



Notes for Château Branaire-Ducru 2014



After an exceptionally mild winter, the bud burst came 15 days ahead of the 10 year average.

Spring was wet and rather cool while the flowering in early June had good thermal conditions.

For the Cabernet, good flowering did not completely compensate for the lower number of bunches per vine induced by the adverse weather conditions experienced in the spring of 2013.

The mild month of June and spring rainfall stimulated the growth of the vines and the development of beautiful foliage. Wet conditions required special attention at this time.

Apart from a very warm second half of July, we had moderate temperatures with average precipitation. Water stress appeared late.

In early September, the water measurements showed interesting constraints which were slightly less favorable than in 2009 but more favorable than in 2008 or 2011.

From the end of August, the weather changed completely with above average temperatures and 30% more sunshine than normal.

Drought rapidly expanded water stress, adding to the concentration of grape tannins and refining and maturing the seeds.

We started harvesting the Merlot on September 24 and found the berries had a greater diameter than average with high sugar and polyphenols. At maturity, the grapes tasted particularly rich with bright fruit.

The harvest of Cabernet Sauvignon started October 3 and ended on the 11th in beautiful conditions.

We were able to pick without urgency with each parcel having achieved ideal maturity.

The first Merlot's tasted were round and fleshy with great aromatic complexity and remarkable length. These are the finest Merlots since the 2010 vintage.

The first impressions following alcoholic fermentation with the Cabernet show a rich wine (impressions confirmed by analyzes of tannins) with extremely fine tannic expression.

We are also optimistic about our Petit Verdot that appears solid and with nice aromatics during the final stage of fermentation.

The 2014 have high natural alcohol-13.5 to 14 for the Merlot and 12.5 to 13.5 for the Cabernet Sauvignon-and good acidity that indicates a beautiful balance.

The running off will begin at the end of the week yet we know already that the returns will not exceed 40 hl / ha. This is the average number of output clusters, but because of the dry, sunny and warm conditions in September (which contributed to the acceleration of maturity and berry concentration by water loss) we will have lower yields.

In conclusion, while the 2014 Branaire-Ducru will likely have a smaller quantity of wine it is a very promising vintage in terms of quality.