



# TIME WARP

## VVEUVE FOURNY CLOS DU FAUBOURG NOTRE-DAME 1999 TO 2009

*by Barbara Schroeder*

The Fourny brothers have been producing the exquisite and rare single-vineyard wine Clos du Faubourg Notre-Dame in Vertus since 1993. Exclusively for VINUM readers, they have offered up nine vintages that impressively illustrate this unique single-vineyard wine's particular ageing potential.

Clos du Faubourg Notre Dame in Vertus is intertwined with the history of the Fourny family. It is home to the winery, and is where Charles and Emmanuel Fourny were born, lived until the age of ten, learned to cycle and played football. However, the Clos is also first and foremost a walled vineyard. Since being acquired by the family in 1931, its harvests have been picked and pressed separately and matured in oak barrels. Our grandparents and parents therefore knew that the vines in this small plot produced very special juices. However, for decades the Clos's wines formed the basis of vintage champagnes, meaning that they were blended with grapes from other sites. It was not until 1993 that the brothers made the courageous decision to bottle and market them separately as a true single-vineyard wine. 19 vintages have since been produced: ten are still slumbering in the cellar, including the

magnificent 2008, which is unusually being delivered after the 2009. 'Geological studies have confirmed that our Clos is a particularly special corner of Vertus. The vines are rooted directly in pure chalk, which comes to the surface in this area. This compensates for vintage variation and therefore ensures a hugely consistent style, particular freshness, spirit and minerality, or more precisely salinity', Charles Fourny tells us. Emmanuel adds: 'This Clos, just 29 ares in size, effectively has its own particular microclimate. Unfortunately it only produces the modest quantity of a few hundred bottles, making it truly a rarity. Opening nine different vintages in one go is not an everyday occurrence here. We are therefore doubly delighted to share the results of this unique tasting with VINUM's loyal readership, even if it is only in virtual form.' The following two pages detail the results of this very special experience.





## CLOS VERTICAL TASTING:

**2009** A sunny summer ensured a particularly fruity, juicy, full-bodied yet delicately spicy wine with hazelnut and grapefruit notes. The salinity typical of the vineyard shapes the lingering finish.

**2007** Difficult year, rainy harvest, and the Fournys wondered for a long time whether they wanted to produce a vintage wine at all. The base wines were not lacking fullness, but did lack some freshness and length. This makes the spirit of the fully mature wine even more astonishing, with its moss and forest mushroom notes and its jovial, generous style.

**2006** Well-balanced year producing particularly elegant, rounded and accessible wines with astonishing ageing potential. Cocoa, hazelnut and pomelo nose that has remained remarkably clean; slender and lean, spirited and fresh with a fruity, mineral, lingering finish. Still a superb bottle.

**2005** A year offering a particular mixture of maturity and herbaceous style. A small harvest, so fewer bottles than usual. Chardonnay's varietal aromas particularly come to the fore, with lemony freshness acting as an interesting counterpoint to the fruity fullness and huge maturity, as well as providing a lingering finish.

**2004** A particularly complex year that was generous with its quantities: people expected smooth wines

Emmanuel Fourny





## TASTING NOTES

with medium ageing potential, and were pleasantly surprised. Clos wines were no exception: not even slightly tired, offering density, astonishing freshness and striking smoky notes with touches of vanilla pastry.

**2002** An exceptional year in Champagne. This is borne up by the Clos with a still youthful wine that has plenty left in the tank, and only opens up once swirled. Grapefruit, pastry, hazelnut and cocoa aromas, stately, particularly deep and lingering, with an exquisite finish of exotic fruit notes.

**2000** Not a top year. Once again, the decision to produce a vintage champagne was made fairly late on. However, the Clos terroir produced a particularly interesting wine, one of the best in this difficult vintage. Ripe nose with complex rancio notes of butter pastry, hazelnut and dried apricot, a full-bodied and lascivious structure, but also enough supporting freshness. Very appealing, enjoy now.

**1999** A sunny and warm year, with parallels to be drawn with 1989 and 2009. A characterful and spirited wine, ripe and very vinous in its particular style, with an interesting truffle, musk and dried fruit nose and a lingering bitter almond finish.

Charles Fourny