



2011 Chateau Granges Cochard Morgon Vieilles Vignes 90/100

From 80-year-old vines, vinified with a high percentage of stems and whole bunches, and matured in large oaken foudre, the Granges Cochard 2011 Morgon Vieilles Vignes delivers floral and licorice overtones as well as toasty, nutty notes that point to the positive influence of ripe stems. There are even carob and chocolate notes, yet for all of their low tones, the fruit here is of bright and tart-edged dark berries, and a saline streak serves to engage the salivary glands. This interactively multidimensional cuvee should be worth following at least through 2015. (I did not have chance to acquire a bottle of the corresponding 2010 stateside and there wasn't a bottle left to be found at the estate last December.) The team at Chateau Granges Cochard - English owners Sarah and James Wilding, vineyard manager Denis Garod, and oenological consultant (ex-Jadot) Remi Jean - are up to serious business, as I discovered on this my first visit there. Their willingness to experiment and openness to critical observations and the exchange of ideas make this is an estate well worth watching. In complete disrepair when the Wildings' bought it from a former negociant just ahead of the 2008 harvest, its 40- to 100-year-old vines had already gotten sufficiently tough love and its cellar been sufficiently restored - including bringing in clean old foudres and used barriques of Chateau des Jacques provenance - to render fine 2009s (on which I reported in Issue 196 based on tasting samples stateside) and the subsequent collections follow suit. Fruit is being partially de-stemmed depending on parcel and condition of fruit, and extraction is via both pigeage and pump-over and lasts 2-3 weeks. Some lots have fermented spontaneously and a range of different yeast cultures have also been brought to bear. In his former profession as an accountant, says James Wilding "I specialized in trouble-shooting, and that," he jokes, "seems to be precisely the right background for my new job."