

# Vintage Report 2013

## Overview

After the challenges thrown at them in 2012, Bourgogne winemakers were hoping for a peaceful 2013. But capricious Mother Nature had other ideas. Defying all weather forecasts, she never let up. After a long winter, a gloomy spring and a fine, providential summer, for the most part, the pickers had to wait until the start of October to take up their secateurs.

The consequences of the weather's whims – such as shatter and millerandage, hail damage, concentration and disease – all had an impact on the quantities harvested. Across the region, no winegrowing area was spared. Some had very low yields with volumes equal to or even less than those recorded in 2012 (1.26 million hectoliters<sup>1</sup>). Fortunately, tastings suggest that 2013 is a very successful vintage. Once again, experience has made all the difference. It has been a challenging year but the winegrowers of Bourgogne have been rewarded for their pains.

## 2012/2013

The winter lingered in Bourgogne. From January to July, the temperatures were cool. The sun was notably absent during the first half of the year, and the rain all too frequent. The final rainfalls were exceptionally high from January onwards, it was well over the average: up 8mm in January, up 22mm in February and up 16mm in March. The heaviest readings were in April (117mm instead of 62mm) and May (148mm instead of 81mm, or over 80% up!). This gloomy weather affected the vines, setting back the growth cycle by around two weeks.

In early May, when the first buds had just appeared, torrential rainstorms hit the region. In some plots, the vines spent several days with their roots in water. The weather during flowering and fruit set was no better and by now, the growth cycle was set back by three weeks.

Cold temperatures combined with humidity during flowering and fruit set meant the appearance of blossom was spread out and there was significant shatter and *millerandage*. Already, the production potential for the 2013 vintage was diminished. The discrepancy in the vine's growth cycle by this point was almost three weeks off the ten-year average.

A hot, dry and sunny summer provided a welcome change and helped the quality of the grapes, enabling them to mature correctly. However, July was marked by a violent hailstorm on the Côte de Beaune with 1,350 hectares affected on 23 July with up to 100% of the vines damaged on some plots. Beaune, Pommard and Savigny were the most affected villages. The potential loss was estimated at 30,000 hectoliters. On 24 August, the south of the Bourgogne region was also hit by localized hailstorms.

Eventually the sunshine and heat emerged, exceeding the seasonal norms. This summery weather dried out the vines and allowed the grapes to continue their development. Ripening and maturation began without problems, despite the cycle having been set back early on.

September didn't help the vines, with the ambient warmth and regular rain encouraging the development of the Botrytis fungus which rots the grapes. It was more limited on those bunches where the grapes were smaller and thus better aerated. The choice of harvest date was a tough one but in general it began during the first few days of October. Winegrowers had to be very reactive and work fast. The final harvest was almost 20% down on the average harvest of around 1.5m hectolitres.

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This demanding vintage required a lot of effort that. However, today this has been rewarded with success. The wines are revealing a real aromatic purity and unexpectedly colour. The balance in the wines is particularly satisfactory.

## White wines

Fruity and balanced, the white wines are characterized by a nose marked with citrus. This aromatic crispness is also felt in the mouth. The wines are well structured, fresh and lively, without the aggression some feared given the acidity measurements taken just before the harvest. Fortright and without flourishes, the whites of 2013 stand up convincingly to previous vintages.

## Red wines

With an intense, sparkling ruby colour, these fruity wines are like a mouthful of freshly picked cherries, raspberries and redcurrants. The Pinot Noirs that were harvested later have more jammy aromas. On tasting, the first acidulated notes give way to a good structure supported by sophisticated, pronounced tannins. Good length on the tongue prolongs the pleasure.

Source : BIVB press conference – Hospice de Beaune 2013