



Olivier Leflaive

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET - FRANCE

VINTAGE 1999

The autumn at the end of 1998 was perfectly cold, whereas January and February were milder than usual.

The budspring started at the end of March until the beginning of April with no significant frost damage. During the 6 to 7 weeks that followed the rainfall and cold weather caused a strong pressure of mildew on the vegetation and some extra treatments were necessary until the month of June. The flowering took place early June with no particular problems excepting some light rainfall. From July to mid-August some rain and sunshine, with more intensity of the sun for the second half of August. September saved this vintage with three weeks of perfect weather conditions, cool wind from the north, fresh temperatures and a very intense sunlight.

From the 21st of September rain comes in during the last week of the harvest

Start of the harvest: 15th September for Pinot Noir
17th September for Chardonnay
End of Harvest 23rd September for Pinot Noir
26th September for Chardonnay

The quality of the Harvest 1999

The 1999 vintage was first of all marked by the big yield. The frost-damage of the previous vintage 1998 resulted into a sort of compensatory development of the vegetation especially on the upper slopes.

The importance of the fruit set and the size of the grapes (especially Chardonnay) resulted into big volumes.

The green harvest at the end of July have not given the expected result either. No person supposed to harvest such big quantities (Chardonnay), it was a big surprise. The INAO allowed an extra 20% to a normal harvest which gives 63 HL/ha AOC for the WHITES and 56 HL/ha AOC for the REDS.

The paradox of this vintage is that with such a big crop the health of the grapes was excellent despite the Mildiou attacks of early spring and that the phenolic maturity of Pinot Noir is good to very good, for the Chardonnay it is more than acceptable.

The Reds have a nice color and are well balanced, with ripe tannins and a good fruit character presuming a good vintage for medium keeping.

The Whites are fringant, with a small part of malic acid resulting into tendency for a fast malolactic fermentation. The aromas are clean and fresh and the structure is good without being exceptional. The wines will be, generally spoken ready for drinking quite early. The harvest and character of the wine can be compared to 1979.

Franck Grux