



CHATEAU LAROZE
SAINT-EMILON Grand Cru Classé

VINTAGE SHEET

2005

THE 2005 GROWING YEAR

I describe this vintage as the "Year of Light" because of the sky's intense brightness and large number of hours of sunlight. This combination of very strong light and drought without excessive heat provided the original ingredients for this unprecedented vintage.

We made up for and even exceeded the week's delay in bud burst because we were working a week ahead of a normal cycle. The growth cycle was shorter during this period because, with the ground being already dry at the end of winter, it warmed up more quickly in spring. The deep roots were not choked by the winter rain and were swiftly re-activated, helping the vines to withstand the drought. The spells of very hot weather and strong sunshine we had this year did the rest.

After very little winter rainfall (a half less than usual) only April had usual levels of rain. May, June and July rewarded us with only 43mm of rainfall at Laroze compared with an average of 172mm over the last six years for the same period!

We had less water in three months than in a single normal month.

August was very dry with 23mm instead of 65!

The rainfall at the end of August and the 20mm at the start of September got the vine moving again, and swelled the grapes which were very small, helping them to ripen with an improved water supply. It was high time this occurred because the vines, at this stage laden with grapes in desperate need of water, were in a bad way and some plots were suffering as leaves were starting to turn yellow and the grapes exposed to the sun were having their skins burnt through lack of water.

HARVESTING

We started to pick the Merlots on Tuesday 13th September, but we worked a day here and a day there, harvesting only where the plots were ideally ripe. We finished on 23rd September, having harvested four times over only six days (the 13th and 14th, the 16th, the 19th and 20th, and the 23rd)!

The very cold nights from the 16th to 21st September (from 4 to 9 degrees C) further slowed down vine development and the difference in ripeness between plots was significant. In other words, the vines made us wait this year to finish ripening its last fruit

But don't let us get this wrong! For those growers who picked their grapes at optimal ripeness in 2005, the quality potential is enormous with significant levels of

anthocyanins and a very good acid balance – just when we were fearing the opposite! The composition of this vintage will help it to go far. The grapes were small: between 140 and 150 grams per 100 Merlot grapes, which is excellent for wine concentration.

After the 18mm of rain at the weekend of the 24th and 25th September we resumed harvesting on 26th September with the young Cabernet Francs. We concluded on Friday 30th with sunny weather and a delightful “gerbaude” - end of harvest celebration. Despite the low rainfall, we produced 4,200 litres per hectare. Without question we have a great vintage, concentrated and aromatic, with acid levels to guarantee good keeping qualities.

The vintage in figures

MID-FLOWERING DATES	Merlots: 1 st June	Cabernets: 1 st June	
DATES FOR MID-POINT OF COLOUR CHANGE	Merlots: 1 st August	Cabernets: 6 th August	
LEAF REMOVAL	Yes		
THINNING OUT	Yes		
HARVESTING DATES	Merlots: from 13 th Sept to 23 rd Sept	Cabernets: from 26 th Sept to 30 th Sept	
WINE YIELD	4,200 litres per hectare		
LENGTH OF BARREL AGEING	15 months		
%AGE OF NEW BARRELS	58 % new barrels	30 % 1-year-old barrels	12 % in vats
FINING	1 st wine: only a part	2 nd wine: no	
FILTRATION	1 st wine: yes	2 nd wine: yes	
BOTTLING	June 2007		
NUMBER OF BOTTLES	1 st wine: 120 000 bottles	2 nd wine: 18 000 bottles	
%AGE 1 st and 2 nd WINE	1 st wine: 87%	2 nd wine: 13 %	
BLEND (approximate)	75 % Merlots	20 % Cab. Francs	5 % Cab. Sauv.



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