

BOISSET VINS & SPIRITUEUX: A FAMILY STORY

SPECIAL REPORT

In Burgundy, family tradition counts more than in Bordeaux, where the châteaux reign supreme. The names of the great négociants are no less prestigious marks of quality than the appellations of origin written on the labels of rare Grands Crus. The family owned and family operated group Boisset is pushing this tradition forward on a global scale.

At first glance, viticulture would seem to be a common French word; but try to find the entry in the Petit Robert, the standard French dictionary. There is none.

It's rather viticulture, the culture of the vine. For the Boisset family, wine has always meant more than just growing grapes. Viticulture conveys only half of what may be called their philosophy, which is why Boisset coined a new term to express the full implication of the culture of wine. If the simple viticulteur, or vigneron, cultivates *vitis vinifera*, the Boisset vinituarist does more than that. He represents the culture of wine, with the term culture referring to a comprehensive knowledge of wine from tasting to its history.

The history of the name Boisset is as deeply rooted in the Burgundian soil as Pinot Noir. In 1961, the 18 year old Jean-Claude Boisset bought wines which he sold to some friends. Three years later, with his father, the young man acquired a parcel of Gevrey-Chambertin: Les Evocelles. By 1974, Boisset had become one of the main exporters of Burgundy to the United Kingdom. During the 1990s, Boisset bought several wineries in other French winegrowing regions such as Chablis, Beaujolais, the Rhône Valley and Languedoc-Roussillon - and installed a modern winery at their 34-hectare-



»» The viticulture method, which is at the heart of the identity of Boisset, relies above all on the notion of teamwork and respect for nature ««

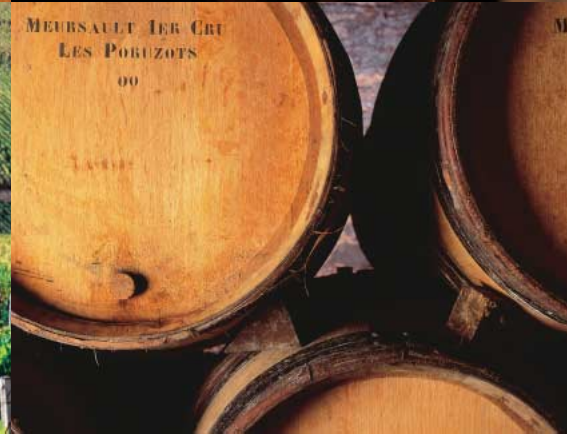
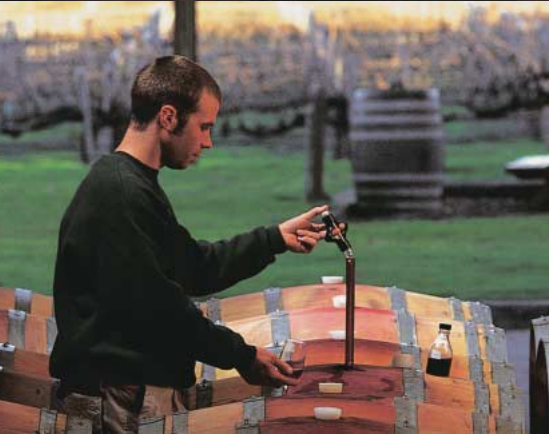
Jean-Charles Boisset

property in Prémieux-Prissey, called the Domaine de la Vougeraie. At the same time, a joint-venture with the Canadian wine company Vincor, now owned by Constellation, developed Boisset's foreign activities: Domaine Le Clos Jourdanne.

Today Boisset Vins & Spiritueux is among the top 5 premium French wine companies with turnover reaching 252 million Euro in 2005 (see Issue 1 October 2006). The company is also one of the top five exporters of fine French wine and is now present in more than 80 countries. Boisset Vins & Spiritueux has not only become a large family of fine wines and consumer brands, including a number of aperitif spirits such as Avèze or Gancia, but also a world-wide family of quality-oriented people, involving some 540 *producteurs-éleveurs* and 2,200 hectares of vineyard under contract.

In France, family names matter. The group's dynamic vice-president Jean-Charles Boisset is proud to own some of the finest shippers in Burgundy: Jaffelin, Ropiteau Frères, Bouchard Aîné & Fils to name but a few. Further, in the Rhône Valley they own the producer Louis Bernard, in Chablis Maison J. Moreau & Fils while Mommessin in Beaujolais complete the list.

At the top there is the group of „Domaines, Artisans et Terroirs”, consisting of Domaine de la Vougeraie,



Jaffelin, Jean-Claude Boisset and Ropiteau Frères. Located in a former Ursulines convent in Nuits-Saint-Georges, the Jean-Claude Boisset wines represent „the epitome of the policy of sheer excellence of the Boisset family as an homage to the founder.” The selection „Signatures Internationales” includes wineries with both a strong regional concept based on the notion of terroir and international marketing: Bouchard Aîné & Fils (Beaune), DeLoach (Russian River Valley in California), J. Moreau & Fils (Chablis), Louis Bernard (Rhône Valley), Lyeth (California), Mommessin (Beaujolais).

At the same time, Jean-Charles Boisset, who in the course of his career has gained much experience on foreign markets, has created innovative brands that would surprise a traditional vigneron from Nuits-Saint-Georges: „French Rabbit” was launched in Canada in the summer of 2005 as a series of four varietals - Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon - available both in bottles and one litre Tetra Prisma, an environmentally friendly packaging also called e-pod, with the “e” being for environment. These Vins de Pays d’Oc are sold at 12.95 Can\$ (€ 9). Recently, a half litre and a 250 ml Tetra Prisma were introduced. In that short period of time, over a million

units of French Rabbit have been sold on the North American market.

According to the Boisset Vins & Spiritueux philosophy, a member brand in the family is not necessarily chained to its vineyards or region. Thus, Bouchard Aîné & Fils, proudly looking back on its 250 year old Burgundian history, launched a 2005 Languedoc-Roussillon Chardonnay called „Chardonella”, whose bottle design matches that of „Pinossimo”, a Pinot Noir from grapes grown in the south of France that was launched three years ago. These wines are designed for younger consumers who prefer fruit driven, unwooded wines that can be consumed as an aperitif or in restaurants by the glass.

However, contemporary label design and approachable as well as affordable wines for new consumers are merely one aspect of the Boisset family. The other is the idea of every wine being rooted in its terroir and the commitment to bringing out the best of that potential by state-of-the-art technology and viculturalist craftsmanship. This is best illustrated by the fact that Domaine de la Vougeraie began biodynamic farming. In California, the DeLoach winery is also moving towards organic and biodynamic farming. Respect for nature and the environment - as well as the

love of terroir - have always been part and parcel of the family values. Modern marketing approaches and the traditions of Burgundian winemaking are not contradictions in terms according to Boisset’s policy of excellence. Says Jean-Charles Boisset: „At the crossroads between tradition and modernity, Boisset Vins & Spiritueux seeks to combine the best in winemaking traditions with the most innovative technology.”



BOISSET SPIRITUEUX & VINS

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BOISSET VINS ET SPIRITUEUX

A global family of fine
wines and brands

**Domaines, Artisans
et Terroirs**



DOMAINE DE LA VOUGERAIE

Founded in 1999, Domaine de la Vougeraie is the home for a number of wineries and crus acquired by the Boisset family. Totalling 25 appellations, a third are in the Côte de Beaune, two thirds in the Côte de Nuits. The winery is located at Premeaux-Prissey, near Nuits-St-Georges. Surface: 34 hectares. Biodynamic farming for Premiers and Grands Crus. Principal appellation: Vougeot 1er Cru Le Clos Blanc de Vougeot Monopole.

Jaffelin

JAFFELIN

This winery is located in a beautiful old monks' house next to the Collégiale Notre-Dame in Beaune, called „Les Caves du Chapitre”. It was founded by

Page II from left to right:

Passionate wine making from the French heartland to the New world and back: Bouchard Aîné & Fils, the key of Mommessin, DeLoach, J. Moreau & Fils and Ropiteau Frères

Page III from left to right:

Grégory Patriat – chief winemaker at Jean-Claude Boisset, Nathalie Bergès-Boisset and vice-president Jean-Charles Boisset

Charles and Henri Jaffelin. The wine ranges include Les Villages de Jaffelin, heart of the range, unknown and value for money wines Les Paradis de Jaffelin and Les Chapitres de Jaffelin.



JEAN-CLAUDE BOISSET

JEAN-CLAUDE BOISSET

Origins, purity, and elegance are the three key notions of Jean-Claude Boisset, located in a former Ursulines' convent in Nuits-St-Georges. Varietals: Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Collection includes Grand Cru Clos de la Roche (Morey-St-Denis). Principal appellations: an exclusive collection of Grands et 1ers Crus from both the Côte de Beaune and Côte de Nuits.



ROPITEAU FRÈRES

Founded in 1848 by a cooper named Jean Ropiteau, this maison de négoce has become one of the leading producers of Côte de Beaune, in particular Meursault. The winery is located in Meursault, the wines age in one of the most beautiful cellars of Beaune, the Caves de l'Hôpital, formerly used by the Hospices de Beaune.

Signatures Internationales



BOUCHARD AÎNÉ & FILS

Established in 1755 by Joseph Bouchard, this négociant-éleveur is one

of the oldest and most traditional wineries in Burgundy, with many fine appellations both there and in Beaujolais. Relations with growers have existed for many generations. Recently two wines from the Pays d'Oc – Chardonnella and Pinossimo – joined the portfolio. Located in the prestigious 18th-century Hôtel du Conseiller du Roy in Beaune, Bouchard Aîné & Fils offers to visitors in their cellar „an unique journey for the five senses.“ The range offered by Bouchard Aîné & Fils covers all major appellations of Burgundy and Beaujolais in almost all segments of price and terroir. The Cuvée Signature range represents the highest art of winemaking.

DE LOACH

DELOACH

In 1971, the DeLoach family introduced Pinot Noir to the Russian River Valley in California and soon became one of the state's leading producers. Varietals include Chardonnay, Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Sauvignon Blanc. Area in biodynamic farming: 22 acres (10 hectares); The potential of Russian River region may best be found in the top Pinot Noir OFS, short for Our Finest Selection.



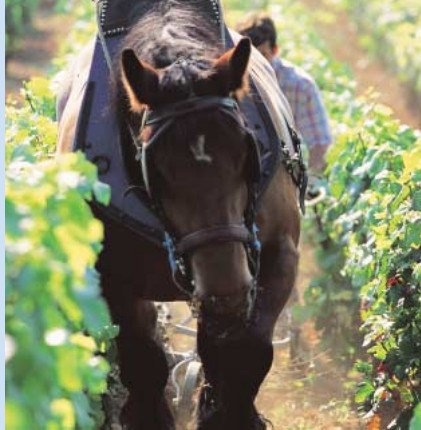
J. MOREAU & FILS

J. Moreau & Fils, the oldest winery in Chablis, was founded in 1814. Apart from Chablis, their collection also includes wines from the Loire valley, with more than 50 growers contributing. More than 300 parcels of vineyards have been classified according to their specific characteristics as to vine treatment, terroir, harvesting time and vinification, to name but a few. Thus, J. Moreau & Fils has acquired a close-to-terroir savoir-faire which is unique in Chablis, and a real expertise in the art of making white wines.



LOUIS BERNARD

The Louis Bernard winery, founded in 1976, is located in the Chartreuse de Bonpas near Avignon, whose prestigio-



Above from left to right:

Jaffelin - the winery located in a beautiful, old monks' house next to the Collégiale Notre-Dame in Beaune; Pinot noir, the sensitive diva

Below from left to right:

Biodynamic winemaking and winegrowing – with one horsepower in the vineyard...

Wines from the Rhône Chartreuse de Bonpas Louis Bernard

us coat of arms is engraved in the Louis Bernard bottles. Appellations include Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Côtes du Rhône and Côtes du Rhône Villages. Main varietals are Syrah, Grenache, and Viognier. The recently launched „Lulu B” range – named after the daughter of Louis Bernard – offers to North American consumers a Pinot Noir, a Chardonnay and a Syrah.

Lyeth

LYETH

The Sonoma county winery was founded in 1981 by Chip Lyeth, who wanted to create Bordeaux-style wines. The standard was established by winemaker Bill Arbios for the best blends. Varietals include Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec, Petit Verdot and Sauvignon Blanc.



MOMMESSIN

Mommessin was founded in 1865 in Mâcon, but has developed south into the Beaujolais, becoming one of the jewels in the region's crown. Beaujolais, of course, is the realm of the Gamay grape. The soils are mostly granite and volcanic porphyry. It took some Burgundian know-how such as Mommessin's to bring out the very best of that variety. After all, the Mommessin family has owned the prestigious Clos de Tart Grand Cru in Morey-Saint-Denis, a monopoly, since 1932. The Grande Exception Monternot range of Beaujolais crus is meant to „blend tradition with exception”. The seat of Mommessin has moved to the beautiful Château de Pierreux, which is surrounded by 70 hectares of Brouilly vines.