



MILLÉSIMES THE 2010 VINTAGE

Annual climate references :

Budburst: April 20

Flowering: June 20

Start of véraison: August 7

Harvest: September 23

Année Climatique :

Was mild and rainy, with higher temperatures and rainfall totals than normal seasonal values, from October to December. Up to December 13 there was hardly a day of frost. These conditions suggested that the vines had not received a signal and hence the sap was not yet descending. It was in this very receptive and unprepared state that the vines suffered – in their wood and dampened buds – a brief and brutal drop in temperature during the night of December 19-20. With -15°C to -24°C recorded, this very rapid and violent fall (from -5 to -20 in 10 hours) caused substantial winter frost damage to the vine stocks, which did not grow in the spring. After December 21, temperatures returned to positive values.

- January and February -

Were marked by a long spell of frost (39 days) and many snowy periods, normal for the season. At the end of winter, March and April had substantial amounts of rain, with accumulated rainfall often higher than normal.

- April -

Despite some lovely sunny days – cool weather predominated, hampering the resumption of the vegetative cycle. At end-April, almost summery conditions favored sudden vine development that did not last. May was marked by a succession of hot, dry periods and cold, damp spells, affecting the vegetation.

- May to June -

Will remain in the annals, according to Météo France, for sunshine that figured among the lowest levels in 60 years (a deficit of 80-90 hours). Fortunately, at the start of June temperatures returned to seasonal normals, bringing with them rainy and stormy periods. Growth was strong and flowering began on June 11 under good conditions. Unfortunately, during flowering a week of dismal weather marked by repeated rainy spells (with accumulations of 27-65 mm) and low temperatures indicated a difficult end to flowering and likely substantial *coulure*.

THE 2010 VINTAGE...

The start of July were marked by a heat wave favoring normal vine growth and development. This period of 3 consecutive weeks of summer weather ended with stormy spells which, depending on the area, brought accumulations of rain that were sometimes very high.

- Summer -

This stormy period finished at the end of July and start of August with a drop in temperatures of some 10 degrees, which remained at 4-5° below seasonal normals.

The ripening process thus began under difficult conditions; the entire month of August was cool and dismal apart from several lovely summer days. September continued in the same pattern. Fortunately, thanks to very “millerand” (partial crop failure with mixt size berries) grapes and limited volumes, we reached harvest date with highly satisfactory ripening.

We still had to watch closely the order of the parcels to be harvested, since significant differences in ripeness existed from one parcel to another. The harvest started on September 23 in rainy and very cold weather which, fortunately, did not last – though it was not followed by sunshine.

- Harvest and vinification -

The harvest is very healthy and beautifully ripe; unfortunately, grape volumes indicate much lower yields than normal.

Vinification was carried out with no particular problems, and the grapes show a good sugar/acid balance. Extraction, while never easy, was correct, and fermentation was quiet and regular. It wasn't a picnic either, however, and surveillance at all times was as necessary as it is every year.

As expected, yields were much lower than normal on racking off, often varying from **1/3 to 1/2 less** depending on the appellation. Fortunately, quality is our consolation for the low yields.

Initial tastings indicate that this vintage is very well balanced, with great purity and finesse and with a very ripe fruitiness that is almost jammy – in the very best sense of the word.

We all hope that this quality will be confirmed during the period of maturing. To be seen in another few months.

