



I Went to Burgundy Expecting One Thing. I Learnt Something Quite Different. ð?•.

Description

By Mukul Manku

When my trip to the major wine regions of France became a reality, there was one thing I was particularly looking forward to.

I thought that once I reached a wine-region city, I would finally be able to taste excellent wines of my choice by the glass â?? wines that are often difficult to find in India.

I was in for a surprise. And not a particularly pleasant one.

My First Evening in Dijon



Dijon

I reached Dijon, checked into my hotel near the city centre and went for an evening stroll through the market.

I walked into a restaurant and confidently asked for the wine menu.

What I saw surprised me.

The high-end Grand Cru and Premier Cru wines were available only by the bottle. The wines by the glass were mostly easier-drinking, more accessible wines.

“Perhaps I haven’t chosen the right restaurant,” I told myself.

But a couple of other bars and restaurants gave me much the same answer.

If I wanted to taste the premium wines, I had to order the bottle.

The problem was I couldn’t possibly drink an entire bottle myself.

And my plan was to taste many different wines by the glass.

I was beginning to feel rather disheartened.

Looking for Wine Tastings

Someone then suggested looking for wine-tasting events.

That seemed like a workable solution.

And yes, there were places – often wine shops – that organised tastings.

The catch?

They were generally held on specific days, and those dates don’t necessarily coincide with your stay.

That was exactly what happened to me in Dijon.

By the following day, I was becoming rather exasperated.

I couldn’t leave Dijon without tasting some exceptional wines from the Côte de Nuits. It would be a pity to come all this way and miss them.

Perhaps Bacchus was listening. ☺

Going to the Villages



Uber : Dijon to Gevrey Chambertin



Road Signage

I decided to go directly to where the wines were made â?? the villages themselves.

I took an Uber to Gevrey-Chambertin.

By the time I arrived, it was late evening. The only restaurant I saw open appeared to be full, with people waiting outside. It seemed reservations were required.



Les Criottes restaurant in Gevrey-Chambertin

But they somehow accommodated me.

There was no tasting measure here either, but there were some excellent wines available by the glass.

And so I finally got what I had been looking for: a glass each of **Jean-Baptiste Ponsot, Rully Premier Cru Molesme** and **Domaine Le Guellec-Ducouet, Gevrey-Chambertin Clos Champ**.





After the frustration of the previous two days, sitting there in Gevrey-Chambertin with Burgundy in my glass felt particularly satisfying.

It was late by the time I finished, but thankfully an Uber was available to take me back to Dijon.



What I Learnt

The experience left me with a few useful lessons that I would certainly keep in mind on a future wine trip â?? and perhaps they may be useful to anyone planning one of their own.

1. Plan wine tastings in advance.

If you want to attend organised wine tastings, plan and pre-book well in advance. Donâ??t assume there will be a tasting available simply because youâ??re in a famous wine region.

2. Look beyond the main city.

The famous wine region is often much more than its principal city.

Check the nearby wine villages and see what restaurants and wine bars offer by the glass. In my case, going to Gevrey-Chambertin opened up an option that I hadnâ??t found in Dijon.

3. Think about transportation before you set out.

Work out your transportation options in advance.

From Dijon, Uber proved comfortable and reasonably priced for me, but trains and buses are also worth exploring depending on the village.

And There Was Another Lesson

There is a third suggestion that worked beautifully for me later in my journey.

Iâ??ll share that when I write about **Saint-Ã?milion**.

Because wine travel, I realised, is not only about knowing the great appellations and the famous names.

Sometimes, it is also about knowing **where to go, when to go â?? and being willing to look beyond the obvious.**

Cheers! ð?•