

'From Bourgogne rouge to the estate's grand crus, Roumier is known for a style marked by finesse and purity'

Christophe Roumier

Visitors to Domaine Georges Roumier covet a taste of Musigny Grand Cru, but only a minuscule quantity is made. So, it is arguably Christophe Roumier's Chambolle-Musigny premier cru, Les Amoureuses, that achieves the highest profile at his demure domaine in a back corner of this appellation.

Whatever the wine, from Bourgogne rouge to the estate's grand crus such as Bonnes Mares and Ruchottes-Chambertin, Roumier is known for a style marked by finesse and purity. The wines are sometimes firm early on, but they deliver the ageability that Burgundy lovers crave.

One reason for this is that Roumier knows his vines – mostly very old – very well. He has made wine only at his family's domaine. Yet his potential influence on the wine world was initially unclear. His father was not interested in working with him, and Roumier was drawn to science.

Eventually, this led him to the study of vinification. Previously, he knew nothing of the scientific side of the cellar. Roumier became fascinated with the process of fermentation, the composition of wine and the process of wine's evolution.

Though not an easy relationship, Roumier joined his father in 1981. He produced his first 'real' vintage – where he called the shots – in 1984, though his father remained on board until 1990.

Left: Christophe Roumier and (below) bottles of his Les Amoureuses 1er Cru, Chambolle-Musigny

Roumier drew inspiration from his father and grandfather. His grandfather Georges' wines are particularly eye-opening – showing purity and incredible freshness even 60 years on. He looked to other great winemakers, too, seeking inspiration not only from their techniques but also from their philosophies on crafting great, ageworthy Burgundies. Roumier met Henri Jayer in 1980, before he was well-known, and met Jacques d'Angerville at around the same time. Jacques Seysses of Domaine Dujac, with his belief in the use of whole-cluster berries, also influenced him.

Nonetheless, Roumier's initial work at the domaine focused on changes in the vineyard: monitoring vine vigour, limiting production, improving grape health, abandoning chemicals and harvesting later. The resulting fruit led to adaptations in the winery. The refinement of many small details at every stage led to a new level of greatness in every bottle.

The story seems deceptively simple. However, it is painstakingly accumulated inspiration, intuition and introspection – along with the blessing of brilliant family vineyards – that has led Roumier to inspire so many of the world's best winemakers today.

Christy Canterbury MW

'In a region with so many extraordinary sites, Christophe Roumier defines, for me, the extent to which an individual can elevate an already famous terroir. His quiet thoughtfulness and relentless drive for quality have always impressed me. He is the epitome of dedication.' **Anthony Hamilton Russell, Hamilton-Russell Vineyards**

'Never over-extracted or lean, Christophe's wines are pure pleasure; balanced, elegant and true to their origins. He is an extraordinary talent who makes wine with great feeling and real common sense.' **Véronique Drouhin, Maison Joseph Drouhin** ➤



Photograph: Michel Joly