

Like all Burgundy lovers, Xavier Badinand, estate director at the leading Côte Chalonnaise-based producer Maison Chanzy, is very much looking forward to the release of the region's latest vintage. After all, as he explains, the 2022 vintage, when high quality was finally matched by ample quantity, "is where we had our smile again".

In truth, Badinand and the team at Chanzy have had plenty to smile about for some time now, with the maison having reached new heights during a dynamic decade under new enlightened ownership – a feeling of rapid progress which even the low volumes of 2019, 2020, and (especially) 2021 couldn't dispel.

Established in 1928 and given its current name under the leadership of Daniel Chanzy in 1974, Maison Chanzy was already a highly respected producer in Burgundy when the Olma Group, an alliance of wine-loving investors with experience in premium food and drink, bought the maison and its holdings in 2013.

The new team wasted no time in building on the solid foundations they acquired, buying up new vineyards (the total holdings have since more than doubled to 80ha, including 66ha of planted vines), and adding an extra level of precision in vine-growing and winemaking.

Things took a further step forward during the 2020 vintage, when the talented and experienced winemaker Max Blondelle was lured to Maison Chanzy from Domaine Chanson, leading to what Badinand calls "a new stage of quality", with new single-vineyard bottlings launched and the wines becoming "much more precise".

Blondelle and his team now have a magnificent array of vineyards to work with, spread across an enormous range of soils and exposures and taking in 38 appellations, including four Grands Crus and 13 Premiers Crus, and five "clos", two of which form part of the monopole Chanzy vineyard.

This enviable collection takes in top sites in the Côte de Beaune and Côte de Nuits. But the Chanzy name is particularly strong in the Côte Chalonnaise, where it has significant holdings in the core appellations of Rully (17ha), Mercurey (13ha), and the village where it is based and with which it is strongly associated, Bouzeron (16ha).

Furthermore, Chanzy is one of the few Burgundy producers to achieve Haute Valeur Environnementale Level 3 – the most highly regarded certification for sustainable agriculture in France.

Chanzy has been on an upward trajectory for several years. Its 2022 releases are a perfect illustration of what this progressive Burgundy house is capable of producing



"Aligoté is a wonderful grape variety with the potential to make an energised, fresh, sensitive wine"

Max Blondelle



As all Burgundy-philes will know, the Côte Chalonnaise has, like Maison Chanzy, been on a pronounced upwards trajectory in the past couple of decades.

"Cote Chalonnaise is a very exciting area," Badinand says. "Work has been done, and more and more people realise that work has been done. There is great excitement, and great terroir. The area is very different from the Côte d'Or: the landscape, the vineyards which are much more spread out, the range of altitudes and different exposures."

Despite the reputational gains, however, according to Blondelle the region still has the capacity to "surprise with the quality, the different terroirs, and the results you can see in different types of wine – very, very interesting things."

Chief among those "interesting things" is Aligoté, a Bouzeron AOC and Chanzy speciality with a reputation that has been transformed in recent years, and for which the Chanzy team are compelling advocates. "Aligoté is a wonderful grape variety, with the potential to go against global warming and make an energised, fresh, sensitive wine," says Blondelle.

"It's very important, and it's almost like a new grape variety for Burgundy, because the old image that people used to have of Aligoté, particularly in France, has completely changed," adds Badinand. "More and more people are coming to Bouzeron to get this energy you can find in Aligoté, an energy that is sometimes difficult to get from Chardonnay. We have a special proposition."

Indeed, Bouzeron is the only Burgundy village-level AOC permitted to produce an Aligoté wine, and Chanzy is very much a quality leader in the village, the proud possessor of arguably the finest Aligoté vineyard in Burgundy in the shape of the east-facing monopole Clos de la Fortune, where the lean and shallow soils are dominated by limestone.

As Chanzy export manager Loic Cornuau says, "2022 is a wonderful vintage for Aligoté, very ripe but very balanced, keeping the refreshing qualities, but with nothing overly acidic or disharmonious."

No wonder, then, that Alliance Wine has made the Aligoté wines a significant part of the Chanzy 2022 en primeur offer – an offer that fully justifies the excitement that all Burgundy lovers feel about this very special vintage.

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Three 2022 Maison Chanzy wines available en primeur

Maison Chanzy Bouzeron Clos de la Fortune Monopole Aligoté 2022 RRP £29.99

Maison Chanzy's flagship wine, Clos de la Fortune is a 100% Aligoté sourced from the eponymous 2.76ha walled vineyard with its south east exposition and limestone-dominated terroir of which Chanzy is the sole owner. A single cuvée harvested on a single day, part of the wine was vinified in barrels, 15% of which are new, the rest in stainless steel, "to bring a subtle, but not excessive, oaky touch", according to Blondelle.

Max Blondelle: "On the nose, it has a very elegant minerality, with a citrus touch: fruits and floral notes, a little flintiness, and subtle oak – a lot of complexity. On the palate, you can feel the ripeness of the fruits, but very well balanced with perfect acidity. You can age it for five to 10 years."



Maison Chanzy Rully la Créée Blanc 2022 RRP £33.99

Proving that the masters of Côte Chalonnaise Aligoté are no less adept with Burgundy's most famous white grape, this Chardonnay is sourced from La Créée, a vineyard famed for its chalky terroir to the west of the village of Rully, just behind the famous Les Pucelles 1er cru. Maison Chanzy purchased its 1.74ha holding here in 2017, producing its first wine in 2019, since when it has lengthened the ageing in a mix of 228-litre barrels and stainless steel from 12 to 16 months. A wine that is a big favourite with Alliance customers for its "fantastic value".

Max Blondelle: "Very pure elegance, but with this specific vintage we also get the liveliness and intensity. We have two different Rullys at Maison Chanzy, this one is the more food-friendly wine. You get that intensity of the floral aspect and a little bit of bitterness – a positive bitterness, something that we find a little bit more than in the past, because of the effect of global warming on the skin of the grapes. It adds something to balance the acidity. Great length."



Mercurey Le Bois Cassien Rouge Monopole 2022 RRP £33.99

From a parcel at the highest altitude in Mercurey, this wholly-owned vineyard has very specific soil with a stony gravel similar to Châteauneuf-du-Pape, over an iron-oxide-rich subsoil that brings strength, power, depth, and longevity, which dovetails perfectly with the freshness brought by the altitude. Made, like all the Chanzy 2022 red wines, without whole-bunch, and with minimal pigeage, but with a lot of work on remontage, it was aged for 10 months in oak, and, according to Alliance's Simone Williams, was "a standout among the Alliance team because it was immediately accessible. You don't need to wait: it's good to go now, which isn't always the case in Burgundy."

Max Blondelle: "Nose of red fruit, cherry and strawberry with good acidity – this is very fresh due to the location, and quite long, with soft tannins. It's a very elegant wine, and I think you can drink it very early or keep it three to five years."

