

# EDOUARD DELAUNAY UK LAUNCH

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**Reviving a Relic: Laurent Delaunay reconstructs one of Burgundy's great estates**

By Victoria Goslar

**Editor's Pick**

Reviving a Relic: Laurent Delaunay reconstructs one of Burgundy's great estates

Of all the regions in the world where one might launch as a new wine producer, Burgundy is perhaps the least attainable. According to the latest figures from French land agency, Safer, the average price for a grand cru vineyard in Burgundy is €6.25million per hectare (\$2.6million for 1 acre), which would still be a lucky break given there's not much for sale anyway.

However, when the objective is to revive a house founded by family, particularly one with deep-rooted relationships in the region, then the circumstances are rather more auspicious than they might otherwise seem.

**Great grandson recovers great house**

Gathered at Hide Restaurant in London on November 28, 2019, Laurent Delaunay was visibly pleased (despite suffering from a cold) to greet UK press and share the fruits of his labor in reviving his great grandfather's, Edouard Delaunay's, Burgundy house. And judging by the ten wines he presented from his growing portfolio, it was evident that he has already made great strides since the 2017 purchase.

**The rise and fall and rise**

Edouard Delaunay's illustrious history dates back to 1893, when Edouard Delaunay senior and his brother Louis purchased the estate from an old supplier and relocated their families from Nantes and Angers to Nuits-Saint-Georges to run their new family business. From the 1920s, Jean Delaunay, the son of Edouard, and his brother Marcel expanded the business worldwide, from Europe to the Americas, from the African colonies to the Far East. In France the wines were not only in top restaurants but also supplied the major travel companies of the time (the French Line, Orient Express, Wagons-Lits, Cusart, Air France). The Delaunays distributed the wines of other prestigious producers including Domaine de la Romanée-Conti and the Liget-Belair family (La Romanée), and naturally took an active part in the creation of the famous Confirine des Chevaliers du Tastevin in 1934.

Also, a difficult period brought on by Laurent's father, Jean-Marie Delaunay, falling ill, as well as economic challenges during the Gulf War recession, led to the decision to sell the business to the Bossot family.

Nevertheless, Laurent found success in the industry. Upon graduating from Dijon University with his wife, and fellow viticulturist Catherine Delaunay, they founded Boissot-Clement, making wine in the Langedoc-Roussillon, Rhone Valley, and Provence, then company became famous for Les Jumeaux, its flagship brand of varietal wines from Pays d'Oc, and its signature range of high-end wines, Abbots & Delaunay from the Languedoc. Selling more than 15 million bottles of their wine in 16 countries gave them some more options.

**Back to Burgundy**

"We always kept one eye on returning to Burgundy," said Laurent. The puzzle started to come together when at a lunch with Jean-Claude Bossot he asked the question, and Bossot replied that in fact he had already been thinking that the name should return to him, he also happened to have bought back their original property, Château de Charnay, in the Hauts-Côtes de Nuits, and began renovations to the highest standard. "I bought the right to use my family name again. The original vineyards, however, were not for sale."

"My family always kept very good relationships in Burgundy," explained Laurent, acknowledging that his siblings' connections, along with the small distribution company he started in Burgundy in 2003, DVP, allowed him to source grapes from more than 130 different growers.

He assembled a star team, led by cellar master, Christophe Brichet, who was previously chief winemaker at Domaine du Loyde Vieille de Beaune, with experience making wine in Chile and Turkey. They create around 25 different wines from purchased grapes, but the house allows them to take responsibility from harvest. "We set the harvest date and pick the grapes ourselves," said Laurent. "The work is a very precise one. It's very important to be aware of our strengths and weaknesses. Even preparation to bottling and bottling—we can make important improvements with attention to details."

Edouard Delaunay produced 60,000 bottles in 2017, 75 percent of which were Pinot Noir. While grapes were more difficult to find, but Laurent plans to increase white production, and double his overall volume in his second vintage, while continuing to improve quality.

The total capacity of the winery is 20,000 cases. "It might take us several years to get there," smiled Laurent, but there's hope that Edouard Delaunay will once again become a leading Burgundian house along the way.

**The Mosu**

**Edouard Delaunay Bourgogne Chardonnay Côte d'Or 2017**  
Grapes sourced from the Côte de Beaune (mainly Auneau-Duresses and young vines in Meurville). Barrel fermented (33% new oak), aged 12 months with occasional stirring.  
Refreshing and bright with delicate lemon and creamy stone fruit flavors.

**Edouard Delaunay Saint-Romain La Vallée 2017**  
This cuvée hails from two high-altitude plots, the En-Pollage and La Perrière, with marl and limestone subsoil containing some layers of clay. Vinified in French oak barrels (20% new oak) at low temperatures using indigenous yeasts. Aging in the same lightly toasted barrels approximately 23 months.  
Very lively, zesty apple and lemon-peel flavors dancing across the palate. Satisfying depth, weight, and persistence. Simply delicious.

**Edouard Delaunay Cuvée Cartier-Champagne Grand Cru 2017**  
Their only Grand Cru of 2017, in 2016 they will have Chevalier-Hontichet.  
Grapes sourced from the En-Champagne climat located on the border between Pernand-Vergillasses and Aloxe-Corton in the upper part of the appellation grown on clay-rich, mostly east. 3 barrels total production, 2 of which were new oak, 15 months barrel aging.  
Lean, balance and finesse, but not huge amount of fruit intensity. Lovely weight on the palate, with an overall delicate freshness and stone-fruit flavor. Needs time to evolve completely—will very young.

**Edouard Delaunay Bourgogne Côte d'Or Pinot Noir 2017**  
From four growers from the Côte de Beaune and Côte de Nuits (Nolay, Chery, and Flixel) all vinified separately. Cold maceration for 4 days (30°C), 10% whole bunch maceration.  
Small dark-blue oval barrels—with open tops, natural yeast fermentation.  
Elegant during the second half of the fermentation—no need getting any green notes. Post-fermentation maceration, 70% aged in barrels, 30% new oak, 30% in stainless steel.  
Vibrant pure red fruit and earthy notes. Fresh acidity, balanced with just enough concentration and very soft, barely there tannins.

**Edouard Delaunay Beauve Premier Cru Les Grès 2017**  
From vines planted in three calcareous soil that contains clay and iron oxides. Located in the center of Beaune village, at the bottom of the slope. Completely deacidified and crucial. Maceration is rather long with regular punch-down. Oak barrel aging lasts 18 months, with 30% new oak.  
Jewel-like garnet tone. Intense earthy and red-cherry aromas laced with vanilla and wood smoke. Lovely and long across the palate, with tartness ground the wine. Tertiary flavors on the horizon.

**Edouard Delaunay Nuits-Saint-Georges La Vallée Vieilles Vignes 2017**  
Grapes come from three plots located at the foot of the slope, both north and south of the village, where limestone and a small clay soil and an average high yield of 30 tons per hectare. Vines are 60 years old. The vines are trained in a traditional horizontal system to fully utilize the sun and the wind. The soil is a blend of red and grey limestone. The vines are trained in a traditional horizontal system to fully utilize the sun and the wind. The soil is a blend of red and grey limestone. The vines are trained in a traditional horizontal system to fully utilize the sun and the wind. The soil is a blend of red and grey limestone.

**Edouard Delaunay Nuits-Saint-Georges Premier Cru Aux Chapeaux 2017**  
This is one of the plots located in the western part of the appellation (lower vineyard), in a rather steep and compact plot of 2.5 hectares. The vines are trained in a traditional horizontal system to fully utilize the sun and the wind. The soil is a blend of red and grey limestone. The vines are trained in a traditional horizontal system to fully utilize the sun and the wind. The soil is a blend of red and grey limestone.

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**Edouard Delaunay Chablis Blanc 2017**  
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**Edouard Delaunay Chablis Blanc 2017**  
From two plots, in Chablis and Auxeyres, where the vines are 60 years old, the eastern part of the appellation, located in the Chablis and Auxeyres (Chablis) sub-appellation and vinified traditionally with about 30% of new oak. Fermentation maceration followed by fermentation in oak (aged 12 months) and 10% of oak. The vines are trained in a traditional horizontal system to fully utilize the sun and the wind. The soil is a blend of red and grey limestone.

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