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Domaine Chandon de Briailles

JAN/FEB 12

By Stephen Tanzer

Chandon de Briailles was not shy about vinifying whole clusters in 2010, and my notes suggest that this approach contributed power and tension to the wines. In fact, the chewiness and flavor intensity of the estate's '10s belie their moderate alcohol levels, which will range from 12% to 12.6% in the finished wines, with no chaptalization carried out. "We eliminated about 10% of our fruit due to rot," noted Claude de Nicolay, "but there was not a problem with underripe grapes." Although Chandon de Briailles uses very little new oak, the estate is now keeping its barrels around for no more than ten years; previously they used barrels as long as 20 years. The 2010s were still on their lees in barrel at the time of my November visit.

2010 Domaine Chandon de Briailles Savigny-les-Beaune

87-88

(completely destemmed): Good full red. Candied raspberry, red cherry and flowers on the tangy nose. Pungent, slightly high-toned pomegranate flavor framed by brisk acidity. Pure, penetrating wine with a lovely balance of fruit and acidity.

2010 Domaine Chandon de Briailles Savigny les Beaune 1er Cru Aux Fourneaux

88-90

(30% *vendange entier*): Good medium red. Raspberry, spices and flowers on the nose. Pure, silky and fresh in the mouth, with raspberry fruit lifted by notes of crushed stone and flowers. The bracing, persistent finish features fine but firm tannins.

2010 Domaine Chandon de Briailles Savigny-les-Beaune Lavieres

90-92

Bright, palish red. Tangy raspberry and cherry aromas are accented by crushed stone and citrus zest. Densely packed and vibrant, with excellent definition and grip to the flavors of raspberry, crushed stone and blood orange. Finishes floral and long. Quite refined for this *cuvée*. Savigny yields were low in 2010 owing to the estate's high percentage of old vines and the bad flowering, noted Claude de Nicolay.

2010 Domaine Chandon de Briailles Pernand Vergelesses Les Vergelesses

88-91

(already racked): Bright medium red. Pungent aromas of raspberry, violet and five-spice powder. Dense and sweet, with a strong crushed rock element energizing the mid-palate. Finishes with dusty, slightly edgy tannins and a whiplash of fruits and minerals. This seems virtually ready to bottle.

2010 Domaine Chandon de Briailles Pernand-Vergelesses Ile des Vergelesses

89-92

Bright red. Pure but subdued aromas of redcurrant, cherry and smoke. Dense, broad and quite dry, with strong minerality currently dominating red fruits. Suppler in the middle than the Les Vergelesses but also more tannic, showing a hint of crushed stone bitterness on the finish. Serious wine but still an infant.

2010 Domaine Chandon de Briailles Corton Les Marechaudes

90-93

(100% *vendange entier*; aged entirely in three-to-seven-year-old barrels; already racked): Good deep red. Vibrant aromas of raspberry and spices, plus a whiff of earth. Silky, intense and precise, with youthfully imploded flavors of red cherry and brown spices. This *cuvée* really benefits from the firm acidity of the year. Finishes very long, with a captivating saline tang and considerable power. The pH here is 3.7, compared to a more typical 3.9 (!) in earlier vintages, notes Claude de Nicolay.

2010 Domaine Chandon de Briailles Corton Les Bressandes

92-95

(vinified with 80% whole clusters; this was racked and then returned to barrel): Good bright red. Raspberry, strawberry, coffee and smoke on the nose. Rich, fine-grained and pliant; wonderfully silky and sweet but with superb building

energy on the back half. A Corton grand cru of noteworthy finesse, finishing with terrific spicy lift and a strong impression of soil.

2010 Domaine Chandon de Briailles Corton Clos du Roi

93-96

(100% whole clusters; this has been racked): Good medium red. Floral, rather delicate nose. Then sappy and expressive on the palate, with a distinctly high-toned impression to the flavors of flowers, exotic spices and minerals. The soil is like that of Corton-Charlemagne just above it, notes Claude de Nicolay, which is what gives the wine its firm acidity and limestone character. Boasts terrific tension without any impression of weight. Finishes with splendid mineral density and outstanding subtle, mounting length. The crop level here was just 15 hectoliters per hectare and the wine was aged in two 350-liter, six-year-old barrels from Domaine Dujac. Leaves the salivary glands quivering. This wine and the Bressandes should go on for decades.

(David Bowler Wine, New York, NY; Ideal Wines & Spirits, Medford, MA; Beaune Imports, Berkeley, CA)