

BEOORDELINGEN
WILLIAM FÈVRE CHABLIS
PREMIER CRU & GRAND CRU 2023

Decanter

CHARLES CURTIS MW

vinous

NEAL MARTIN





BEAUROY DOMAINE 1^{ER} CRU

Charles Curtis: "The Fèvre bottling of premier cru Beauroy is teeming with wonderful aromas of lime peel and green apple, touched with a bit of smoky reduction and a lovely salty edge on the finish. The texture is lively and fresh, but there is also density here. The grapes come from three parcels located in part of the Beauroy climat called Troésmes. There are two parcels of old vines (up to 50 years of age) and one of young vines. The grapes are fermented and aged partly in tank and partly in cask (40–50%)."

Drink from 2030-2050. 94/100 points.

Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Beauroy 1er Cru had just been pumped so it was extremely cloudy in the glass as they keep the lees. The bouquet is well defined with light marine/oyster shell scents. The palate is balanced with pleasing fatness on the entry, not a steely or austere Beauroy. A sunny Chablis that has a "smile" on the finish."

Drink from 2025-2034. 88-90 points.

LES LYS 1^{ER} CRU

Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Les Lys 1er Cru comes from a single hectare of vines. Lime, red apple and touches of orange pith and peach skin develop in the glass. The palate is well balanced with a taut line of acidity, silky smooth, very composed with a lot of finesse on the finish. This is one of the domaine's hidden gems and should not be under-estimated."

Drink from 2025-2040. 91-93 points.

VAILLONS 1^{ER} CRU

Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Vaillons 1er Cru has much more composure than the Montmains, more harmonious and poised. Light sea spray scents mixed with Crustacea come through with aeration. The palate is well balanced with fine delineation, quite linear and malic with a concentrated finish. I prefer this to the Montmains this year."

Drink from 2025-2039. 90-92 points.

MONTMAINS 1^{ER} CRU

Charles Curtis: "In the hands of Fèvre winemaker Didier Séguier, premier cru Montmains has a certain initial reserve. But with time, the green apple and gooseberry notes, touched with acacia blossoms and spice, open up on the palate. The texture is lively and fresh, yet there is substance here as well. The grapes are assembled from 10 parcels throughout Montmains, including some in Forêts and Butteaux. Séguier explains that Butteaux is deep in the valley and further from the Serein so it ripens later. The grapes are fermented in tank and older casks for 40–50% of the harvest."

Drink from 2030-2050. 95/100 points.

Neal Martin: "From 3.8 hectares of vines on a late ripening terroir, the 2023 Chablis Montmains 1er Cru was the last to be picked. It has a fresh nose, Granny Smith and light shucked oyster shell scents. The palate is well balanced with fine acidity, steelier than the Beauroy with a slightly abrupt finish at the moment. Today, it is just a little raw, hence my prudent score."

Drink from 2025-2034. 87-89 points.



FOURCHAUME 1^{ER} CRU

Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Fourchaume 1er Cru comes from a selection made from eight parcels on marl soils. That comes through on the nose: quite stern, more austere than Fèvre's other cuvées, perhaps one for those who like a bit of meanness in their Chablis. The palate is well balanced with a touch of reduction on the entry. It requires a little more acidic bite to develop on the finish. Fine."
Drink from 2025-2035. 89-91 points.

VAULORENT 1^{ER} CRU

Charles Curtis: "The Vauloirent from Fèvre is more mineral than its Montée de Tonnerre, if a bit less lush, with aromas of lime peel, mirabelle plum, and passion fruit. The texture is chiselled and concentrated, with layers of tightly wound extract and a dense, chalky finish. The grapes are from 3.6 ha in Vauloirent, which is part of Fourchaume but located on the side of the grands crus. Winemaker Didier Séguier chooses his favourite blocks for this bottling and crafts a 'classic' Fourchaume from the rest. Fermentation is done in older casks for 40-50% of the grapes."
Drink from 2030-2060. 95/100 points.

Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Vauloirent 1er Cru has a mineral-driven bouquet—oyster shells and a touch of petrichor, quite intense. The palate is well balanced with a pleasant "bite" on the entry. A twist of sour lemon imparts tension and gets the saliva flowering. Fine weight on the finish, this should age well in bottle."
Drink from 2026-2042. 90-92 points.

MONTÉE DE TONNERRE 1^{ER} CRU

Charles Curtis: "This powerful, thrilling wine shows pronounced, ripe aromas of mirabelle plum, nectarine and green apple, with a strong underpinning of flinty minerality and smoky reduction. The texture is tightly wound and compact; it's substantial, but not heavy, carrying the wine to a marvellously long finish. The grapes are from 2.24ha in the lieux-dits Pied d'Aloup, Côte de Bréchain (planted 1936), and Chapelot, fermented in a combination of tank and cask, ageing now on the lees prior to bottling. Ideally wait five years before opening and drink over the next 30."
Drink from 2028-2050. 94/100 points.

Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Montée de Tonnerre 1er Cru is a step up from the slightly underwhelming 2022 last year. Fine delineation, citrus-fresh with petrichor and a touch of peach skin. The palate is well balanced, and quite powerful though well focused. A keen line of acidity with more sapidity on the finish compared to the Vaillons. Persistent spiciness on the aftertaste. Recommended."
Drink from 2026-2040. 91-93 points.



BOUGROS GRAND CRU

Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Bougros Grand Cru comes from 4 hectares of vines. It has a complex bouquet with lemon thyme, crushed rocks and lime aromas, well-defined and focused. The palate is very composed and steely, a subtle reductive element here, fine weight with an elegant finish. Not the most powerful of the domaine's Grand Cru, but it has panache."

Drink from 2027-2049. 91-93 points.

VAUDÉSIR GRAND CRU

Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Vaudésir Grand Cru, which is consistently the first to be picked, has a pretty nose with yellow fruit and a touch of chalk. The palate is fresh and quite linear in style, a "correct" Grand Cru. Steely and saline with a more austere finish compared to its peers. It will need some bottle age."

Drink from 2027-2049. 90-92 points.

LES PREUSES GRAND CRU

Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Les Preuses Grand Cru comes from 2.5 hectares of vines split over two parcels. Scents of grapefruit, white flowers, and crushed stone. A touch of sea spray comes through with time and eventually gains admirable intensity. The palate is fresh and vibrant on the entry, fine acidity, maybe not quite as complex as the Côte Bouguerots. A little more understated on the finish. But this will age well in bottle."

Drink from 2026-2045. 91-93 points.

VALMUR GRAND CRU

Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Valmur Grand Cru comes from the top sector on the incline with a south-east facing orientation on a vein of marl. That scent of shucked oyster shell permeates the nose and puts it above Vaudésir in terms of complexity. A superb reduction. The palate is taut and fresh, more complex and certainly more saline. There's a bit of meanness on the finish, but that is not written pejoratively. For those seeking more traditional Chablis this vintage."

Drink from 2028-2048. 93-95 points.

BOUGROS 'CÔTE DE BOUGUEROTS' GRAND CRU

Charles Curtis: "Initially a bit restrained, the fruit opens up on the palate with notes of white peach, nectarine and Mirabelle plums, accented with a salty minerality and a hint of spice. Chiselled and fine but still impressively powerful. Fèvre owns more than a third of Bougros; 2ha are located in this unique parcel that rises steeply from the river in south-southwest-facing slopes, producing this exotic, concentrated wine that will live for decades."

Drink from 2028-2045. 95/100 points.



Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Bougros Côte Bouguerots Grand Cru comes from steep slopes at the bottom of Bougros, close to the Chablis bypass. Quite taut on the nose, it conveys plenty of tension, citrus peel mixed with hints of vanilla and white chocolate. The palate is beautifully composed with a killer line of acidity, lime cordial, a touch of fish oil, quite intense on the finish that lingers long in the mouth. One of the strongest offerings from the Domaine this vintage."
Drink from 2026-2048. 93-95 points.

LES CLOS GRAND CRU

Charles Curtis: "Year after year, Fèvre's Les Clos is among the great wines of Chablis. In 2023, the pronounced aromas range from grapefruit to nectarine and green apple, laden with pungent, salty mineral notes and a little smoky reduction – a bit of everything, really. The texture is dense, almost impenetrable at this age, but enlivened by a lovely hint of bitterness at the end. It is truly a wine for the ages. Ideally wait a decade before opening; this wine will last at least 40 years."
Drink from 2030-2050. 96/100 points.

Neal Martin: "The 2023 Chablis Les Clos Grand Cru comes from 4 hectares of vines, mostly at the top of the slope on limestone-rich soils. Oyster shell and light sea spray scents on the nose entwined with hints of orange pith and wild mint. The palate is very concentrated and intense, more so than William Fèvre's other Grand Cru. Very harmonious with a poised, stem ginger tinged-finish that lingers long in the mouth. Excellent."
Drink from 2027-2049. 93-95 points.

THE 2023 VINTAGE IN CHABLIS

An unhoped-for vintage

1. Meteorological data

• Temperatures

The winter was generally mild and very dry. The first signs of a recovery in the vegetative cycle appeared in the last few days of March. The first night frost occurred on 28 March. This was followed by a relatively cool April, marked by several bouts of frost of up to -6°C on the nights of 4 and 5 April. Fortunately, these did not cause any damage.

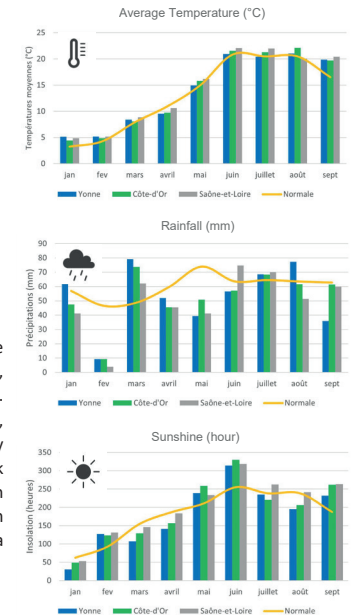
The weather gradually warmed up from mid-April onwards, leading to a warm and above all very dry May. June brought hot, heavy weather, interspersed with numerous thunderstorms, which caused heavy disease pressure in the Chablis vineyards. August 19 heralded the start of a heatwave, followed by a spell of rain a few days later, leading to a rapid rise in degrees. The return of hot weather at the end of the month, which continued for the first two weeks of September, stabilised the health of the harvest.

• Rainfall

Relatively dry period of vegetative rest. Rain arrived in March, between 25 and 40 mm between the 21st and 27th. From 19 May onwards, with the change in the moon, the weather became very dry, accompanied by a north-easterly wind that caused the soil to dry out considerably. June was interspersed with thunderstorms. The first of these came on the afternoon of the 9th, followed by thundery rainfall on the 11th, ranging from 10 to 25 mm depending on the area. Downy mildew was not long in coming. The weather improved for a few days, enabling the teams to work on the vines before the thunderstorms of 18 and 19 June, which brought a further 30mm. The rain returned on the afternoon of the 20th and there was a major storm on the 21st, bringing 40-45mm in one hour. The rainy spells continued, with a further 100mm between 23 July and 22 August, and a further 40-50mm on 24 and 25 August after a heatwave.

• Sunshine

Cumulative sunshine levels were in line with average, with a surplus in February, May, June and September.



2. The growth cycle in our vineyard

After a winter of fluctuating temperatures, a mild spell at the end of March helped the vegetative cycle to resume. Fortunately, the vines had not yet budded during the heavy frosts of early April. Mid-budding was 3 days later than the average of the last 20 years. Flowering began on 2 June in the earliest areas and spread to most terroirs from the 5th. With a mild, dry month of May, the vines made up for lost time and were now 3 days ahead of the average for mid-flowering. This was followed by a well-watered June and July, which led to heavy downy mildew pressure, which was kept under control by our teams.

Veraison started at the beginning of August. The mid-veraison stage was reached around 12 August, almost a week ahead of schedule, but the heat wave that followed, coupled with the lack of water, limited its development and it was not until the last few days of August, with the return of rainfall and a drop in temperature, that it was fully completed.

3. Harvests, vinification and ageing

Maturity checks began on 17 August. Ripeness progressed very quickly between the 20th and 25th, accelerated by the heavy rain of 24th-25th. The weight of the bunches rose from 150 to 220g.

After the heat and rain that followed, there were fears that the harvest would be fragile, but the hot, dry conditions from the end of August meant that ripening could be completed in good health. Potential alcohol levels quickly reached 12.5-13°, and even 14°, particularly in the young vines.

Harvesting began on 7 September for the young vines less than 10 years old, in very hot weather that forced us to pick only in the morning. The weather cooled from 13-14 September. Harvesting ended on 16 September. The volumes were generous, tempered by the terroirs of Chablis and our very strict viticultural practices. Fermentation took place rapidly, within 15 days.

4. The wines now

The wines are very fruity, with yellow peach, citrus, candied lemon and pear notes. They are pure, full-bodied and rich. After a few months' ageing, the terroirs reveal themselves with great freshness and precision.

