

VIEW FROM THE CELLAR

By John Gilman

March-April 2016

Number Sixty-Two

- ❖ *The Hospices de Beaune's "Cuvée Maurice Drouhin" and A Bit of History of the Extraordinary Man Behind the Wine.* (pages 1-10)
- ❖ *Germany's Stupendous 2015 Vintage- The Finest Potential In Forty Years.* (pages 11-70)
- ❖ *Another Collection of Superb, Low Octane, Neo-Classical American Wines.* (pages 71-90)
- ❖ *Château Latour à Pomerol's Exceptional Track Record From 1929 to Today.* (pages 91-105)
- ❖ *A Second Round of the Beautifully Elegant 2014 Burgundy Vintage.* (pages 106-165)

Coming Attractions

- ❖ *A Deep Vertical of Château Beaucastel's Hommage de Jacques Perrin.*
- ❖ *Round Two of Kalin Cellars- America's Great Iconoclast Traditionalist.*
- ❖ *Mount Eden Vineyards' Utterly Brilliant Santa Cruz Mountain Wines.*
- ❖ *Checking In Again On the Underrated 1981 Bordeaux Vintage at Age Thirty-Five.*
- ❖ *Taurasi- Today's Answer To What Italian Region Will Replicate, In the 21st Century, Barolo's Opportunity Of Thirty Years Ago?*
- ❖ *Richard Olney's Life In Wine.*
- ❖ *The Very Fine 1986 Bordeaux Vintage at Age Thirty.*
- ❖ *The Very Promising Start For La Ragnaie Brunello di Montalcino.*
- ❖ *The Bi-Annual Champagne Report, More Mâconnais Wines, Ric Forman, Great Old Right Bank Gems, Gérard Boulay's Lovely Chavignol Sancerres, The Annual Beaujolais Report, A Taste For Campania's Beautiful and Ageworthy White Wines, Château La Lagune, François Cotat, The Hill of Corton, Who Are The Traditionalists In Bordeaux, Cathy Corison, Château Ausone, More Off the Beaten-Path Italian Wines, Bruno Paillard, Old German Wines in Bottle and Château Musar.*

View From the Cellar is published bi-monthly by John Gilman, who is solely responsible for its content. Electronic subscriptions are available for \$120 per year (\$220 for two years), available at www.viewfromthecellar.com. Inquiries may also be emailed to john@viewfromthecellar.com. Copyright 2016 by John B. Gilman, all rights reserved. Content may be utilized by members of the wine trade and/or media as long as either View From the Cellar or John Gilman are fully credited. Please do not share.

**THE HOSPICES DE BEAUNE'S MARVELOUS
BEAUNE "CUVÉE MAURICE DROUHIN" AND A BIT OF HISTORY
OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MAN BEHIND THE WINE**



The Hospices de Beaune's fine bottling of Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is one of the very top wines of the Côte de Beaune produced by this venerable charity, with the quality of the wine totally commensurate with the very well-lived life of the exceptional gentleman who gave it his name. Maurice Drouhin was an iconic figure in the world of Burgundy during his days at the head of Maison Joseph Drouhin, which started in the immediate aftermath of the First World War and lasted up until he officially retired in 1957 and passed on the directorship of the *négociant* business to his nephew and adopted son, Robert Drouhin. In addition to his long tenure at the head of the family business, he was also the long-time director of the Hospices de Beaune and gave tirelessly of his time and energy to this worthy cause. Maurice Drouhin was an extraordinary man and his activities took him far beyond the scopes of the wine business. He was himself a highly-decorated a veteran of the First World War, having spent time in the trenches and coming to prominence as the Liaison Officer to the (then) American Major, Douglas MacArthur and his Rainbow Division (which was the second division of American soldiers to arrive in France after the US joined the Allies in 1917). During the Great War, he formed a lifelong friendship with Douglas MacArthur and over the course of his life Maurice would be

invited to Washington from time to time on diplomatic missions. It would be his close friendship with General MacArthur that would later get Monsieur Drouhin in trouble with the Germans during the Second World War.

After the First World War, Maurice Drouhin returned to Beaune and took over the reins of the family *négociant* business from his father Joseph Drouhin. The family domaine had been founded by Maurice's father in 1880, and was one of the important *négociant* businesses by the time of the First World War, when Maurice was called up for the military and sent off to serve his country. He returned to Beaune unscathed physically from his time fighting the war (though he was often visited by nightmares brought on by his wartime experiences), and succeeded to the head of the family business in 1919. At the time, Maison Joseph Drouhin was like most of its neighboring *négociants* in Beaune or Nuits St. Georges and sold wines from many other regions of France under its label, as well as Burgundy. Maurice decided that the future lay in his house producing solely wines from the Burgundy region and he was one of the very first amongst the merchant houses in Beaune to make this transition to a Burgundy-only portfolio. In 1925 he was selected to the Administrative Commission of the Hospices de Beaune and moved up to the position of Vice-President of the organization a few years later. As the position of President of the Hospices was an honorary post given to the Mayor of Beaune, the Vice-President was the *de facto* head of the Hospices de Beaune. He would continue on with his duties as Vice-President of the Hospices until 1955. During his time there he was instrumental in getting the Hospices de Beaune to rework its vineyard holdings, which prior to his tenure here, were a hodgepodge of *villages*, premier cru and a few scattered grand cru holdings. Maurice understood that the Hospices would be much better served if they could trade off their *villages* holdings for additional premier crus or purchase additional parcels in premier crus, so that they could offer higher quality wines at the auction each November and increase the budget for their good works. He wrote a convincing Hospices report to this effect in 1932 that paved the way for the vineyard configuration we know today of the modern Hospices de Beaune. He was very much a man ahead of his time in realizing that Burgundy's fortunes in the future would be tied to the highest quality wines.

In a similar vein, one of the first things that Maurice Drouhin accomplished after taking over the direction of the family *maison* in 1919 was to purchase the family's first vineyard parcels, with this beginning with the domaine's flagship premier cru of Clos des Mouches in the village of Beaune. Maurice was quick to realize that a merchant house with a foundation of its own vineyard holdings would be better positioned to withstand the vagaries of the marketplace in more difficult times, which Burgundy had certainly seen its share of by the time he returned to Beaune from the war in 1919. Phylloxera had devastated the region in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, and even as Joseph Drouhin was founding his house in 1880, the region was in the midst of economic crisis caused by the devastation of the vineyards by phylloxera. It was not really until the second decade of the twentieth century that the region was beginning to bounce back a bit from the costs of replanting all those vineyards onto American rootstocks, and then along came the First World War. With so many young men on both sides of the trenches lost during that war, the aftermath in Burgundy was a time of hardship, a shortage of young men to work in the vines, little market demand, abandoned vineyards and real questions about the future of wine production in the region. Maurice Drouhin's first purchase of land in the Clos des Mouches vineyard was actually *en friche* at that time, and after buying the parcel, it had to be

replanted in the spring of 1920 and the *maison* did not produce its first vintage of Beaune “Clos des Mouches” until the 1923 vintage. At this time, work in the vineyards was still done principally by horse and cart, so Maurice Drouhin focused his continued vineyard purchases during the 1920s on other vineyard parcels in the premier crus of the village and neighboring communes of Beaune. It would not be until 1938 that he would purchase his family’s first parcel of vines outside of the Côte de Beaune, when he purchased just under a hectare of vines in the Clos de Vougeot.

Like many of the French men of his generation, who knew the reality of war all too well from the First World War, Maurice listened uneasily as another epic war with Germany seemed to be hovering on the horizon as the decade of the 1930s deepened. During this time, he was instrumental in the adoption of the Appellation Contrôlée system that has come to define Burgundy as we know it today and really paved the way for the region to find its way out of the dire economic crises that affected the region in the decade of the 1930s. Maurice Drouhin was elected one of the first members of the INAO when it was formed in 1938. In addition to starting to build up the family business’s vineyard patrimony during the decades of the 1920 and 1930s, Maurice also became at this time the largest customer for the wines of the Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, with Maison Joseph Drouhin purchasing fully sixty percent of their production each year during the decade of the 1930s and handling all of the domaine’s sales outside of France. DRC was not immune to the hard times that afflicted the Burgundy region in the 1920s and 1930s and Maurice Drouhin’s commitment to purchase their wines during this epoch was invaluable in keeping the domaine in the hands of the Chambon and de Villaine families during the nadir in Burgundy’s fortunes. Keep in mind that the Domaine de la Romanée-Conti was only officially established in 1912, the year after Edmond Gaudin de Villaine was appointed its managing director and a few years after his marriage to Mademoiselle Marie-Dominique-Madelaine Chambon. The Chambon family had owned half of the vineyard of Romanée-Conti for several decades, with the other half owned by their cousins, the Guyot brothers. In 1912, the vineyard was again reunited by the purchase of the Guyot brothers’ portion of Romanée-Conti by their cousins, Madame Chambon de Villaine and her brother, Jacques Chambon and the domaine was officially created in the aftermath of that sale. During World War II, when sales of Burgundy were hardly robust and expenses at DRC routinely outpaced profits, Jacques Chambon sought to sell his half of the domaine and the de Villaine family sought a partner to take over the Chambon legacy. The first person that they thought of as a potential new partner in 1941 was Maurice Drouhin.

As is so beautifully recounted in Don and Petie Kladstrup’s moving book, Wine and War, the timing of the offer to join the de Villaine family as co-proprietors of the Domaine de la Romanée-Conti could not have come at a worse time for Maurice Drouhin, for at that time he was in prison and suspected by the Germans of having ties to the French Resistance. He had been arrested in August of 1941, no doubt in part due to his occasional trips to Washington to consult with Douglas MacArthur and other American foreign policy officials on the affairs of Europe as the clouds of potential war deepened on the continent. He spent six months in prison before he was put on trial on February 13, 1942. He was released a few days later, as the Germans were unable to uncover any evidence of his ties to the Resistance. It turns out that the Germans were not incorrect in their suspicions however, as Maurice Drouhin was indeed very actively involved with the French Underground at this time. While in prison his wife Pauline had relayed the

information that it was going to be possible to purchase Jacques Chambon's half of the Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, but Maurice decided that it would be too big of a risk with his being in prison and knowing that even if he were released, the odds were strong that he might be re-arrested if any evidence surfaced of his ties to the French resistance. And in fact, the Gestapo did indeed knock on the door of the Drouhins' home on the Rue d'Enfer in the old center of Beaune in the wee hours of the morning to re-arrest Maurice on June 7th of 1944. Maurice had been prepared for just such an eventuality, having packed a small bag and placing it under his bed the moment he returned home from his first imprisonment, just in case he would have to go into hiding. When the knock came, he whisked out his bag and headed to the cellars under the house.

The Drouhins' home and Maison Joseph Drouhin's offices sit above the ancient cellars that were once owned by either the Dukes of Burgundy or the Church. These ancient cellars honeycomb all the level below Beaune's center, running under the Hospices de Beaune and much of the remainder of the town's old section. They were built at various times between the thirteenth and the nineteenth centuries and were purchased by the Drouhin family as circumstance allowed in the early years of the twentieth century. There are miles and miles of interconnected cellars here that form an underground city of their own underneath the heart of Beaune and Maurice had descended into these with only a small candle as soon as he heard the knock on the door. As Maurice had been the Vice President of the Hospices de Beaune since the late 1920s, when he emerged from the labyrinth of cellars a block over from the family home, his destination was to be the Hospices de Beaune. There, the nuns employed by the Hospices to take care of the sick and the elderly were able to hide Monsieur Drouhin from the Gestapo until the city of Beaune was liberated by American soldiers in September of 1944, and so, unbeknownst to his family (who were only a few blocks away), Maurice was safely hidden away out of the reach of the Gestapo as the war ground to a close in the Burgundy region in the last months of 1944. In appreciation of all that the Hospices de Beaune did for Maurice during his months in hiding at the end of the war, he and his wife Pauline made a donation in 1947 of vineyard parcels that Maison Drouhin owned in Beaune to create what would become the Hospices' "Cuvée Maurice Drouhin".

Although the vineyard parcels that comprise the Cuvée Maurice Drouhin were bequeathed to the Hospices de Beaune in 1947, the transfer of vineyards was assigned to occur after the death of Maurice Drouhin. After the war, Maurice Drouhin settled into his professional life once again, running Maison Joseph Drouhin and continuing his activities at the Hospices de Beaune. In the autumn of 1955 he had a stroke, that left him partially paralyzed, though his mental faculties were largely unaffected. At the time, his son Robert was serving out his military obligations, so with the help of his staff at Maison Drouhin, Maurice was able to continue his duties at the family *négociant* through 1956, but he resigned his position at the Hospices de Beaune in the wake of his stroke in 1955. When Robert Drouhin returned to Beaune from the military at the end of 1956, he assumed direction of the family business and Maurice fully retired in the beginning of 1957. Monsieur Drouhin passed away in 1960, so the first vintage of this cuvée actually produced by the Hospices de Beaune was the 1961. The Hospices de Beaune's Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is made up of a blend of parcels in four different premier crus: les Avaux, Champs Pimonts, Boucherottes and Grèves. This is one of the largest bottlings produced by the Hospices de Beaune, as the Drouhin family's donation amounted to 2.69 hectares of vines in the four premier crus. Forty percent of the vines are located in the vineyard of les Avaux (1.08

hectares), twenty-five percent each in les Pimonts and Boucherottes (.72 hectares each) and ten percent (27 *ares*) in Beaune “Grèves”. The Maison Joseph Drouhin has purchased it every year since it was first produced by the Hospices de Beaune in the 1961 vintage, following Maurice Drouhin’s passing the year before. As Robert Drouhin, recounts about the bidding for this cuvée at the Hospices auction each November, “we generally try and buy it all, but it has happened that other *négociants* have purchased some of it” in certain vintages through the years.

During their *elevage* of the wine, Maison Drouhin will remove their Hospices de Beaune purchases from the one hundred percent new oak that the wine is sold in, once it has completed its malolactic fermentation. In certain vintages, where the malolactic is long and drawn out, this will mean that the bottlings will spend a longer period in new oak than what the domaine would ideally like for the wine, but it is not advisable to change a wine’s cask while it is still undergoing malolactic fermentation. Consequently, in some vintages the Cuvée Maurice Drouhin will seem a bit more marked by its new oak than in other years, but this is a challenge that every buyer at the Hospices de Beaune auction faces each year. With so many of the Hospices’ top cuvées produced from vineyard sites in the Côte de Beaune, the one hundred percent new oak regimen of the Hospices may not always be ideally suited to the underlying style of the wines. But, as the following notes will attest, Maison Joseph Drouhin does an admirable job in managing the new wood of this bottling in their cellars and it is the rare vintage that does not fully absorb its generous serving of new oak over the course of its life in bottle and blossom into an absolutely stunning example of Beaune premier cru.

Like all of the Hospices de Beaune wines, the Cuvée Maurice Drouhin bottling arrives at the *maison’s* cellars already well on its way to a finished wine, and though the *elevage* is of course of paramount importance, much of the character of the wine has already been shaped by the winemakers at the Hospices de Beaune. As these have changed over the years, the personality of the wine has shifted a bit with the stylistic preferences of the respective *Régisseurs* at the Hospices, but in the vertical tasting of the bottling that Véronique Drouhin-Boss and the domaine so kindly organized to assist in the preparation of this article, it was remarkable to see how consistent the style of the wine proves to be over time, despite the changes in winemakers over the years at the Hospices de Beaune. Of the notes that follow on the Cuvée Maurice Drouhin, the vintages from 2013 back to 2000 were all made by the Hospices’ recently retired *Régisseur*, Roland Masse (who retired after crafting the 2014 vintage here). The 1990 vintage was made by his predecessor, and the 1985 was made by the well-known André Porcheret during his first period as *Régisseur* at the Hospices de Beaune (Monsieur Porcheret was winemaker at the Hospices from 1976 through 1987, and then after a brief sabbatical at Domaine Leroy in Vosne-Romanée, returned to the Hospices again from 1994 through 1999).

I am deeply indebted to Véronique Drouhin-Boss and Robert Drouhin for assisting in the preparation of this article, which I had talked about doing with Véronique for several years and which we were finally able to make happen during my most recent visit in the spring of 2016. Her father Robert was very gracious to field all of my questions about the history of the domaine during Maurice Drouhin’s times and of his father’s extraordinary life beyond the walls of the *maison*. As he commented, “it is always a pleasure to think of my father- a model of intelligence, curiosity, integrity and generosity” and share some of his legacy. Robert Drouhin’s recounting of the history of his father was greatly appreciated, as I found that several other sources that

included mention of Maurice Drouhin's era as head of the family domaine and the Hospices de Beaune were not always entirely accurate as to dates or events. This is not surprising, as Maurice Drouhin was a man of great energy and passion and accomplished a great many things over the course of his life- many of which reached far beyond the boundaries of the world of wine- and it is understandable that memories will be hazy and less exact as time marches on. I hope this brief narrative will assist in setting the record right on a few facets of the exceptional life of Maurice Drouhin. Toasting his extraordinary accomplishments with a glass of properly aged Hospices de Beaune "Cuvée Maurice Drouhin" seems like a very fitting way to celebrate his legacy. Though this legacy extends far beyond the wines that bear his name, he was first and foremost a man in love with his native Burgundy- of the people and wines that are interwoven here in such a beautiful and timeless tapestry of life- and though his influence will reach far beyond the world of wine, Robert Drouhin probably says it best when he reflects that "I also learned so much from him on Burgundy and its traditions."



Véronique Drouhin-Boss with a very promising lineup of the Hospices de Beaune "Cuvée Maurice Drouhin".

The following wines were all tasted in March of 2016, with the exception of the 1972 and the beautiful 1964 bottling of Cuvée Maurice Drouhin. The 1964, which I was fortunate enough to find six bottles of at auction back in the late 1990s and drank with immense pleasure over the ensuing years, was last tasted back in 2008, when I finished up my last of six extremely enjoyable bottles. I should also mention that the last time I toured the cellars of the La Tour d'Argent

restaurant in Paris, they still had a fine supply of the 1978 Cuvée Maurice Drouhin in the cellars and had not yet put the wine on the main wine list. If you happen to be there and it has not yet found its way onto the list, enquire, as it was perhaps Monsieur Porcheret's greatest vintage during his tenure at the Hospices de Beaune, and I cannot help but imagine that the wine would be drinking brilliantly today.

2013 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

The 2013 Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is a lovely wine that shows all of the intensity and bounce of this fine, middleweight vintage. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a youthful blend of red berries, cherries, vinesmoke, a lovely base of soil, fresh herb tones and cedar. On the palate the wine is medium-full, focused and tightly-knit, with lovely intensity of flavor, moderate tannins and very good length and grip on the well-balanced finish. This needs time, but it will be a fine bottle. 2023-2060. **91.**

2011 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

The 2011 Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is quite closed down at the present time, and it may prove that my score is slight conservative as a result. The more black fruity bouquet is still quite primary, but shows fine potential in its blend of black cherries, dark berries, incipient notes of gamebird, espresso, woodsmoke and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, fullish and properly reserved at the present time, with a fine core of fruit, lovely length and grip and a moderately tannic, well-balanced and classy finish. This will be a very good bottle, but it seems likely to need a few more years than the 2013 to really blossom and presently is showing its new oak just a bit more than the '13. 2025-2060. **90.**

2010 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

The 2010 vintage of Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is really superb and probably one of the finest examples of this bottling that has been produced in the last twenty-five years. The excellent nose remains youthfully pure, wafting from the glass in a fine mélange of plums, black cherries, gamebird, raw cocoa, a superb base of dark soil tones, woodsmoke, violets and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a sappy core, great transparency and outstanding length on the nascently complex and ripely tannic finish. This wine has the sappy depth to carry its new oak seamlessly. 2022-2070. **94.**

2009 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

I really like the 2009 vintage of the Cuvée Maurice Drouhin, but this will likely be one of the shorter-lived vintages of this wine in the new millennium. It is already starting to drink quite nicely, wafting from the glass in a juicy blend of black cherries, chocolate, woodsmoke, a touch of *garrigue*, a nice bit of meatiness and spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a good core, bright acids and a long, moderately tannic and quite wide open finish. This is already showing fine complexity and generosity, but it does not seem to have the grip and structural backbone to go anywhere near as far down the road as the 2010, for instance. A very good bottle and a ringing success for the 2009 vintage, but a wine to drink over the relative mid-term. 2016-2035. **91+.**

2008 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

The 2008 Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is a fine example of its vintage, but it is struggling just a bit to carry the one hundred percent new oak of the Hospices and still shows just a whisper of oak tannin on the backend. The bouquet is very high class, wafting from the glass in a fairly red fruity constellation of cherries, pomegranate, a touch of blood orange, developing notes of heather and *sous bois*, gamebird and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows

lovely mid-palate depth, with excellent soil signature, fine focus and grip and a long, modestly tannic and tangy finish. This is a classic 2008 and a fine bottle that only needs a few more years' worth of bottle age to reach its plateau of maturity, where it should cruise along very nicely for several decades. Fine juice. 2018-2045+. **92+**.

2005 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

The 2005 vintage of Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is top flight and will compete with the 2010 as the finest bottling of this wine in the new millennium. This is more powerfully built than the 2010 version, offering up a deep, sappy and really fine bouquet of black cherries, sweet dark berries, raw cocoa, a superb base of soil tones, espresso, gentle balsamic tones and spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and beautifully sappy at the core, with a still quite primary personality, ripe, beautifully integrated tannins, great focus and mineral drive and a long, tangy and very, very promising finish. This is still a puppy and needs plenty of time in the cellar to blossom, but it will be stellar once it blossoms completely. 2025-2075+. **93+**.

2003 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

The 2003 Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is quite ripe and shows the warm vintage character of this torrid summer in Europe. The bouquet offers up a blend of baked black plums, a touch of prune, roasted venison, dark soil tones and a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with fairly good depth at the core and a wide open, ready personality on the fairly long finish. There are some gritty tannins on the backend here that will probably always be part of the equation, but this is a wine to drink over the next fifteen to twenty years, as there is not the customary structural chassis in the '03 as most of these other vintages. 2016-2035. **88**.

2001 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

The 2001 vintage of Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is now into its apogee of peak drinkability and was really showing well at the time of our tasting. The beautiful nose offers up a mature constellation of cherries, desiccated red berries, woodsmoke, forest floor, a touch of heather, spit-roasted game and a dollop of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely tertiary today, with a good core, fine focus and grip and a long, complex and meltingly tannic finish. A lovely bottle. 2016-2035. **90**.

2000 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

The 2000 Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is even a step up from the very pretty 2001 version and is showing more mid-palate depth and backend length than its younger sibling. The bouquet is excellent, wafting from the glass in a very classy blend of black cherries, *sous bois*, dark soil tones, espresso, woodsmoke, *pigeon* and a topnote of fresh herbs. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and full-bodied, with more mid-palate stuffing than the 2001, lovely complexity and a long, vibrant and impressively tangy finish. This wine is now fully *à point*, but has the balance and structural integrity to cruise along at least another fifteen to twenty years. A very impressive showing. 2016-2035. **93**.

1990 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

The 1990 Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is one of the best 1990 red Burgundies I have tasted in quite some time, as it has retained its freshness of fruit better than many wines of higher appellation. The bouquet is deep, plush and very nicely vibrant, wafting from the glass in a black fruity blend of dark berries, black plums, woodsmoke, forest floor, a touch of mustard seed, a lovely note of heather and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and impressively soil-driven in personality, with a fine core of fruit, excellent focus and balance and a long, meltingly tannic and complex finish. Really a lovely bottle. 2016-2040. **92**.

1985 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

The 1985 Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is a dynamite wine at its apogee, but still with plenty of structural elements to carry it flawlessly for at least another couple of decades. The superb nose jumps from the glass in a mature blend of dried cherries and plums, a touch of orange zest, gamebird, forest floor, heather and a smoky topnote redolent of bonfires. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and focused, with fine complexity, a lovely core of fruit, excellent soil signature and a long, bouncy and focused finish that closes with fine grip and energy. Really a classy wine, from back when André Porcheret was making the wines for the Hospices de Beaune. 2016-2035. **94.**



1972 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

The 1972 Cuvée Maurice Drouhin is getting a tad volatile as it nears the end of its life, or at least this was the case with our particular bottle. The bouquet offers up a complex blend of cherries, raspberries, coffee, *sous bois*, and lovely spice tones. On the palate the wine is medium-full, complex and tangy, with good mid-palate depth, but a fair bit of volatile acidity that soon consumes the finish of the wine. For the first fifteen minutes this was a lovely bottle, and then the collapse began in earnest, and ten minutes later the bottle was history. I suspect better bottles would be just lovely. This was **88** at its best, but that only lasted about fifteen minutes.

1964 Beaune “Cuvée Maurice Drouhin”- Hospices de Beaune (Maison Joseph Drouhin)

Maison Joseph Drouhin buys the Cuvée Maurice Drouhin each year from the Hospices. I was fortunate to come across a half case of this wine about a decade ago and have had great

pleasure from each and every bottle that I have opened. This is a blend of les Avaux, Champs Pimonts, Grèves and Boucherottes, and the '64 has consistently drunk with fine vigor over the course of the seven or eight years that I still owned bottles of this wine. The last bottle of the six pack, which I served a couple of years ago was still at its peak, offering up a deep and vibrant nose of cherries, a touch of red plum, woodsmoke, fresh herbs, gamebirds, forest floor and coffee. On the palate the wine is fullish, complex and still generous at the core, with melted tannins, still quite tangy acids and lovely length and grip on the complex and tertiary finish. A lovely bottle of fully mature Beaune, I have little doubt that this wine will continue to cruise along beautifully for years to come. 2008-2025+. **92.**