowering period. Thankfully a hot summer ensued allowing the berries to ripen fully, with harvest starting in mid-September. Though yields and berries were small, the quality of the vintage was high, characterised by a very nice ripeness and great balance.

VINIFICATION

Most of the fruit from their vineyards was hand harvested. On arrival at the winery, the grapes were cold soaked for seven days at 8°C to extract colour and flavour from the skins. Temperature controlled fermentation lasted 12 to 14 days with daily pumping over, finishing with a rack and return, or 'délestage', to impart the grainy tannins that give the wines a lovely structure and length. The wine was then aged in oak barrels for 13 months, of which 20% were new, before being bottled in December 2014.

TASTING NOTES

A dark garnet colour. The nose is focused on woody notes and kirsch. Full and rich, the palate shows red cherry and redcurrant flavours with mouthwatering freshness and pleasant tannins on the finish. Though drinking well now, it will reward some time in the cellar.



VINTAGE INFORMATION

Vintage	2013
Region	Côte Chalonnaise, Burgundy
Grape Varieties	100% Pinot Noir
Winemaker	Gérard Fagnoni
Classification	AOC
Features	Sustainable, Vegan, Vegetarian
Closure	Screwcap
ABV	13%
Acidity	6.42g/L
Wine pH	3.41
Bottle Sizes	75cl