

2019: A GRAND VINTAGE

CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

Temperatures

- January saw temperatures that were relatively in line with seasonal norms, with the exception of Chablis which was colder than usual.
- February and March were rather mild, with temperatures higher than seasonal norms (+ 2°C on average in February, + 1.4°C in March).
- April's temperatures were normal but the month of May that followed was cooler (- 1.7°C on average).
- There were several episodes of frost, notably that of 5 April in the southern Côte de Beaune, as well as at the end of April and early May in Chablis.
- June, July, and August were hot (+ 1 to + 2°C) with two heat waves between 25 and 30 June and from 21 to 26 July.

Precipitation

- The predominant characteristic of 2019 was the chronic deficit of precipitation. Although April and October were wetter than usual, the other months lacked rainfall, which in the end represented a deficit of approximately 30% by the end of October.
- The spring was punctuated by several storms accompanied by fine hail, but that fortunately did not do any major damage. However, the hailstorms of 6, 7, 14 and 20 July caused damage in the Côte de Beaune and Côte Chalonnaise.

Sunshine

- With the exception of the months of January and October, the year was sunnier than usual (+20% on average).

To summarize: 2019 was yet another hot year. For the period covering the growth cycle of the vines, it comes third, after 2018 and 2003. Average annual temperatures and amount of sunshine were close to those of 2003, however precipitation was slightly higher in 2019, though highly variable in the different vineyards.

THE KEY STAGES IN THE GROWTH CYCLE OF THE VINES

The first three months of the year were relatively mild with very little precipitation, which resulted in a rapid start to the growth cycle and early budburst at the beginning of April.

April and May were slightly cooler than usual, with periods of frost on 5 April in the southern Côte de Beaune and in mid-April and early May in Chablis which caused varying degrees of damage depending on the stage of the growth cycle of the vines.

Temperatures began to rise as of 22 May, yet there was another cool spell accompanied by strong gusts of wind between 6 and 12 June that slowed down flowering.

Such chaotic weather conditions resulted in instances of shatter and millerandage that were quite pronounced in some areas and had an impact on yields.



Hot temperatures returned in the summer, with heat-wave temperatures for a week at the end of June and another week at the end of July, encouraging vine development.

However, the chronic lack of precipitation that began in May slowed down the process of veraison. Much welcomed rain fell between 9 and 11 August, allowing for veraison to get truly underway and it was complete by the final days of August.

A WORD FROM ALAIN SERVEAU, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

2019 was a strange year, with marked contrasts as far as temperature and irregular rainfall were concerned, which brought about varying degrees of drought-like conditions depending on the region.

Harvesting began on 10th September at Domaine Long-Depaquit, on the 11th at Domaine du Pavillon and on the 13th at Domaine du Clos Frantin.

Due to ideal weather conditions, we were able to spread out the picking so that the grapes could reach optimal maturity, especially for the Côte de Beaune Chardonnay grapes that required additional time.

The Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes were in excellent health and at their peak of ripeness.

Yields were rather low for the Pinot Noir grapes, and even more so for the Chardonnays due to heterogeneous flowering that resulted in shatter and millerandage.

The red wines

We completed the barrel aging of the red wines at the end of December, beginning of January since we did not want to prolong it too much due to the impeccable ripeness of the tannins.

At the moment, the Pinots Noirs are highly aromatic, redolent of blackberry, blackcurrant, blueberry and peony though they remain very fresh. Total acidity levels are not high, but pH levels are more than satisfactory, which allows for good balance with relatively high alcohol levels.

These wines are rich and dense, though they also express great finesse.

The white wines

Although the hot, dry weather conditions encouraged high maturity levels, the acidity levels for the Chardonnays were preserved. This was due to low yields and to concentration of the grapes' flavours and aromas in addition to their acids.

The white wines feature very pure noses, with floral notes and aromas of white-fleshed fruit (pear), without any hints of over ripeness. They are rich and dense on the palate, and perfectly supported by freshness and minerality.

Conclusion

If almost all of the vintages ending in 9 since the early 20th century have marked their decade by their outstanding quality, 2019 is no exception to the rule.

Thanks to their good concentration, freshness and harmony, both reds and whites are endowed with all it takes to be an excellent vintage for laying down.

