

CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE 2019

STRUCTURE, COLOUR, HEALTHY GRAPES: A SUPERB VINTAGE!

2019 witnessed a normal rainy spring (96 mm), after an exceptionally rainy spring in 2018 (280 mm)

The bad memories left by the outbreaks of mildew in 2018 prompted the wine-growers to be particularly vigilant right from the beginning of the season. Unnecessarily so: the phytosanitary pressure was almost non-existent. 2019 will be remembered however for the excessively hot and dry summer, starting from the heat wave at the end of June.

The harvest started very early in the season so as to pick the early-ripening varieties before they became over-ripe. It carried on smoothly. The rainfall on 18th September triggered higher juice yields and more balanced grape musts. In 2019, the perfect sanitary condition of the grapes has allowed the production of **highly coloured, smooth and generous red Châteauneuf-du-Pape** wines. The **whites are rich, full, with a long finish**.

AN EXCESSIVELY HOT AND DRY YEAR

The autumn and winter rainfalls (460 mm) launched the vegetative period and provided the soils with good water reserves. April and May were moderately cool, marked by fast -and then suddenly slow- growing periods. This phenomenon can trigger *coulure* (= failure of the fruit to set). Fortunately, this was not the case in 2019, apart from a few isolated plots. The growing season was very dry (moderate rain in the spring, hardly none in the summer) with only 158 mm total rainfall (against 530 mm in 2018, 230 mm in 2016 and 185 mm in 2017). It was also very hot, with 7 every 10 days exceeding 30°C (86°F) between 1st June and 15th September. At the end of June, a heat wave hit the region, peaking at 44.3°C (111.2°F) on 28th June.

In the face of these extreme weather conditions, the foliage did rather well, the Rhône corridor having been spared by the “hair-dryer” effect which affected some southern vineyards. The water shortage however impacted the size of the berries that remained comparatively small. The bunches only actually closed at the end of the *véraison* (= the beginning of ripening, when the grapes start changing colour), thanks to a few isolated rainy spells. In these conditions, the phytosanitary pressure was next to non-existent.

By harvest time, the grapes were showing a **beautiful sanitary state** albeit a **low yield in juice**. The 15 mm rainfall on 18 September was rather welcome and allowed the grenache grapes to reach phenolic maturity. This resulted in nice, thick skins, intense colours and **marvellous aromatic purity**. The yield is slightly up from average, compared to the last few years.

COLOUR, SILKINESS AND GREAT POTENTIAL

The **Châteauneuf-du-Pape whites** express notes of peach, exotic and citrus fruits. They have a long and ample mouthfeel. **The reds**, essentially made from grenache, required rather long macerations. Aromas of ripe fruit, raspberry and crystallised ginger are to be found in the grenache wines, while the Syrah reds reveal minty notes. On the palate, the tannic structure is elegant, mineral and nicely concentrated, and the acidity remains discreet. Beautiful results can be observed on the blends made straight from maceration. **This 2019 vintage already shows signs of a long ageing potential.**



Please note that Châteauneuf-du-Pape will be on **Wine Paris** (10-12th Feb. 2020), **Prowein** (15-17 March 2020) and of course on the 11th **Printemps de Châteauneuf-du-Pape** (3, 4 & 5 April 2020)

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