



Olivier Leflaive

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET - FRANCE

VINTAGE 2008

Winter was not particularly harsh. There was no instance of frost when budding commenced in April 2008.

Vegetation was even, up until flowering between 10th and 15th June, at which point temperatures turned cool, hampering the process.

This led to some millerandage (hens and chickens), affecting mainly the Chardonnay vines. The end of June, July and August were notable for heavy rainfall. While oidium was easier to hold in check, mildew made a constant assault.

From then on in, there was no let up to the cloud cover and at the start of September the prognosis was grim. The grapes just were not ripening. That said, the more serious and painstaking vigneron produced almost perfectly healthy grapes, the main issue being uneven ripening. From the 15th September however, beautiful dry, sunny conditions came to stay and brought with them the northern wind which concentrates the grapes, giving perfect conditions for harvest.

Beginning of harvest: 20th September

End of harvest: 12th October

OVERVIEW OF QUALITY:

Chablis (Chardonnay):

Chablis benefited enormously from the prolonged ripening period, as did the Cote de Beaune, producing wines with great typicity, style and fruit. In my opinion a very good vintage indeed.

Cote de Beaune (Chardonnay):

Crops are reduced, indeed low in some areas for example Meursault. Healthy fruit has resulted in elegant, precise wines. Final post-malolactic acidities will be quite different to the current levels. The wines are rather austere now but well structured.

The unique conditions of 2008 concentrated grapes that were not wholly ripe. On this basis, the elevage sur lies (time on lees) will take longer than in 2005, 2006 and 2007.

Cote de Beaune (Pinot Noir):

As phenolic maturity was uneven we were forced to harvest a little later than originally planned. The crop was healthy however, with small grapes.

Aided by a rigorous sorting process (resulting in a loss of between 5 and 15%), the wines show beautiful colour, appealing fruit and satisfactory tannins, a promising combination pointing to good overall quality.

As for the white wines, malolactic fermentation will make for softer, more appealing wines by the end of Spring.

All in all, the level of quality is good but should not be considered a great vintage. The key to quality will be time and care spent in the elevage process.

Franck GRUX
December 2008