



Joseph Drouhin

2008

Burgundy blessed with another great vintage

Autumn and winter were rather dry and mild; spring was cool and humid, followed by a summer resembling 2007.

By mid-September, the weather in Burgundy turned extraordinary and allowed harvesting to take place under ideal conditions. Depending on the areas, the overall quantity is lower: 5% to 30% less than in 2007. On the other hand, the quality level is high – and in Chablis even exceptional.

Summary of the 2007/2008 growing season

Burgundy experienced a severe cold spell in mid-December but milder conditions were prevalent in January and February. The average monthly temperature was actually 2°C higher than normal. It didn't rain much and there was a water deficit during February.

But the rain shortfall ended in March and the long sunny period that Burgundy had enjoyed that winter came to an end. In fact, it was probably the sunniest winter of these last ten years. Winter made a last-ditch intrusion at Easter: it snowed that day.

April was cool and wet, with little sunshine. By then, the amount of rainfall received was twice as heavy as usual. The vine seemed to take its time to grow: in some vineyards the buds were barely swelling on the branch whereas, in better exposed areas, they were already sprouting and open.

No sooner had spring arrived that summer-like conditions became the norm. The month of May was warm, with temperatures reaching 25°C (78°F) at times. The vine took advantage of these conditions to develop rapidly. By mid-May there were already 8 to 9 leaves out on the vine, the same level of development seen in 2005.

The weather was rather cool and rainy for June. The flowering took place over a two-week period, causing some *coulure* here and there (failure of the grape to develop after flowering). Those vines planted in late-ripening areas benefitted the most: when the temperature started to rise, the flowering took place rapidly and uniformly.

At the beginning of July, the berries were well formed and distinct. By July 15th, the grapes had assumed their final shape. The amount of sunshine was close to normal, except in August. The change of colour (*véraison*) occurred in Beaujolais around August 15th. It quickly spread to Côte d'Or and Chablis as the climatic conditions improved dramatically.

The weather was cooler and wetter at the beginning of September, with outbreaks of botrytis noticed in some areas. Maturation was progressing slowly and the picking was due to begin September 22nd. It is a classical date.

DOMAINES ET MONOPOLES

CHABLIS GRAND CRU LES CLOS • CHABLIS GRAND CRU VAUDESIR • CHABLIS GRAND CRU BOUGROS • CHABLIS GRAND CRU PREUSES • CHABLIS 1^{er} CRU MONTMANS • CHABLIS 1^{er} CRU SECHER
CHABLIS 1^{er} CRU VAILLONS • CHABLIS DOMAINE DE VAUDON • CHABLIS • RULLY • CHAMBERTIN-CLOS DE BEZE • GRIOTTE-CHAMBERTIN • CHAMBOLLE-MUSIGNY 1^{er} CRU AMOUREUSES
CHAMBOLLE-MUSIGNY 1^{er} CRU BAUDES • CHAMBOLLE-MUSIGNY 1^{er} CRU • BONNES-MARES • MUSIGNY • CLOS DE VOUGEOT • ECHEZEUX • GRANDS-ECHEZEUX • VOSNE-ROMANEE 1^{er} CRU PETITS MONTS
NUITS-SAINT-GEORGES 1^{er} CRU PROCES • CORTON-BRESSANDES • CORTON-CHARLEMAGNE • CHOREY-LES-BEAUNE • SAVIGNY-LES-BEAUNE • BEAUNE 1^{er} CRU EPENOTES • BEAUNE 1^{er} CRU CHAMPIMONTS
BEAUNE 1^{er} CRU GREVES • CÔTE DE BEAUNE • VOLNAY 1^{er} CRU CLOS DES CHÊNES • MEURSAULT EN LURAULE • BÂTARD-MONTRACHET • CHASSAGNE-MONTRACHET 1^{er} CRU MORGEOT MARQUIS DE LAGUICHE
MONTRACHET MARQUIS DE LAGUICHE • BEAUNE 1^{er} CRU CLOS DES MOUCHES

7 rue d'Enfer • BP 29 • 21201 Beaune Cedex • France • Tél. : +33 (0)3 80 24 68 88 • Fax : +33 (0)3 80 22 43 14 • maisondrouhin@drouhin.com • www.drouhin.com

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The weather turned beautiful by mid-September and stayed that way for the duration of the harvest: bright skies, dry and windy days, marked difference in temperature between day and night. The vines kept ripening under ideal conditions and all botrytis infection disappeared.

Style of the wines:

Chablis

We are quite confident to say that 2008 is one of the greatest vintage of the past 25 years. All the wines from Chablis to the Grands Crus, depending on their level of appellation, show concentration, richness, freshness, minerality and intense aromas. You will be easily seduced by these wines which are very pleasant.

It could be interesting to lay down these Chablis as their aromatic potential is important. Although very pleasant and seductive when young, we recommend drinking the Chablis within to 4 or 5 years, the Premiers Crus from 7 to 8 and the Grands Crus to drink from 2011 and the next 12 years.

Cote d'Or whites

The malolactic fermentations began later than usual and last several months. This ageing on the lees has allowed the wines to gain complexity, flesh, and to reduce the acidity level. The quality is homogeneous all across Côte d'Or. The wines show richness, minerality and freshness.

Crus of Mâconnais :

The yields are particularly low in St-Véran because of hail storm. The wines of the area show a very seductive floral character.

Cote d'Or reds :

Both in Côte de Beaune and in Côte de Nuits the yields at Joseph Drouhin estates are low (from 15 to 30% down compared to last year).

Just after the flowering we expected the yields to be lower but the sorting of the grapes reduced further the quantity produced. The colours are more intense than 2007, with a beautiful red rubis colour. The malolactic fermentations are almost completed. The wines have a good stuffing with a very nice freshness and refined tannic structure.

Côte de Nuits wines seem to have a greater ageing potential than the Cote de Beaune.

Frédéric J. DROUHIN

September 22nd 2009

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