Joseph Drouhin

2012 – A Great and very rare vintage

The Burgundy winter had only one very cold period with negative temperatures day and night during a fortnight in February. Some damage caused by ice was noticed. Spring arrived very quickly with the month of March being unusually warm. In these conditions the vines developed very quickly but then slowed down again due to cold and rainy conditions in April and May.
Flowering began at the end of May, the temperatures being, once again, warm for the season. The weather then turned unstable with sporadic violent hail storms. Flowering did not take place in the best conditions and we noticed a high percentage of millerandage (small grape clusters). From then on, we knew the expected yields would be small.
The summer months also proved unstable with periods of great sunshine alternating with storms. Certain areas of the Côte de Beaune; Puligny, Meursault and Volnay were particularly hit by hail and up to 80% of the harvest was damaged. The last days of August became summery with temperatures reaching their peak in Burgundy. Although it had rained in southern Burgundy, the Chablis area, in contrast benefited from dry conditions and it was only in mid-September that the rain returned.

At the start of the harvest it was noticed that the bunches were well aerated, due to the millerandage, and well spaced out between them.
The harvest started at the Domaine around the 19th of September in Cote D'Or, and on the 24th of September in Chablis.
The vineyards not affected by hail produced very low yields in Côte de Beaune, and fairly low yields in Côte de Nuits. The vines affected by hail suffered even more.
On a positive note, there was no rot this year. All of the berries, white as well as red, have a thick skin and a high proportion of millerands (small berries with very concentrated juice).

The vinifications went smoothly, extraction of colour and tannins happening quickly, our main task being to ensure the right balance and elegance.
In our hands we have the potential for a very great vintage, but in exceptionally small quantities.

Frédéric DROUHIN
December 17th 2012