JASPER MORRIS
Inside Burgundy

The original Delaunay business was founded in Dijon in 1893 by the great-grandfather of Laurent de Launay, who has revived the firm based in part in Nuits-St-Georges and in part at his family home ion L'Etang-Vergy in the Hautes Côtes. He operates as a négociant, concentrating more on red wines (up to 75%), buying grapes rather than wine.
The white grapes are pressed without crushing, settled for 24 hours, then sent to barrel to ferment with natural yeasts, assisted by a little lees stirring early on. There are no fixed rules for the reds, much depends on the quality of the stems. There is a short cool maceration, natural yeasts, typically two and a half weeks, punching down more at the end than the start.

WHITES

Bourgogne Aligoté 2018: 85 ★★★☆☆
Laurent Delaunay did not plan to make an Aligoté but could not resist this one which comes from the hill of Vergy, east facing and high up on the slope on white marl. It was bottled in March. Pale colour, soft nose, with some lightly confected barrel notes, fresh nettle according to Laurent Delaunay. Nice fresh acidity behind. Tasted: November 2019

Chardonnay Bourgogne Côte d'Or: 86 ★★★☆☆
Bottled in July. One plot is by Auxey, another below Meursault and Volnay. Vinified in barrel without new wood. Pale lemon colour, nothing much striking me on the nose. Ripe spicy notes with good energy on the palate, fair acidity, and good length. Tasted: November 2019

Saint-Romain 2018: 88 ★★★★☆
Just about to be bottled. From two plots to the south, Les Perrières and En Poillanges. 20% new wood. Attractive pale colour. There are many fine St-Romain white wines around this year and this is one of them. The fruit absolutely fills the mouth and the oak is a complement rather than a distraction. An impressive weight of ripe fruit with a little salty touch to finish.

Meursault 2018: 89-91 ★★★★☆
Five suppliers, five plots, across all parts of the village. Full lemon colour. The nose speaks well of classical Meursault in its youth. It has the roundness to be sought after, future butteriness, while there is a useful thread of acidity on the palate to stop this toppling over. Tasted: November 2019

Chassagne-Montrachet 2018: 87-90 ★★★☆☆
Just one plot, Les Champs de Morjot, below Boudriotte, with lots of stones. Careful selection during the pressing with deselection of the last parts of the press into Bourgogne as the pH rises. Pale yellow, a sturdy white Chassagne, shows the oak (25% new) a little. Good acidity behind with a lemon touch. Tasted: November 2019

Chassagne-Montrachet Les Baudines 1er Cru 2018: 91-94 ★★★★☆
Light lemon with a faint green touch. The nose is quite elegant, tingles nicely across the palate, there is very good fruit weight here, ripe but not hot with pleasing length. Perfectly balanced, a good result. 40% new wood. Tasted: November 2019

Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru 2018: 91-95 ★★★☆☆
En Charlemagne, higher on the slope, with 60% new wood. Full lemon colour. The nose remains quite marked by the coconut oil as it was when I tasted it in the spring. Underneath there is some ripe and spicy yellow fruit. Grapes well warmed by the evening sun. The oak shows again at the back, but it should be digested in due course. Some weight, good acidity. Tasted: November 2019

REDS

Pinot Noir Bourgogne Côte d'Or: 86 ★★★☆☆
Bottled in July. From below Fixin, Chorey and Volnay with 10% whole bunch vinification. Deep bright mid purple. There is some energy and concentration to the nose, pure bright deep red fruit, good weight while staying fresh. Attractive wine, with a good juicy content. Tasted: November 2019

Savigny-lès-Beaune 2018: 88-90 ★★★★☆
From the lower part of Rouvrettes, north-east facing, older vines. About to bottle, 15% new wood. Medium deep purple with an attractive crisp fruit on the nose. There is a little more weight of fruit on the palate than expected, with some deeper darker notes at the back, yet with good acidity too. Tasted: November 2019

Santenay Beauregards 1er Cru 2018: 89-91 ★★★★☆

Full deep crimson purple, fully ripe grapes. This is plump and gorgeous, doesn't show its undoubted alcohol nor the 20% new wood, and clearly from a classy stock of pinot. Firm but ripe tannins and good length. Tasted: November 2019

Beaune Grèves 1er Cru 2018: 89-92 ★★★☆☆

Old vines from the lower part, in a sandy clay soil, gives good weight to the wine. Medium deep purple, the nose is not very forthcoming. There is a fair weight of fruit and some firm tannins but I cannot quite find the full Grèves profile here. Tasted: November 2019

Corton Grand Cru 2018: 89-92 ★★★☆☆

Three barrels, two of them new, from En Charlemagne in red! Medium density of colour, fresh purple. The bouquet is quite graceful, of moderate depth. Some oak begins to show. Then the fruit swells very attractively through the middle, coated with its oak at the moment. Robust finish. Tasted: November 2019

Côte de Nuits Villages 2018: 87-88 ★★★☆☆

From Fixin, Corgoloin and Comblanchien. Robust crimson purple with quite developed fruit on the nose. 20% new wood. Definitely some bilberry alongside the lush raspberry, firm but ripe tannins, just enough acidity, together giving grip at the back. Tasted: November 2019

Nuits-St-Georges 2018: 88-90 ★★★☆☆

From the Longecourts, Belle Croix and Aux Allots vineyards. 30% new wood. Full bright purple with a luscious dark pinot nose, ripe yet balanced. I like the dark fruit which holds up well at the front but is slightly over-done and dry at the very finish. Tasted: November 2019

Nuits-St-Georges Aux Chaignots 1er Cru 2018: 92-94 ★★★★☆

Plenty of clay in the soil here to anchor the wine. This will not be bottled until March. Dense full purple, with a dark energy to the fruit on the nose, but not over-ripe. 30% new wood. There is medium density through the middle of the palate, but it is balanced and nuanced. Thicker tannins behind and just a useful flash of acidity. Good length. Tasted: November 2019

Nuits-St-Georges Les Crots 1er Cru 2018: 91-94 ★★★☆☆

Straight on the rocks here. Medium density of purple. Dark fruit herewith a certain sweetness of character but does not stop the wine being quite elegant. Smooth and classy with more at the back than on the initial attack. Very nice Nuits for the medium term. Tasted: November 2019

Vougeot Les Petits Vougeots 1er Cru 2018: 88-90 ★★☆☆☆

Medium deep crimson colour. The nose is a little bit simple. Quite smooth through the middle of the palate but the dark fruit at the finish has only just escaped being cooked. Some bilberries in the mix. Overall I cannot quite see the joy here. Tasted: November 2019

Morey-St-Denis 2018: 85-87 ★★☆☆☆

Plump dense purple, with a heady nose reflecting 14.5% alcohol. 30% new wood. Unfortunately the over heating is drying the fruit out here. Still some acidity but the wine finishes with some heat. Tasted: November 2019

Gevrey-Chambertin Cherbaudes 1er Cru 2018: 91-93 ★★★☆☆

Still in barrel, to bottle in March. Dense rich purple, super-saturated. The nose is dense yet still classy. This is very powerful but not out of balance. Very dark fruit, sweet black cherry and even blackcurrant. This may not be your style of Burgundy, but if it is then don't hesitate. Tasted: November 2019

Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru 2018: 93-96 ★★★★☆

From one plot with 30% whole bunch vinification and 60% new wood, this will not be in bottle before March or even May. Dense mid purple, lots of energy to the nose. This is a very good example of the appellation, with depth but without rusticity, plenty of fruit especially at the front, and an attractive finish with well ripened tannins. Tasted: November 2019

Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru 2018: 91-95 ★★★☆☆

3 barrels from Charmes itself and one of Mazoyères. Rich purple, just a little bit inky. The oak shows a bit too. Dense and luscious, almost top-heavy. Very dark raspberry, some bilberry too. Lightens up towards the back. There is really plenty of fruit here, and I would like to see it again after longer elevage. It will merit a higher score if the fruit at the front of the palate settles down before bottling Tasted: November 2019

Griotte-Chambertin Grand Cru 2018: 91-95 ★★★☆☆

Just one almost new barrel (it had had 3 months of another wine before) Very dense black-purple, a little bit pruny, shows the over ripeness in the aromatics but still with some balance on the palate. Weight and power and does finish attractively juicy. There is plenty of character here. Tasted: November 2019