

In 2012, Chablis did well against all the odds

Many winemakers say that, despite the odds, the 2012 vintage in Chablis is « *a very good surprise* ».

Indeed, the producers have been severely tested by the weather conditions that have drastically complicated the work in vineyards. In April, spring frosts threatened the buds just after budding and the humidity increased the threat of diseases. Blooming occurred under difficult conditions and, because it was spread over time, the resulting grape clusters were loose with rather small berries. Followed hail episodes that mainly touched the right bank of the Serein. This vintage was set to be one of the most difficult in the history of Burgundy.

But nature is unpredictable and, starting mid-July, summer was dry, so dry that grapes matured very slowly and water stress led to sugar but also acid concentration in the berries.

Finally, at the end of September, the weather favoured the vine growers with rainfalls at the very beginning of harvest that swelled the grapes and boosted the spirits of the growers. Perfectly healthy vines restarted under the Sun of September. They visibly benefited from the rain, thus ensuring the quantity and quality of the harvest.

The first harvest bins reassured the grape pickers: the must was naturally rich in sugar with a nice acidity.



The only downside is the volume of grapes harvested, which is below the norms particularly on the right bank of the Serein; i.e. a decrease of 10 to 15%. However, there is no comparison between the losses expected in other parts of Burgundy.

The last plots were harvested as “normal” at the beginning of October, if normal still means something under these conditions.

It is still too early to say what the new vintage will look like, but enologists and winemakers are very confident. For Jean-François Bordet, President of the Chablis Commission, this vintage is one of the most beautiful he has worked with in the past 37 years.

The musts are pure, frank, straightforward, a reflection of the classic style of Chablis. The wines are intense, the maturity is well-balanced, while showing a nice acidity. The flavours are harmonious and the wines, powerful, express beautifully the terroir with mineral, chalky characters as well as fresh fruit and citrus notes.

Some wines display a nice complexity and wonderful structure and can be aged several years to fully express their potential.

Finally, the winemakers of Chablis compare this vintage with the 2010, and even the 2005 vintages.

Chablis, November 2012