

VINTAGE 2018

A hot and stormy year with hail on the 15th of July



GROWING SEASON

Bud break was slow, but growth in mid-April was spectacular thanks to truly summerlike temperatures.

The “Ice Saints” in May led us to fear the worst, but fortunately the warmth returned quickly with a succession of storms and heavy rainfall. Flowering began cautiously at the end of the month when the mildew threat was increasing. The intensity of this parasite reached levels unseen in a long time due to rainstorms in June. In the end, damage to the fruit was limited to 10 – 15%. By mid-June, three-quarters of the average annual precipitation had already fallen.

The hot and stormy first half of July ended on the 15th with a devastating hailstorm. Every plot was affected, leaves and bunches were torn to pieces and vine shoots and stocks were slashed. It is estimated that between 80 and 100% of the harvest was lost in any given plot.

July ended up being the hottest since 2006 and 2013. August kept up the momentum with the start of the month approaching a heatwave. Then, storms returned, resurrecting the mildew on the frail foliage struggling to overcome stress from the hail. The grapes fared no better and ripening did not get fully under way until the beginning of September.

The harvest

On the 27th of September, the pickers were summoned to gather some grapes. With the drought in autumn, in spite of all the rain this year, the situation failed to improve. The short rainy spell on the 14th of October finally triggered the development of *Botrytis cinerea* scarcely eight days later and the rot worked its magic. The harvest had to be done quickly, because the grapes were reaching peak concentration. From the 23rd to the 26th, our trusty pickers undertook the exhausting task of sorting the grapes which survived the hail and which were also often damaged on their western side. The harvest was completed on the 30th with a total of 27 barrels, nearly two thirds of which were already expected to be declassified into generic wine.

The wine

Barrel ageing: 30 months

TASTING NOTES

Château de Fargues tasting notes

The wine was fermented and aged in barrels previously used for one vintage and exhibits great freshness with dominant aromas of fresh flowers and plant stems, followed by notes of lemon, grapefruit, pineapple and mango. The bittersweetness of apricot completes the profile. This Fargues vintage will not be remembered for its power, but rather for its balance, freshness, and subtle, easy-going style, reminiscent of a 2002 or 1999 or other wines from the late 20th century.

Even though the hail damage of the 15th of July drastically reduced the harvest – one thimbleful per vine – high-quality grapes were very difficult to obtain. This was a challenge for the whole team, and these few barrels are a tremendous reward for our tenacity.

2020 Château de Fargues

Score: 93-96

This has a bit more than most of the pack in 2018, with layers of warmed coconut, mango, peach, apricot and macadamia nut flavours, all framed by a lightly singed almond note.

James Molesworth – April 2019

SCORES

James Molesworth : **93-96**



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