



LES MILLÉSIMES

VINTAGE 2016



Weather-linked References for the Year

Bud-break on the vine: 18th to 24th April

Black frost: 27th April

Vine flowering: end June

Harvest: 26th September to 4th October

End of vinification: 26th October



Summary of Year 2016

Winter: Exceptionally mild and dry

Spring: Cool and rainy

Summer: Dry and hot

2016 will be remembered for the black frost on 27th April, with 6000 to 7000 hectares affected and very variable levels of damage, but an average of 58% of buds destroyed. Nevertheless, we noted that, from one parcel to another, from one village to another, the impact of that frost could vary from 0% to 100% (see 'Bien Public' article of 6th April 2017)

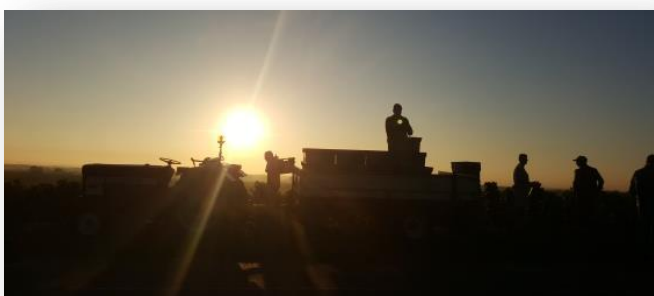
Climate

Autumn and Winter:

Autumn was mainly dry with rainfall levels lower than seasonal averages. Only the month of October was very close to traditional rainfall levels. In total, there were 19 rainy days over October to December. As to temperatures, they were exceptionally mild and +1° higher when compared with seasonal norms. No significant frost incidents were noted, the ground was never frozen solid and frost damage did not occur.

Spring:

Overall, it was cool and rainy. Between January and June we accumulated 75% of annual rainfall. Lack of luminosity also played its part, since we had a net deficit of around 220 hours over 6 months. Temperatures were slow to develop and delayed bud break. It was necessary to wait for the first half of April to rediscover seasonal temperatures.



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Vegetative Cycle

In early April, the 'cotton-bud' cocoon phase was prevalent. We had to wait for bud-break to be evident, with the mildness of the last ten days of the month allowing growth to progress. Unfortunately, the frosts during the week of 25th April stopped this progress dead.

We would only detect a significant restart of growth in mid-May. It was end May before we had 5 to 6 opened leaves, placing 2016 amongst the slowest years for vine growth.

From June, near-normal weather allowed vine flowering to begin at month end in very good conditions and with the return of hot weather. In these difficult climatic conditions, the exceptionally strong pressure from cryptogamic vine diseases (oidium and mildew) forced us to ceaselessly apply counter measures.

In early July, for the first time since the start of the growing season, vines grew freely and in very summery weather, punctuated by stormy downpours that were often welcome for vines showing serious water stress that went as far as blocking véraison and the development of ripening.

2016 Harvest

Harvesting started on 26th September in very favourable conditions after a period of very dry weather and strong heat that gave us grapes of exceptional ripeness and healthiness. The great disparity of yields due to the spring frosts also gave us great disparity in terms of phenolic maturity, so much attention had to be paid to the choice of parcels to be harvested first.

As for each year, constant attention was necessary for the vinification of vintage 2016, attention particularly due, once again, to the great disparity of yields from one parcel to another, forcing us to adapt our strategy accordingly and on a case by case basis.



In terms of first tasting

This is a rich vintage with lovely colour intensity and tannins well present, all underpinned by good acidity. It would seem that this vintage, while not benefitting from the aura of media attention of its predecessor, will certainly have all its qualities, if not more. To be watched carefully...

DOMAINE DROUHIN-LAROZE & MAISON LAROZE DE DROUHIN