

# THE *CLIMATS* OF BOURGOGNE WINES





# The alchemy of *terroir*

The *terroir* in Bourgogne is a subtle alchemy between:

*The soil composition in Bourgogne reflects both its marine origin and its geological history.*



*A combination of favorable natural elements...*

The Bourgogne subsoil is mainly composed of marl and limestone of marine origin. Some fossilized shells date back to the Jurassic period (200 to 145 million years ago).

The formation of the Alpine massif during the Cretaceous period and the subsequent glacial periods have shaped a natural environment favorable to vine growing, with soils and subsoils of extreme diversity. The result is an incredible mosaic of vineyard plots, from Chablis to Mâcon, through the Côte de Nuits, the Côte de Beaune and the Côte Chalonnaise.

Due to its geographical location, Bourgogne is subject to a semi-continental climate.

Depending on the season, the vineyard benefits from the influences of the ocean (in spring and autumn), the continent (in winter) or the south (in summer).

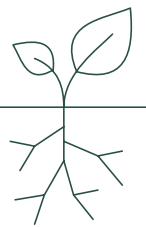
Most of the vineyards are located on the east/southeast slopes of the hillsides, at altitudes of between 200 and 500 meters. The vines benefit from the effects of the wind, natural water drainage, and longer, milder morning sunshine during the winter months, which prevents them from suffering too much from frost.

The sunshine and high temperatures in summer allow for optimal ripening of the grapes, thus concentrating the aromas.

*Bourgogne wines are mostly single varietals, which gives them a great purity of expression*

*Two main grape varieties: Pinot Noir and Chardonnay*

The Bourgogne vineyard remain the ultimate reference for wines made from *Chardonnay* (white) and *Pinot Noir* (red). Some wines are made from other grape varieties such as *Gamay* or *Aligoté*.





### ...and a thousand-year-old know-how

Agricultural practices in Bourgogne are known for being gentle. Some even call them intuitive. Winegrowers in the region have always had a strong interest in the soil and the vine.

Whether they choose organic certification, biodynamics, sustainable farming, or a return to the practices of their ancestors recorded in family books, the Burgundians aim to contribute to the richness of their land.



*This proximity to the soil, a hallmark of Bourgogne winegrowers, is in line with the developments of modern viticulture, which tends towards methods that are more respectful of the balance of soils and plants so that the terroir expresses itself in each wine.*



# The secret of the *Climats*

***Climats* are the ultimate expression of *terroir*-based viticulture. Each *Climat* represents a unique *terroir*, identified and recognized according to the plot of vines.**

### What is a *Climat*?

In Bourgogne, a *Climat* refers to a vineyard plot, gradually and precisely demarcated by man. The *Climats* have been recognized by name for centuries, in many cases since the Middle Ages. Each *Climat* has specific geological, hydrometric and exposure characteristics. The production of each *Climat* is vinified separately, from a single grape variety. The wine thus produced takes the name of the *Climat* from which it comes.

The personality of the *Climat* is expressed in the wine, vintage after vintage, thanks to the know-how of the winegrower. Nowhere else in the world has man sought to link wine production so precisely and intimately to its place of origin.

**More than 1,800 *Climats de Bourgogne*** thus constitute the very essence of the Burgundian viticulture model, representing 25% of the vineyard.

### The principle of relationship to place

When you taste the wine from a *Climat*, it does not taste like the wine from the neighboring *Climat*, even if it was vinified by the same winegrower. Over the centuries, these particularities have been observed, resulting in a real mosaic of vineyard plots that can be seen today in the landscape and in the hierarchy of *appellations*.

Such a delimitation of the *terroir* by generations of women and men can only exist as long as there are, from the start, varied natural elements identifiable on the terrain. The places provided the natural framework (soil and subsoil, topography, orientation, weather conditions) that humans improved through their know-how. The harmony of both gives rise to wines unique in the world.

**The term “*Climat*” is typically Burgundian.**

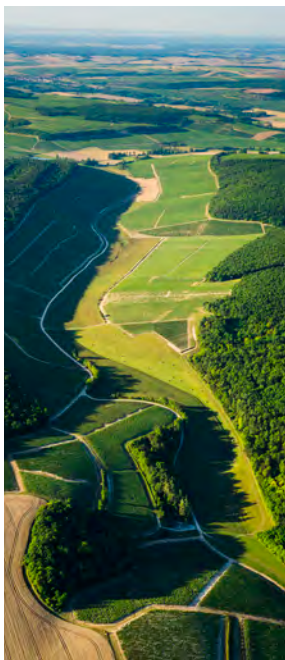


### The *Climat* gives the wine its identity

In Bourgogne, each *Climat* imparts a unique identity to the wine it produces. Their names reflect the diversity and history of the vineyard, through several factors: the natural environment, heritage and know-how, the men and women of Bourgogne.

Thus, the names of the *Climats* are quite varied, each telling a story.

### Where do the *Climat* names come from?



- From the **environment**: each name evokes the particularities of the landscape through its **relief** (e.g., Les Combes, Sur la Roche, Mont de Milieu), its **exposure** (e.g., Beauregard), its **vegetation** (e.g., Les Génévrières, Les Charmes), its **geological nature** (e.g., Les Perrières, Cras), its **fauna** (e.g., La Renarde, Le Clos des Mouches) and its **environment** (e.g., La Grande Berge, Les Riottes).
- From our **heritage**: over the centuries, men and women of Bourgogne have shaped these landscapes, clearing land, planting vines, and creating **paths** (e.g., Grande Rue, Montée de Tonnerre, la Grande Borne), **clos/walled vineyards** (e.g., Clos de Monsieur Noly, Clos du Roi) and **small constructions** (e.g., Murgers des dents de chien, le Puits or Echezeaux/Chazal in reference to an agricultural estate and its buildings).
- From the **unique know-how** which today constitutes the heritage of Bourgogne and sometimes results in amusing *Climat* names (e.g., la Corvée, Taille-Pieds).

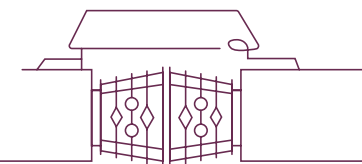


- From the **history of the men and women of Bourgogne**: Some *Climats* bear the imprint of a true Burgundian temperament, built over the centuries. Wines produced from these plots reflect an authentic regional character, shaped by various peoples, kings, lords, monks, merchants and winegrowers. Thus, there are **prestigious owners** (e.g., Romanée-Conti, Clos de Bèze, Clos de la Cave des Ducs) and **those for whom only the name of the *Climat* remains** (e.g., Derrière Chez Edouard, Tonton Marcel).

Finally, **the humor and poetry of the Burgundians** sometimes makes an appearance, in a roundabout way (e.g., Montrecul for a very steep plot of vines, Les Amoureuses when the earth sticks to the winegrower's shoes, Le Paradis for a vineyard with ideal characteristics...).

### The difference between a *lieu-dit* and a *Climat*

Since the creation of the land registry in France, the term "*lieu-dit*" has referred to a piece of land whose name represents a topographical or historical characteristic. The term "*lieu-dit*" falls within the field of general toponymy, is not specific to the wine world, and has no connection with a specific *terroir*.



# 2,000 years in the making

The *Climats* are the result of a rich history spanning 2,000 years, during which men have gradually discovered the *terroirs* of the *Côte de Nuits* and *Côte de Beaune*. The notion of the *Climat* truly emerged from the 16th century onwards.



**1st to 3rd century:  
The Roman era**  
Creation of the vineyard in the plain under the Gallo-Roman influence.



**6th to 15th century:  
The Christian period**  
In the Middle Ages, the vineyard starts to conquer the hillsides, under the influence of Christian communities (bishoprics, chapters, Cluny and Cîteaux abbeys). The monks establish the first walled vineyards and develop the principles of Burgundian-style viticulture.



**16th to 17th century:  
The rise of cities**  
The nobility and the bourgeoisie of Dijon acquire some of the Church's vineyards. The *Crus* become increasingly hierarchical. The notion of the *Climat* appears between the 16th and 18th centuries.



**Late 19th to early 20th century:  
The time of winegrowers**  
After the Phylloxera crisis, the winegrowers organize themselves into unions to protect the notion of origin for their wines. The first AOCs (*Appellations d'Origine Contrôlée*) for Bourgogne wines are created in 1936.

**6th century:  
The Burgondes era**  
Based on the Gombette law, the Burgondes clear the hillsides and plant vineyards. This idea of laborious cultivation producing quality grapes reflects the Christian ideal and anticipates the coming monastic movement.



**15th century:  
The age of the Dukes**  
The Dukes of Bourgogne help promote the wines of Bourgogne in France and in Europe. Philippe le Hardi imposes the very first production rule, banning *Gamay* in favor of *Pinot Noir*.



**18th to 19th century:  
Traders and merchants**  
The first wine merchant companies are founded, notably in Beaune. They establish the model of *terroir* wines and *Climats* in Europe. In the 18th century, the great landowners of the *Côte Chalonnaise* are inspired by this model, followed by the *Yonne* in the 19th century and the *Mâconnais* in the 21st century.



**July 4, 2015:  
Worldwide recognition**  
The specificity of Bourgogne is internationally recognized: The *Climats du vignoble de Bourgogne* are registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List.



# Worldwide recognition

## A heritage for humanity

Since July 4, 2015, the *Climats du vignoble de Bourgogne* have been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site as a “cultural landscape” (i.e., a unique work combining human and natural factors, which deserves to be protected and passed on to future generations). This recognition encompasses:

- a cultural landscape shaped by man over 2,000 years, along the *Côte de Nuits* and the *Côte de Beaune*
- a *terroir*-based viticulture model that is known throughout the world
- an outstanding architectural heritage, linked to vine growing
- a showcase for life, traditions and wine-making know-how

The *Association des Climats* works on a daily basis to protect the listed site, to support the management and sustainable development of this territory, and to share, publicize and promote the *Climats* World Heritage Site.



## Cité des Climats et vins de Bourgogne

Each site highlights the history, heritage and culture of the region related to the world of vines and wine. Each site also features the specificities of its territory.

3 cités welcome you in **Chablis, Beaune and Mâcon**



You will find immersive and sensory tours, wine and cultural workshops, and events throughout the year, as well as tasting workshops, training sessions, food and wine pairing bars, bookshops, boutiques and areas providing information that will encourage you to visit the winegrowers and merchants.

The *cité* in Beaune hosts the main interpretation center of the *Climats du vignoble de Bourgogne* World Heritage Site.



To be discovered without moderation!



@vinsdebourgogne



**BOURGOGNE**  
Bourgogne Wine Board



MEMBRE FONDATEUR

CLIMATS DU  
VIGNOBLE DE  
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