

## Burgundy 2002 - a sneak preview

*11 Jan 2004 by JR*

Two tastings of Burgundy 2002s down and just 12 more to go before I can publish all my tasting notes and a full assessment of this extremely exciting vintage. There are scores of wines, both red and white, well worth buying, though individual domaines vary considerably in their success rates with this interesting year.

Be warned however that for the first time for some years, prices in sterling have risen a bit, especially at the top end. (Prices in US dollars seem to have escalated fairly steadily over recent vintages.) These price rises are mainly a response to the relatively tiny size of the 2003 crop in Burgundy which shrunk not in the wash but in the extreme heat, and after the ravages of some punishing frost damage.

The Burgundians have shown an admirable lack of rapaciousness, particularly in relation to their counterparts on the other side of France, so I don't begrudge their price rises too much. But a Grand Cru or one of the highest-priced Premiers Crus will have to be truly thrilling for me to recommend it wholeheartedly as a sensible buy. The really exciting thing is that there are many great buys in the £100-300 per case range. Merchants suffering from a hole in their turnover because of sluggish demand for Bordeaux 2002 last year are presumably pinning their hopes on these Burgundy 2002 en primeur offers.

Note however that most of my notes are based on cask samples tasted in London. I have tried to establish exactly when these cask samples were taken but there may inevitably be some wines which will have suffered twist cellar and tasting. For even more detail based on tasting from cask to cask in the cellar take a look at Allen Meadows' burghound.com, based on longer periods spent in the region than any other anglophone commentator manages. (My family would kill me if I did anything like his tours of duty.)

Hold on for my overview here in wine news on Jan 31, backed up by hundreds and hundreds of individual tasting notes, scores and likely drinking dates on