

General Info**Country:** France**Region:** Burgundy**Appellation(s):** Echezeaux Grand Cru, Nuits St. Georges Gevrey-Chambertin 1er cru, Vosne-Romanée Puligny-Montrachet 1er cru**Producer:** Jean-Jacques Coudray-Bizot**Year Founded:** Early 1800s**Farming:** Organic Non-Certified**Harvest Method:** Manual**Domaine Coudray-Bizot****The Philosopher in the Vines**

A visit to the cellar and vineyards of Jean-Jacques Coudray-Bizot becomes a lesson, not just in grapes and soil, but in philosophy, the intellectual process, and the inner workings of Burgundian culture. As you walk among his vines, Jean-Jacques' musings range from ideas about viticulture, to development around the city of Beaune, the writings of René Descartes, and the nature of self-doubt. It's this self-questioning nature that is perhaps most crucial to the understanding of Jean-Jacques' methods. Everything done in the vineyards and in the cellar is considered, investigated and then considered again. This rigorous and methodological process was passed down to Jean-Jacques from his grandfather Dr. Bizot, who was a surgeon and wine maker at the Hospice du Beaune, and whose favorite saying about wine was, "you have to hurry up and wait!"

Walking in Coudray-Bizot's vineyard holdings is a Burgundy lover's dream as your feet sink into the soil that has given birth to some of the world's greatest pinot noirs and chardonnays. Here in the vines Jean-Jacques works with the utmost respect for nature and the specific character of the terroirs. All the work is done to allow the earth to speak through the wines. Use of any chemical treatments are avoided and, of course, the harvest is done completely by hand.

Another key element in the quality and style of these wines is Jean-Jacques' cellar which lies beneath his home in Beaune, the Chateau David de Beaufort built in the 1500s. Not only does having ancient cellars provide perfect temperature control for fermentation and aging, but the atmosphere and tranquility of the space is also good for the wines' development and traditional structure. Tasting down in this damp, cool cellar, the only clue that you are in the modern world are a few naked lightbulbs to provide enough light to carefully walk from barrel to barrel. Jean-Jacques decides about de-stemming and élevage from vintage to vintage but no more than 30% new oak is ever used on the wines. Normal aging time in the cellar is 5-6 years before release depending on how the wines are evolving.

Although Jean-Jacques is making some of the most compelling and delicious wine coming out of Burgundy today, he is wary of over-confidence and where it leads. To constantly question his methods and to make the best wine possible are his ultimate goals. Jean-Jacques tells me his father's most sage piece of advice to him; "always be careful of the person who is the most confident, as they, perhaps, have the most to make up for."

The Wines**Echezeaux 'En Orveaux'**

30-60 year old vines. En Orveaux is the northern most site in Echezeaux. North of this site is Le Musigny, the Clos de Vougeot is just to the east. 2013 - 97 pts Editor's Choice - Wine Enthusiast - Dec 2020 2014 - 96 pts - Gilbert & Gaillard

- Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru 'Les Champeaux'** 30+-year-old vines. Les Champeaux is the site of the most northern vineyard in Gevrey-Chambertin red clay soils with some limestone. 2013 - 94 pts Editor's Choice - Wine Enthusiast - Dec 2020
- Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru 'Les Cazetiers'** 2/3s of the vines here are very old, perhaps as much as 75 years, the rest were planted fourteen years ago. There is more red clay here and a higher limestone content. 2013 - 93 pts - Wine Enthusiast - December 2020 2014 - 92 pts - Gilbert & Gaillard
- Vosne Romanee 1er Cru 'La Croix Rameau'** 40 year old vines. Clayey-sand on a Bajocian limestone bed; Croix Rameau is the smallest 1er cru in Vosne-Romanee, just .6 hectares located in the north-east corner against the pillar and cross erected by the monks of the Abbey of St Vivant also honoring JeanPhilippe Rameau renowned for his sacred music. The site is surrounded on 3 sides by Romanee St. Vivant! There is a movement afoot among the growers here to have the site re-designated as part of that great Grand Cru. Should this occur, the wines grown here will instantly double in price. 2013 - 95 pts - Wine Enthusiast - December 2020 2014 - 92 pts - Gilbert & Gaillard
- Nuits-Saint-Georges 'Aus Bas de Combe' -** Over 90 year old vines planted in clay sand over white oolite limestone with small levels of fine-stone marl. The vineyard is located on the incline between Boudots above and Clos des Réas directly below. 2013 - 92 pts - Wine Enthusiast - December 2020
- Puligny Montrachet 1er Cru 'Les Combettes'** $\frac{3}{4}$ 80+-year-old vines, $\frac{1}{4}$ 25+-year-old vines. Les Combettes is a hillside just south of Meursault 'Charmes' with rocky limestone and clay soils. 2014 - 93 pts - Gilbert & Gaillard