Joseph Drouhin

2022 – A generous, consistent, and charming Burgundian vintage

2022 harvest brings joy to many in Burgundy as it is both generous and of high quality.
This is a welcome change after three deficit vintages due to climatic uncertainties.
The meteorological year was varied with significant temperature and precipitation fluctuations. Disease pressures, such as mildew and oidium, were kept under control.
2022 is the warmest year recorded since the beginning of the 20th century, and it is also the driest and sunniest. Vinification and wine aging occurred under favourable conditions, preserving the typicality of our terroirs.
2022 is an expressive vintage aromatically, making it immediately charming. However, it also has substantial structure, allowing it to improve for many years.

Climatic conditions of the 2022 vintage

Rainfall and average temperatures in autumn-winter were close to normal, with some disparities between geographical areas. February was one of the warmest recorded, and March had a rainfall deficit.
Early April remained dry. With temperatures higher than average, the first green tips appeared on April 20, in the earliest sectors, three unfolded leaves were observed, with significant heterogeneity across the different sectors of the Côte.
Note that on April 3, 4, and 9, there were frost episodes due to a Scandinavian cold air origin, affecting some plots without causing too much damage. By the end of April, lack of water was the main concern in many Côte villages, reminiscent of the conditions in 2020.

Temperatures then continued their ascent beyond seasonal norms. The following months were consistently warm, with average temperature deviations ranging between +1 and +2.5 °C compared to averages. May stood out as the hottest month in the last fifty years. A storm with hail in the first days of the month affected the northern part of Côte d'Or. The vine grew rapidly, and the heterogeneity observed earlier in the year disappeared.
Flowering took place in the second half of May. In Chablis, mid-flowering was noted at the end of the month, in Côte d'Or on May 24, in Côte Chalonnaise on May 27 and 24, and in the Mâconnais area on May 24.
2022 ranks among the earliest vintages since 2007/2011/2020.

The weather changed in June with significant rainfall, especially in the Côte d'Or. The precipitation accumulation in Chablis was about 109mm, and 150mm in Beaune. Almost half of the precipitation fell between June 21 and 25, sometimes with thunderstorms and even some hail. The rain boosted the vine's growth, and at this stage, vigilant against both oidium and mildew it was necessary to be.
From a low risk in early June, the threat increased at the end of the month.

In July, with the soil's available water reserves and the heat, vines continued their development, and the first “veraison berries” were observed in early ripening sectors. However, some blocking phenomena were noted in some plots, more in Chardonnays than in Pinot Noirs.

August was marked by episodes of heat, with four peaks noted during the month, mainly from August 8 to 13, and on the 24th and 25th. Precipitation was below average. Veraison evolved very quickly, and it was completed around mid-August in the Côte. Mildew pressures noticed earlier in the summer became anecdotal due to the hot and dry conditions. The same happened to oidium, whose development was stopped in the second half of August.

On the eve of harvest, the sugar content and total acidity of Chardonnays in the Yonne area are similar to 2020 and 2005 vintages. In Côte d'Or, for Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays, 2022 resembles 2009.

From early June, monitoring all our plots provided a good overview of quality, quantity, and the evolution of ripening to determine harvest dates.

Harvest and Vinification

Harvesting began under favourable conditions in Côte de Beaune on August 22, in Mâconnais on August 26, shortly followed by the vineyards of Côte de Nuits on August 27. At the Domaine Drouhin Vaudon in Chablis, we started on August 31.
Vinification conditions were favourable, with a satisfactory juice yield despite the particularly dry conditions of the year.

For red wines, a healthy harvest and ripe stems encouraged us to favour vinification involving whole bunches. The stems added a complexity of aromas that was particularly interesting. Vinification fluctuated from 13 to 24 days, depending on the vats, with a predominance of gentle punch-downs and pump-overs. In accordance with our usual practice, we separated the end-of-press juices. Aging continued in barrels on lees to preserve the freshness of the wines.

Regarding white wines, we were pleasantly surprised by the balance of the musts. We prioritize working on lees to preserve this freshness. Overall, the whites stand out for their energy, a surprising characteristic for a warm year.

The 2022 vintage follows in the footsteps of great Burgundian vintages. The wines captivate with their immediate charm and aromatic expression in their youth while promising excellent aging potential, especially for the great red wines. Wine enthusiasts should appreciate the combination of immediate charm and the ability to evolve favourably over time.Another characteristic of this vintage is the terroirs' ability to reveal and maintain all their typicity. There is no sensation of over-ripeness. 2022 is truly a beautiful vintage, consistent from Mâcon to Chablis.

Wine Characteristics

Whites

Maturity is evident, with wines that are particularly aromatic and complex. Citrus and ripe fruit aromas mingle with delicate floral fragrances. The palate, tender and full, is supported by well-present structure. With pleasant roundness and a delightful finish, the wines of this vintage are balanced and show very good aging potential.

Reds

The 2022 reds impress with their bright and sustained colour. The noses, of great complexity, blend aromas of blackberry, blueberry, and blackcurrant with floral scents of peony and violet. On the palate, spices highlight silky tannins of high quality. Ample, full-bodied, and with beautiful freshness, these wines are an archetype of balance between aromas and structure, with a very real aging potential.

Frédéric Drouhin - *January 24, 2024*