

2020

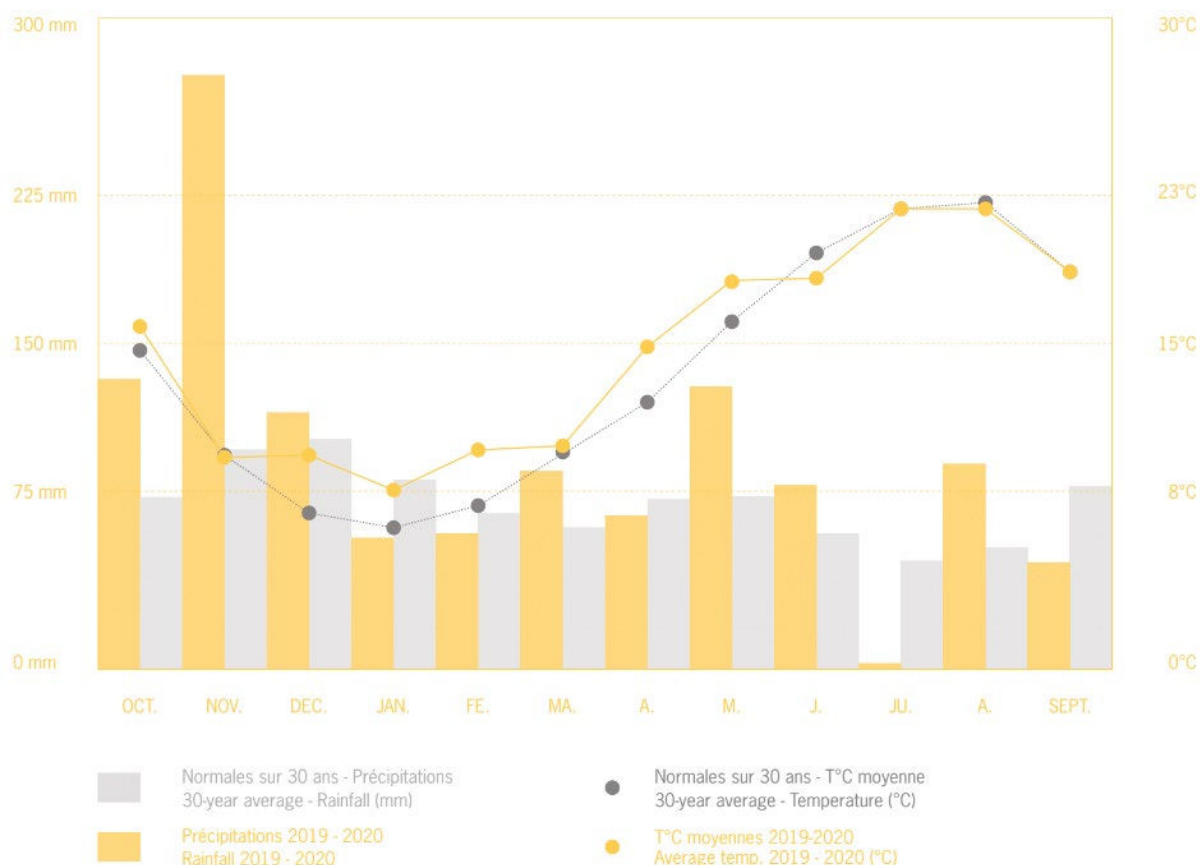
VINTAGE REPORT

FIAT LUX !

Winter 2019-2020 was marked by mild temperatures and heavy rain. After a particularly dry summer, the 525 mm of rain that fell between October and December 2019 replenished the soil's water reserves. The mild winter conditions culminated in an early (by about 15 days) and generally homogeneous bud break in the vineyard, on 20 March for the Merlot and 26 March for the Cabernet Sauvignon.

In April, phenological development progressed rapidly thanks to mild temperatures in the first fortnight, with +2.5 °C compared to the seasonal average and average maximum temperatures of 22 °C. This period saw more widespread bud break and active vine growth.

Meteorological comparison of Pauillac 2020 with seasonal Bordeaux averages (1968-1997)



The arrival of rain and cooler temperatures at the end of April slowed branch growth slightly. We were also three weeks in advance on the seasonal averages.

Harvest dates and crop development in the Château Lynch-Bages vineyard

VINTAGE	Varieties	Budburst began (March)	A Mid-flowering (June)	Difference A to B	B Mid-veraison (August)	End veraison	Difference B to C	C Start of Harvest (LYNCH-BAGES)	Difference A to C	Start of veraison	End of Harvest
LYNCH-BAGES 2014	M	20-Mar	30-May	68	8-Aug	20-Aug	46	24-Sep	114		30-Sep
	CF	27-Mar	5-Jun ← days →		12-Aug	← days →		30-Sep	days	15-Jul	2-Oct
	CS	31-Mar	10-Jun	64	14-Aug	27-Aug	52	6-Oct	116		11-Oct
LYNCH-BAGES 2015	M	6-Apr	1-Jun	62	3-Aug	15-Aug	50	23-Sep	112		24-Sep
	CF	10-Apr	3-Jun ← days →		8-Aug	← days →		1-Oct	days	18-Jul	2-Oct
	CS	15-Apr	8-Jun	62	10-Aug	23-Aug	52	2-Oct	114		8-Oct
LYNCH-BAGES 2016	M	31-Mar	4-Jun	64	8-Aug	19-Aug	50	28-Sep	114		3-Oct
	CF	2-Apr	6-Jun ← days →		13-Aug	← days →		4-Oct	days	21-Jul	5-Oct
	CS	4-Apr	10-Jun	66	16-Aug	25-Aug	49	5-Oct	115		12-Oct
LYNCH-BAGES 2017	M	27-Mar	25-May	62	27-Jul	11-Aug	51	18-Sep	113		21-Sep
	CF	31-Mar	27-May ← days →		4-Aug	← days →		22-Sep	days	11-Jul	22-Sep
	CS	2-Apr	31-May	66	6-Aug	18-Aug	49	25-Sep	115		5-Oct
LYNCH-BAGES 2018	M	5-Apr	1-Jun	60	1-Aug	14-Aug	48	19-Sep	108		25-Sep
	CF	9-Apr	4-Jun ← days →		3-Aug	17-Aug ← days →		25-Sep	days	17-Jul	25-Sep
	CS	12-Apr	8-Jun	57	5-Aug	20-Aug	51	26-Sep	108		9-Oct
LYNCH-BAGES 2019	M	25-Mar	29-May	71	10-Aug	20-Aug	43	23-Sep	114		26-Sep
	CF	28-Mar	30-May ← days →		13-Aug	← days →		27-Sep	days	20-Jul	27-Sep
	CS	30-Mar	1-Jun	74	15-Aug	28-Aug	75	30-Oct	149		9-Oct
LYNCH-BAGES 2020	M	20-Mar	23-May	64	27-Jul	20-Aug	47	14-Sep	111		18-Sep
	CF	22-Mar	24-May ← days →		10-Aug	← days →		17-Sep	days	10-Jul	18-Sep
	CS	26-Mar	26-May	76	12-Aug	28-Aug	37	19-Sep	113		29-Sep
25-year average (1995-2020)	M	25-Mar	3-Jun	66	8-Aug		47	24-Sep	113		27-Sep
	CF	29-Mar	5-Jun ← days →		12-Aug	← days →		1-Oct	days	19-Jul	29-Sep
	CS	2-Apr	8-Jun	68	15-Aug		50	3-Oct	117		9-Oct

The first flowers appeared on around 10 May (almost fifteen days earlier than normal), with mid-flowering between 23 and 26 May depending on the grape variety. After a particularly rainy spell in early May, hot and dry weather conditions allowed perfect flowering over the space of ten days, suggesting a beautiful harvest.

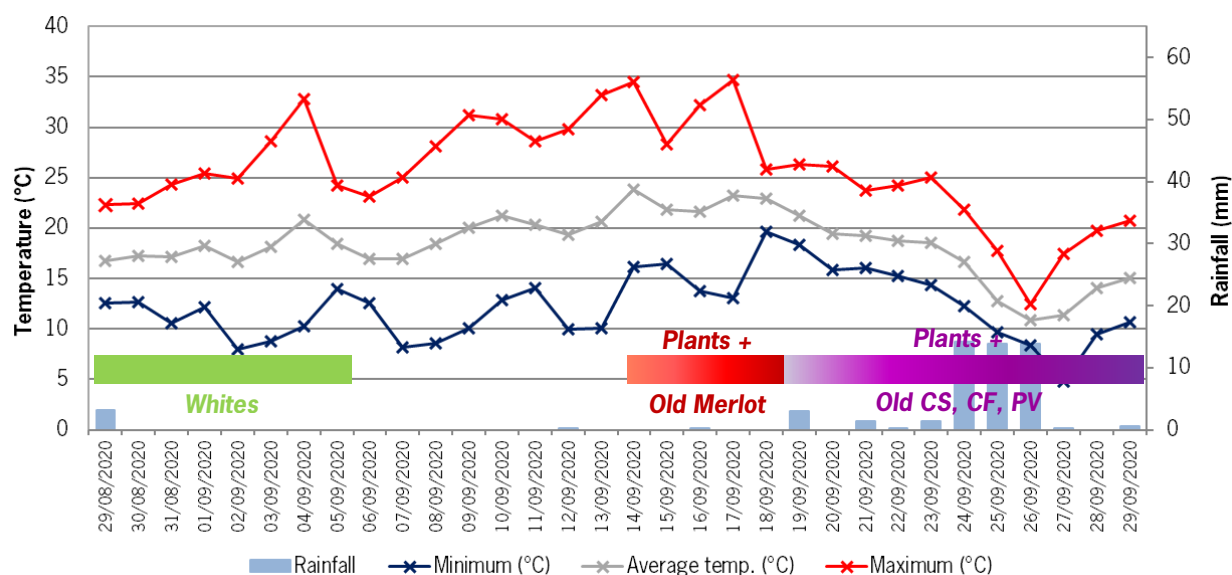
The alternating and variable weather conditions in May and June required meticulous planning of the work carried out in the vineyard. The rain dried up from 19 June and a gradual increase in temperatures completely transformed the moisture profile of the vintage.

Veraison, which came particularly early, began on the first plots of Merlot on 9 July. Mid-veraison was seen between 27 July and 12 August, two weeks earlier than usual for all grape varieties. The high temperatures and increasingly severe water constraints, especially on the gravelly soils, led progressively to first signs of stress, especially in the younger vines.

The dry, sunny weather and temperature ranges ensured optimal grape maturation. The berries became more concentrated in anthocyanins and developed a beautiful aromatic expression. From 15 August, a particularly beneficial rainstorm gave the Merlot berries and those of the white grape varieties an opportunity to grow.

Ripening of the various grape varieties ended in very hot and dry conditions, like those seen at the beginning of August. As a result, the grapes became more concentrated and smaller, especially on the dry gravelly hilltops, the terroir of choice for Cabernet Sauvignon. Several maturity controls were carried out from mid-August.

Harvest and weather in Pauillac – August/September 2020



At Château Lynch-Bages, harvesting of the white grape varieties began on 29 August with the first Sauvignon Blanc plants, two weeks earlier than in 2019. Picking took place over six days and in very good weather conditions. As for the reds, harvesting began on 14 September (nine days earlier than in 2019) with the fully mature Merlot plants and continued over five days. It finished with the four plots of Cabernet Franc. The pickers then harvested the Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot over the space of nine days. Picking ended on 29 September.

At Château Haut-Batailley, the first grapes were picked very early, on 14 September. The Merlot was harvested over five days, from 14 to 18 September; then came the Cabernet from 22 to 29 September. A first sorting took place in the vineyard, before taking the harvest in 200 kg crates to the winery. A second and third sorting took place, before and after de-stemming.

At Château Ormes de Pez, the Merlot harvest began on 15 September, nine days earlier than in 2019, and continued through to 20 September. The Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot were harvested on 21 and 22 September, respectively. The Cabernet Sauvignon was picked from 20 to 28 September, which also marked the end of the 2020 harvest.

Despite very changeable weather conditions between the beginning (hot and dry) and end (cooler and sometimes wet) of the harvest, picking proceeded smoothly and, above all, in compliance with the health protection measures in force.

The 2020 vintage and its characteristics

2020 is a historic harvest for Château Lynch-Bages, as it is the first vintage to be born in our new facilities.

Harvesting proceeded smoothly, and our team implemented all the recommended safety protocols.

The grapes were moderately rich in sugar, and extremely rich in polyphenols (tannins and anthocyanins). In fact, numerous vats had a TPI (Total Polyphenol Index) superior to 100.

Due to the climatic conditions, the Cabernet produced small, highly concentrated berries. The vintage will be remembered for its high quality, but relatively low yields.

Tasting revealed ripe, fleshy and above all very promising wines.





CHATEAU
LYNCH BAGES

2020

2020 marks the beginning of a “new era” at Lynch-Bages as it will be the first vintage born in the new winery. Bud break and flowering promised a particularly early vintage. After a relatively mild winter and spring, and rain in May and June, the summer months were hot and dry. The storms on 15 August helped the grapes to complete their maturation and achieve a very good sugar and polyphenol content.

Following a harvest carried out entirely by hand, while taking all the necessary health precautions required under the circumstances, alcoholic fermentation ended rapidly after one week.

Post-fermentation maceration gave the already harmonious wines additional fatness and volume. The aromas were then able to express their full potential. The Merlot brought a powerful freshness and beautiful fruity aromas. The Cabernet and Petit Verdot expressed notes of ripe fruit and developed a wonderful tannic structure.

The phenolic potential was of a high quality, with a maceration revealing intense colours and powerful tannins.

After an average vatting time of 20 days, running off began on 6 October. Malolactic fermentation then took place in the new malolactic fermentation cellar, one third in vats and two thirds in barrels. At the end of November, we began our first blends, followed by barrel maturation.

Château Lynch-Bages 2020

Blend:

60% Cabernet Sauvignon
31% Merlot
4% Cabernet Franc
5% Petit Verdot

Ageing:

18 months in French oak barrels (75% new wood)

Analyses:

Alcohol: 13.41% vol.
Acidity: 4.0 g/l of H₂SO₄
pH: 3.73
TPI: 93

Echo de Lynch-Bages 2020

Blend:

60% Cabernet Sauvignon
40% Merlot

Ageing:

One-year-old barrels for 12 months

Analyses:

Alcohol: 13.03% vol.
Acidity: 3.9 g/l of H₂SO₄
pH: 3.78
TPI: 80



2020

Blanc de Lynch-Bages

The weather conditions for the 2020 vintage – mostly wet during crop growth, then summery during ripening – improved the quality of the white grapes growing in the plots subjected to cooler temperatures of Saint-Sauveur. In July, leaf thinning on the rising-sun side of the vines created optimal ripening conditions for bunch development and avoided the onset of botrytis.

After two maturity controls carried out in mid-August, picking of the 2020 Blanc de Lynch-Bages vintage began 15 days ahead of schedule. We began sorting the Sauvignon Blanc on 29 August, followed by the Muscadelle and Semillon. Picking took place over six days and in very good conditions.

The resulting wines are particularly aromatic, clear and fresh. From an analytical perspective, their alcohol content is correct and acidity relatively low. For the first time, the harvest reception, fermentations and ageing took place in the new cellars. These allowed meticulous vinification of the different batches in an oxygen-free environment, optimal and rapid must clarification through use of appropriately-sized temperature-controlled vats, precise selection of both batches and press wines, and gentle and fully-controlled alcoholic fermentation thanks to careful thermal regulation.

As soon as the grapes arrived at the cellar, we used one of three types of technique depending on the quality of the berries: direct pressing with or without de-stemming, or pressing after cold skin maceration. This last technique gives the selected batches an additional fatness and volume.

Approximately 75% of the juice was vinified in individually temperature-controlled barrels, creating ideal fermentation conditions for the yeasts. As a result, the wines preserved their fresh aromas throughout the process. Ageing on lees began at the end of September using an Oxoline system allowing stirring without exposure to oxygen and ended about six months later, before bottling.

Blanc de Lynch-Bages 2020

Blend:

70% Sauvignon Blanc
20% Sémillon
10% Muscadelle

Ageing:

Six months in barrels on lees (50% new wood)

Analyses:

Alcohol: 12.89% vol.
Acidity: 3.3 g/l of H₂SO₄
pH: 3.35

Château Haut-Batailley

2020

Mild winter temperatures made for a speedier bud break, which came very early, almost fifteen days ahead of the ten-year average. The months of April and May were relatively hot, resulting in rapid plant development. Flowering took place in particularly difficult conditions in the last week of May, in hot, wet weather punctuated by rainfall.

The beginning of the summer was very dry, and several heat peaks were recorded in July. The Haut-Batailley vineyard, composed essentially of old vines with strong roots, coped very well with the important water constraints at the beginning of the summer. The dry summer weather conditions began to change in the second half of August. At mid-veraison there were some stormy episodes, particularly beneficial for the plants.

The hot and dry weather in September, which continued right up until the harvest, helped the grapes reach full maturity in perfect health. The first grapes were picked especially early, on 14 September. The Merlot was harvested over five days, from 14 to 18 September. Picking of the Cabernet then followed, from 22 to 29 September. All grapes were harvested exclusively by hand.

A first sorting took place in the vineyard before bringing the harvest to the winery in 200 kg crates. The grapes were then sorted a second and third time, before and after de-stemming. Vatting occurred over a period of three weeks, with successive cycles of pumping over and “rack and return”. Following running off, malolactic fermentation began in vats and the wine started its ageing in oak barrels.

Château Haut-Batailley 2020

Blend:

62% Cabernet Sauvignon
38% Merlot

Ageing:

14 months in French oak barrels (60% new wood)

Analyses:

Alcohol: 13.6% vol.
Acidity: 3.50 g/l of H₂SO₄
pH: 3.85
TPI: 81

Haut-Batailley Verso 2020

Blend:

40% Cabernet Sauvignon
60% Merlot

Ageing:

One-year-old barrels for 8 months

Analyses:

Alcohol: 13.7% vol.
Acidity: 3.45 g/l of H₂SO₄
pH: 3.81
TPI: 80



2020

Château Ormes de Pez, located in Saint-Estèphe, benefited from weather conditions similar to those at Pauillac, but with more accumulated rainfall (+5% approximately). As in Pauillac, bud break came early, on 22 March on average for the Merlot and 28 March for the Cabernet. The extremely variable and relatively humid weather conditions throughout the spring (+30% rainfall) accelerated the vine's vegetative cycle. Flowering began on about 14 May and progressed smoothly.

From 18 June, the weather completely reversed with a shift to dry and summery conditions, with even some scorching heat at the end of July beneficial for berry quality. Water stress developed, in particular on the large gravelly soils of the Cabernet, but was mitigated by the clay Saint-Estèphe sub-soils. Veraison began early, in the second half of July, and ended in mid-August.

The first maturity controls were carried out at the beginning of September. The Merlot harvest began on 15 September, nine days earlier than in 2019, and continued through to 20 September. The Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot were picked on 21 and 22 September, respectively. The Cabernet Sauvignon was harvested from 20 to 28 September, date at which the harvest ended. The grapes were perfectly healthy.

We employed traditional vinification methods, lasting on average 20 days, for all vats, with rapid alcoholic fermentation. Running off began on 6 October. Following malolactic fermentation at the end of December, the wine started its 16 month ageing period in French oak barrels.

Château Ormes de Pez 2020

Blend:

38% Cabernet Sauvignon
54% Merlot
4% Cabernet Franc
4% Petit Verdot

Ageing: 16 months in barrels (45% new wood)

Analyses:

Alcohol: 13.17% vol.
Acidity: 3.85 g/l of H₂SO₄
pH: 3.69
TPI: 79