Sylvain Pataille's 2011s

10 Jan 2013 by Jancis Robinson

From €10.12, $23.99, 2,940 yen and £195 a dozen in bond

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I apologise for choosing burgundy two weeks in a row and promise to change my tune next week - maybe something non-European for a change.

But Sylvain Pataille of Marsannay really is making better and better wine every year and seems to have shrugged off the challenges of 2011 without a second thought. He's a cherubic young man with a mop of sandy curls and could not have been more active at yesterday's OW Loeb burgundy 2011 tasting in London, keen to tell every single taster the full background to every one of the nine wines he was showing there.

According to Jasper Morris MW in his invaluable book *Inside Burgundy*, Sylvain, the first of his family to be involved in wine for several generations, qualified as an oenologist in 1997 and consults widely. But he has been developing his own label since 2001, dependent on rented parcels of vineyard around Marsannay. Most of them are AOC Marsannay but he also has access to some land in Chenôve just north of Marsannay that officially qualifies as AOC Bourgogne today but he claims was highly respected a century or two ago.

It's also worth pointing out that he makes a particularly fine Marsannay rosé, very unusually aged for ages in oak. See my enthusiastic note on **Dom Sylvain Pataille 2011 Marsannay Rosé** that The Wine Society were selling in the UK at £11.50 a bottle last year. According to wine-searcher.com you can currently find this wine in France from €10.12 and in the US from $23.99. (I was rather less enthusiastic about his 2011 Aligoté that they still stock when I tasted it last September.)

I was intrigued by all nine of the wines shown yesterday, currently on offer chez OW Loeb at prices per dozen in bond between £140 and £195 - really very modest compared with many of the 2011 burgundy offerings. They are clearly made with great care and display huge amounts of interesting fruit - again, relatively rare in 2011.

But the wine I would like to recommend particularly is **Dom Sylvain Pataille, Longeroies 2011 Marsannay Rouge** at £195 per case of 12 bottles in bond. Unlike the Montagne bottling from a particularly warm, sheltered site well up the Côte, this is much suaver in texture - more polished - and is grown on a mixture of soils. It is characterised by particularly luscious fruit and is a real charmer. I gave it 17 points out of 20 and recommend drinking it 2016-25.

OW Loeb is the only merchant anywhere I can find currently offering Pataille's 2011 reds but there are merchants in Japan and the US offering his excellent **Dom Sylvain Pataille, Clos du Chapitre 2011 Bourgogne Blanc** from stony terroir in Chenôve that is chock full of character at €14.30 and 2,940 yen respectively.

This is a producer really worth seeking out from the northern end of the Côte d'Or, which seems to be the source of an increasing number of interesting wines. (I really liked Alex Gambal's 2011 Fixin Blanc too.)

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