

# VINTAGE 2012 - Southern Rhône



## «Great Châteauneufs , crisp and racy.... »

Comments from Maison M.Chapoutier / December 12th, 2012

« More than in the North, the fear of water shortage, that already began at the end of winter, was on everyone's mind. Grenache from Châteauneuf, more impacted than Syrah from the north by the cold wave during winter, were not that well prepared for the growing conditions in spring. Every analysis could make fear the worst at this stage - beginning of March - with water reserves only refilled up to 45-70% depending on the location. We were already talking about drought before the bud break, but a little more than 100mm of rainfall in April was salutary and raised fears of a difficult spring season even if the thermometer fluctuations made the development phasis more complicated. »

« Even if we had more rain than in 2010 and 2011, the period from May 15th to June 15th was conducive to a homogeneous flowering, with a temperature just as cool as the two latest vintages (19, 8 ° C respectively in 2012 versus 20.0° C and 20.3 ° C in 2010 and 2011). After a great bud break, the beautiful quality of flowering has confirmed a very nice potential for the coming harvest. As everywhere in France, the end of spring was quite moody which means water was not so limited during the development phasis of berries. But the small accumulations of water in July and August (85mm is low considering the important demands at this stage) have fostered some moderate water stress, which is conducive to uniform ripening. After a hot summer (warmer than 2010 and 2011 both in June, July and August), that erased the phenological delay observed since early spring, the technological maturity was due to be early. In fact, both syrah and grenache were between 13.5 and 14% potentially in the last days of August. But September was amazingly cool (17.5 ° C on average, versus 19.1 in 2010 and 21.7 in 2011 especially!), preserved acidity (remained almost constant throughout the month, around 3.6 pH fairly uniform) and allowed harvesting at the right phenolic and textural ripeness without compromising on the beautiful fruit aromas! Great Châteauneufs , crisp and racy, in perspective.»



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## THE HARVEST...IN A FEW DATES

Syrah were harvested on September 17th and 18th . The earliest Grenache on the graves soil were picked around the 25th. The harvest was completed on October 4th and 5th in the north part, on safres soils.



## TASTING THE WINES

BARBERAC (Châteauneuf-du-Pape): Beautiful nose of crushed strawberry, smoked tea and blood orange. The palate is juicy and meaty, well balanced. A warm finish with chocolate notes.

CROIX DE BOIS (Châteauneuf-du-Pape) : More earthy than Barberac, the nose also shows some nuances of licorice, fig and savory. A beautiful concentration, fleshy and round, the wine is already very pleasant.

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