

2017

Vintage Report



After a real winter, with truly cold temperatures (particularly in January), but with less rainfall than average, budbreak took place earlier than usual at the end of March during a superb early spring that saw vigorous vegetative growth.

During the last fortnight of April, some rain fell on the already well-developed plants (many of which were already showing 3-4 leaves, sometimes more). In the Cote d'Or the frosts were less deadly than those of 2016, and were often radiative in nature (and therefore very localised). Nevertheless, they had a profound impact on Chablis, the Couchois region (to the west of the Cote Chalonnaise) and some of the hills in the north of the Maconnais, as well as southern Beaujolais and some of the slopes of the Beaujolais Vil/ages area. Subsequently, there were a few weeks of slow growth as both the dry soils and the cool conditions meant that the vines took their time to put on a growth spurt.

Some rainfall and temperatures somewhat above the norm in May gave us a reminder that the vine is, well, a vine... Growers picked up the pace in the vineyard and began lifting the canopies.

At the start of June, vines in earlier-ripening areas flowered, but suffered a bit from heat stress. There was some evidence of poor fruit set, particularly when it came to the whites. The Pinot vines flowered later, in more moderate conditions, and promised well in terms of future fruiting. Overall, yields just about reached the average when it came to whites while the red harvest promised to be generous.

It looked as if 2017 was set to be an early vintage, with picking due to start between the end of August and the beginning of September.

We saw little in the way of disease pressure, although there were a few spots of downy mildew fairly late in the growing season, but these were quickly brought under control. There was some evidence of powdery mildew in July, but it caused little damage.

Overall, summer was fine. There was little rot and the grapes ripened steadily, although the lack of rainfall (a shortfall equivalent to two whole months of rain compared to the average) began to make itself felt. In the south of the region, two hailstorms in July destroyed a large part of the potential harvest in the crus of Moulin a Vent, Chiroubles, Fleurie and Morgon, but the Cote d'Or was spared from damage.

We began harvesting the whites on 2 September, a few days after we started picking the first grapes in Beaujolais. Picking took place in good conditions, with little need for triage and good levels of ripeness overall.

As long as yields were kept under control, the reds are showing great depth of colour and generous fruit. Maturation should lend the wines the necessary density,

In whites, balance is key, and this is largely determined by the management of the malolactic fermentation. Ripeness levels appear to be good and the wines are already showing encouraging levels of richness and depth.



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