



VINTAGE 1999

SUMMARY

A subtle combination of Yquem know-how and a lot of hard work, with a spot of luck, made the 1999 vintage well-balanced and elegant, as well as unusually approachable and enjoyable to taste now. It also has all the power and length required for tremendous ageing potential. The 1999 vintage is certainly one of the winners from this decade.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Temperatures were above average throughout the growing season. This, combined with average rainfall, provided excellent conditions for vine development. The major storms in late July which hit other vineyard areas in Bordeaux, causing premature and very detrimental rot, bypassed Yquem entirely.

HARVEST

A series of light showers between September 10th and the 24th brought about the onset of noble rot. Other than a small amount of Sauvignon Blanc grapes cut on the 16th, the vintage really started on the 24th and left off on the 29th. Although this first wave of picking was interrupted at times by rain, the Sauternes region fortunately escaped the deluge that fell in Bordeaux around the 25th of September (110 mm as compared to 22 mm at Yquem). In fact, the weather lasting until October 4th was perfect for spreading botrytis evenly throughout the vineyard.

An ideal "window" of 12 consecutive days of dry weather then set in, and picking went on in earnest. The completely botrytised grapes took full advantage of sunshine and a perfectly-timed easterly wind, becoming quickly concentrated while retaining fruitiness and freshness. This intense harvest (two waves of picking, one after the other, for 11 days in a row) fortunately came to an end on October 15th, before heavy new rains (40 mm from October 17th to the 20th) arrived. The last grapes were cut on the 20th and 21st of October, but these will not be used to make Château d'Yquem.

Thanks to intense work in the vineyard, at harvest time, and more than a little help as regards the weather, this magnificent vintage makes a brilliant contribution to the rare series of successful vintages since 1995.

TASTING NOTES

Superb, brilliant golden colour.

The bouquet is already intense and very expressive, to an extent rarely seen in a wine this young. Tremendously pure, complex aromas: yellow fruit, dried fruit, spices, aromatic plants, and elegant oak. Starts out beautifully on the palate. The roundness is backed up by great acidity and a vivacious quality. Beautifully smooth and soft aftertaste.

This elegant wine has a remarkably long finish.

Tasting 17/02/04

Alcohol by volume: 13.9%

Residual sugar: 128 grams per litre

Total acidity: 4.5g/l H₂SO₄