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MARGAUX

2017

H I S T O R Y O F A V I N T A G E



SYNDICAT VITICOLE DE MARGAUX

N°16/APRIL 2018



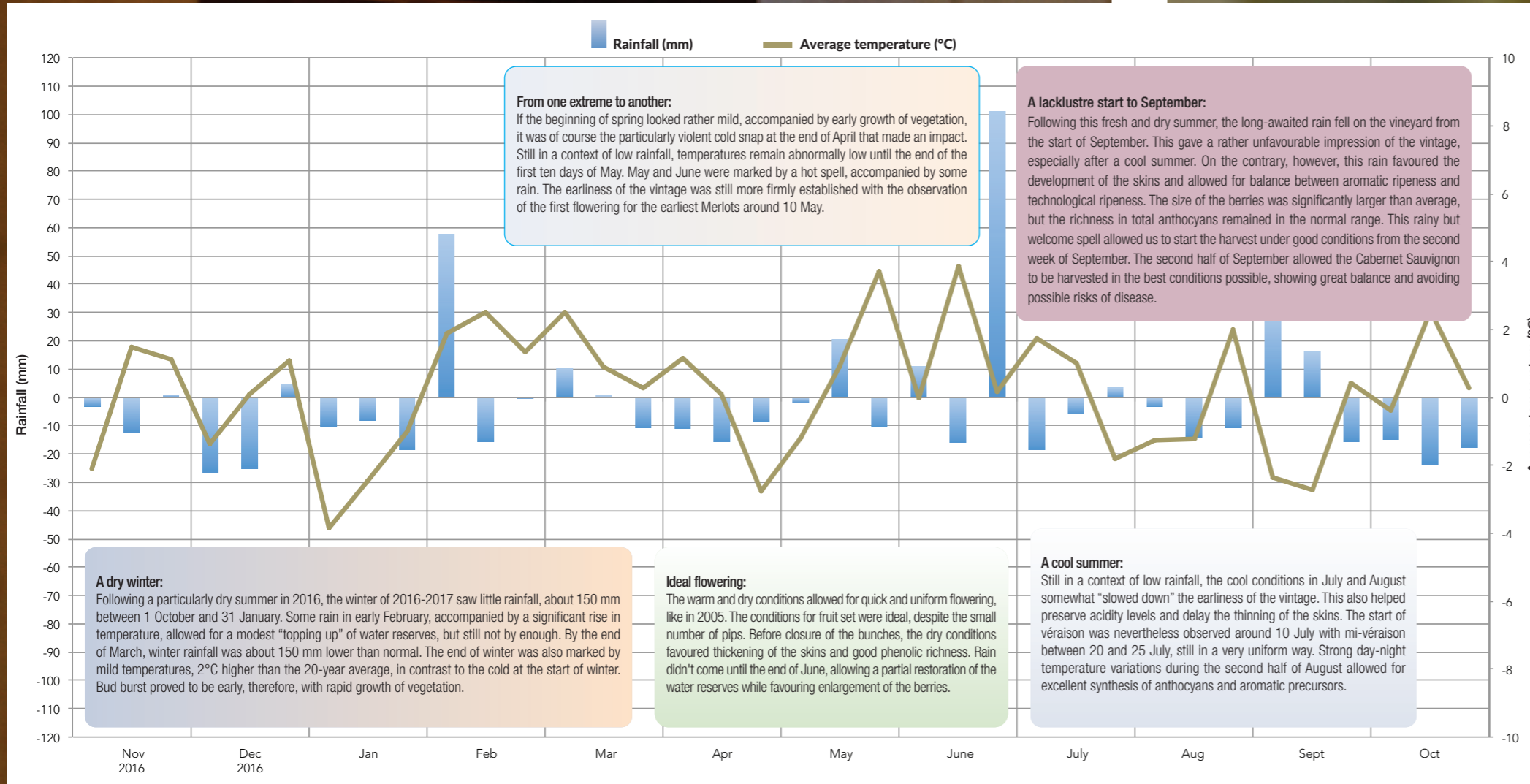
A year of contrasts

2017 is truly a year of contrasts. The start of the growing season, following a very dry winter, was marked by excess: excessively early, with a particularly mild end to the winter; and excessively cold at the time of the dreaded red moon at the end of April. The 3-day spell of frost was the worst since 1991, but it did not have such widespread consequences. The total production of the Margaux appellation will be close to 50 000 hectolitres, which is certainly 25% lower than average, but far from the disaster that has severely affected other winemaking regions. The situation is extremely uneven geographically. The east of the appellation was not affected and has even seen a good harvest in both quality and quantity, while the west was severely affected in places, with some plots losing all of their production. There was a significant qualitative difference between plots affected by frost or not, and the great wines of our appellation are all from plots that experienced a harmonious vegetative phase. The 2017 Margaux wines have a beautiful colour and a silky tannic texture. In their own style, they are in line with the superb vintages made in the appellation since 2014.

Gonzague LURTON

President of the Syndicat Viticole de Margaux

Vintage 2017 - Deviation from the average - Margaux Weather Station



OENOLOGIST'S COMMENTS

2017 is a vintage in which the climate particularly played on its excesses. First of all, it was a vintage with a very low water regime, with only 600 mm of rain throughout the year. It started with a dry winter, with a rainfall deficit of 200 mm, laying early foundations for the water stress to come. Then, after very mild temperatures in April, three days of intense frost reminded us how nature can impose unforgiving setbacks. Many plots nevertheless survived, thanks to the calming presence of the estuary. Heatwaves in mid June, mid July and end September marked out the summer period. Finally the summer, which had remained dry until then, finished with a rainy spell that led us to start the harvest.

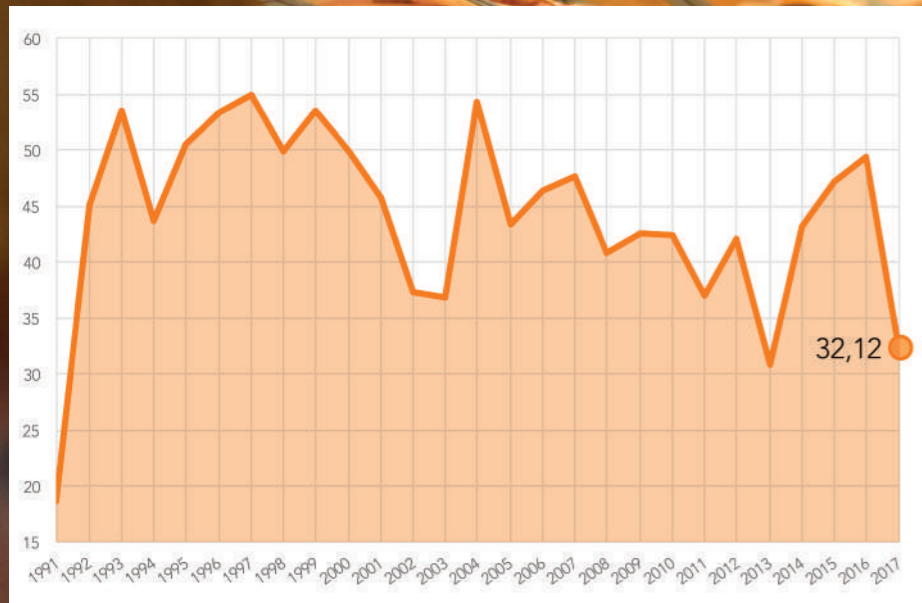
And the vine... For those not affected by the frost, conditions were favourable in all respects, with a significantly early start almost equal to 2011, low pressure from fungal diseases and, above all, mild temperatures between the periods of strong heat, conducive to even ripening of grapes, aided by water stress that remained reasonable despite everything.

In that, 2017 is a vintage that is difficult to read for those who didn't live it from the inside, and yet it contains so many mysteries. This may help to explain it. It combines refinement and power. The tannins, like those of 2015, are discreet and flavourful. They have an unsettling force, which expresses itself through incomparable length on the finish.

Eric Boissenot
Enologist, Doctor of Oenology and Ampelogy



Average yield for the appellation Margaux (hL/ha)



The 2017 vintage ranks among the lowest-yielding in the past 30 years, at only 32.12 hL/ha on average. The cause was, of course, the frost at the end of April, reminiscent for those who knew it of 1991 and its average yield of 18.67 hL/ha...

This significant difference in volumes is due to several important factors, not without consequences for the quality.

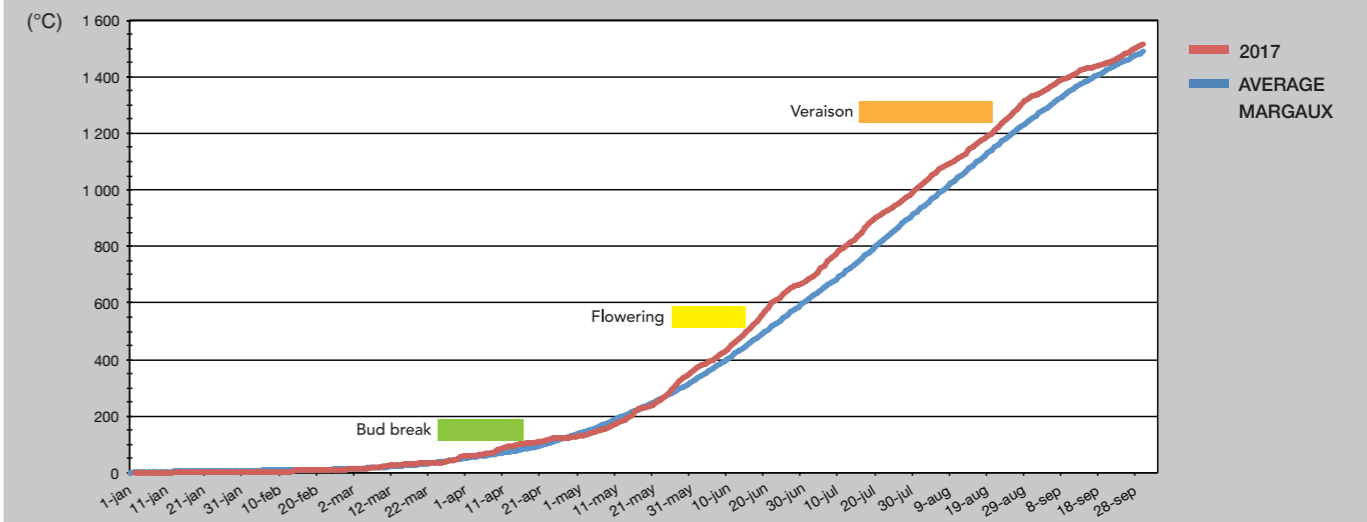
In fact, the 2017 frost affected only part of the vineyard, mainly the west of the appellation, and much less, if at all, the other sectors where yields were quite satisfactory.

Study led by **Nicolas Pejoux**,
Technical Director of
Château Rauzan-Gassies.



Another notable phenomenon compared to 1991 was the flowering, under superb conditions from mid-May, fast and uniform, and similar to that of 2005. Otherwise the general climatic conditions in 2017 were close to those of 2001, with early ripening on top. The wines are therefore balanced and fine, fresh and deeply coloured, with a subtle balance between power and delicacy.

Sum of average daily temperatures above 10°C



WINEGROWER'S COMMENTS

2017, THE YEAR OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY!

Ah, those years ending in "7"! It seems that you have to go back to 1947 to find a really good one! And, as if fate was beating on the vineyard, one year to the day after having hit Burgundy, on 27 April 2016, the frost fell on the Bordeaux vineyard, on the night of 26-27 April and then again on the night of 27-28 April 2017.

Over these 2 terrible nights, almost half of the vineyard was affected by this frost, the most violent since 1991. The Margaux appellation, less severely affected than the region as a whole, was not totally spared.



But then, as if to compensate for this sad episode, there followed a particularly favourable climate for the development of a fine vintage: May and June with higher than average temperatures and a complete absence of rain, which favoured a fast and particularly uniform flowering. The vine built up a good head start over these 2 months.

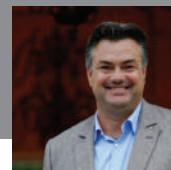
The fine weather, after a rainy spell at the end of June that allowed the soil to build up water reserves for the summer, continued in July giving way to a relatively dry and cool August. The cool nights in August were favourable for the development of aromas. And, as if to compensate for the spring frost, as if the vines were communicating with each other, as if nature imposed its own language inaccessible to man, it was calmly observed that the vineyards not affected by the frost came to harvest with real quantity and very well balanced in most cases.

As with the fruit trees, the vines spared by frost were generous and good, providing very nice, perfectly uniform fruit at the beginning of September.

After a light rainy spell in early September (72 mm in 10 days) the harvest could start around mid September with good, ripe, healthy grapes. The very cool nights in September largely limited the risk of botrytis. The harvest ended with the Cabernet Sauvignons in the first half of October.

So, among the vineyards spared by those terrible nights in April, there are some very good successes in 2017 in the Margaux appellation and for some of these properties, they have had their best vintage ending in "7" since 1947!

Eduard Mialhe
Director of Château Siran



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