

CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC



## THE 2015 VINTAGE

### WEATHER CONDITIONS

Temperatures and precipitations were close to average during the first three months of the year. The rest of 2015 was particularly dry.

Accumulated rainfall was just 535 mm, i.e. the second lowest figure in 20 years.

Only 2005 was drier (501 mm). Temperatures were much higher than average from April until the end of August. The months of September and October were dry and rather cool. Except for fairly heavy showers on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October, most of the harvest took place during dry weather.

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## THE VINE'S WATER BALANCE

2015 was a very dry year, punctuated by a rainy period during the first two weeks of August. The vines successfully resisted the drought conditions that gradually set in during the first part of the growing season, finding the necessary coping mechanisms. The water deficit in early August was nevertheless very marked in plots with gravelly soil, where stem water potential readings of -16 bars were recorded. Thanks to August showers, this constraint did not lead to water stress, which would have been harmful to young vines on gravelly soils. Starting on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, a new period of dry weather once again intensified the water deficit until early October. As of the 30<sup>th</sup> of September, 2015 was the 2<sup>nd</sup> driest out of 64 vintages since 1952.

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## THE GROWTH CYCLE

Bud break in 2015 was the latest recorded at Cheval Blanc for the past 25 years. However, the vines caught up with the normal growth pattern by flowering, which was quick and even thanks to beautiful warm, dry weather from April to July.

Véraison (colour change) was also rapid and even. The unusual water balance in 2015 created especially propitious conditions to quick ripening, especially on gravelly soils. The water deficit early in the growing season called an advanced halt to vegetative growth as early as late June in certain plots and resulted in small berries. August showers gave a boost to photosynthesis as soon as mid-véraison was reached, when the berries started to fill out.







The conjunction of halted vegetative growth on the vines, small berry size, and high sugar production due to active photosynthesis led to very quick ripening on gravelly plots.

The first plot of Merlot was picked on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September, just 31 days after mid-véraison. Ripening took place according to a more usual timetable on other types of soil, and the time from véraison to harvest was more in keeping with the average.

For the above reasons, the harvest lasted until the 6<sup>th</sup> of October (33 days), a record at Cheval Blanc. Several plots of Merlot with sandy soil were picked later than Cabernet Franc grapes on gravelly soil.



## RIPE GRAPE COMPOSITION AND QUALITY OF THE VINTAGE

Early water stress reduced the size of the Merlot berries. Showers in August had more of an effect on the weight of Cabernet Franc, a later-ripening variety.

The composition of the must reflected the good ripening conditions. The grapes had high sugar levels and a low malic acid content. As in 2011, the average sugar levels of the Cabernet Franc grapes were slightly higher than those of Merlot. However, thanks to the cool temperatures at the end of the season, the harvested grapes had a lower pH than usual and they retained very good aromatic freshness.





## 2015 CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC

Cheval Blanc's terroir is a veritable patchwork, consisting of forty-one different plots. During maceration, wine from each one was tasted in the vat room to evaluate its intrinsic qualities. These rigorous tastings, done practically daily, and most often blind, left even experienced tasters impressed and unusually puzzled. Their final verdict was that every plot except two was worthy of going into the blend for the *grand vin*! The 2015 vintage, picked over 34 days, epitomises beauty and harmony. Intense, brilliant, ruby-red colour with deep purple highlights.

The remarkably intense and complex nose features a host of impressions: various fruits, spices, and flowers, as well as balsamic aromas.

Still other nuances appear with aeration: red fruit, raspberry, cherry, and blackcurrant jelly, as well as delicate floral overtones of lilac and violet. The wine starts out rich and powerful on the palate, with a concentrated middle palate showing well-defined, precise, elegant tannin.

The wine's volume and richness are obvious, and continue into an aftertaste that goes on and on. There is a perfect balance between power, elegance, and distinction.

Grape varieties: 55% Merlot  
45% Cabernet franc

### TASTING NOTES

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# CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC

PLAN DU DOMAINE EN 2015

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## PETIT CHEVAL

Petit Cheval will not be galloping alongside its older brother this year.

For the first time in its history, Petit Cheval will not be offered at tastings of the 2015 vintage.

Seeing as thirty-nine plots were excellent enough to go into the grand vin, the two remaining ones were insufficient to produce Petit Cheval. Therefore, there will be no 2015 Petit Cheval.



RED WINE VARIETIES

-  CABERNET FRANC
-  MERLOT
-  CABERNET SAUVIGNON

WHITE WINE VARIETIES

-  SAUVIGNON BLANC
-  SEMILLON

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## 2015 QUINAULT L'ENCLOS

Deep red colour.

The bouquet is bursting with red and black fruit aromas.

It also has floral overtones (violet and rose) with aeration, going on to display fresh hints of mint and eucalyptus.

The wine is powerful and full-bodied. It starts out quite straightforward, with a very full, silky middle palate.

Rich, creamy tannin accompanies the long aftertaste.

The harvest: 18<sup>th</sup> of September to the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October

Grape varieties: 69% Merlot

12% Cabernet franc

19% Cabernet Sauvignon

### TASTING NOTES

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