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Beaujolais Villages

APPELLATION CONTRÔLÉE

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MIS EN BOUTEILLE PAR LOUIS LATOUR NÉGOCIANT-ÉLEVEUR
A BEAUNE - CÔTE-D'OR - FRANCE

Tasting Note

The 2010 Beaujolais Villages presents itself in a profoundly superb garnet color. The nose is powerful with aromas of strawberry and black currant, accompanied by notes of hummus. In the mouth it is an ample and round wine with aromas of huckleberry. Beautiful acidity in the finish which gives a lovely persistence. Tasted July 2011.

Conservation

1997 1998 1999 2000 2001
2002 2003 2004 2005 2006
2007 2008 2009

Vinification

Traditional Beaujolais techniques

Description

Beaujolais-Villages comes from 35 selected towns within the northern part of the region and originating from granite soils which are ideally compatible with the indigenous Gamay grape. The difference between the various levels of Beaujolais - Beaujolais Nouveau, Beaujolais, Beaujolais Superieur, Beaujolais-Villages, and Cru Beaujolais- is the maximum yield, geographic area, and the ability of the wine to improve with age.

Report 1999

1999 THE LAST HARVEST OF THE CENTURY

The harvest was marked by sunny conditions and record levels of maturity in the crop. Though there was rain in the last few days, well-tended vines yielded a promising harvest of grapes rich in sugar. Volume is expected to total around 1.5 million hectolitres, which is higher than 1998.

The first two weeks of September in Burgundy saw temperature records being broken and, as a result, well-ripened grapes. Sugars were at an average of 180 g/l (16.8g of sugar yields 1% alcohol) for the Chardonnay grapes, the highest average figure reached at the start of the harvest in the last ten years. In the Mâconnais, levels approached those of 1995 (an exceptional vintage). While the sugar level of the grapes in the Côte Chalonnaise left other years far behind, in the Yonne, it fell between that of 1995 and 1996.

The Pinot Noir grapes also experienced record levels of maturity. One vineyard in the Côte de Beaune yielded grapes with sugars at 230g/l at the beginning of September. In the Côte de Beaune, sugars reached 1995 levels, and in the Saône-et-Loire and Yonne records were broken as well. On average, sugar levels were 25g/l above those for 1988. The polyphenolic structure of the grapes (which determines the colour and structure of the wine) was excellent.

Every gourmet knows that the right balance between sweetness and acidity with food is crucial. The same is true of grapes. The sugar level determines the alcoholic strength of the wine while acidity is responsible for the perfect balance to give a wine its keeping qualities. It is clear that the high sugar levels seen in the grapes this year are matched by excellent levels of total acidity derived from the tartaric acid naturally present in the fruit. In the Pinot Noir grapes, average levels of tartaric acid, at around 7.5g/l, are higher than the average for the last ten years and close to those of 1991 and 1993. Equally, average total acidity in the Chardonnay grapes matches the average of the last decade.

From mid-September onwards Burgundy saw the return of rain, especially at night, and this upset the smooth progress of the harvest to some extent. However, the health of the grapes remained excellent and the rain had only limited effects on the quality of the crop, especially in the case of those growers who had the foresight and concern for quality which led them to carry out crop thinning or a green harvest earlier in the season.

At Domaine Latour the picking started on the 17th September with the vineyards in Beaune, the average sugar levels were 12.5% potential alcohol with some vineyards, including the Corton Charlemagne at 14%! Our harvest was finished by 27th thus we avoided much of the heavy rains.

The wines have now finished their alcoholic fermentation and will spend the next 18 months in barrel acquiring structure, flavour and complexity.

Our two sister wineries in the Valley of the Ardèche and further south in the Var both reported an excellent crop of healthy ripe fruit.

In the Ardèche isolated patches of spring frost and summer hail reduced our yield, leaving a small quantity of fully ripe and concentrated fruit. The two week harvest began on 2nd September under clear blue skies as the Chardonnay d'Ardèche came in at 13.2° whilst the Grand Ardèche easily made 13.5°. The wines have good rich fruitiness, and supportive acidity which gives excellent ageing potential to these well balanced young wines.

The Pinot Noir at Domaine de Valmoissine enjoyed an exceptional year with optimal levels of sun and rain throughout the growing season. The harvest began on 13th September, and lasted for 10 days. Whilst there was a little rain on the 8th day, all the fruit was harvested at 13.5°. This will be Valmoissine's best year yet, already the wines are showing ample richness, subtleness and a silky smoothness.

PROVA DA SAFRA 1999.

Aperitivo ao almoço em 31 de julho de 2011. (Bacalhoda da Casa)