

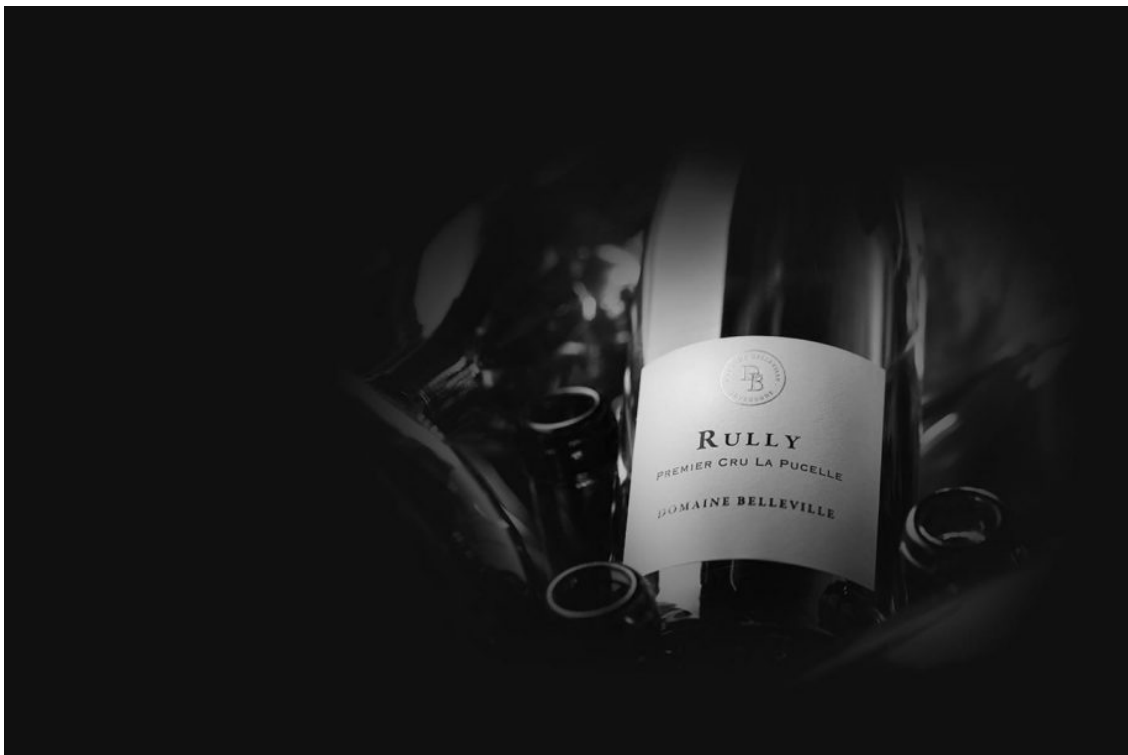
PREMIUM

Domaine Belleville: A new Burgundy name to look out for

Andy Howard MW tastes nine wines from this relative newcomer with majority holdings in Rully and Mercurey and finds premium expressions of terroir at affordable prices...



Andy Howard MW
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Credit: <https://www.domainebelleville.com/>

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Belleville was purchased in 2017 by Denise Dupré and Mark Nunnally – two American wine-lovers – and Jean-Luc Vitoux, an ex-wine law lawyer who was born in Champagne.

Although Dupré and Nunnally reside in the US, they have many investments in the hospitality sector across France such as the Royal Champagne hotel in Champillon; Champagne house Leclerc Briant in Epernay; and the hotel/restaurant Le Chateau de la Commarine in Pommard.

Domaine Belleville comprises 10.5ha in Rully and 5.5ha in Mercurey, with a further 2ha of vineyards in Gevrey, Chambolle-Musigny, Puligny Montrachet and Santenay.

In total the estate owns holdings in six Rully Premier Cru, with an additional Premier Cru (Clos l'Evêque) in Mercurey. Four more Rully wines are bottled as separate lieu-dit, together with five lieu-dit from Mercurey. Vitoux notes that the estates objective is to focus on just one plot and to respect and express terroir diversity.

The team at Belleville is headed up by young winemaker Charles Nebout, an oenologist and son of a winegrower in Saint Pourçain. The estate is in the process of converting to organic, with the first 'organic' harvest taking place in 2018.

Other improvements are being made to aid the focus on terroir expression and quality. All white grapes are now transported from vineyard to winery in small boxes, before pressing and fermentation in stainless steel. Post-fermentation, white wines are generally aged for 8–12 months with a maximum of 25 barrels used. Red wines are nearly all destemmed, before 10–14 months ageing with 25–30% new wood. In total the estate produces around 100,000 bottles.

Jean-Luc Vitoux explains that Domaine Belleville's objective is to become one of the most well-known in the Côte Chalonnaise, and there is no shortage of quality with these wines. To my mind, there is still a little more work to do in emphasising individual terroir – a number of wines had a very glossy feel, with oak characters a little more evident than expected. However, the wines (from the 2018 vintage) are still very youthful and with cellaring, the vineyard character is certain to increase.

There was a significant step up in quality from the village (and some of the lieu-dit) wines to Premier Cru level, as one would expect.

Within the whites, the lieu-dits of Rully La Créée and Mercurey Les Villeranges were very promising, displaying elegant and understated characters without oak being over prevalent. Of the Premier Cru, Rully 1er Cru Pucelle was drinking beautifully already but with a long future ahead, and of the red wines, Rully 1er Cru Chapitre and Mercurey 1er Cru Clos l'Evêque, were fine wines with lovely fruit purity, restrained oak, and great potential to age.

Domaine Belleville is certainly a name to look out for – these are undeniably high-quality wines which are bound to increase the growing reputation of Rully and Mercurey.

See Andy Howard MW's tasting notes and scores of 9 Domaine Belleville wines



Domaine Belleville, La Cree, Rully, Burgundy, France, 2018

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Quite rich on the palate with a very clean flavour. Good weight. Some attractive spicy notes on both nose and palate – quite a lot of oak evident at the moment. Fresh and pure with interesting notes of agrumes on the palate. Just a little short on the finish but...

Points 90



Domaine Belleville, Les Villeranges, Mercurey, 2018

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Pale yellow colour with some green tints. Refined with a good mineral edge, this has clean, crisp apple fruit character. Oak is restrained and well-balanced. An under-stated Mercurey with a lot of finesse.

Points 92

Domaine Belleville, Rully, 1er Cru La Fosse, Burgundy, 2018

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Creamy, ripe, weighty. Oak and spice evident. Nicely made but, like a few other white wines from this producer, the power and density tend to dominate at the moment. Could do with a little more

restraint and finesse. Typical Rully sunny characters but would be nice to have a bit...

Points 91



Domaine Belleville, Rully, 1er Cru La Pucelle, 2018

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A powerful, rich and spicy example of white 1er Cru Rully, this retains good freshness with a lovely 'bite' of acidity on the palate. Plenty of spicy oak compliments the stoned fruit and greengage characters. Although 14% this is a very enjoyable example which can be drunk young, or aged...

Points 93



Domaine Belleville, Les Hates, Santenay, Burgundy, 2018

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Bright red cherry on the nose with a touch of spice and hints of menthol. Soft red cherry fruits, a touch of bitterness but this works very well with the ripe fruit characters alongside nice tannins. Quite soft and generous on the palate with nicely integrated oak. Not complicated but...

Points 90



Domaine Belleville, Chaponniere, Rully, Burgundy, 2018

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Slightly stemmy red fruit character on nose and palate with acidity that is rather pronounced at the moment. A lighter style of wine with medium-concentration and a good, deep, purple colour. Palate is soft with purity of fruit flavour. Some damson fruits plus raspberry – an attractive, fresh Rully which...

Points 91



Domaine Belleville, Rully, 1er Cru Chapitre, Burgundy, 2018

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Another good example of the Rully AOP, and worthy of 1er Cru status. Smooth, ripe fruit, luscious character on the palate. Smooth tannins, acidity quite pronounced but as expected in a young wine. Attractive flavours of ripe dark plum fruit, very nicely integrated, subdued, oak. The nose is very

Points 93



Domaine Belleville, Les Perrieres, Mercurey, Burgundy, 2018

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Deep colour, youthful, red and black fruits – bilberry, raspberry, damson. Nice weight, firm but ripe tannins with a good texture. Attractive nose with some violet, floral characters and a touch of spice on the palate. Medium body but just lacks a little concentration on the mid-palate.

Points 90



Domaine Belleville, Mercurey, 1er Cru Le Clos l'Evêque, 2018

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Much more structure and concentration than Les Perrières. Focussed palate with firm, ripe tannins and crisp acidity – this needs a lot more time. Very clean on the palate and nose – dark-berry fruit and under-stated oak. A fine example of 1er Cru Rully which will age very well.

Points 93

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