

JASPER MORRIS

Inside | Burgundy



Domaine Latour-Giraud

The Domaine operates out of the Giraud family premises – there have been Giraud in Meursault since 1850 and Latour since at least the 17th century. The Domaine now covers 11 hectares and is run by Jean-Pierre Latour. He joined his father in 1983 and took over 10 years later. The Domaine is farmed organically, without certification.

The whites are direct pressed, settled if necessary, then encouraged to start to ferment in tank before transfer to barrel, with 20% new wood for the village wines and no more than 25% for the whites, all in the traditional 228 litre size. There is some lees stirring. The wines are racked to tank after 11 months and bottled early the following year. The reds are entirely destemmed (though Jean-Pierre's father left all the stems in), given a cool pre-maceration, then fermented with some punching down for a total of up to three weeks in the vats.

The approach in both colours is classical but not hidebound. Jean-Pierre is very aware that words like classical or traditional can be taken pejoratively. He remains open to change, but I suspect rarely needs to do so as his formula works very well to make un-showy but intense and intricate white wines, along with some attractive, fruit-laden but adequately structured reds. He chose to bottle the whites a little earlier than usual, to suit the style of the vintage.

White

2019, Bourgogne Chardonnay, Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★ 87

The vines are situated behind Domaine Roulot in Meursault. Clear pale colour, not a lot of bouquet but this is a pure clean and stylish mini-Meursault, with some sweetness of fruit in this ripe year, and impeccable length. Even quite lively at the finish. Ripe apple notes. Tasted: February 2021

2019, Meursault “Cuvée Charles Maxime”, Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★ 90

The cuvée is named in honour of Charles Giraud and Maxime Latour and has been made from the same plots since 1987, covering 3.50ha from all round the village, up and down slope. Pale lemon in colour but rather mute on the nose, having just been bottled, and showing a little bit of sulphur. The quality comes out on the palate, stricter in style, but with a proper Meursault intensity, offering austerity with just a little white fruit flesh. Tasted: February 2021

2019, Meursault Les Narvaux, Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★ 91

A little more primrose in the colour, with some weight of fruit, not quite the excitement I was hoping for but possibly dampened by the recent bottling. On the palate the expected concentration kicks in, tightly wound, some citrus notes in with ripe apple and a little bit of plum. Don't be in a hurry for this. Very slight passion fruit aromatics. Slightly between two stools at the moment. Les Narvaux makes Jean-Pierre think of Meursault Perrières at village level. Tasted: February 2021

2019, Meursault Bouchères 1er Cru, Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★ 93

Mid yellow here. A touch of sulphur on the nose, white fruit swells rather deliciously across the palate, shows a little warmth at the finish, not an easy terroir Jean-Pierre thinks, it has elegance, but you can mess it up as it loses acidity quickly so needs to be picked early. Jean-Pierre often picks his Bouchères before the full harvest team arrives, to keep a balance otherwise the wine can be too soft. Delicacy rather than depth. He has called it right in 2019, making a Meursault which is ethereal and elegant. Tasted: February 2021

2019, Meursault Poruzots 1er Cru, Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★ 93

If Bouchères is aerien then Poruzots is terrien. Paler colour, more four square, great ageing potential. This is a wine which needs white meat or charcuterie, not fish. Stern on the nose, it all happens on the second half of the palate, showing firm acidity even with some tannins. Perfect with jambon persillé, suggests Jean-Pierre Latour. The ripeness appears but with a light hand at the end of the palate, very delicious, with even a suggestion of red fruits. 13.9% Tasted: February 2021

2019, Meursault Charmes 1er Cru, Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★ 94

Half comes from the upper part of Charmes and half below. One ouvrée is from 1930. Bright lemon colour, just bottled on Tuesday but even through the light sulphur I can detect the soft weight of classic Charmes. Still some gas here, yellow fruit, a light butteriness but enough grip to maintain the balance. Really very good wine. Long and nuanced. Ripe lemon zest notes as well. Jean-Pierre wants to avoid a massive Charmes and he succeeds. Tasted: February 2021

5 Star Wine ★★★★★

2019 Meursault Genevrières 1^{er} Cru, Domaine Latour Giraud

95

Full mid yellow, with a relatively accessible nose, a little bit buttery. This soon settles down and regains the lovely nuanced, mineral, slightly smoky character of Genevrières. There is plenty going on here, as the fruit opens out beautifully. I would not have wanted this to be any riper but as it is it presents so many different facets.

A really complex, intriguing wine. A little touch of bacon to finish. Terrific.

Tasted: February 2021

2019, Meursault Perrières 1er Cru, Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★★ **95**

This comes from Les Perrières-Dessous. Clear mid lemon. A very stylish and sensual bouquet, all about the finesse. Far from exaggerated and clearly picked at the right time. Just the right acidity which is interwoven very well with the juicily generous ripe fruit, a little touch of liquorice, intelligent use of wood too. A little more volume than the Genevrières and nearly as complex.

Tasted: February 2021

2019, Puligny-Montrachet Champs Canet 1er Cru, Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★ **92**

The fullest yellow to date. Soft rich ripe yellow fruit on the nose. Ripe lemon notes, almost a lemon custard texture, less detail than the Meursaults, and slightly less acidity. A touch of spice to finish. A warmer style of fruit but I cannot quite see this as equalling the quality of the Meursault 1ers crus. Tasted: February 2021

5 Star Wine ★★★★★

2019 Meursault Genevrières « Cuvée des Pierre » 1^{er} Cru Domaine Latour Giraud

95

The Pierres referred to are Jean Pierre's father and his nephew. The wine is made from the top of the plot, old vines of 55 years plus. For this cuvée they pick first the vines with 4 bunches, those with a bigger crop are picked later and put in the regular Genevrières. One third new wood, typically three barrels. The first vintage was 1996 and the idea is to show how far you can go with Genevrières. Clear bright mid lemon. Certainly this shows an extra concentration on the nose. More spice on the palate, a vast weight of fruit which in youth hides the nuances. This takes a while to catch up with the regular in accessibility. Some pears but nothing soft: this is a very well-balanced wine, with excellent acidity which does not show so much because of the weight of fruit. I could almost see this as a Charmes in weight, though Genevrières in profile.

Tasted: February 2021

Red

2019, Pommard « Cuvée Carmen », Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★ 88

Named in honour of Jean-Pierre Latour's grandmother. The vines come from Les Vignots, purchased ten years ago when they sold their Maranges Fussière vineyard. Deepish red crimson colour, quite a stern nose, still some gas, firm structured fruit, austere, plenty of tannins. Old school Pommard but not sombre. The last to be picked and certainly not over-ripe. Tasted: February 2021

2019, Meursault Caillerets 1er Cru, Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★ 92

This used to be sold as Volnay Caillerets, but when they replanted in 1985 they were instructed to use the correct Meursault Caillerets designation. It has an excellent lifted dark crimson colour, with a sensual and stylish fruit, deep raspberry, so that I could almost believe there were some stems here. The fruit fills out the mid palate with very good structure. This has a rich ripe fruit but it is balanced and delicious. Tasted: February 2021

2019, Pommard Refène 1er Cru, Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★ 92

Medium deep crimson. Clean clear fruit not especially showing its own character. Maybe dark cherry. Intensity builds well to the back of the palate. The finish is really very good, not too tannic, with length and intensity. Tasted: February 2021

2019, Volnay Clos des Chênes 1er Cru, Domaine Latour-Giraud

★★★★ 91

From the Monthelie end of the vineyard. Rich dark purple in colour. The nose comes across as sturdier than the Refène. There is considerable density, with slightly drier tannins, the fruit appearing a little more at the front of the palate. I picked up the faintest touch of volatility, though barely above the threshold. Tasted: February 2021

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