



The 2013 vintage Prodigious Bourgogne wines

7 November 2013

After the challenges thrown at them in 2012, Bourgogne winemakers were hoping for a peaceful 2013. But capricious Mother Nature had other ideas. Defying all weather forecasts, she never let up. After a long winter, a gloomy spring and a fine, providential summer, for the most part, the pickers had to wait until the start of October to take up their secateurs.

The consequences of the weather's whims – such as shatter and millerandage, hail damage, concentration and disease – all had an impact on the quantities harvested. Across the region, no winegrowing area was spared. Some had very low yields with volumes equal to or even less than those recorded in 2012 (1.26 million hectoliters¹).

Fortunately, the first tastings suggest that 2013 is a very successful vintage. Once again, experience has made all the difference. It has been a challenging year but the winegrowers of Bourgogne have been rewarded for their pains.

We feared the worst, but we were spared!

The winter lingered in Bourgogne. From January to July, the temperatures were cool. The sun was notably absent during the first half of the year, and the rain all too frequent. This gloomy weather affected the vines, setting back the growth cycle by around two weeks.

In early May, when the first buds had just appeared, torrential rainstorms hit the region. In some plots, the vines spent several days with their roots in water.

The weather during flowering and fruit set was no better and by now, the growth cycle was set back by three weeks.

A hot, dry and sunny summer provided a welcome change and helped the quality of the grapes, enabling them to mature correctly. July was marked by a violent hailstorm on the Côte de Beaune with 1,350 hectares affected on 23 July.

September didn't help the vines, with the ambient warmth and regular rain encouraging the development of the Botrytis fungus which rots the grapes. It was more limited on those bunches where the grapes were smaller and thus better aerated. The choice of harvest date was a tough one. Winegrowers had to be very reactive and work fast.

This demanding vintage required a lot of effort that, today, has been rewarded with success. The wines are revealing a real aromatic purity and unexpectedly color. The balance in the wines is particularly satisfactory.



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¹Down almost 20% on an average harvest of around 1.5 million hectoliters.

White wines



Fruity and balanced, the white wines are characterized by a nose marked with citrus. This aromatic crispness is also felt in the mouth. The wines are well structured, fresh and lively, without the aggression some feared given the acidity measurements taken just before the harvest. Forthright and without flourishes, the whites of 2013 stand up convincingly to previous vintages.

Red wines

With an intense, sparkling ruby color, these fruity wines are like a mouthful of freshly picked cherries, raspberries and redcurrants. The Pinot Noirs that were harvested later have more jammy aromas.

On tasting, the first acidulated notes give way to a good structure supported by sophisticated, pronounced tannins. Good length on the tongue prolongs the pleasure.



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Crémant de Bourgogne

Good acidity and sugar levels meant that at the end of September, the grapes harvested were perfect for making Crémant de Bourgogne.

The lively and fruity white base wines reveal aromas of white peach and grapefruit. The Pinot Noirs are characterized by fine structure, while the Gamays offered very high quality with intense aromas of red fruit.

2013 offers producers the possibility to make vintage *cuvées* with good keeping potential.



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This press release outlines some generalities. Since each wine and each winemaker is unique, every wine must be individually tasted before its character can be described.



The 2013 weather in Bourgogne

Gray and cold from winter through spring



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The start of 2013 was characterized by intense cold. After January, which was just under the seasonal average temperature, February continued the trend with an average temperature of around 1°C as opposed to the usual 3°C. (Average from 1981-2010)

Spring followed the same pattern and it wasn't until July that temperatures were above average. After then, we enjoyed a fine summer.

The cold was accompanied by gray skies and a significant lack of sunshine. In January, the average sunshine was a third less than usual. February and March were a little better but were still down by a third.

Unfortunately, the spring was no better. Sunshine during the month of May was 50% down on the seasonal average. But during July and August, the sun was well and truly back, with above-average hours of sunshine, while in September, it fell again.

The persistent cold in winter and spring was accompanied by frequent rainfall that had a direct impact on the vine's vegetative cycle. The vines were around ten days late in starting to grow again (the mid-budburst stage).

Cold temperatures combined with humidity during flowering and fruit set meant the appearance of blossom was spread out and there was significant shatter and *millerandage*. Already, the production potential for the 2013 vintage was diminished. The discrepancy in the vine's growth cycle by this point was almost three weeks off the ten-year average.

Exceptionally high rainfall

Rainfall was exceptionally high during the first half of the year. From January onwards, it was well over the average: up 8mm in January, up 22mm in February and up 16mm in March.

The heaviest readings were in April (117mm instead of 62mm) and May (148mm instead of 81mm, or over 80% up!).

The weekend of 4-5 May was so wet, some cellars and vines were flooded.

The beginning of the summer saw higher-than-average rainfall, mainly due to some stormy weather. The storms were sometimes accompanied by hail and were sometimes violent.

The Yonne was hit on 17 June and on 23 July, a powerful hailstorm swept across 1,350 hectares on the Côte de Beaune with up to 100% of the vines damaged on some plots.

The potential loss was estimated at 30,000 hectoliters. On 24 August, the south of the Bourgogne region was hit by localized hailstorms.

The damp spring encouraged the development of cryptogamic diseases such as mildew and powdery mildew. The significant threat they pose to the vines meant winegrowers had to be extremely vigilant to halt their spread.

A proper summer: the key to maturity

In early July, the weather finally improved, despite some storms. With the first days of summer, the sunshine and heat emerged, exceeding the seasonal norms. This summery weather dried out the vines and allowed the grapes to continue their development. Ripening and maturation began without problems, despite the cycle having been set back early on.

From mid-September, the vines underwent more unstable weather conditions. Temperatures remained high for the period and a lot of rain fell, although the total was less than average. This combination of warmth and precipitation provided perfect conditions for the development of Botrytis rot.

Shatter and *millerandage* meant small, aerated bunches of grapes which helped slow down the development of rot. It affected the whites more than the reds but remained contained. The sunny days and pleasant temperatures helped improve the concentration of the grapes.

In general, the harvests began during the first few days of October, accompanied by typical weather for the year – i.e. rain. Sorting was often necessary to ensure only the best grapes were used. In the end, the grapes offered good aromatic intensity and an interesting balance.

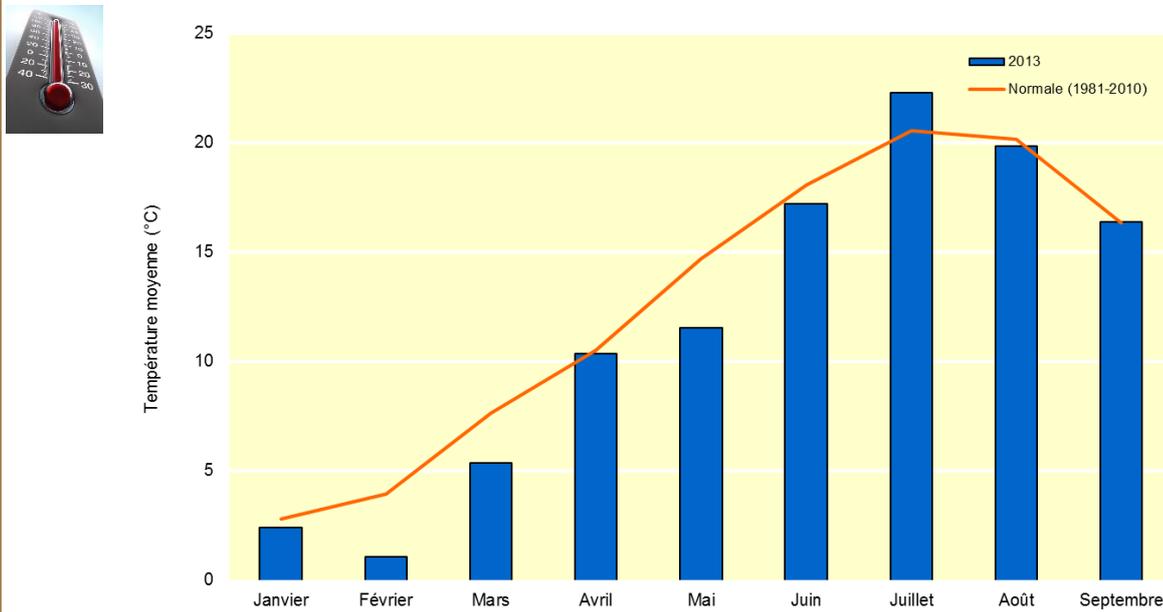


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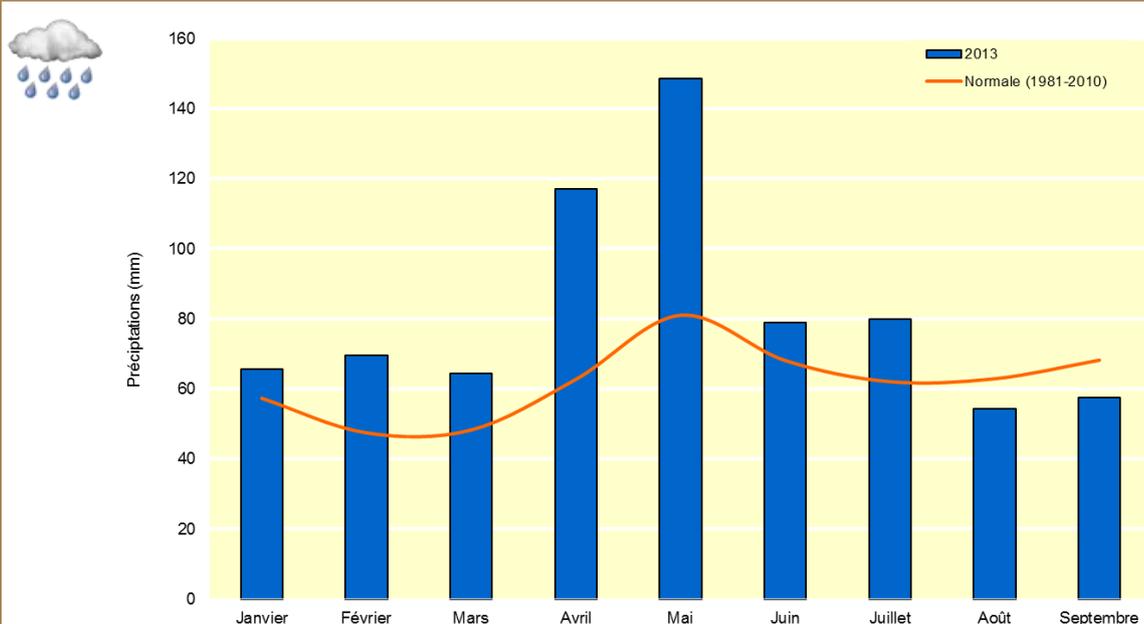
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Average monthly temperatures – Bourgogne 2013



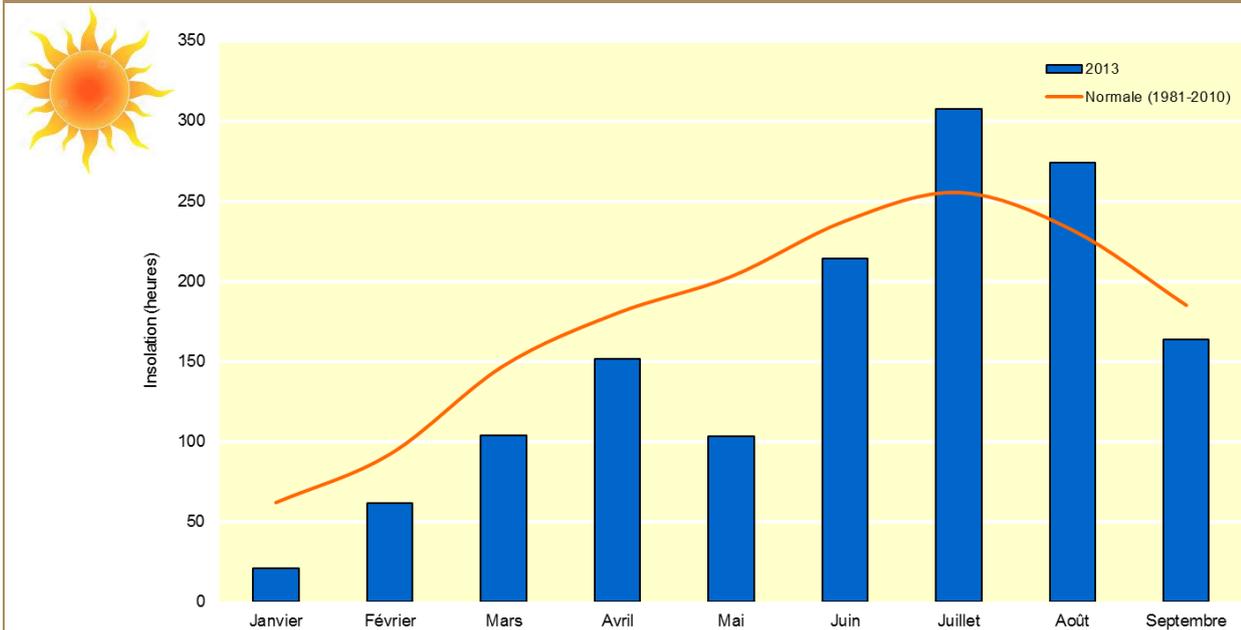
Sources: Météo France

Average monthly rainfall – Bourgogne 2013



Sources: Météo France

Average monthly sunshine – Bourgogne 2013



Sources: Météo France

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