



The Five Grand Crus of Montrachet: A Story from Burgundy

Description

By Mukul Manku

A motorcycle, a sidecar and a journey into one of Burgundy's greatest wine stories.

During my recent visit to the French wine regions, one of my first stops was the C te de Beaune. I had hired a motorcycle with a sidecar through the official Beaune tourism website, and it turned out to be a wonderful way to explore the vineyards. The smaller motorable tracks took me well beyond the main roads and right into the heart of the vines.



Mobike with a Sidecar â?? driven by a lady Chauffeur who also doubled up as the wine guide

For a wine enthusiast, I was like a kid in a candy store â?? except that the proverbial candy was hanging from vines. The vineyards were lush and green, the grapes were ripening and I found myself stopping constantly to take photographs and videos.

Back home, those photographs and videos became a treasure trove. As I began researching them one by one, I found myself returning again and again to one of Burgundyâ??s most fascinating vineyard stories â?? *Montrachet*.

According to an old Burgundian legend, the lord of Puligny divided his lands among his children. His eldest son was the â??Chevalierâ?•, his daughters were the â??Pucellesâ?•, and his illegitimate son was the â??BÃ¢tardâ?•. These names survived in the vineyard landscape and, centuries later, became part of one of Burgundyâ??s most famous groupings of vineyards.

CHEVALIER-MONTRACHET



High on the slope above Montrachet lies Chevalier-Montrachet, entirely within Puligny-Montrachet. In the old story, this was the land of the knightly son. Today, it is one of the five Montrachet Grand Crus, producing Chardonnay of extraordinary finesse, intensity and longevity.

LES PUCELLES



Then come the â??maidensâ?•â?? Les Pucelles. In the legend, these were the daughtersâ?? lands. Today, Les Pucelles is a highly regarded Premier Cru of Puligny-Montrachet. It sits close to the great Montrachet vineyards and forms an intriguing part of the story.

BÃ?TARD-MONTRACHET



And then there was the •Bâtard• the illegitimate son. His name lives on in Bâtard-Montrachet, one of the five Grand Crus. The vineyard stretches across both Puligny-Montrachet and Chassagne-Montrachet, lying just below Montrachet. Its wines are famous for their richness, breadth and sheer power.

BIENVENUES-BÂTARD-MONTRACHET



The Bâtard name did not stop there. On the Puligny side lies Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet, a neighbouring Grand Cru and one of the five members of the Montrachet family. Small in size but enormous in reputation, it is another expression of Chardonnay from this remarkable patch of Burgundy.

CRIOTS-BÂTARD-MONTRACHET



And across the village boundary, in Chassagne-Montrachet, lies Criots-Bâtard-Montrachet. It is the smallest of the five Grand Crus and completes this extraordinary family of vineyards.

MONTRACHET

And at the heart of it all is Montrachet itself – shared between Puligny-Montrachet and Chassagne-Montrachet. A part of the five Grand Crus, its name has become almost synonymous with the idea of great white Burgundy, and the vineyard remains one of the most revered Chardonnay sites in the world.

Five Grand Crus. Two villages. One extraordinary piece of Burgundy.

And all of this began, for me, with a motorcycle, a sidecar and the freedom to wander down those little vineyard tracks.

To Surmarise – the five Montrachet Grand Crus are : **Montrachet, Chevalier Montrachet, Batard Montrachet, Bienvenues Batard Montrachet** and **Criots Montrachet**.

And that makes it easy to remember. Cheers.