Joseph Drouhin

2024 - A Vintage of Precision and Delicacy

In 2024, nature set its own pace, demanding constant vigilance. A contrasting, demanding year marked by capricious weather, the early start of the vegetative cycle and unprecedented disease pressure.
Thanks to the attention and expertise of the teams in the vineyards and the cellar, Maison Joseph Drouhin has nonetheless produced a vintage of great precision, where quality transcends quantity. Careful attention was devoted to each of the estate's 60 crus, resulting in modest volumes in some cases. The wines however, display brilliance and accuracy in perfect harmony with the balance and finesse that lie at the heart of the Joseph Drouhin style.

A CONTRASTED GROWING SEASON

A mild winter and early budbreak

Following a remarkably mild winter, temperatures above average lead to an early budbreak. The first green shoots of chardonnay appeared as early as March 22nd in certain plots.
This early awakening immediately inspired vigilance in the vineyard. Although the damage remained localized, April frosts affected several areas of the vineyard, especially in the southern Côte de Beaune which was hit more severely than others.

A humid spring: rain, storms, and early mildew

In May, the weather alternated between warmth and storms. On May the 1st, a hailstorm struck part of the Premiers and Grand Crus plots of Chablis. Subsequent hailstorms hit the Côte d'Or, Chablis, southern Mâconnais and Beaujolais in May, June, July, and early August.
Persistent rain and relative warmth encouraged an exceptionally early development of mildew, observed as early as mid-May on leaves and bunches. This disease pressure remained constant throughout the summer. Our estate teams, committed to organic and biodynamic viticulture, had to redouble their vigilance and protection efforts. Natural, precise, and repeated treatments did not always manage to preserve the harvest, as disease pressure proved exceptionally intense this year.

Flowering and limited potential

Flowering began in early June and concluded around June the 17th, under mixed conditions: coulure and millerandage reduced the crop potential. But the poor fruit set had a positive impact on the subsequent ripening.

A good summer: favourable conditions for ripening

Summer again alternated between stormy episodes and brief calm spells. On June the 20th, another hailstorm hit the Saône-et-Loire, particularly the southern Mâconnais (Vinzelles, Fuissé).
By late July, ripening was delayed by around 10 to 12 days compared to 2023, still alternating between sunshine and rain.
However, a warm, dry, and sunny August brought healthy grapes and allowed ripening to conclude beautifully.

HARVEST

Analyses carried out on the eve of harvest confirmed a mixed situation depending on the area: The pinot noir grapes showed excellent phenolic maturity, comparable to 2019, with lower potential alcohol than in 2022 or 2023. The chardonnay grapes revealed promising balance, marked by well-preserved acidity.
After several years of early harvests, 2024 marked a return to a more traditional calendar. The picking dates were determined precisely based on maturity, sanitary conditions, and crop load. More than ever, close monitoring of ripeness allowed us to begin harvesting at the perfect moment, parcel by parcel.
The first grapes were picked on the estate from September the 14th, under calm skies. Each day, our teams adapted to modest yields and variable ripeness depending on grape variety and terroir. In the Côte de Beaune, the pinot noir grapes were harvested first on September the 14th, followed closely by the chardonnay grapes from the 16th of September onwards. In the Mâconnais, harvest followed the same rhythm. The pinot noir grapes from the Côte de Nuits and Côte Chalonnaise were picked between the 18th and 20th of September. Finally, the first grapes were picked around the 20th of September in Chablis.
Given the strong mildew pressure, strict sorting in the vineyard and the cellar was absolutely key. Only the healthiest bunches were retained. Whole clusters were kept where maturity and balance met the Maison's quality standards. Yields were extremely low, producing small, concentrated berries of remarkable aromatic purity.

VINIFICATION AND WINE STYLE

The small harvest also required us to adapt our methods and tools to ensure the highest possible quality during pressing and vinification.

Whites:
All chardonnay grapes were harvested before the late September rains.
Occasional blending of certain appellations (for example our Meursault Luraule grapes were added to the Meursault cuvée).
Use of smaller vats.

Reds:
The pinot noir grapes displayed excellent phenolic maturity; we therefore increased the proportion of whole-clusters to up to 40%.
Some of our usual crus such as Corton-Bressandes and Chambolle-Musigny Premier Cru Baudes were not made due to volumes being too small for individual vinification.
Full barrel fermentations (500L, 300L, or 228L) were used, especially for the top Côte de Nuits appellations, to maintain vinification inertia.
Vertical presses were adjusted with custom padding systems to accommodate the small quantities.

These adjustments allowed optimal use of our selective tools, particularly the presses. We selected the juices rigorously in order to barrel the presses that were rich in the lees. The lees encouraged high quality fermentations and helped with nourishing the élevages. The same care was given to our pinot noirs grapes processed with our vertical presses.
We also adapted our ageing methods to align volume, oak type, and barrel age in order to achieve the finest harmony between wine and vessel.
The wines are now being nourished by their original lees and are evolving harmoniously, expressing the purity and precision of the vintage.

CONCLUSION

In the face of a season marked by climatic challenges and exceptional mildew pressure, Maison Joseph Drouhin demonstrated discipline and unwavering vigilance to preserve the essential.
Despite very low volumes (some appellations could not be produced), 2024 stands as a great success for the Maison. It is also a demanding, uncompromising vintage, one in which selectivity was essential to achieve the desired quality.
The reds stand out with their aromatic purity, freshness, and refined textures, while the whites reveal vibrant tension, delicate salinity, and subtle complexity; hallmarks of the Maison's great white wines.
A demanding vintage for both vine and vigneron, 2024 will yield precise, pure, and authentic wines, faithful reflections of their terroirs. Elegance, purity, and harmony remain the guiding principles; an enduring signature of Maison Joseph Drouhin.

Frédéric Drouhin
The 3rd of November 2025