



BOURGOGNES

Bureau Interprofessionnel des Vins de Bourgogne



Burgundy's "Climats" *at the heart of the BIVB's communication*

"In Burgundy, when you talk about "Climats", you don't lift your eyes to the sky, you lower them to the ground." Bernard Pivot

November 2010

In 2011, the Burgundy Wine Board (BIVB) decided to focus its communication on the "Climats" and "lieux-dits" of its vineyards.

Burgundy is the only wine-growing region in the world to be able to legitimately claim the notions of "Climats" and "lieux-dits", which are inseparable from its "Terroir", a founding element of the reputation of its wines. "Climats" and "lieux-dits" are the very expression of the construction of the Burgundy vineyard and its appellations. They are the basis of its history, its landscapes, its economy and its expertise. It was time to return them to the key position that they deserve!

■ **This subject can be discovered all year long**

An exceptional photo exhibition and an exhibitor's choice table dedicated to wines, each carrying the name of a "Climat" or a "lieu-dit" will be at the centre of the "**Terroirs & Signatures de Bourgogne**" *tastings organised by the BIVB abroad*, throughout the year. These events, destined for the trade (importers, wholesalers, wine shops, wine waiters, instructors, press, etc.) bring together the companies who travel from Burgundy to present their wines.

■ The first meetings in 2011:

- ▶ London (UK): 20 January
- ▶ Stockholm (Sweden): 16 February
- ▶ New York (USA): 16 March
- ▶ Chicago (USA): 17 March
- ▶ Toronto (Canada): 22 March
- ▶ Montreal (Canada): 24 March
- ▶ Tokyo (Japan): 23 May

The "Climats" and "lieux-dits" of Burgundy will again be **honoured at the Burgundy pavilion during the 2011 edition of Vinexpo**. The BIVB will be present in Bordeaux, with many Burgundy companies, from 19 to 24 June 2011 and this subject will act as the central theme for the presentation of the Burgundy area and for the **Burgundy tasting on 20 June**.

The BIVB will also provide specific documents on the "Climats" and "lieux-dits" of Burgundy from January 2011, available to all. The first, printed on paper, will be an introduction to the notion of "Terroir" and "Climats". The second document, more comprehensive and aimed at well-informed wine lovers, will broach these notions in more depth, covering the history, geology and climatic aspects. It will be available only on the Internet.

The BIVB and the Burgundy Wine School are also working on the creation of a specific training programme to help wine enthusiasts and the trade understand the notions of "Climats" and "lieux-dits".

■ The “Climats” of the Burgundy vineyard apply for the UNESCO World Heritage list

Associated with the towns of Dijon and Beaune, historical seats of political, economic and cultural power, the “Climats” of the Burgundy vineyard are applying to UNESCO for recognition of their exceptional universal value. The application, officially made in 2007, could reach the next stage with the final presentation to the French state by the end of 2011.

The association which made the application invites all those (officials and general public) who wish to support it, to the “Walk for the Climats” which will take place between Chambolle-Musigny and the Château du Clos de Vougeot next April. On arrival at Clos de Vougeot, the officials of the region will sign the “Charte Territoriale des Climats de Bourgogne” charter, in which all those involved in the region will undertake to promote the UNESCO initiative in their management.

To support the Burgundy “Climats” application, see www.climats-bourgogne.com

■ What is a “Climat”?

The term “Climats” is typically Bourguignon, and refers to an ancestral custom. It constitutes the Burgundy definition of “Terroir”. The “Climats” are plots of land with precisely defined limits, benefiting from specific geological and climatic conditions which, when combined with human action and “translated” by the two great grape varieties, Pinot Noir for red wines and Chardonnay for white wines, brought about an exceptional mosaic of hierarchically organised and world renowned wines. There are thus thousands of “Climats” in Burgundy.

In a “Climat” there is geography, the history of France, archeology, grapes, traditions, geology, expertise, landscapes, towns, geneology, reason, passion, ancestral acts, grape varieties, customs, meteorology, oenology, culture, viticulture, toponomy, biodiversity, etc.

As early as the 7th century some famous “crus” were recognised and quoted, such as the “Clos de Bèze” in Gevrey. For several centuries, the reputation of Burgundy wines spread thanks to the monks of Cîteaux and the Dukes of Burgundy. Some wines, designated by the name of the original “Climat”, acquired a reputation which transcended borders (Clos de Vougeot, Montrachet, etc.).

From 1935, the INAO (Institut National des Appellations d’Origine) officialised the use of the term “Climat” and used it in its regulatory texts for all Burgundy appellations, whatever their hierarchical level.

■ What about the “lieux-dits”?

Since the creation of the land registry in France, the “lieu-dit” has designated a small piece of land whose name refers to a topographical or historical peculiarity. However, the terms “Climats” and “lieux-dits” have long since become confused in Burgundy. In reality, there are several differences. And you can find several “lieux-dits” within one “Climat” or you can have a “Climat” which covers only part of a “lieu-dit”.

■ Origin of the names of “Climats”

Although Burgundy includes **684 Climats of Premiers Crus**, there are **over 1,200 Climats** across Burgundy covering all levels of appellation. All these plots of land have names of various origins.

The names are sometimes related to specific characteristics:

- ▶ to the geographical conditions
 - e.g. *Les Cras, Les Caillerets (stoney slopes), Les Epenots (relative to the thorny vegetation), Le Montrachet (bald mountain)*
- ▶ to man’s creations
 - e.g. *Champs des Charmes, Aux Charmes (the word “Charme” in Burgundy designates former common fields which were cultivated and then set aside), aux Fourneaux, Derrière le Four (presence of ancient coal ovens)*
- ▶ to the life of men
 - e.g. *La Romanée (due to the proximity of a supposedly Roman ancient road), Entre Deux Velles (« Velle » designates the Gallo-Roman villas now become villages), Les Meix (« Meix » is a little village clos)*

Some names are difficult to identify or remain non-identified:

- e.g. *Les Ecusseaux (possibly due to the plot being shaped like a shield or écu), Les Corbins (plot belonging to someone of the name of Corbin or possibly invaded by crows (corbeaux))*

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