

Meeting new faces & tasting new wines at Louis Latour Agencies



Paul Espitalié, new winemaker
at Simonnet-Febvre

With Jean-Philippe Archambaud having moved after some 15 years as head winemaker at [Simonnet-Febvre](#) in Chablis, the tasting was a good opportunity to catch up with the new winemaker at Simonnet-Febvre, Paul Espitalié who was showing the excellent new 2018 vintage that, with 60 hectolitres per hectare, also has volume.

Apart from the change at the top here most of the changes have taken place with the winery's continued interests in the Coteaux de l'Auxois. This once prolific region that never recovered from phylloxera is increasingly being invested in with another hectare of Pinot Noir being planted this year – the region is very interesting – it is the slopes, the soils and the wines are getting better each year.

The Pinot Noir Des Lyres 2018 is good quality, quaffable is part of the company's strategy of increasing its Pinot plantings outside the core Burgundy region, and is showing marked improvements vintage by vintage. The vines are traditional, lyre-pruned, hence the name of this and the other new single vineyard wine **Chardonnay Des Lyres 2018** which comes from older (37 year old) vines.

The entry level Coteaux de l'Auxois wines are no longer blended, now simply being single cepages of **Pinot Gris, Chardonnay and Auxerrois** and have been given a facelift too. They 'stack up' tasting-wise and are excellent value for money, especially perhaps the Pinot Gris.

Espitalié confirmed that these most Northerly of Burgundy Pinot vines are improving every year as temperatures rise with the fruit being riper and with the wine having smoother tannins.



Simonnet-Febvre is mainly about Chablis, of course, with a new good quality cuvée out on the market called **Chablis D1840, 2018** corresponding to the age of the vineyard, that is domaine-owned and sits close to the 1er cru Montee de Tonnerre; four of the estate's other cuvées are now certified organic.