



AURIC PACIFIC

“selling wine with passion!”

Auric Pacific Fine Wines

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Written by Andy Tan



Meursault 1er Cru *Les Genevrières* - photo courtesy of www.burgundy-report.com

Dear All,

For all the fanatics of *bourgogne* and those who are familiar with Meursault. Beside Jean-François **Coche-Dury** and Dominique Lafon of **Comtes Lafon**, it would have to be Jean-Marc Roulot of Domaine **Guy Roulot** being the next super-star in this white wine predominant village. I was once told by a reputable burgundy *négociant* of the following remarks, "the best vineyard lies in Puligny-Montrachet; Chassagne-Montrachet owned by the best winemaker; but, the best *vigneron*, got to be those from Meursault".

Let's walk through some history of Meursault. The earliest record in history on Meursault was in 1102 when Duck Odo II donated the land in Meursault to Cîteaux. Along with Clos-de-Vouegot, Meursault was the most important viticultural territory for Cîteaux. Such significance can further witness that, it is Meursault rather than Puligny which is the Hospices de Beaune's white wine holdings.

"At Meursault, only white wines are made, because there is too much stone for the red." - **Thomas Jefferson** (1787)

Accordingly to **Dr. Jules Laval** in his *Histoire et Statistique de la Vigne et des Grands Vins de la Côte d'Or* (1855) clearly stated that, Meursault was once, widely planted with pinot noir. **André Jullien** (*Topographie de Tous les Vignobles Connus* - 1815) also mentioned that, Meursault reds of the Santenots *lieu-dit* on the Volnay border produced a wine similar to those of Volnay quality. However, over the years, the increase demand for white Meursault like *Genevrières* and *Gouttes d'Or* (Jefferson's favorite Meursault), along with their high price command in Hospices de Beaune, fetching 450 francs per *queue* (equivalent of two barrels of 228 liters each. common white wine commanded just 75-90 per *queue*) reds have slowly fallen out of fashion.

The highly lucrative sale for Meursault has also resulted in many vigneron starting their own domaine-bottling. Which explain why today, Meursault has the most domaine bottlings in the whole Côte d'Or - well over 100, which is four time more than Puligny-Montrachet and double of those of Gevrey.

The Meursault *appellation* can be very confusing. It stretches from Monthélie-Volnay in the north and hamlet of Blagny towards the south-east, which adjacent to the neighbor of Auxey-Duresses. There are total of 89 *lieu-dits*, excluding those of Blagny, out of which, twenty-nine are *premiers crus*. There are no *grand crus* in this appellation despite many would argue that, Meursault 1er Cru Perrières (especially Albert Grivault's *monopole* Clos des Perrières) with their class and refinement could well be promoted to a *grand cru*. The best vineyard in Meursault lies towards Blagny, with soils dominated with Bathonian origin over Callovian limestone, as well as Argovian white marl. The vineyard here rises up to 300 metres, with an ideal southeast facing position. Up-the-slope, where additional broken limestone debris can be found lies the best *lieu-dit* of Meursault - **Perrières Dessous**. Interesting to note that, prior to

the implementation of *Appellation contrôlée* in 1930, the best white wine of Blagny was actually not part of Meursault. Despite, the glory days of Meursault reds are long gone, you can still find some premier cru Blagny rouge from **Domaine Vincent Leflaive** or those made by **Thierry Matrot** (or, Joseph Matrot).

Guy Roulot -

"The glory of French wine lies of their prize for distinction", said **Matt Kramer** in his book - **making sense of Burgundy**. It was through such long-standing delight in differences and an acceptance of ambiguity. The French has become the master of *terroir*, where their devotion for *terroir* has inspired the generation of wine lover and the discovery of great vineyards such as Romanée-Conti or Montrachet. At the same token, one only require to try the two Meursault *premier crus* and five of the *village lieu-dits* of **Domaine Guy Roulot** to discover the existence of the true *terroir*.

Despite five generations of Roulot in Meursault, it was Jean-Marc Roulot's grand-father, the late Paul Roulot began to switch his family business from distiller to grape-grower. Paul Roulot started to acquire land, which he bought the first *village lieu-dit* of Meix-Chavaux after the first World War. When Paul's son, Guy Roulot took over the business, more vineyards were purchased. Guy through marrying a Coche (Madame Genevière Roulot was the cousin of Georges Coche, father of **Jean-François Coche-Dury**) where he inherited the Meursault Tillets, Auxey-Duresses Les Duresses and the Monthélie and the Bourgogne Aligoté. Meursault Luchet and Tessons were also acquired in the 1950s, and more Luchets in 1975. He subsequently share a parcel of Perrières with his good friend, **Pierre Matrot**. Guy Roulot was among the very first to vinify and bottled all his cuvée separately and not just the primer cru, but the village *lieu-dit* such as Luchets, Tessons, Tillets...etc.

Guy Roulot tragically died in 1982 at the age of fifty-three. His immediate successor was his son, Jean-Marc Roulot. At that time, the twenty-seven-year-old Jean-Marc was more interested in his classical actor-career. Madame Roulot had no choice but to seek an outsider to continue the family business. Through the introduction of **Jacques Seysses** of **Domaine Dujac**, **Ted Lemon** (current proprietor/winemaker of Littorai), an American and former apprentice of Seysses was brought in and handled the winemaking between 1983-84. The departure of Lemon was later replaced by Roulot's cousin **Frank Grux**, who continued to make wine for Roulot for the next four years before joining **Olivier Leflaive Frères**. Finally in October 1988, Jean-Marc Roulot decided to return to Meursault and since, he has expanded the domaine further into Monthélie.

Since Jean-Marc Roulot has taken over the controlled of his family operation. He has slowly moving his family 10.2 hectares of vineyards towards organic farming. He believed, by respecting the micro-organisms in his vineyard will help to develop a better root system which will than take on different element from various layers of sub-soil and the mother rock. The resulting wine will express more precisely on their origin. In the *cuvée*, Roulot's job was to enable to further enhance the unique personality of each wine. Fermentations take place in wood, and generally only 20-30 per cent new, mainly from *Allier*. Only indigenous yeast are used. Roulot is not a great believer of *bâtonnage*. To him, "by creating richness, you will result heaviness in wine, which you will than loses the elegance and purity". "Aromatic, purity, balance and elegance is what I strive to achieve in my wine", said Roulot.

Vintner's Dinner – Domaine Guy Roulot

On **November 6 (Monday) 2006**. We will be hosting a dinner featuring Meursault from this renowned estate of Domaine Guy Roulot. During the evening, you will have the opportunity to sample multiple vintages of their Meursault. In addition, the proprietor/winemaker, **Jean-Marc Roulot** will be here to share with you his winemaking experience and to discuss on those wines featured. Here are the list of wines that will be serve on that night.

2004 Bourgogne Chardonnay (Apéritif) - [54.00](#) (Burghound's 86 points)

2002 Meursault Les Luchets - [115.00](#) (Burghound's 89 points)

1999 Meursault Les Tillets (Burghound's 88-90 points)

(mini vertical of Les Tessons)

2004 Meursault Les Tessons, Clos de Monplaisir - 140.00 (Burghound's 89-92 points)

2003 Meursault Les Tessons, Clos de Monplaisir - 135.00 (Tanzer's 89 points)

2001 Meursault Les Tessons, Clos de Monplaisir (Burghound's 89 points)

2000 Meursault Les Tessons, Clos de Monplaisir (magnum) (Burghound's 90 points)

2003 Meursault 1er Cru Les Charmes - 185.00 (Burghound's 88-91 points)

2004 Meursault 1er Cru Les Charmes (magnum) (Burghound's 92 points)

2003 Meursault 1er Cru Les Perrières - 190.00 (Tanzer's 91+ points)

2004 Meursault 1er Cru Les Perrières (magnum) (Tanzer's 93 points)

1996 Meursault 1er Cru Les Charmes (magnum) (Tanzer's 92 points)

The above dinner inclusive of wines is reasonably priced at **S\$250 nett** per person. The dinner will be hosted at **Jiang Nan Chun Restaurant, Four Seasons Hotel**. The dinner is limited to 25 people only. For those who are interested to attend this rare event, you can contact me at **6513 3716** or simply reply this message.

The Rising Star of Tuscan Coast - Montepeloso



> famous Bolgheri's Cypress Road

Anyone who had watch Bernardo Bertolucci's *Stealing Beauty* (Liv Tyler's début movie and shot near the beautiful medieval town of San Gimignano) or Diane Lane acted movie, *Under The Tuscan Sun* would be so captivated by the breath-taking landscape. My very first visit to Tuscan Coast was some 5-6 years ago. I was traveling with few other Italian wine Aficionado (sadly, I've just lost one of my best traveling partner - Byrick, who was tragically killed early this month from an road accident) to Tuscan right after the Vinitaly (the biggest most important Italian wine exhibition). Instead of driving straight from **Veneto** to **Florence** (Firenze), which is the nearest town to the famous Chianti's region. We have instead started off our trip at the east end of **Arezzo**, where we visited the town of **Cortona**, famous for their **Syrah**. After my driver (actually a very good drinking buddy of mine) complained that, we took nearly 4-6 hours driving journey to reach our destination and only to realize that, there were just three wines to be taste, along with some sourdough breads (actually, very difficult to find good sourdough here. Most of which, do not taste "sour") and prosciutto (famous Italian cured Ham). The nagging persisted throughout our next destination (guess, he is not coming with me next year?).

Direction to south-west - **Siena**, we arrived at the small town of **Montalcino**. Here, where everybody seem to know everybody and looks like, they are expecting an alien (Chinese) group of intruders to stir up their rather peaceful and quiet lifestyle. For those who think the best Italian food is found here, you are likely to be disappointed. Food here are rather simplistic, with clear minestrone soup (not our usual spicy-style) and pasta are commonly found in the *la trattoria* menu. Fortunately, the quality of noodle here is sound and with some luck, you might get yourself some chicken's liver to go with. Nevertheless, all the **Brunello** producers we visited did not disappoint us with their wines and their hospitality.

Our next stop was to pass **Grosseto** and drive towards our first coastline region of **Castagneto Carducci**. Most people are aware that, **Sangiovese** is the most important grape for Tuscan. Much like **Nebbiolo** for Piedmont, **Aglianico** for Campania, **Negroamaro & Primitivo** for Puglia, **Nerello Mascalese**, **Nero d'Avola** for Sicily. However, one such talk about Tuscan coastline, it was the foreign varieties such as **Cabernet Sauvignon**, **Merlot**, **Syrah** that's stealing the lamplight. Yes, **Sangiovese** do make their

presence here; like those very fine examples from **Michele Satta** and Pier Mario Cavallari's **Grattamacco** in Castagneto Carducci, also those **Morellino di Scansano** (part of the Sangiovese's clone) from the neighbouring village of **Maremma**.

Among all the Tuscan's Mediterranean coast sub-zone between **Grosseto** to **Livorno**. It would have to be **Bolgheri** being the most famous and internationally known. This small town has a history that's dated back since 8 century, where the area was once owned by the family of Counts della Gherardesca. At their prime, many poet like Giosue Carducci (where **Castagneto Carducci** taken it name) and Davanti San Guido (where the estate of **Sassicaia** name after) made their stint here. In 1703, the famous boulevard, along with the centuries-old cypress trees was build. Till these days, the same site continue to intrigue new visitors and we were told by the local that the road actually lead you to the sea?

The father of modern day Italian wine, **Giacomo Tachis**, made his first experimental Bordeaux-blend wine in Bolgheri with **Marchese Mario Incisa della Rocchetta** in 1968. The wine was named, **Sassicaia**. The success story of **Sassicaia** not only drawn many foreign interest on Italian wine, it also inspired many open-minded, new generation winemakers to start experiment with foreign grapes and blended them with their native Sangiovese, Canaiolo. Italian wine has begun it's quality revolution.

Despite the central Tuscan, more noticeable from Chianti's region, many IGT (or innovatively blend wine) have emerged over the years, however, Bolgheri remained as home of the finest Bordeaux-inspired wine due to their unique maritime climate that is best suited for those foreign grapes and unlike, central Tuscan, where there are many boundary guarded by regulation and traditional practices, Bolgheri are rule-free and playground for those experimental wine producers such as **Ornellaia**, **Guado al Tasso** (owned by Antinori), **Tua Rita**, **Le Macchiole**, more recently, the famous Piedmontist, **Angelo Gaja** also join the pool with his **Ca'Marcanda**.



In 1998, **Fabio Chiarello** purchased the property of **Montepeloso**, which was ideally located at the slope above the famous **Tua Rita** in **Suvereto** from their original owners, **Willi & Doris Neukom**. The goal for the Swiss-Italian historian was to produce a world-class red out of his chalky gravel and clay hillside vineyard that has much in common with those of St.Emilion's famed *Côtes*. This low-yield, hillside vineyard is capable of producing wine of firm structured, great richness and power. Prior to the change of ownership, the Montepeloso was already made famous by consultant oenologist, **Luca D'Attoma** (also making wine for **Le Macchiole**). However, my past experiences of Montepeloso often suggest that, there is a strong signature from D'Attoma, much like those from **Le Macchiole**. The same problem apply to many trendy Italian that uses the services of those flying consultants, where their wines often come across as very similar. I continue to stress the importance that, the owner should remain involved in an active role in making their wines rather to rely too much on those consultants. Fabio does not seek for consultant advise and neither is he concerned about what the press has to say about his wine. He has since replaced **Fabrizio Moltard** as the new winemaker, and the quality of the recent vintages are among the finest I have seen.

2003 Eneo is the entry level of Montepeloso, but this Sangiovese Merlot blend that oozes with ripe, delicious, layers of fruits, with just **\$64.00** a bottle. Is hard to beat. **Daniel Thomases** of Veronelli recently rated this wine at **90 points**.

The Sangiovese predominant of **2003 Nardo** is my personal favorite. Very masculine with intense black fruits and plum, yet equally, the wine is well pitched and clearly defined. This intense, structured wine requires a good decanting to bring out the best. It has just given a **Tre Bicchieri** by **Gambero Rosso**. **\$145.00** a bottle.

2003 Gabbro is clearly the finest Cabernet now in Bolgheri. Year-in-year-out, Gabbro has consistently been given ***Tre Bicchieri* by Gambero Rosso**. Immense seductive and deliciously sweet. Thanks to its concentration and multi-layers palate. Despite the fullness, the wine does not come across as clumsy, over-the-top, but instead, there is this sense of elegant, lifted palate that kept everything in balance. Sadly, I only brought in 24 bottles. **S\$198.00** a bottle.

During our launching period of Montepeloso, we are pleased to extend a further **10%** discount for all the wines offered in this mailer.

All prices quoted for per bottle in Singapore dollar. Prices indicated "in red" are inclusive of 5% GST.

Free delivery for purchases of S\$350 and above, otherwise S\$15 per delivery will apply.

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