



ALEX GAMBAL

Winemaker, Domaine Alex Gambal



Alex never thought he would be a winemaker. After graduating from UNC Chapel Hill in 1979 he began work in the real estate business in Washington, DC but in the late 80s he began to get interested in wine and food, frequented wine stores, and soon it had become his passion and avocation. In 1992 during a visit to Burgundy he met Becky Wasserman, the iconic exporter, and in an evening over good wine and cheese decided to take a sabbatical with his family working with Becky in the Burgundy.

He arrived in May 1993 with his wife and two children, 8 and 10 years old, placed them in the local schools (they became fluent in French in 5-6 months) and they all soon became part of the community. Alex says that having his children present was magic because there were many winemakers with children the same ages who were taking charge at their family domaines and thus became family friends as well as colleagues.

After three years in the export business Alex then attended the adult wine school in Beaune and began his winery in July 1997 by buying grapes and wine in barrel. In 2005 Alex bought his first vineyards consisting of Bourgogne Pinot Noir and Bourgogne Chardonnay consisting of 6 acres. In 2008 he continued his vineyard expansion by buying 1.5 acres of Puligny-Montrachet (Les Grands Champs and Les Petits Grands Champs) whose vines are nearly 60 years old, and a 1/2 acre parcel of Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru La Maltroie.

In March 2011 Alex became the first non Frenchman to purchase vines in the Grand Crus of Montrachet: ~1/2 an acre of Batard-Montrachet. The seller was Gambal's professor at the wine school in Beaune and the parcels of Batard-Montrachet had been in his family for many generations and one parcel was given to the grandfather as a payment for medical services early in

the 20th century. The Batard consists of two parcels which lie in the upper part of Batard that is considered the best or "Premiere Classe" according to the 1860 classifications, called "Les Batards Montrachet."

Also purchased was a 3/4 acre parcel of Puligny-Montrachet Les Enseignerres, classified a village wine, but because of its excellence it is often referred to as "Baby Batard." Finally, a 1/3 acre of Chassagne-Montrachet "L'Ormeau" completed the purchase. Recently Alex acquired another 8 hectares in Nuits St. Georges, Beaune, Savigny-les-Beaune and St. Romain, Volnay and Pommard bring his total to 12 hectares or 30 acres. All of Gambal's vines are farmed bio-biodynamically. Currently Alex produces approximately 5,000 cases of wine a year with 55% being white. The range of his appellations extends from Bourgogne Pinot Noir and Bourgogne Chardonnay, Village, Premier Crus and Grand Crus such as his Batard-Montrachet, Corton-Charlemagne Clos Vougeot and Latricieres-Chambertin.