



Arlequin One Bottle Club
January 2018
David Duband Nuits-St.-Georges 2014

Burgundy, France

Varietal: 100% *Pinot Noir*

Winemaker Burgundy native David Duband caught the break of his lifetime while still a student in enology school. His grapegrowing father introduced him to a Francois Feuillet, a wealthy businessman who'd just purchased vines in Aux Thorey, a premier cru in Nuits-St.-George. Somehow, David convinced Feuillet to let him make the wines--even though Duband was a total winemaking novice, with barely a vintage under his belt. (The Duband family grew 50 acres of grapes in the Hauts Côtes de Nuits, but sold them to the local cooperative.) In exchange for tending the vineyards and making the wine, Feuillet let Duband take half the grapes to make wine under his own name. That arrangement has proven wildly successful for both Feuillet and Duband since that first vintage, in 1991. A fast learner and an eager apprentice, Duband studied under some of Burgundy's best, including Rober Jayer of Jayer-Gilles. As Feuillet bought prized vineyards in more Burgundy *terroirs*, such as and Vosne-Romanée and Echézeaux, he turned them over to Duband to work. The combination of notable *terroirs* and Duband's increasing mastery proved electric; Critical acclaim attained a groundswell with the 2000 vintage, and Duband went from unknown to acclaimed talent seemingly overnight.

Vintage Alan Meadows, of Burghound, provides the following comments on the 2014 vintage in Burgundy's Côte de Nuits: The best 2014s are going to provide a great deal of pleasure... In particular 2014 will offer an abundance of possibilities for reasonably priced alternatives for ageable house reds and the Hautes Côtes de Nuits produced a number of lovely examples. The 2014s, notwithstanding their earlier accessibility, I believe may very well surprise people by how well they age due to their excellent balance.

Winemaking Over the years, Duband's style has evolved to one of increasing finesse and elegance. Over the last five vintages or so, he has eschewed cold maceration of the grapes (prior to fermentation) altogether, and gently punches down the cap curing fermentation by foot. The goal of both techniques is to lessen the extraction of color and tannins, in order to create lighter, more fine-boned wines. Duband has also decreased the amount of new oak he uses. For this Nuits-St.-Georges, just 40 percent of the barrels were new. Most significant, Duband began, with the 2008 vintage, to vinify the majority of his red grapes as whole clusters. His inspiration came from tasting old bottles of classic producers who used the practice, such as Domaine Dujac and Domaine de la Romanée-Conti. Duband believes that this technique helps to create livelier, spicier and more aromatically complex wines. After fermentation, the wines matured in barrels for 14 months before a further 3 months of bottle age. Unfined and unfiltered.

Vineyard In 1999, Duband began converting all of the vineyards under his control to organic methods. Grapes for this village cuvée come chiefly from La Charmotte and Aux Saints-Juliens, two vineyards on the far northern side of the appellation. Duband also blends in a few barrels from Les Plateaux, on the south hill.

Tasting Notes In comparison to the delicate wines of Chambolle-Musigny and suave reds of Vosne Romanée, Nuits-St.-Georges wines can be rustic and a little wild, with significant tannins. This example, while showing the tannic grip typical of the appellation, is more refined than most of its brethren. The medium-bodied palate is spicy and bright, with savory notes of forest floor and underbrush highlighting high-toned red and black cherry and berry fruit. We love the whisper of oak on this wine, which is just enough to round out the palate without masking the purity of its fruit, herb and earth flavors.

Food Pairing Duband suggests serving this red with *blanquette de veau* and rice pilaf, a dish whose mild flavors and unctuous richness make it an ideal foil for this fine-boned red. Alternatively, a simple roast chicken, rubbed with plenty of rosemary and thyme and served with creamy mashed potatoes, fits the bill nicely, too. Seared duck breast with tart cherry sauce makes a good bet for a dinner date.