Joseph Drouhin

The 2009 Vintage – Taking its place among the greatest…

The winter of 2008/2009 lingered in Burgundy. The temperature started rising only during the first two weeks of March. Spring moved in for good at the beginning of April and the weather at that time became unseasonably warm. The amount of rain was normal.

With such mild conditions prevailing, bud break spread to all the vineyards. In the space of four days, there were green shoots all over Burgundy.The recorded dates of this bud break are in many ways identical to 2005, on the whole 10 days earlier than for 2008. At the end of April, you could count up to four or five leaves fully developed on the vines.
In May, the growth was slowed down by some light rain and cooler temperatures, but by the middle of the month, the weather had turned warmer and sunnier than usual. The vines then grew at a faster pace, with 2 to 4 new leaves unfolding every week.
Flowering occurred on May 21st in the Chardonnay areas as well as on a few Pinot Noir vines.
The dates for mid-flowering were May 28th for Chardonnay in Côte de Beaune, and May 31 st for Pinot Noir in Côte de Nuits. Compared to 2008, these dates are significantly 13 days earlier, similar in fact to what we saw in 2003. The setting of the berries ("nouaison") began during the first week of June. By the end of the month, all the vines of Côte d'Or had reached the important stage of berry touch (also known as cluster tightening).
June and July were more humid than usual, with rainfall at times heavy but of short duration. As a result, the growth of the vine was slowed down and "véraison" (turning colour) got under way only at the end of July. The summer, both hot and sunny, came in early August, providing ideal conditions for maturation which by August 24th was practically all done. The grapes were ripe, healthy and homogeneous, without any trace of rot. Picking began in Côte d'Or on September 7th under excellent conditions. It was over by the 21st. In the Yonne area (Chablis), it went from September 12th to the 26th.

Owing to this sustained period, we were able to pick and choose the best times for harvesting. Coming after 2007 and 2008 which saw lower volumes, 2009 marks a return to the norm.

The vinification of the wines occurred without problem as the grapes were ripe and healthy.
Regarding the reds, the proportion of whole bunches being used was higher than usual, thanks to the excellent condition of the stalks.
The vinification lasted from two to three weeks depending on the appellations.

CHABLIS: this is a classic vintage with a beautiful equilibrium between acidity and mineral qualities.

WHITES OF COTE D'OR: the wines are very aromatic with a lot of style and balance. They already show some mellowness which makes them quite attractive even in their youth.

REDS OF COTE DE BEAUNE: frank, clear ruby red colour; the bouquet is reminiscent of red fruit along with an attractive and ripe mouth.
This is a consequence of an excellent maturity of the berries. They could be enjoyed from now as they are already delicious.

REDS OF COTE DE NUITS: the wines are very generous with ample character.
The tannic structure is quite strong but ripe. The acidity level is fairly low. To be drunk or to be kept, the choice will be difficult as they are already full of charm, but also well-balanced, which is a sign of a good ageing potential.

WHITES FROM MACONNAIS: slightly over-ripe, on honey and acacia notes. Highly seductive. To be drunk now.

BEAUJOLAIS: the wines show an intense, dark, almost black colour. Notes of black fruit and spices. Extremely supple, it is one of the best vintages since 2003.

2009 is showing its breed and will rightfully take its place among those vintages ending in "9" in the last century, as well as 2005, 1978, 1961…

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