



Bourgogne 2018: An ideal vintage

Bourgogne, 12 November 2018



The 2018 vintage was met with a unanimous show of satisfaction from the north of Bourgogne to the south. The exceptional weather, especially during the harvest period, resulted in grapes with perfect health, allowing picking to extend over almost a whole month.

Initial tastings ahead of the Hospices de Beaune Wine Auction have given an early idea that 2018 will be a truly great year.

The vines had built up some reserves over winter thanks to some very rainy weather, and the growth cycle began on the late side. When the sun started to show in April, the vines sprang into life, with budburst taking place very rapidly. The mild weather then allowed the plants to make up for lost time, even getting ahead of the average. Frosts in April sent a shudder across the whole region, but damage remained very limited. Flowering and fruit setting took place without hindrance.

Summer saw constant heat and drought, apart from a few hail storms in early July that were of no great consequence. The vines continued to grow at a fast pace until mid-August. Veraison took a little longer in places, the heat and lack of water affecting some of the younger vineyards.

Nonetheless, since the hydric reserves had been restocked over winter, most of the vines came to maturity nicely thanks to the ideal weather conditions.

The first grapes were picked in the last 10 days of August. Since the dates of flowering, the rainfall and temperature varied greatly from one area to another, harvesting extended into the last 10 days of September.

The fruit was in extraordinarily good health, and the weather was perfect, allowing each winemaker to harvest at the optimum moment. The mood was serene across the whole wine region, producers enjoying this magnificent vintage that combined quality and quantity. Many think this will be one of the best vintages in many years.

Vinification of the whites went without a problem, the grapes having retained a good level of acidity despite the heat.

The reds required a little more attention during vinification due to the relatively high level of potential alcohol.

White wines

In 2018, the aromatic complexity of the white wines is incredible. They are explosive on the nose, with an amazing diversity that reflects each *terroir*. The wines have a certain crispness and good minerality. In the mouth, they are rounded and generous, balanced with a nice tension.

Red wines

The 2018 reds have a seductive intense color. They are already well structured and powerful, with nicely-integrated tannins and good concentration of fruit. These exceptional wines are perfectly balanced, and are already tasting well in their first flush of youth.

This is a delicious vintage with splendid maturity.

Crémant de Bourgogne

This is a benchmark year, with expressive aromas that vary from one varietal to another, promising balanced and aromatic base wines. The Pinot Noirs are generous, with notes of cherry and rose, resulting in balanced wines with a pleasant freshness. The Chardonnays are powerful, with moderate acidity, making them well-rounded. The fruit aromas reveal some exotic notes, nuanced by fragrances of apple and peach. The Gamays have delicate aromas of raspberry and strawberry, underscored by citrus touches (clementine, lemon). The Aligotés are sharp and lemony, as usual, with good length in the mouth.



*This press release only offers a general snapshot.
Because each wine and each winemaker is unique, wines need to be tasted individually
before being characterized.*



Contrasting weather in 2018 in the Bourgogne region

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In 2018, the weather varied greatly depending on the month and the area, especially in terms of rainfall. Before the start of the growth cycle, it rained a lot during winter and the temperature varied widely from one month to the next. Despite growth starting on the late side, the vines subsequently burst into life.

Rain was largely absent during summer, despite some localized showers. Weather conditions from the end of spring and throughout summer were overall very sunny, warm and dry, keeping disease at bay. Thanks to the water reserves accumulated during the winter, the vines held up well during this drought, resulting in a quality harvest in excellent health.

A very rainy start to the year

January was atypical, with incessant rain and the warmest average temperatures since 1945. The Bourgogne region had 120% excess rainfall in the north (Chablis, Grand Auxerrois, Châtillonnais, Côte de Beaune and Côte de Nuits), and 150% excess in the south (Côte Chalonnaise and Mâconnais).

February was wintery, with rainfall in line with seasonal averages and temperatures 2.6°C lower than normal. The rain redoubled in March, though there were some major disparities. The Côte de Nuits, Côte de Beaune, Côte Chalonnaise and the Mâconnais had more than 120mm of rain, 50% more than normal, whereas Chablis and the Grand Auxerrois had only 60mm.

All this water put back the growth cycle, but also allowed the land to build up some reserves.

A warm spring

From April, mild weather prompted explosive budburst. The heat intensified over the following months, with sunshine far ahead of seasonal norms and scant rain in April and May. Only the Côtes and Hautes Côtes de Beaune and de Nuits received any significant precipitation in spring, with some storms.

This sudden warmth meant flowering was early and rapid, catching up for the lateness seen earlier on in the growth cycle. The vines grew so fast that winegrowers struggled to keep up. Bunches formed without any particular problem, suggesting a decent harvest.

The damp winter and stormy spring raised the threat of mildew, but the return of warm weather and wind fortunately dispelled this.



© BIVB_Jean-Louis Bernuy

A never-ending summer

July, August and September all saw temperatures well above seasonal averages, with one period of heatwave. Rainfall was below norms, and only the Côte-d'Or had any rainfall, with some localized storms in July. Episodes of hail had some minor impact on the vines, notably around Nuits-Saint-Georges.

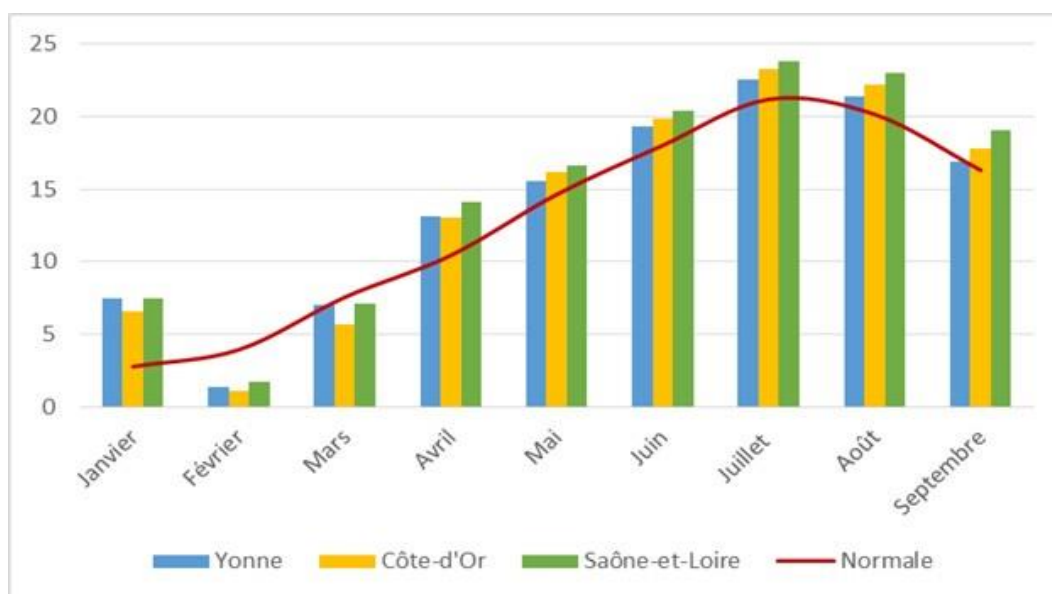
Sunshine far outstripped the average. By the end of August, the lack of water in certain areas slowed or even blocked veraison, with mainly the young vines suffering. The older vines and those growing in deeper soils profited all season from the water accumulated at the start of the year.

This sunny weather resulted in fruit that was in impeccable condition. In September, ripening continued, helped by cool nights, which limited the degradation of acids and evaporation of juice.

Harvesting stretched from 20 August to the third week in September, a particularly long span thanks to the optimal conditions, which allowed winemakers to wait for the exact moment to pick each plot.

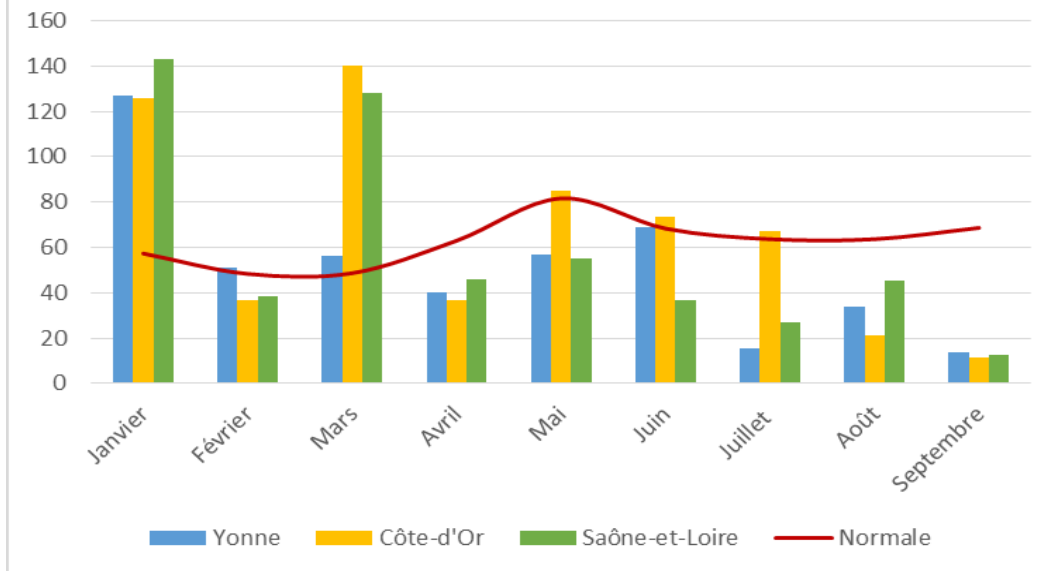
Overall, the extraordinary weather in 2018 resulted in a very satisfactory harvest, both in terms of quantity and quality, leaving winemakers both reassured and delighted!

Average monthly temperatures (°C) - Bourgogne 2018



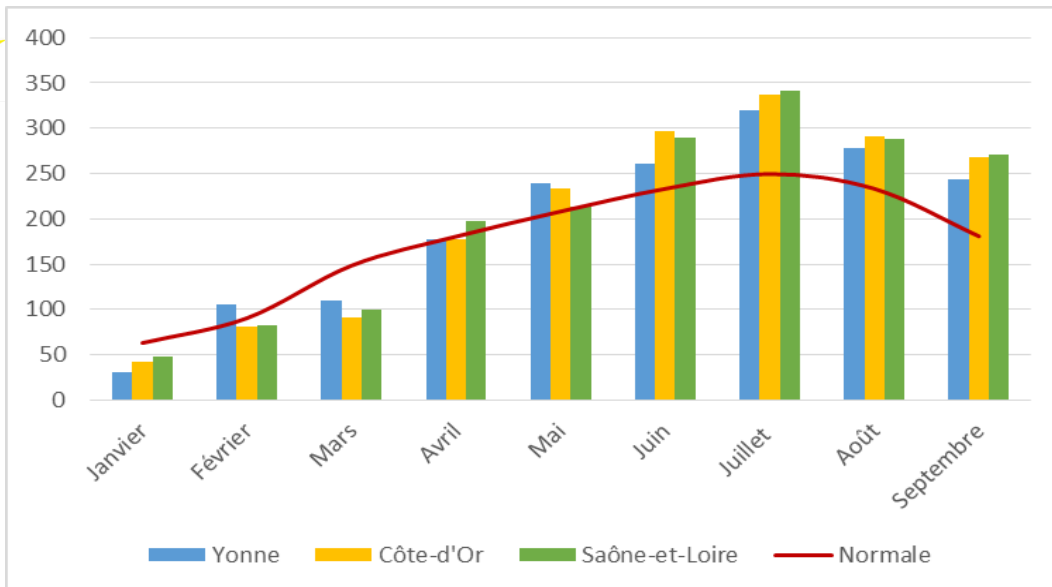
Source: Météo France

Average monthly rainfall (mm) - Bourgogne 2018



Source: Météo France

Average monthly sunshine (hours) - Bourgogne 2018



Source: Météo France

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