FRANCE- BURGUNDY, RHONE, AND CHAMPAGNE
Burgundy

• Burgundy is much smaller than Bordeaux, producing only half as much wine.
  – In Bordeaux, the wine-producing estates grow their own grapes, have the winemaking facility and aging caves on the property, and market the wines under their own name.
  – In Burgundy, each village will have its own appellation, and the vineyards within that village may each have their own individual appellations. Those vineyards, although very small, may also have several owners.
Burgundy (continued)

• In Burgundy, winemaking facilities are located in the towns, away from the vineyards.
  – The name under which a wine is marketed may be that of a merchant or négoçiant, who is not connected to the vineyards.
Burgundy (continued)

- The history of wine production in Burgundy precedes the Roman Empire.
  - There is clear evidence that viticulture was well established here by the second century AD.
• During the Middle Ages, as its landholdings increased, the Church played a crucial role in perfecting techniques of viticulture and wine making.
  – The Cistercian order, in the northern part of Burgundy, did extensive systematic research into the relationship among grape varietal, soil and climate conditions, and the wine that resulted.
  – These monks were among the very first to investigate and define the concept of terroir. From their meticulous work evolved the idea of crus.
Burgundy (continued)

• After the Napoleonic Wars came to an end in 1815, economic and political conditions stabilized and wine production in Burgundy expanded.
  – With the rise of the bourgeoisie, France’s middle class, a new market for Burgundy’s wines opened up.
  – Attention to quality and authenticity was not always maintained.
  – Vintners and négociants could expand production by blending in juice from grapes grown in inferior vineyards outside of Burgundy.
Burgundy (continued)

• The passage in 1935 of the Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée laws eliminated the worst of the fraud and gave protection to the place names within Burgundy.

• The AOC laws also established standards of viticulture and winemaking, thus increasing the overall quality.

• Furthermore, since the 1980s, there has been a trend away from the pattern of small growers selling their grapes to négociants, and instead the number of proprietaire labels has increased.
The Classification System of Burgundy

• When learning to decipher Burgundy’s classification system, it is helpful to think in terms of concentric circles. There are five levels.
  – In the case of Burgundy, the outermost concentric circle is the general appellation, Burgundy. The label will say simply “Bourgogne Rouge” or “Bourgogne Blanc.”
  – Grapes for this level of wine may be grown anywhere within the region of Burgundy.
  – Burgundy is a small region with 98,000 acres under vines, and the grapes used have to be the approved varietals of Pinot Noir for reds and Chardonnay for whites.
The Classification System of Burgundy (continued)

• The classifications continue in decreasing order of size:
  
  – *Regional appellations.* For these wines, the grapes must all be grown within a specific subregion of Burgundy.
  
  – *Commune appellations.* A commune is a village or town. All the grapes used in a wine labeled with the name of a specific commune must come from vineyards located within its boundaries.
The classifications continue in decreasing order of size:

- **Premier cru appellation** ("first growth designation"). The label for premier cru wines will show both the name of the vineyards and the name of the commune in which it is located.

- The **grand cru appellation** ("great growth designation"). The grand cru vineyards have been rated by the authorities as the very best.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Chablis

• Chablis is home to some of the driest and most elegant wines made from the Chardonnay grape.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Chablis

- The region lies in the far north of Burgundy, and is actually about 40 miles closer to Champagne than it is to the rest of Burgundy and was, in fact, part of Champagne at one time.

- Although it is one of the classic regions of Burgundy, its growing conditions have more in common with Champagne’s than with the rest of Burgundy’s.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy

• Burgundy is divided into six main regions.
• They are: Chablis, the Côte d’Or (Côte de Nuits and Côte de Beaune), the Côte Chalonnaise, the Mâconnais, and Beaujolais.
  – Chablis lies geographically separate from the rest of Burgundy, some 81 miles to the northwest.
  – The remaining regions are spread in a contiguous line from the city of Dijon in the north to the city of Lyon in the south.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Chablis

- Chablis is an appellation restricted to dry white wine.
  - These are among the driest and most elegant wines made from the Chardonnay grape.

The Grand Cru vineyards of Chablis
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Chablis

- Chablis is a fairly small region, with less than 7,000 acres under vines.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Chablis

• The climate here is cool enough that the grapes maintain an excellent crisp acidity.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Chablis

- The soil throughout Chablis is uniform.
- It is a unique and unusual mix of chalky limestone and clay.

All of Chablis' Grand Cru vineyards and Premier Cru vineyards are planted on primarily Kimmeridgean soil which is composed of limestone, clay and fossilized oyster shells.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Côte d’Or

- Burgundy’s Côte d’Or (Golden Slope) is widely regarded as one of the world’s best areas for growing cool-climate grapes.
  - The area is only about 30 miles long and under 2.5 miles at its widest.
  - Elevation is between 720 and 1,000 feet.
  - The hills protect the vineyards from excessive rain, and provide south and east facing slopes that catch more sunlight.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Côte de Nuits

• The Côte de Nuits is home to some of the worlds most famous red wine producing vineyards with a couple of great white wines as well.

• Of the 23 grand cru vineyards in Burgundy, 22 are in the Côte de Nuits.

• Simply put, the Côte de Nuits is the worlds premier red wine district.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Côte de Nuits

- The Côte de Nuits starts in the north with the village of Marsannay, just south of the city of Dijon and continues for 14 miles.
Château du Clos de Vougeot
Vineyards of Cote de Nuits
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Côte de Beaune

- The Côte de Beaune is famous for its whites, and all the Grand Cru vineyards are white except one. However, three-quarters of the production is red wine.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Côte de Beaune

- The Côte de Beaune is more than twice the size of the Côte de Nuits, stretching some 71 miles from north to south.
- The hills here have more gentle slopes and face mostly southeast.
Harvest time on the Côte de Beaune

BOB FRASER- Do not Duplicate
The famous roof of the Hospices de Beaune
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Côte de Beaune (continued)

• There are sixteen villages included in the Côte de Beaune appellation, including:
  – Aloxe-Corton
  – Savigny-lès-Beaune
  – Beaune
  – Pommard
The picture above shows vines in spring, the rows piled with Volnay's friable soils to protect them from the winter frost.
Château of Savigny-lès-Beaune
Outside Beaune
POMMARD
Cote De Beaune

Volnay

Meursault
Louis Jadot, Beaune Visit
Louis Jadot Winemaker Jacques Lardier
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Beaujolais

- Beaujolais is a subdistrict of Burgundy; however, there are many differences.
  - The climate and soil are different; it is in a different département than the rest of Burgundy; the primary grape is Gamay instead of Pinot Noir.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Beaujolais

• Beaujolais is one of the most popular red wines in many countries around the world. Beaujolais has 49,540 acres of vines.
The Wine Regions of Burgundy: Beaujolais

• As much as 50 percent of a Beaujolais producer’s wine is released as Beaujolais Nouveau, a very light, simple wine that is released by mid-November.
Côtes-du-Rhône

• The region along the Rhône River in southern France is an ancient wine-producing area.
  – The valley of the Rhône extends from the city of Lyon in the north where it is joined by the River Saône, and extends south for approximately 120 miles to the city of Avignon.
Côtes-du-Rhône

- For much of the length of the river the valley is heavily industrialized.
- Along the northern section lies rolling agricultural land, and in southern sections, ascending the slopes (the “côtes”) reveals rugged dry open spaces. This is where the vineyards are located.
Côtes-du-Rhône (continued)

• The Rhône is separated into two regions, the Northern Rhône and the Southern Rhône.
  – The entire region is warm and dry. But the North is definitely cooler, and the vineyards here cling to the stony soil of steep hillsides.
Côtes-du-Rhône (continued)

- The southern section begins south of the town of Montélimar and continues on south of Avignon.
- Here the climate is definitely Mediterranean, very warm and sunny and dry.

A vineyard in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, in southern Rhône
Côtes-du-Rhône (continued)

- The principal grape varietals of the Northern Rhône is Syrah for reds and Viognier for whites. The Syrah grape produces full-bodied wines with fruity aromas.
  - Tight and austere when young, Syrah-based reds will open up to show accessible flavors when mature.
  - Viognier grapes have a deep yellow color and possess an intriguing floral/fruity aroma.

Viognier grapes ripening on the vine
Côtes-du-Rhône (continued)

• The vineyards of the southern Rhône support a much more complex array of grape varietals.
• Whereas the wines of the Northern Rhône, both reds and whites, are mostly single-varietal, those of the Southern Rhône are blends of several varietals.
• The principal red grape of the southern appellations is the Grenache, a noble varietal that thrives in warm, sunny climates.
• Other varietals used for blending include Mourvèdre, Syrah, and Cinsaut, for reds, and Marsanne and Rousanne for whites.
Côtes-du-Rhône (continued)

• The southern section of the Rhône Valley is much larger than the northern one.
  – The total acreage for the entire appellation is almost 150,000 acres.
  – Of that, only 5,900 acres are in the nine communes and crus of the Northern Rhône.
  – The rest is in that very large, highly varied region of the Southern Rhône.
Champagne

- Champagne is not merely a type of wine. It is a geographic region in France, and only wine made in a specific method from specified grape varietals grown inside the boundaries of that region is technically Champagne.
Mumm, Reims, France
Viticulture in Champagne

- There are three grapes that are allowed in Champagne: Chardonnay, Pinot Meunier, and Pinot Noir.
  - The latter two are red grapes, but the juice of these grapes is white.
  - There are over 72,000 acres of vineyards, owned by 19,000 individual growers.
Champagne vineyards in Verzenay in the Montagne de Reims subregion
The Terroir of Champagne

- The most distinguishing characteristic of this environment is the high concentration of chalk in the soil.
  - The poor nutritional content of the soil means the vines have low vigor.
  - This results in an open canopy, which reduces the likelihood of mildew.

BOB FRASER- Do not Duplicate
The Terroir of Champagne (continued)

• Champagne is farther north than any other important wine region, and the damp cold weather barely allows grapes to ripen.
  – Acidity levels stay high in such a cool climate, which is desirable in any sparkling wine.
  – However, a minimum sugar level must be reached, and if the temperatures stay too cool, the grapes have a difficult time reaching the necessary ripeness.
The Style of Champagne Producers

• There are approximately 110 houses (or, in French, *marques*) that make Champagne.
  – Because these companies own only 10 percent of the vineyards in Champagne, they buy most of their grapes from growers.
Champagnes are bottled at different levels of sweetness:

- **Extra Brut**: Dry; residual sugar is less than 0.6 percent per liter.
- **Brut**: This is the most common classification, and forms the backbone of any house’s line. Residual sugar is between 0.5 and 1.5 percent per liter.
- **Extra Dry**: These Champagnes are off-dry, with residual sugar between 1.0 and 2 percent.
The Style of Champagne Producers
(continued)

– **Sec**: Although *sec* means “dry,” these Champagnes have noticeable sugar—between 2 and 3.5 percent.

– **Demi-Sec**: The literal translation is “off-dry,” but these are quite sweet. The sugar is between 3.5 and 5 percent. These Champagnes are meant to be served with dessert.

– **Doux**: The sweetest form of Champagne has a minimum of 5.5 percent sugar, and in some cases contains as much as 8 percent.
The Style of Champagne Producers
(continued)

• There are other important terms that show up on Champagne labels. Most of these types will be made in a Brut style.

• **Nonvintage**: Grapes from several different years are blended together to get consistency of quality, even in years when weather patterns are less than ideal.

• **Vintage**: If conditions are favorable, the wine-maker can choose not to blend in wine reserved from lesser vintages. The wine must contain at least 80 percent grapes from the declared year.
The Style of Champagne Producers
(continued)

• **Blanc de blancs**: Literally, “white from white” is a Champagne made exclusively from Chardonnay grapes.

• **Blanc de noir**: Literally, “white from black.” The wine is made exclusively from the two allowed red varietals.

• **Rosé**: If some red wine is added to a cuvée of white wine, or if the juice of the red wines is given some skin contact, the resulting Champagne will be a rosé.
THAT’S ALL FOLKS!!!