

THE 2010 VINTAGE IN CHATEAUNEUF DU PAPE

A quantitatively low but qualitatively high harvest !

With an average yield of 27 hl/ha (for the 35 hl/ha authorized in the appellation's specifications), the 2010 vintage will be remembered as one of the lowest in terms of volume produced, and one of the highest in terms of the quality of the grapes harvested and the wines produced.

In total, 84,777 hl of Châteauneuf-du-Pape were produced in 2010, including 5,813 hl of white and 78,964 hl of red, for a production area of 3,165 hectares. Coulure in the spring and a lack of water in July and August explain the low yields observed, while the year is described by agro-climatologists as "cooler and wetter than average".

In 2010, there were 55 days with average temperatures above 30°C, but also 46 days of frost at the beginning of the year (compared to 31 on average). The first and second dekads of May were deficient in temperature, as was the beginning of June, while the first dekad of July was one of the mildest known. The cumulative temperature at the 10°C threshold on June 30 was 629°C for 2010 compared to, for example, 831°C for 2003 and 785°C for 2007. This measurement translates quite perfectly the earliness (or the delay) of a vintage.

From October 2009 to September 2010, rainfall was 23% above average, but lower in July and August. Over the agricultural year, rainfall approached 800 mm (median 642 mm), placing this period at the top of the list of cumulative rainfall over the last 139 years (slightly less than 2001, but well above 2005, 2006 and 2007). On the other hand, if we consider the months of July and August 2010 alone, the cumulative precipitation is higher than in 2007, but lower than in 2003, 2005 and 2009. The year was the 9th lowest summer rainfall since 1871.

Just like last year, the quality and characteristics of the 2010 vintage reflect the lessons of the past year's climatic balance: a rainy spring and a dry summer have favored the production of extremely healthy grapes with a beautiful tannic structure. The cool nights of August favored the synthesis of anthocyanins and polyphenols, while delaying the start of the harvest.

At harvest time, sorting was reduced to a strict minimum and, apart from a storm at the beginning of September, the harvest went smoothly. Fermentations took place in good conditions, the last devatting took place at the beginning of November. The malolactic fermentations took a little longer due to the low temperatures of the fall.

The first tastings of finished wines indicate that the 2010 vintage is in line with the great vintages of 2001 and 2007. The red wines show deep purple colors. The nose is intensely fruity, often with mineral touches. The most remarkable character of the vintage lies in the very fresh balance of both the reds and the whites, with full-bodied mouthfeel and rich, fine-grained tannic structures. Without any doubt a vintage with a strong ageing potential.

Fédération des syndicats de producteurs de Châteauneuf-du-Pape

12 avenue Louis Pasteur - 84230 Châteauneuf-du-Pape

Tél + 33 490 837 221 - Fax + 33 490 837 001

Email : michel@chateauneuf.com

Web : www.chateauneuf.com

Données météo : Cirame Carpentras