

# The 2015 Bourgogne vintage Simply sublime!

9 November 2015



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***The grapes harvested in the Bourgogne wine region in 2015 were simply perfect. They were in tip-top health, and at optimal ripeness, a double whammy that will make this year one to remember. The wines have wonderful balance, and the vintage is characterized by abundant aromatic depth. The upbeat mood felt across the region during harvesting has been transformed into pure delight as vinification progressed and the first tastings revealed the promise of the future wines. The overall quality and exceptional concentration observed from the north of the region***

***to the south suggest this may well go down as a legendary vintage.***

Flowering started in early June, with veraison occurring in mid-July and the first grapes picked in late August, meaning everything went at quite a lick as the hot, dry weather dictated the tempo. Winemakers managed to adapt to this sustained pace and unusual conditions, bringing in some magnificent fruit which promises a great vintage.

This idyllic picture is, however, tempered by the relatively low volumes of red harvested which, at times, fell below expectations.

## White wines

The white wines are already very expressive, with lovely notes of summer fruits, and great aromatic purity, balanced by an impressive crispness and richness in the mouth. This harmony will please those who don't want to wait too long before uncorking, but will undoubtedly improve with ageing.

## Red wines

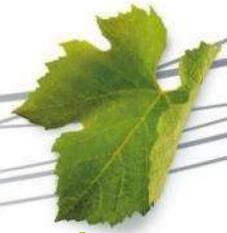
These are showing some intense, bright colors. The wines are bursting with aromas of incomparable complexity, with notes of red berries, and are ripe and full-flavored. The tannins are silky and rounded, a reflection of perfect maturity, giving the wines balance and elegance. 2015 promises to be an outstanding vintage that is already delicious, but which will reveal its full splendor in years to come.

## Crémant de Bourgogne

In order to preserve a good balance of acidity and fruit, the harvests, which have to be carried out by hand, began at the end of August. The yields of Chardonnay and Aligoté were in line with the norm, but were more uneven for the Pinot Noir and Gamay. The vintage is characterized by very aromatic, intense and complex base wines.

*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.*



# 2015: A year of extraordinary weather conditions

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***No one could have predicted the outstanding weather seen in 2015. High temperatures, low rainfall, and exceptional sunshine hours gave the plants a lot to cope with. But the vines of Bourgogne once again showed their ability to adapt and optimize the resources available.***

## What heat!

2015 began the same way 2014 ended: Winter took a long time set in, and January was notable for its mild weather. The first cold snap came in February, with average temperatures lower than seasonal norms, and as low as -1°C in the Yonne.

This “fast-track” winter soon gave way to springtime, with the thermometer climbing above seasonal averages. The tone had been set.

The months to come followed the same pattern, with the mercury rising steadily until the end of August, accompanied by lots of sun. Besides January and September, sunshine hours were ahead of seasonal averages, especially in April, June and July. Over the first nine months of the year, sunshine hours were 13% up on average.

It was so hot that records were broken: In Mâcon, on 4 July, 39.2°C was attained, beating the previous July record of 38.6°C set in 1983. And on 7 August, the temperature in Mâcon tipped 39.1°C, outstripping the prior record for that month of 37.3°C, set in 1949. The same day, Dijon touched 37.5°C, beating the previous record of 37.4°C set in 1998.

Between March and August, the number of days when the temperature exceeded 30°C was double the norm in the Saône-et-Loire and Côte-d’Or departments. The situation was less extreme in the Yonne, where averages in March and May were slightly below norms (-0.5 and -0.3 °C). Nonetheless, between March and August in that department, days when the mercury topped 30°C were 1.5 times more frequent than the average.

Across the Bourgogne region, during the three months of summer, the variations on normal temperatures were 1.2°C up in June, 2.5°C up in July, and 1.2°C in August. The Côte-d’Or department saw the widest variation on the norm.

This trend was reversed in September, which was cool with temperatures barely reaching seasonal averages in Saône-et-Loire, and below normal in the Yonne and the Côte-d’Or.

Between January and September, average temperatures overall were ultimately 0.2°C above the norm in the Yonne, and 1°C higher in the Côte-d’Or and Saône-et-Loire.

## Rain was scarce, but fell at the right time

This hot and sunny weather was accompanied by a shortfall in rain, at times quite marked. All winemakers would agree that 2015 will be remembered as a particularly dry year, but local rainfall levels varied considerably from one area to another.

The Côte-d'Or and the Saône-et-Loire both recorded a shortfall of almost 20% on average rainfall between January and September.

January was in-line with averages in both departments, as was April in the Côte-d'Or, whereas August had above-average rainfall. In the Saône-et-Loire, it wasn't until September that any significant rain fell, with totals for the month significantly above average (up 39% over norms).

The Yonne was the exception over the first nine months of 2015, with only 2.5% less rain than the norm. January, April and August all saw above-average precipitation: Up 16%, 64% and 66% respectively. In August, the excess came mainly from the storms that occurred on the night of 31 August, which were accompanied by hail in certain sectors. This had an impact on volumes harvested in the affected *appellations* and *Climats*, but did not alter the quality.

The main feature of the year was the drought in July, with rain shortfalls of between 75% and 90% depending on the department. Its effects were accentuated by the lack of rain in June, particularly in the Saône-et-Loire.

## The vine, an exceptionally resilient plant

These weather conditions were not without consequences. The sunny, mild spring – when the rain shortfall was not yet being felt – was favorable for the rapid resumption of growth. Bud-burst and flowering took place in a matter of days, and quite early in the season.

Fortunately, vines can seek out water deep underground thanks to their extensive root system. But concerns began to grow during the summer, when high temperatures, drought and long sunshine hours all combined. This period is key in the growth cycle of the vine. The leaves are working flat-out to swell and ripen the grapes through photosynthesis.

At the end of July, the hydric stress for the plants was such that, in places, the vines went into survival mode and suspended their activity, which can then result in the ripening process coming to a halt. But the vine is a particularly resilient plant, and some much-needed rain fell at just the right moment, kick-starting the cycle again. This renewed vigor led to fruit of exceptional quality. But the early pace set from the start of the year continued, and the first snip of the *secateurs* took place at the end of August.

These unusual conditions kept diseases and destructive bugs at bay, meaning the fruit was in excellent health upon picking. The harvests unfolded over several weeks across the region, and by the end of September, the 2015 vintage was in, while the vine leaves still had a nice green color.



### Average monthly temperatures - Bourgogne region 2015

#### Variation on norms by department



Difference compared to averages (C°)



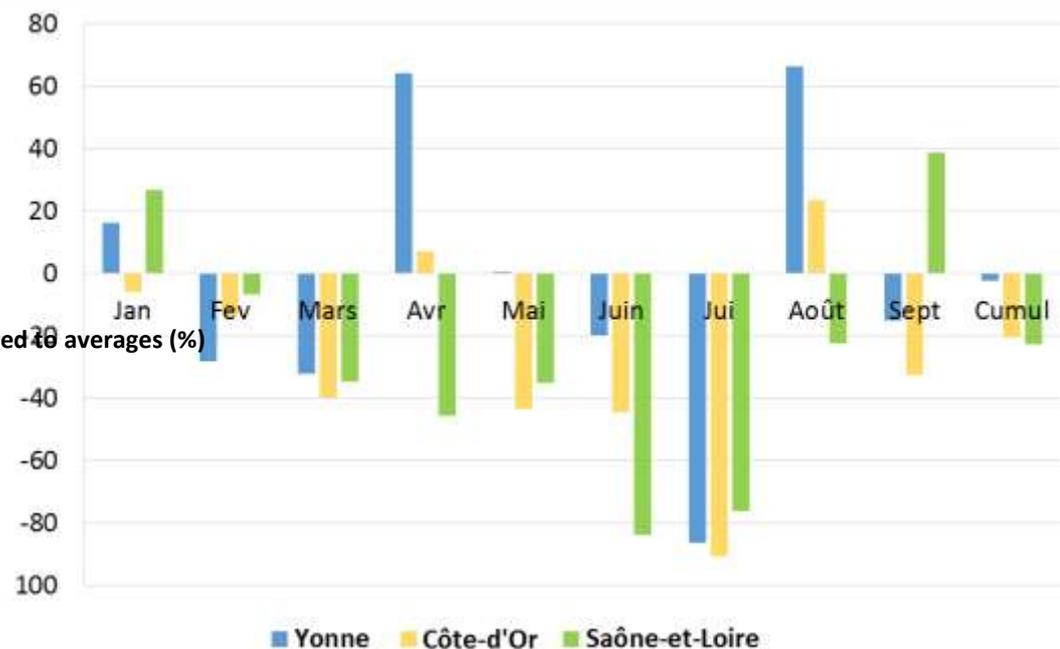
Sources : Météo France/BVVB

### Average monthly precipitation - Bourgogne region 2015

#### Variation on norms by department



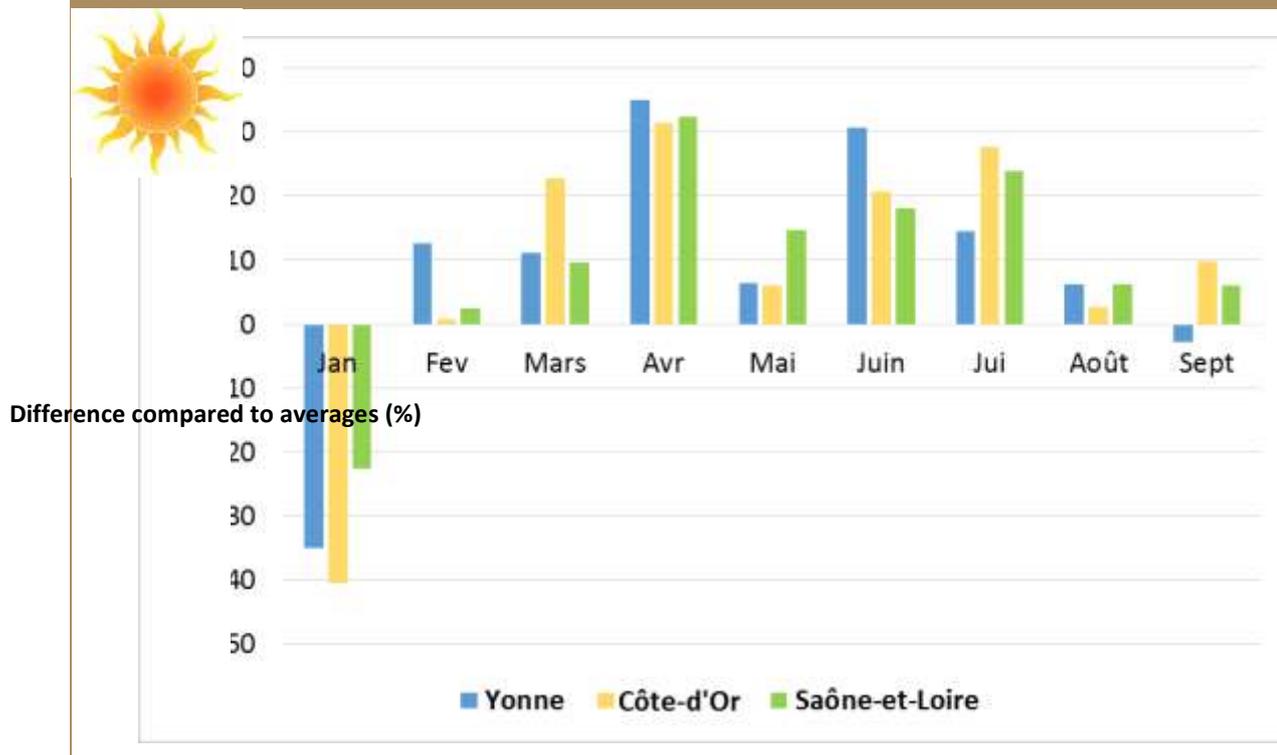
Difference compared to averages (%)



Source : Météo France/BVVB

### Average sunshine hours – Bourgogne region 2015

#### Variation on norms by department



Source : Météo France/BVB

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