



BOURGOGNES

Bureau Interprofessionnel des Vins de Bourgogne



2010 *Vintage in Burgundy:* *well worth the effort*

16 November 2010

The 2010 vintage in Burgundy is a success, despite difficult climatic conditions. In Burgundy, 2000 years of history have indeed allowed the vine and man to adapt to all situations. Far from being a question of chance, this longevity is proof that the vine has found its ideal land in this northern vineyard, whilst adapting to the climatic changes.

Here, making wine is an art form which has nothing to do with ease.

The Burgundy winegrowers demonstrate judgement, a great capacity to adapt, and the expertise to get the best out of each vintage.

The latest meteorological forecasting tools, analytical controls and tasting the grapes are all factors for anticipating and rationalising each of the key steps leading up to the harvest.

Tasting the grapes was particularly crucial this year, allowing winegrowers to monitor the change in the aromatic potential of each plot, one of the strengths of this vintage. Here, the level of maturity and the health of the vines were key in choosing the date of the harvest. Although the harvest usually takes place by colour (traditionally red then white), the winegrowers, attentive to the quality, alternated between red and white plots.

The small yields obtained are both a result of the winegrowers' controlled pruning, the *coulure* and *millerandage* caused by the climatic conditions in the spring, and the strict selection performed both on the vine and in the cellar. The winemakers were then able to adjust their technique on the harvested grapes to unveil the fine balance between sugar and acidity, without harming the aromatic expression.

There is no doubt that the 2010 Burgundies hold some nice surprises for wine lovers!

Since the harvest came to an end at the beginning of October, it is still too soon to give a definitive judgement on the wines of this vintage, although there are already some dominant characteristics.

■ **White Wines**

From the north to the south of Burgundy, the white wines reveal the whole range of expression of the Burgundy Chardonnay, often copied but never equalled!

These balanced wines are appreciated for their freshness and purity. The minerality, present on the palate, is typical of the Burgundy "Terroir". They reflect the elegance and finesse of Burgundy's great classics.

■ **Red Wines**

The olfactory nuances of the red wines can be found in red fruits and fresh fruits. These very perfumed wines also present a nice cherry red colour.

On the palate, they unveil silky tannins and a pleasant harmony between acidity and roundness. The persistent sensation of freshness perfectly translates the expression of the Pinot Noir in Burgundy.

■ **Crémant de Bourgogne**

The 2010 vintage is of good quality for the two grape varieties Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. The quality of the grapes allowed for a gentle extraction, resulting in base wines without excessive levels of acidity, an intense aromatic expression and good maturity.



Climatology 2010

a delicate year

After a very good summer 2009, the following winter was one to remember. The temperatures in December 2009 and January/February 2010 were particularly cold, with the average temperature in January only 0°C (compared to a usual 2.8°C). The third week of December saw major frosts with temperatures even flirting with -20°C in the night of 19 December. These temperatures resulted in frost damage, some of which was significant on certain plots. There was also a great deal of rain and snow in February, exceeding seasonal averages. Burgundy experienced a real winter - it was cold, snowy and dark, with the first two months of the year seeing a lack of sunshine.

March and April marked the beginning of spring with a rise in temperatures, greater than seasonal averages. April saw almost summer-like conditions. Precipitations were below the seasonal averages and there was a lot of sunshine. These favourable conditions allowed the **budding to take place under good conditions, beginning mid-April** for the earliest plots and soon taking place across the vineyard. The average estimated dates of the half-budding stage (50% green shoots) are close to the average (1994-2009).

In **May**, the situation worsened with temperatures plummeting and a return to cold weather, in particular during the first two weeks of the month. Temperatures then oscillated until the end of the month. On average, rainfall remained below average but there were considerable differences between the various sectors. Hours of sunshine recorded were far below average.

The first ten days of **June** saw mild temperatures, above seasonal averages, allowing growth once more. The atmosphere cooled down once more from 15 June. Mid-June, the **mid-blossoming stage was reached on the earliest plots** and a few days later for the other sectors. These dates are similar to those of 2001 and 2008 depending on sectors and grape varieties. The rainfall was heavy and sunshine was average.

July saw similar climatic conditions. The weather was very variable, alternating between hot, sunny periods and cooler, rainy spells. This very changeable weather in the spring and the beginning of the summer resulted in *coulure* and *millerandage* in many parts of the vineyard.

August saw similar conditions in terms of temperatures and rainfall. However, sunshine was below average. None of these conditions facilitate the maturing process, but the return to sunnier weather in **September** offset this to a certain extent.

Before the harvest, the health of the vineyard was fragile, and the winegrowers were extremely cautious with regard to *botrytis*. Some sectors were seriously affected. At the time of the harvest, winegrowers performed strict selection both on the plots and upon arrival in the cellar.

October, although somewhat cooler, saw little rain and good levels of sunshine.

■ A two-step maturing process

Maturing began at a good pace, in particular in terms of accumulation of sugars and reduction of total acidity, despite the climatic conditions which were by no means ideal. The absence of any real heat in August does not allow the consumption of organic acids, but the good sugar content obtained means that the grapes have good balance.

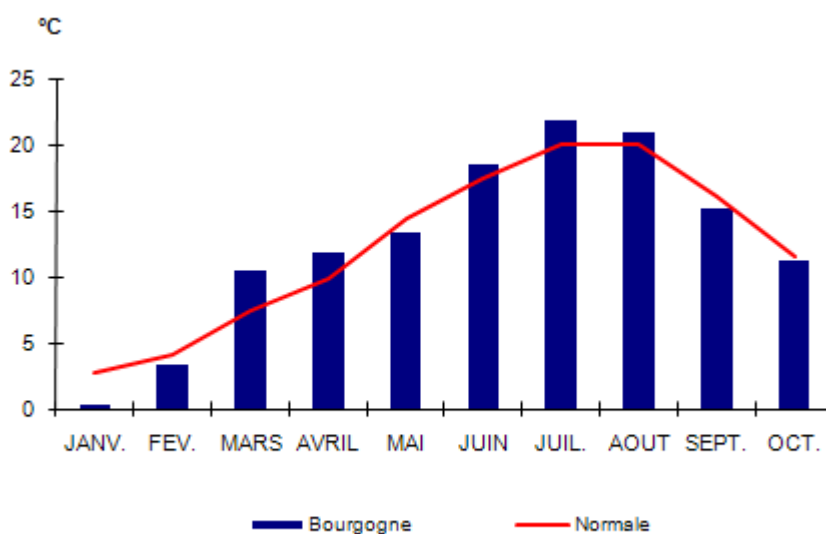
The first phase of maturing began on 23 August and continued until 6 September. During this period, **the average daily gains in sugars, across all grape varieties and sectors, were regular and fairly substantial.**

On 6 September the weather was dull with heavy rain, marking a clear slowdown in the concentration of sugars in Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Gamay. From this date the average daily gains began to fall, but without harming the final content which reached a fairly high level. A concentration effect took place within the grapes, rather than accumulation, notably on the earliest plots.

Tasting the grapes allowed the winegrowers to determine the best time to harvest. And the end of September/beginning of October, the grapes developed pleasant fruity aromas and a very interesting balance of sugar/acidity. At the time of the harvests, the vines, which had suffered throughout the year, were somewhat fragile and their health was a key factor in the choice of a harvest date.

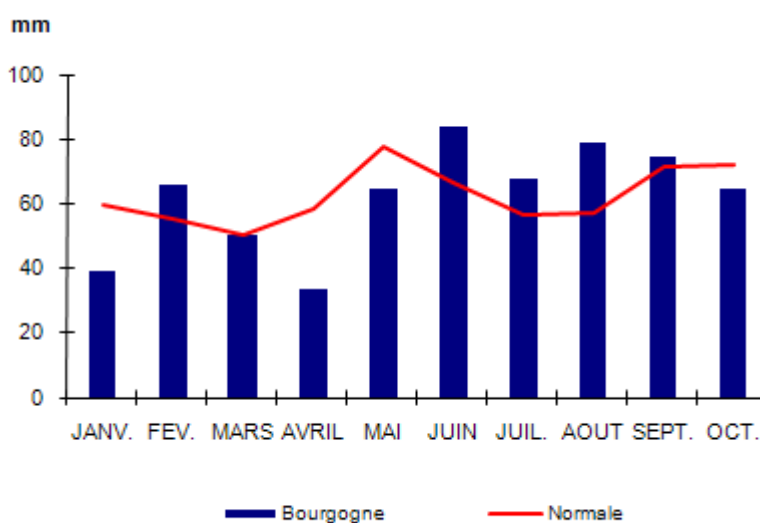
The expertise of the professionals helped them find the ideal time, taking into account maturity, health risks and the unstable weather. The 2010 vintage required close attention at all times. It tested all involved but the final result, much to the surprise of external observers, is highly promising!

Average monthly temperatures Burgundy 2010



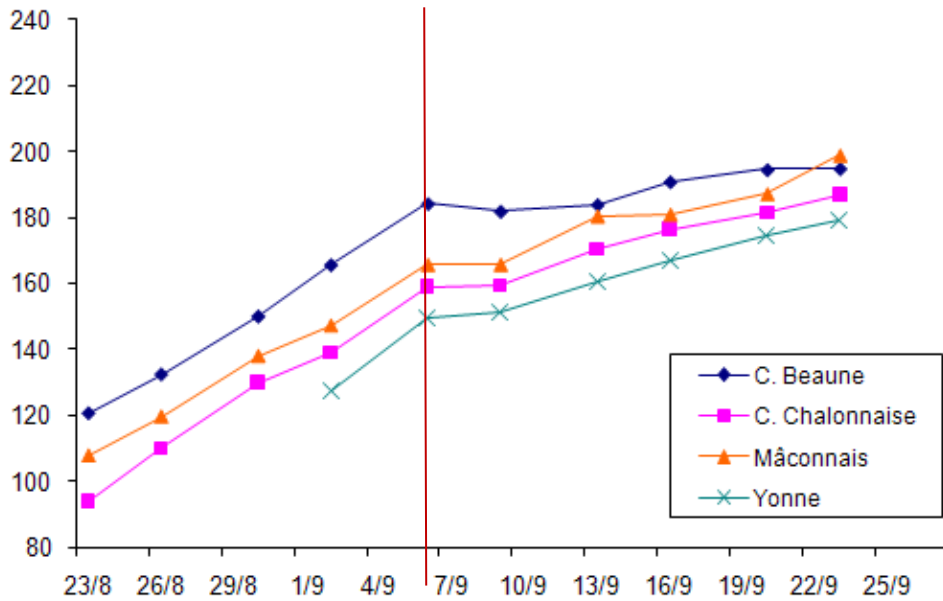
Sources: BIVB/Météo France

Average monthly precipitation Burgundy 2010



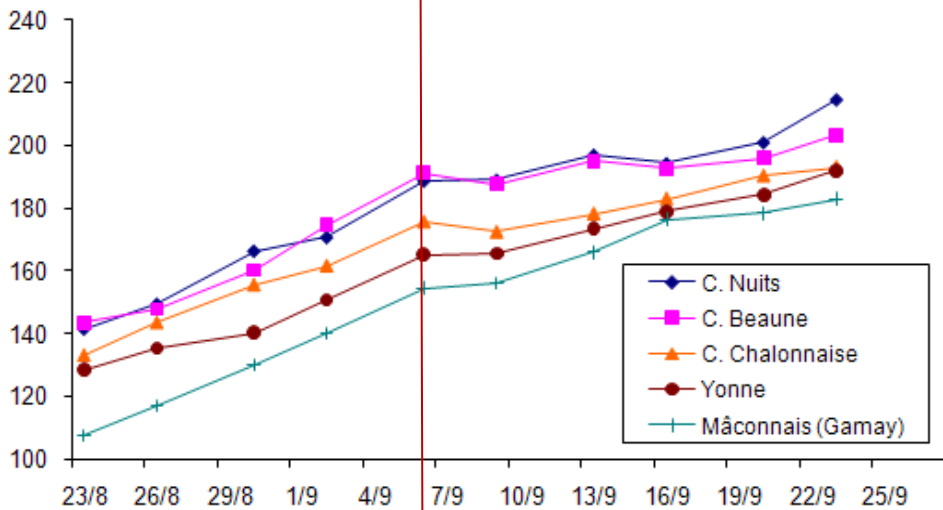
Sources: BIVB/Météo France

Change in sugar content 2010 – Chardonnay – Burgundy 2010



Sources: Observatoire du millésime du BIVB

Change in sugar content 2010 – Pinot Noir and Gamay – Burgundy 2010



Sources: Observatoire du millésime du BIVB

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