



BOURGOGNE
Bourgogne Wine Board

A happy 2022 harvest for the Bourgogne winegrowing region

21 September 2022



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The harvest is over in Bourgogne and our winegrowers and merchants are, on the whole, looking pleased. After historically low volumes in 2021, followed by some tricky weather during the growth cycle, the 2022 vintage is proving to be a pleasant surprise, and one that combines both quality and quantity. With beautiful balance, perfect health, and wonderful color extraction, it would be unreasonable to ask for more. The potential is there to make 2022 a great vintage indeed.

After a winter that was milder and drier than average, the first green shoots appeared in the earliest sectors at the start of April. A mass of cold air from the north then caused temperatures to drop across Bourgogne, which once again had to take arms to fight four nights of frost between 3-11 April. Winegrowers feared the worst, but luckily, at that point in the cycle, most of the vines were protected, as they were still in the “buds-in-cotton” stage. The damage was nothing like that experienced in 2021, even if some early sectors did suffer badly.

A speedy start to the growth cycle

In mid-April, spring-like conditions set in, and growth was fast. Just one month later and the first flowers were spotted in the most advanced sectors. Flowering happened across the region with a two-week head start on the average and in warm and dry weather. The emerging bunches suggested a generous harvest to come. An exceptionally warm spring shifted things up a gear, and after an average budburst, the pace upped and the 2021 vintage looked like it would be one of the earliest ever seen.

Much hoped-for rain and perfect timing

Fruit set began a fortnight earlier than average, and the berries developed in hot and sunny weather. Thunderstorms arrived at the right time and hit the whole region from 21-25 June, bringing precious water at a crucial stage for the plants. However, a few hailstorms did cause some significant damage in some areas.

Ripening in a heatwave

The summer was marked by a series of heatwaves. Winegrowers were happy as this meant there was no disease. The drought had little impact as vines withstand hydric stress very well, although those growing in shallow or sandy soils did suffer more.

Checks to monitor maturity increased and sugar levels showed good progress even though it was noted during the first half of August that some vines were evolving more slowly than others, indicating a lack of water. Winegrowers began preparing for harvest while praying for rain, and were blessed with showers mid-month, which had an instantly beneficial effect where they fell.

Sunny harvests and smiling pickers for results that went beyond our hopes

In the end, this vintage was no earlier than normal. Picking started on 16 August for a few plots of Crémant de Bourgogne. Then it was the turn of the Chardonnay vines for still wines on the Côte de Beaune from 20 August, as the pace picked up with the Crémant de Bourgogne. The rest of the region followed on behind. The last grapes were gathered on the Côte de Nuits, the Hautes Côtes, and in the Chablis region during the third week in September.

It is somewhat unusual that the harvest should go on for almost a month. This was down to diverse ripening good weather, and unhoped-for volumes. But nobody complained.

The grapes were in fine condition and wonderful health. The sorting tables were mainly used to eliminate a few dried-out berries. The yield in terms of juice was surprisingly good, and the general consensus is that the musts are balanced with controlled degrees of alcohol and good acidity. The qualitative potential of the phenolic compounds is excellent for the reds, suggesting a vintage with good ageing potential. But for both reds and whites, the musts are very aromatic, and fermentation is happening fast.

Vinification is now well underway. We'll need to wait a little longer to know more about the aromatic profiles and final equilibrium.

This vintage, a vintage of the kind we were all hoping for, is dedicated to Louis-Fabrice Latour, who died in early September. Former President of the Bourgogne Wine Board (BIVB) and the Fédération des Négociants-Eleveurs de Bourgogne (FNEB), and very involved in the world of wine on a national and international level, he would have been delighted by this fabulous harvest.



Contact:

Cécile Mathiaud – Head of PR at the BIVB

Tel. + 33 (0)3 80 25 95 76 6 Cell +33 (0)6 08 56 85 56 - cecile.mathiaud@bivb.com

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