

THE 2011 VINTAGE IN CHATEAUNEUF DU PAPE

Exceptional conditions for the harvest !

With a normal yield estimated at 33hl/ha, the 2011 harvest in Châteauneuf-du-Pape returns to its quantity standards, leaving behind the last few years of low volume crops. Even if the wines are not finished yet, we already have a good idea of the quality of 2011. The weather conditions during the harvest helped immensely, allowing the grapes to be picked at optimal maturity.

This harvest will be remembered as one which was expected –straight from the beginning of the year- to be much earlier than previous harvests. And in the end, it turned out to be just like a normal year. In September, Provence enjoyed an amazing Indian summer, giving the wine-makers the perfect weather for harvesting grapes of superior quality.

We are just days away from receiving the grape collection reports, but the current forecast for 2011 yields is: 100.000hl of red Châteauneuf-du-Pape, a little more than 5.000hl of white, produced by 350 wine-makers, harvested from 3.160 hectares of land.

With 125 mm of rainfall in the appellation between June 10th and September 10th, against 30 mm last year at the same time, we had proof if need be that -even in Provence- there is no typical summer! Temperature-wise in 2011, there were 72 days of temperatures above 30°C, against 55 days the year before.

The months of April, May and June were very hot and dry, which favoured a rapid growth in the vines, as well as an early flowering -12 days in advance compared to the year before. July and August had an average temperature of 22.6°C. With precipitation at 103.5mm, it was ideal for the vines. They didn't suffer during the crucial period of maturing.

A remarkable fact: the length of the harvest, extremely spread out this year. Some wineries started as early as the second week of August. And it went on until the beginning of October for the late ripening varieties and terroirs.

From a sensory point of view, the first half of the harvest presents a wine that is well balanced, fresh, with lots of fruit. The second half presents a more concentrated wine, dense and full-bodied. This allows us to think that 2011 will be a wonderful year for Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

From a selling point of view, the wines from Châteauneuf-du-Pape continue to be blessed with an excellent reputation in the North American and Northern European markets.

Our wines are becoming more popular with Asian consumers who are looking for wines that match their diverse and spicy cuisine. Châteauneuf-du-Pape wines are to be found more and more in countries like Japan, South Korea, Singapore, China and Hong Kong. The Indian market is just starting to take a strong interest in our southern and multi-varietal vineyards.

Fédération des syndicats de producteurs de Châteauneuf-du-Pape

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