
TASTING NOTES

Gentil "HUGEL" 2008

2008 VINTAGE:

Climatic conditions were a carbon-copy of the excellent 2007 vintage. Budburst at the end of April was quite late, but May was warm and sunny so flowering began on 15th June and took more than a fortnight to complete. July and August were particularly cool with hardly any rise in temperature, but in mid-September the "Indian Summer" arrived without a drop of rain. The sky stayed bright but temperatures were relatively cool. As a result, the grapes ripened slowly but fully, perfectly healthy and with excellent acidity. In late October we harvested VT and SGN wines with historically high levels of sugar and acidity. The 2008 Alsace vintage was already born great but may prove to be exceptional.

VINIFICATION:

Classic "Hugel" wines are made exclusively from grapes purchased from winegrowers under long-term contract, in a dozen of the most favoured localities around Riquewihr. This wine revives an ancient Alsace tradition that wines assembled from noble grape varieties were called "Gentil". Gentil "Hugel" allies the suave, spicy flavour of Gewurztraminer, the body of Pinot Gris, the finesse of Riesling, the grapiness of Muscat and the refreshing character of Sylvaner. The grapes are taken in small tubs to the presses, which are filled by gravity, without any pumping or other mechanical intervention. After pressing, the must is decanted for a few hours, then fermented in temperature-controlled barrels or vats (at 18 to 24°C). The wine is raked just once, before natural clarification during the course of the winter. The following spring, the wine is lightly filtered just before bottling, and the bottles are then aged in our cellars until released for sale. The whole production of this wine is closed with DIAM the cork without the risk of cork taint.

TASTING NOTES:

(by Serge Dubs, World's Best Sommelier 1989)

Juvenile star-bright colour : fresh, pale pistachio green and lemon yellow. Agreeably aromatic, fruit-driven bouquet of white peach, citrus, with a spring blossom finish : primrose, freesia, rose... It remains a dry wine but is harmonious, supple and well balanced in the mouth, with a very attractive refreshing finish. Perfect now for its frank, fresh, grapey character but it will keep 2 to 3 years. Served chilled at 8°C, it is excellent as an aperitif or with appetisers, tapas and fish : fresh, marinated, grilled, sushi, tempura or spiced Indian- or Mexican-style.
24 July 2009