

# CHATEAU SMITH HAUT LAFITTE

GRAND CRU CLASSÉ



## THE VINTAGE 2012

***Our major assets despite the delicate climatology:  
The quality of our terroir and our savoir-faire: the Bio-Precision.***

**An early terroir:** the gunzian gravel soil, warm and well-drained, at Smith Haut Lafitte is very favourable to a good maturation of the grapes and the clayey nodules of the sub-soil limit the extreme hydric stress. The main advantage of our terroir is the consistency in the development of the vine all year long, despite the sudden changes in weather conditions. This early terroir, aerated and healthy where the vine is deeply rooted allowed us to craft a wine of beautiful quality despite the delicate climatology of 2012.

**A unique savoir-faire:** a unique working philosophy matching the best of nature (research for a symbiosis plant-terroir-biotope) and the best of science (tools of high technology for the most faithful expression of the terroir through the wine).

### **On the White Side**

« Chateau Smith Haut Lafitte white 2012 offers a bright and very fresh aromatic expression, dominated by citrus fruits and white-fleshed fruits (pomelos, yellow lemon, white peach, pear), with delicate flowery notes combined with earthier notes of flint. The mouth is wide and dynamic at the same time, offering generosity and volume for a great texture. The *finale* is marked by a tension, a remarkable freshness which reveals the whole complexity of this wine. »

### **On the Red Side**

« A beautiful aromatic freshness and a dynamic, sharp and generous mouth characterise this Chateau Smith Haut Lafitte red 2012. From the merlots the richness, density and velvet; and from the cabernets the aromatic complexity, structure and dynamism. 2012 appears long, structured, with a good concentration, a beautiful silky texture and well-integrated tannins. This wine offers a real complexity of fresh red fruits aromas (strawberry, red cherry), spicy notes of liquorice and dry herbs with more empyreumatic notes of hearth and gun flint. »

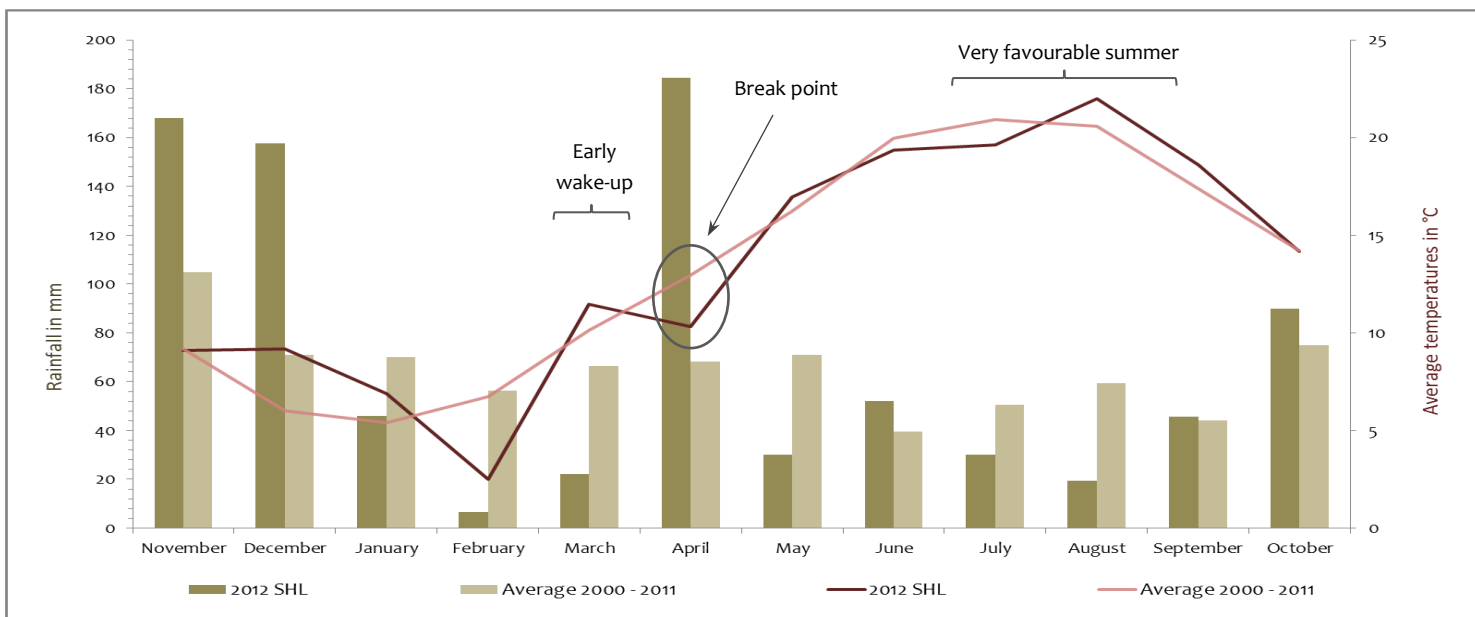
**By Fabien Teitgen - Technical Director**



## Climatology

2012: A delicate climatology: “a very technical vintage in terms of soil - plant balance”

- Warm and rainy winter, cold wave first half of February and important rise of temperatures until March.
- Early budbreak followed by a cold and humid April, causing the vine growing process to stop.
- Very favourable weather conditions from May to September: among the driest of the past decade with sums of temperatures close to 2009 and 2005.
- Heterogeneous veraison and superb conditions for the maturation for the grapes in August and September.
- September and October on the edge: extreme reactivity required for quality harvest.



Measurements performed by a weather station located in the heart of Château Smith Haut Lafitte vineyard.

## Major Vine Growing Steps

2012

Budbreak	End of March
Flowering	Beginning of June
Veraison	First half of August

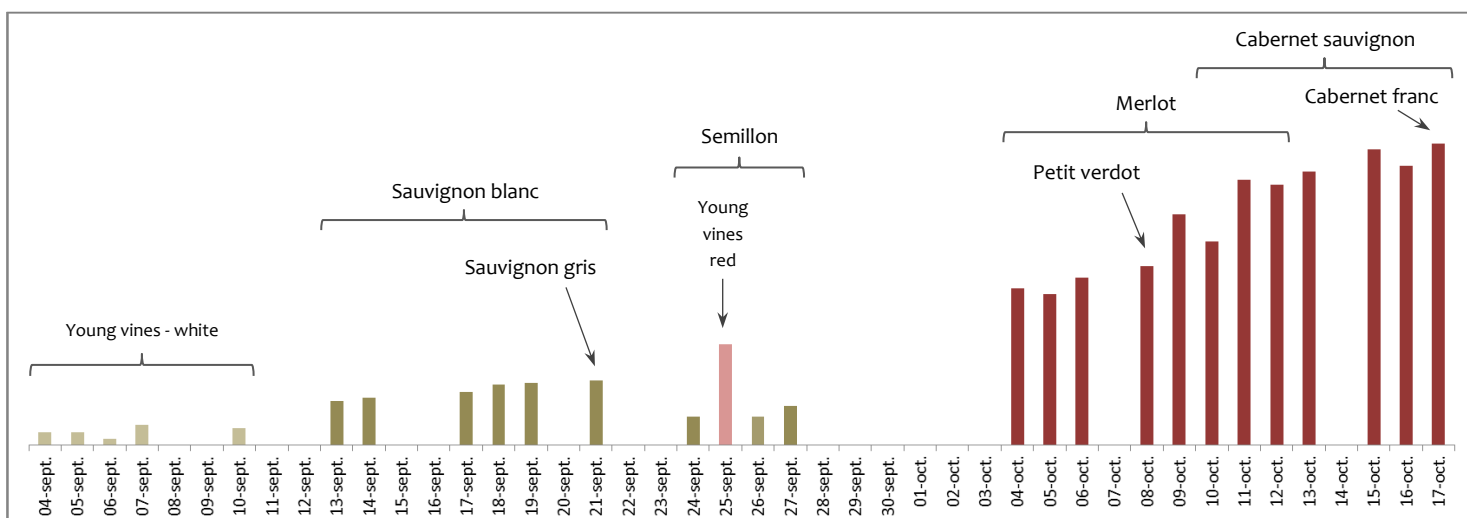
} Very early budbreak, then flowering and veraison on normal dates or a little late.

Measurements performed in our vineyard by Fabien François Fort, Chef de Culture at Château Smith Haut Lafitte.

## Viticulture

Difficult vintages reveal more than others the winemaker expertise. Thus, the years spent on research for the ideal plant - terroir balance in the vineyard were rewarding during the 2012 delicate vintage: the good reaction of the vine to hydric stress and sudden weather changes is possible thanks to this viticulture of high precision.

## Harvest



The *Enoview* satellite imagery is essential in 2012 in order to split the vine plots in zones of homogeneous maturity. In addition to the *Terroir Map*, created through measurements of the *Electric Resistivity* of the soil, it allows us to increase tremendously the precision of harvest, picking in small batches, vine per vine so to speak, within plots.

## Vinification

The quality of the vintage comes from the late and compact harvests as well as the meticulous sorting during long evenings of grapes reception at the chai. To achieve the required reactivity to harvest, teams were doubled to reach over 200 harvesters and the optical sorting technology was complemented by an additional manual sorting.

- Vinification of the reds: vatting using gravity, fermentation of whole berries in small oak vats at 28°C, manual pigeage - punching down of the cap -, ageing lot by lot on the lees for 18 months in barrels.
- Vinification of the whites: direct pressing of the berries in neutral atmosphere to prevent from oxygen contact and preserve full aromatic potential, fermentation in barrels, ageing on the lees 12 months with bâtonnages.
- Yield: 32 hl/ha in average before selection of the different wines.
- Barrels made at Château Smith Haut Lafitte's very own cooperage with a selection of woods from the greatest oak forests of France.

## “Bio-Precision”

This approach, native of the Château, aims to match the most innovative viticulture and vinification techniques with the greatest respect of the living: the soil and the vine. This method promotes the bio diversity and the balance of the vineyard ecosystem through hedge plantation, production of organic compost or horse ploughing among other techniques. It focuses as well on preserving the genetic diversity of the vine and therefore the complexity of our wines thanks to vine graft, clone selection or rootstock mother vine on the “La Lande” island on the Garonne river.

## Château Smith Haut Lafitte Blends

	Cab. Sauv.	Merlot	Cab. Franc	Petit Verdot	% New Barrels
Château Smith Haut Lafitte	55	40	4	1	60
Les Hauts de Smith	45	55	-	-	20
Le Petit Haut Lafitte [Grand Export]	55	45	-	-	20

	Sauv. Blanc	Sémillon	Sauv. Gris	% New Barrels
Château Smith Haut Lafitte	90	5	5	50
Les Hauts de Smith	100	-	-	50

## Château Cantelys and Château Le Thil Blends

	Cab. Sauv.	Merlot	Cab. Franc	Petit Verdot	% New Barrels
Château Cantelys	65	35	-	-	20
Château Le Thil	15	85	-	-	30

	Sauv. Blanc	Sémillon	Sauv. Gris	% New Barrels
Château Cantelys	50	45	5	50
Château Le Thil	50	50	-	30

## Analysis

	TA	% Alc. Vol.	pH
Cabernet Sauvignon et Franc	-	12.5 - 13	3.6 - 3.65
Merlot	-	13 - 14	3.6 - 3.7
Petit Verdot	-	12.7	3.65
Sauvignon Blanc	3.5 - 5g H <sub>2</sub> SO <sub>4</sub> /l.	12.8 - 14.5	3.15 - 3.30
Sauvignon Gris	3.4g H <sub>2</sub> SO <sub>4</sub> /l.	14.5	3.3
Semillon	3.6 - 4.2g H <sub>2</sub> SO <sub>4</sub> /l.	12.5	3.35

## Production Breakdown

