A Good Buy from a Top Burgundy Vintage

Henri Gouges Bourgogne Rouge 2005

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I bought many red Burgundies from the superb 2005 vintage, intending to hang on to some until they reach maturity. I still recall drinking my 1990s way too young and do not want to repeat that mistake with the ’05s.

Part of my strategy was stocking up on some serious Bourgogne rouge. I plan to drink these Pinot Noirs over the next two to five years. Not only does the quality of the vintage elevate these regional wines, they also serve as a barometer to indicate how the village wines and *premiers crus* (and of course *grands crus*, if you can afford them) are developing. (Check out another recent Bourgogne rouge pick of mine.)

One of the Bourgognes is from Henri Gouges and cost $24. It comes from two parcels in the Nuits commune, one consisting of mainly limestone soils, the other a mix of limestone and clay.

The Gouges cousins, Christian and Pierre, do not use much new oak, so their wines evolve slowly, with pure expressions of fruit and place. This Bourgogne was full, rich and earthy, even slightly animal, with wild berry flavors. It still needs time, perhaps another year or two, to soften and show its best. I gave it 88 points, non-blind.

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