



The 2017 vintage, The epitome of Bourgogne elegance

Bourgogne, 19 November 2017



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In 2017, everything came good for the Bourgogne winegrowing region in terms of both quality and quantity. And after several years of harvests that suffered the whims of the weather, 2017 has provided volumes set to satisfy the market, with wines that are already promising great things to come from this elegant vintage.

After spending the winter building up their strength, the vines profited fully from a very warm spring, with budburst in early April ensuring a head start in terms of the growth cycle that was maintained right up to the harvest. The plants progressed from stage to stage free from hindrance, and by mid-June, were flowering before rapid fruit set. An early vintage was confirmed.

During the summer, a few spells of heatwave alternated with more mixed weather. However, ripening continued at a good pace and by the end of August, the first grapes were being picked, two weeks ahead of average. Harvesting continued until mid-September as each plot reached peak maturity. The grapes were in exceptional health and required virtually no sorting. Everyone was very enthusiastic about this fabulous fruit, its peak ripeness, and the volumes produced. The only downside were a few areas hit by spring frosts, where yields were below norms.

Vinification went without a hitch and the mood was one of serenity for this vintage when the Bourgogne winegrowing region returned to more habitual levels of quality and quantity.

White wines

From the north to the south of the Bourgogne winegrowing region, opinion is unanimous: The 2017 vintage is one of the most elegant expressions of the Chardonnay grape, with perfectly balanced wines and a wonderful aromatic profile. They are crisp, with notes of citrus and white-fleshed fruit. Aeration triggers the release of hints of peach and apricot, while in the mouth, minerality and tension balance out this rich, fruit-filled palette. A very fine vintage indeed!

Red wines

Intense, dazzling colors ranging from ruby to garnet. From first glance, these wines simply invite one to taste them. Notes of red and black berries in these extremely expressive wines are another sign of indulgence, while perfect balance in the mouth combined with silky tannins results in a very harmonious ensemble that is subtle and without opulence.



Crémant de Bourgogne

The Chardonnay offer good balance, combining freshness with aromatic depth over notes of peach, quince, and tropical fruit. The acidity is present, but without excess, resulting in a light finish. The Pinot Noir are fruity, with touches of cherry and raspberry. In the mouth, they bring structure and a long finish. The Aligotés ensure a perfect blend, and bring good ageing potential. Lastly, the Gamay are indulgent, fruity, and expressive, and are the perfect partner, in the production of Crémant de Bourgogne rosés.

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.

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The Bourgogne winegrowing region: contrasting weather in 2017



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In 2017, the weather varied widely, from month to month and from sector to sector, in particular in terms of precipitation. Right from the start of the growth cycle, it was hot with excessive sunshine. This meant the vines grew very fast indeed. The rain was absent for long spells, before returning in excess quantities with stormy downpours. The hot, sunny, and dry weather during the first half of the year held disease at bay, and ensured the grapes were perfectly healthy and ripe upon harvest.

Bright, dry, and cold early on, before things began to warm up

January left no doubt as to the presence of winter, with bright, dry, and cold weather. Temperatures were lower than average, lingering at around freezing point, and even lower in some places. Precipitation was very low, down 60% compared to the average, with slightly more sunshine than normal. Coming after an equally cold December, this early cold snap allowed the vines to build up their strength.

In February, the rain continued to stay away, down 20% on average in general, but with some local exceptions. For example, in Beaune and Rully, rainfall was up 12 and 29% respectively. Average temperatures were up slightly, while sunshine stayed within the usual parameters.

In March, rainfall varied from department to department. In the Saône-et-Loire and the Yonne, precipitation was up around 50% over the average, while in the Côte-d'Or, rainfall was down. The warm weather persisted, with temperatures up slightly on average. At the end of March, things really took off, with fast and early budburst. Sunshine was average for the Yonne, whilst up a few hours elsewhere.

Springtime blowing hot and cold

Between April and June, the sun shone more than usual in all three departments as temperatures gradually rose. However, at the end of April, several days of cold brought morning frosts during this key period for vine development, when the young leaves and future fruit are at their most sensitive. Only part of the region was affected, mainly the northerly areas of the Grand Auxerrois, Chablisien, and Châtillonnais, as well as a few odd places on the Mâconnais and Côte Chalonnaise, but there was no comparison with 2016.

By early May, temperatures were slightly higher than normal. And from 23 May onwards into June, they really shot up, on average 6°C higher than normal. Flowering began in early May, a few days ahead of the 10-year average, and was over very quickly. By the end of June, records were being broken with the mercury hitting 33.5°C in Mâcon on 20 June and 36.4°C in Dijon on 22 June.

Rainfall varied. It lacked greatly in April in all three departments, down by as much as two-thirds. In the Yonne, low rainfall in May was in part compensated by an excess in June. In the Saône-et-Loire, levels were very low by June, but almost normal in the Côte-d'Or. But whatever the department, the average rainfall masks some very disparate local situations, mainly explained by sporadic storms.

These conditions are very favorable for vine growth, but fast-growing plants require a great deal of attention from winemakers.

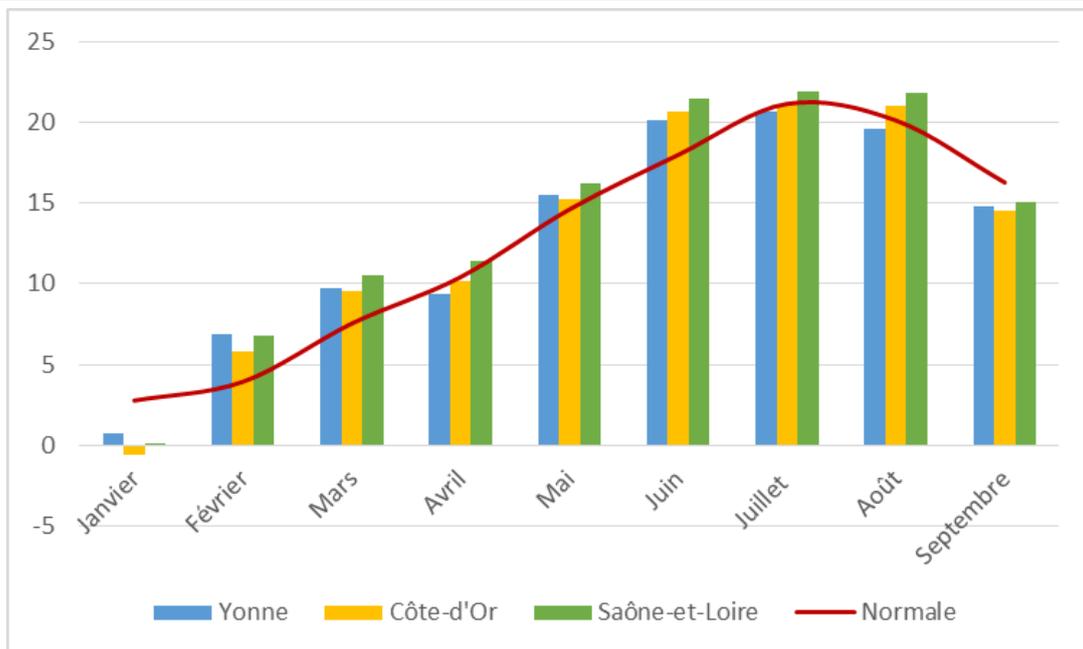
Hot and dry for July and August, then fall arriving early September

In July and August, temperatures were average for the season, before suddenly cooling with the arrival of September. But in reality, the two summer months offered periods of extreme heat, particularly towards the end of August in the southern Bourgogne region, alternating with cooler spells

Rainfall varied, depending on the sector, with most of the volume falling in sudden stormy bursts. The Saône-et-Loire and the Yonne were subject to excess rainfall in July, while levels in the Côte-d'Or were average. The Mâconnais was hit by hail on 10 July, which had a big impact locally on yields. In August, water was lacking in the Côte-d'Or and the Yonne. Rainfall in the Saône-et-Loire was above average, mainly linked to storms at the end of the month after a long period of drought. In certain areas, ripening was halted by hydric stress after a long period of drought, but rain at the end of August got things moving again.

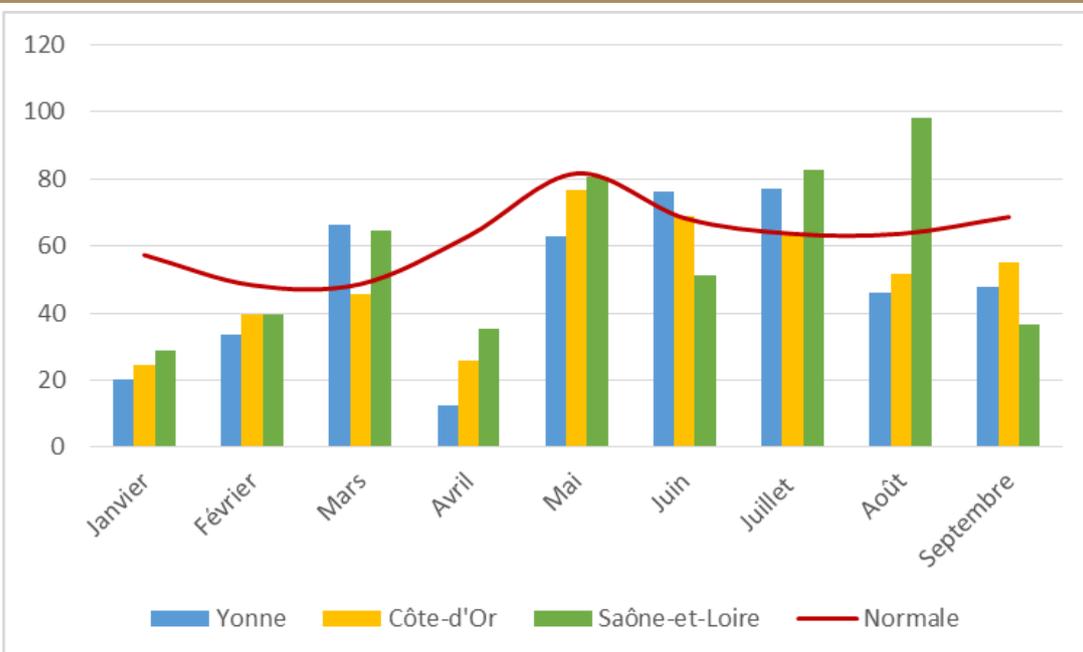
Average sunshine hours in these months were down on the first half of the year. It was between normal and just above average in the Saône-et-Loire; in the Côte-d'Or, it was below average in July, and just within the normal range in August; while in the Yonne, it was significantly down during July and August. Then in September, the weather suddenly changed, with sunshine levels well below average. But this shift slowed the pace and ripening, which was well underway, was able to conclude in a calmer fashion until the grapes reached optimum maturity. Picking was undertaken in ideal weather conditions for both harvesters and grapes: Not too hot, not too sunny, and not too wet.

Average monthly temperatures - Bourgogne 2017
Difference compared to the average (%) by department



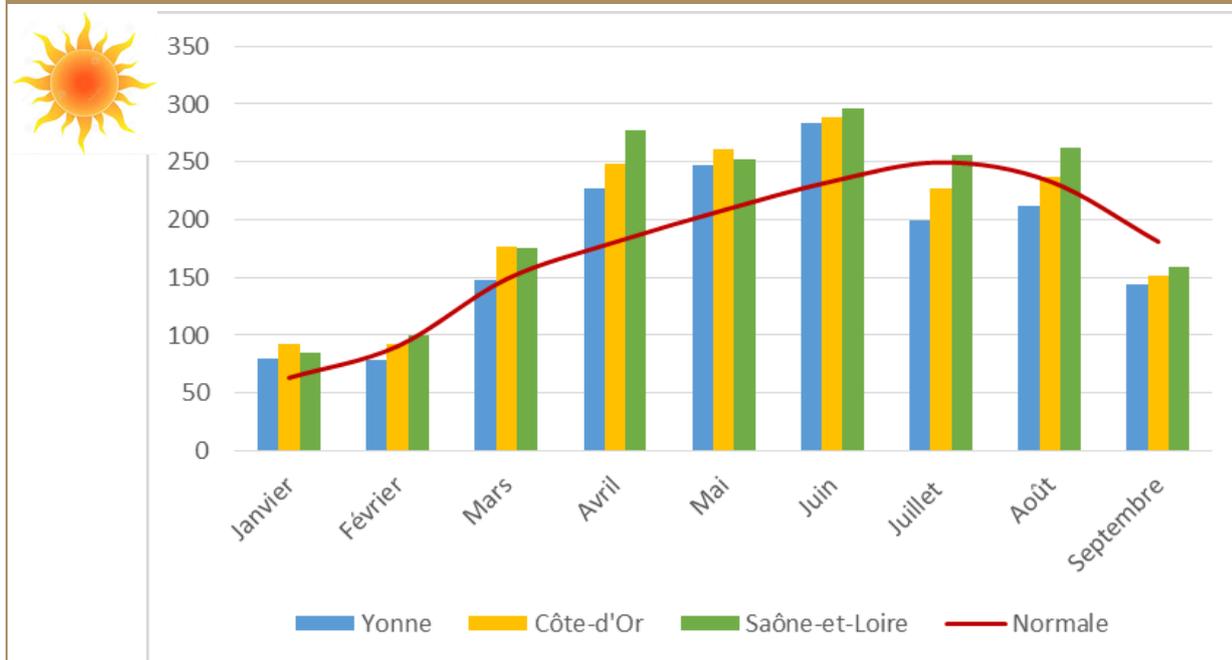
Source: Météo France

Average monthly rainfall - Bourgogne 2017
Difference compared to the average (%) by department



Source: Météo France

Average monthly sunshine - Bourgogne 2017
Difference compared to the average (%) by department



Source: Météo France

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