Joseph Drouhin

A warm and generous vintage

2023 stands out as one of the hotest years in Burgundy, surpassing even 2022 with a 0.2°C difference. Sunshine was particularly abundant, with 130 more hours than an average year. Though rainfall was scarce early in the year, it varied across regions leading up to harvest. While disease pressure was kept under control, vigilance against powdery mildew was crucial.
This vintage is also marked by its generosity, both in quantity and quality, with consistent yields across all regions, from Chablis to Mâconnais, including the Côte d'Or and Saône-et-Loire.
However, vine health was sometimes uneven, influenced by crop load, weather conditions, and harvest dates.
The winemaking process was met with great enthusiasm, with our winery working at full capacity. Alcoholic fermentations proceeded smoothly, accompanied by meticulous care to guide each cuvée.
Like 2022, the 2023 vintage is expected to be highly appealing. It is characterized by intense aromatic expression and a beautiful texture, promising a bright future.

2023 GROWING SEASON

Weather Conditions

Autumn-Winter 2022-2023: rainfall deficit reached nearly 50mm. January and February were mild, close to seasonal norms.

March: this month brought significant rainfall, 50% above normal levels, helping to offset some of the deficit, particularly in Yonne and, to a lesser extent, in Côte d'Or and Saône-et-Loire. Temperatures remained near normal with alternating warm and cool days. It was only in the last 10 days of March that the growing cycle began, with the first signs of vine sap flow.

April: there were large disparities between the villages of the Côte, with a lack of water in areas like Meursault. This month was short on sunshine. Temperatures stayed cool, only rising at the end of the month. As a result, vine growth in April was slow. It was in the last days of the month that vine growth really took off, with uneven stages depending on the region, ranging from 1 to 3 open leaves to 4 to 5 leaves in the earliest parcels. Notably, Chablis experienced a frost episode on the night of April 3-4, causing minor damage but contributing to uneven vine development.

May: beneficial rainfall, though uneven across Burgundy. Hail affected some plots (Chambolle-Musigny and Morey-Saint-Denis) on May 11, without causing significant damage. The vine continued to grow rapidly, with the appearance of three new leaves in just one week. Cooler areas of the Côte were still lagging behind. By the end of the month, with rising temperatures, the vine grew quickly, and the first flowers appeared in late May in the Côte d'Or.

June and July: mid-flowering was observed on June 5 in Meursault, June 6 for the Pinots Noirs of the Côte de Beaune, June 12 in Chablis, and June 13 in Saint-Véran. These dates are similar to those of 2015. Flowering proceeded quickly, thanks to alternating warmth and regular rainfall. By the end of June, grape bunches were closing. Thunderstorms on June 19 and 25, as well as on July 11 and 15, brought water, but overall, temperatures remained near normal.

August: the first week was particularly cool, even autumnal, but the end of the month turned distinctly summery, with temperatures above normal. Mid-veraison was observed on August 10 in Chablis and August 9 in Puligny-Montrachet for the Pinots Noirs of the Côte de Beaune. From August 18 to 24, temperatures reached 35°C to 36°C, causing slight sunburn in vineyards with low leaf density. Overall, average temperatures exceeded seasonal norms by 20%.

Harvest

Initial analyses of the Pinots Noirs from the Côte d'Or revealed very high maturity levels, comparable to 2019. The Chardonnays showed indices similar to 2018, while Chablis results echoed those of 2003. Tasting the berries revealed intense aromas.
Harvest dates were determined based on maturity, vine health, and crop load.
Harvest began on September 8 in Chablis, September 2 in Côte de Beaune for the whites, and September 4 for the reds. In Côte de Nuits and Mâconnais, picking started on September 8, while in Côte Chalonnaise, it began on September 11.
Given the high temperatures, we opted to start harvesting at dawn to preserve the grapes' freshness and ensure optimal working conditions for our teams, who finished cutting around midday.

WINEMAKING AND WINE STYLE

As every year, meticulous sorting was carried out at the winery to ensure optimal quality, both for whites and reds.

For the whites

Pressing was carefully fractioned to select the best juice (cœurs de cuvée). After selective settling, the finest lees were kept nourishing the wines during aging. Aging on fine lees preserved the freshness of this sun-kissed vintage. Extended aging continues as the wines reveal more over time. A significant portion of our whites is still maturing, in either oak barrels or stainless-steel vats.
The wines combine generosity, freshness, and finesse, with a climate that enhances the terroirs without overpowering them.

Chablis

The Chablis Villages and Premier Crus were vinified in stainless steel and aged extensively on fine lees, while the Grands Crus benefited from aging in 300- to 500-liter barrels and stoneware eggs. The wines are full-bodied, with generous mouthfeel supported by vibrant freshness.

Côte d'Or Whites

Pre-fermentation work allowed us to enhance the wines with fine lees. These wines gained freshness over the months, particularly after malolactic fermentation, with no bâtonnage performed. The wines are still in development but already display exceptional qualities of generosity, freshness, and length, subtly highlighting the terroirs.

Mâconnais Whites

Winemaking in the Mâconnais bridges the practices of Chablis and Côte d'Or, with a balanced approach between stainless steel and barrels. The region's warmer climate required adjustments, such as blocking certain malolactic fermentations to preserve freshness. Aging on lees and the use of 500-liter barrels achieved a perfect balance, resulting in rich, full, fresh, and precise wines.

For the Reds

The finest red grapes were selected for whole-cluster fermentation, enhancing freshness and aromatic complexity. Extended macerations (20 to 24 days) enriched the structure and added further complexity, while a careful selection of pressed juice ensured only the best was kept for aging. Thanks to the use of quality lees, the wines gained complexity while maintaining their freshness.

Côte d'Or Reds

The climate's generosity is evident in these Pinots Noirs. Still in maturation or at the start of final blending, the wines exhibit beautiful deep ruby colour and a marked expression of terroir. They show excellent ripeness with smooth, long, and complex palates.

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