

MARGAUX 2014

History of a vintage

MARCH 2015

N°13

2014: of doubts and hopes

“**W**hen the weather is capricious, vine growing is laborious” could become the new proverb of the year. To compensate for the feeble sunshine at the start of the season, winegrowers all had to increase their efforts in the vineyard; secondary bud removal, leaf removal, shoot removal, green harvests to name but a few.

We might say that years of experience, and a fierce will to succeed despite fate being against us, allowed us to glorify 2014 and to go from tears in July to broad smiles in September. It is certainly true. But in all humility, the winegrowers of Margaux also recognise that it was the Indian summer that ended up rewarding us and exalting the work of man.

One vintage follows another, but they are not always similar. The weather, often fickle, can give the worst as well as the best.

The Margaux appellation is pleased to offer you the best!

José Sanfins

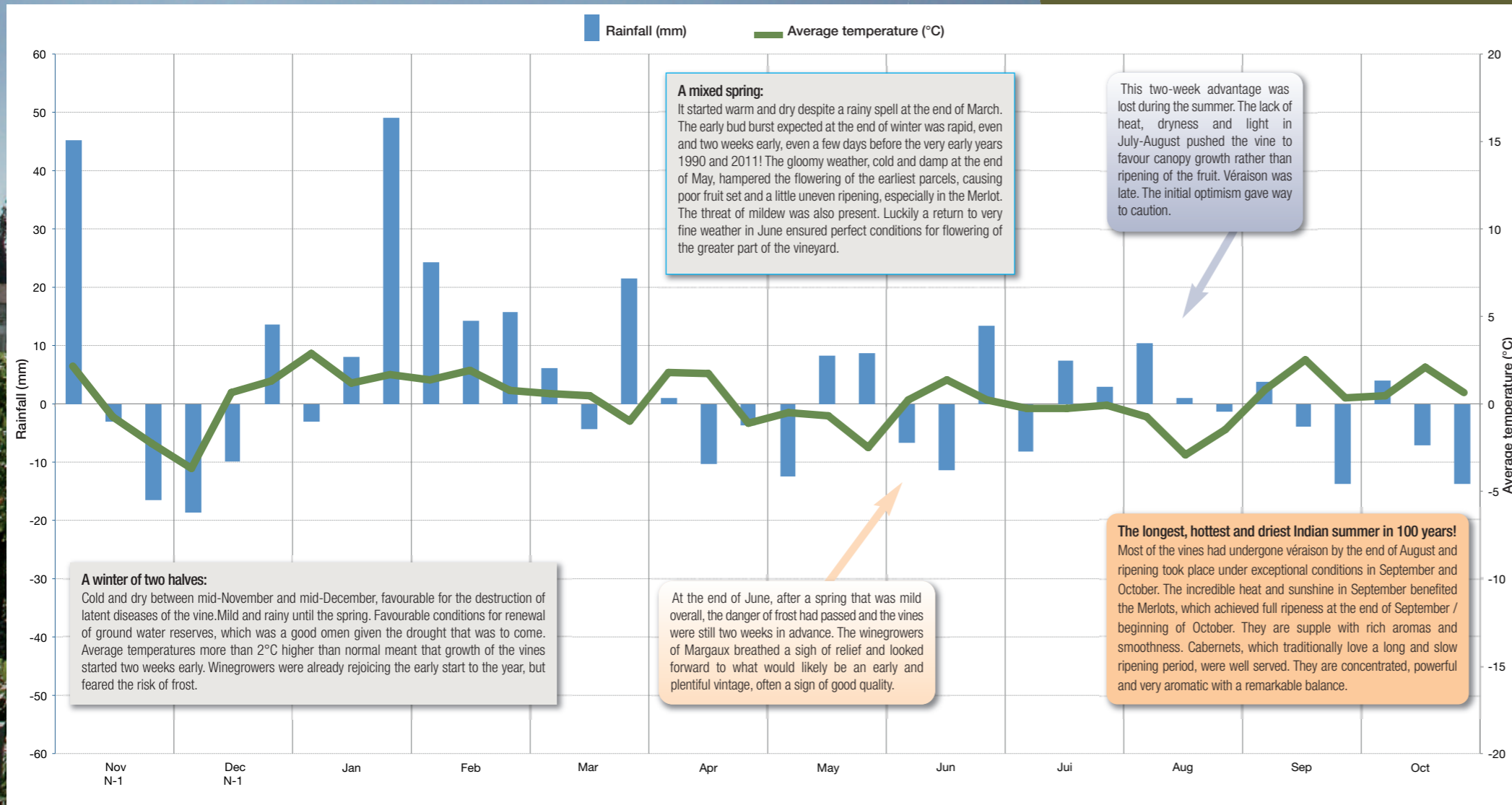
Vice-President
of the Syndicat Viticole de Margaux



SYNDICAT VITICOLE DE MARGAUX

www.maisonduvindemargaux.com

Vintage 2014 - Deviation from the average - Margaux Weather Station



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A word from the oenologist

2014 2014 is such a singular vintage that it is difficult to make comparisons. Yet another example that confronts us with the unknown. Everything about it is special, starting with the flowering which was remarkable, rapid and effective, which we haven't seen in a long time, I think since 2005. We can say that the foundations were already there and that they would be difficult to undermine. But summer started badly, mostly grey and stormy. The vine, sustained by sufficient water reserves, forgot to put enough effort into the véraison. Ripening fell behind, while we hoped for a spectacular turn of events at the end. What we hadn't had before, we got later: sun, heat, light! A very special character of this vintage. Such a marked contrast between the start and end of summer, as if the seasons had been inverted, does not bring to mind any other vintage. Patiently we waited for the grapes to ripen and patiently we harvested the parcels one by one, at the pace that suited us. A calm vintage, and one that taught us many lessons. You would have to have been very clever to predict the outcome. In any case, we were eager to know what it would taste like.

Gradually the different grape varieties showed us their faces, and I don't think any has been found lacking. That is another special feature of this vintage, where each one has its place and expresses itself fully. The 2014 wines are straightforward without being austere, smooth without being heavy, taut without being green. Quite simply they are great.

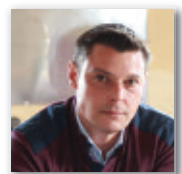
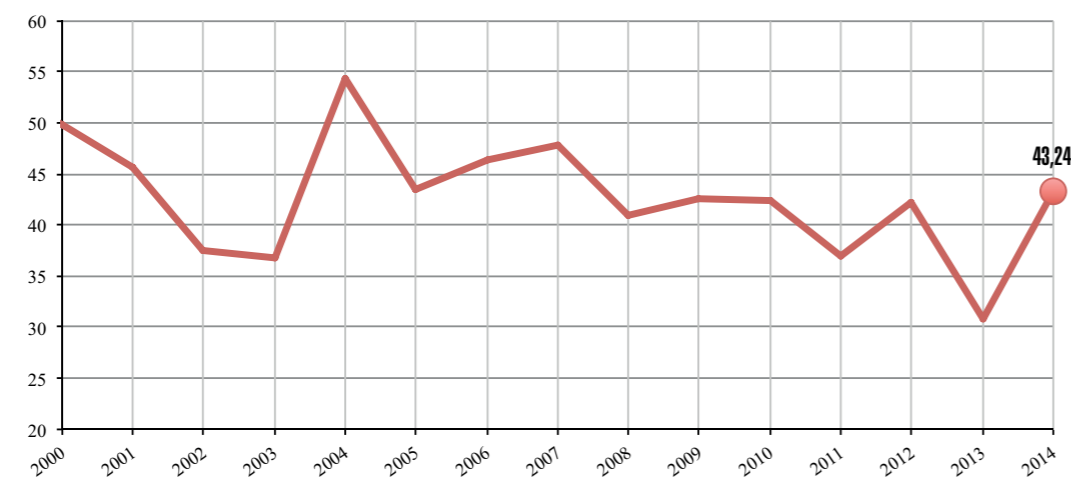
Eric Boissenot
Oenologist, Doctor of oenology and ampelology



2014 looked like an early year at the start of the season, thanks to a very mild end to winter. This trend was confirmed in spring up to mid-April. Much milder temperatures than usual favoured rapid and very even growth. The vines were still ahead up to flowering despite a drop in temperatures in May, with a summery month of June providing some compensation. The advance was lost in August because of a sharp drop in temperature. But the distinct increase in temperature brought by the Indian summer ensured excellent ripening conditions with the sum of temperatures much higher than in recent vintages.

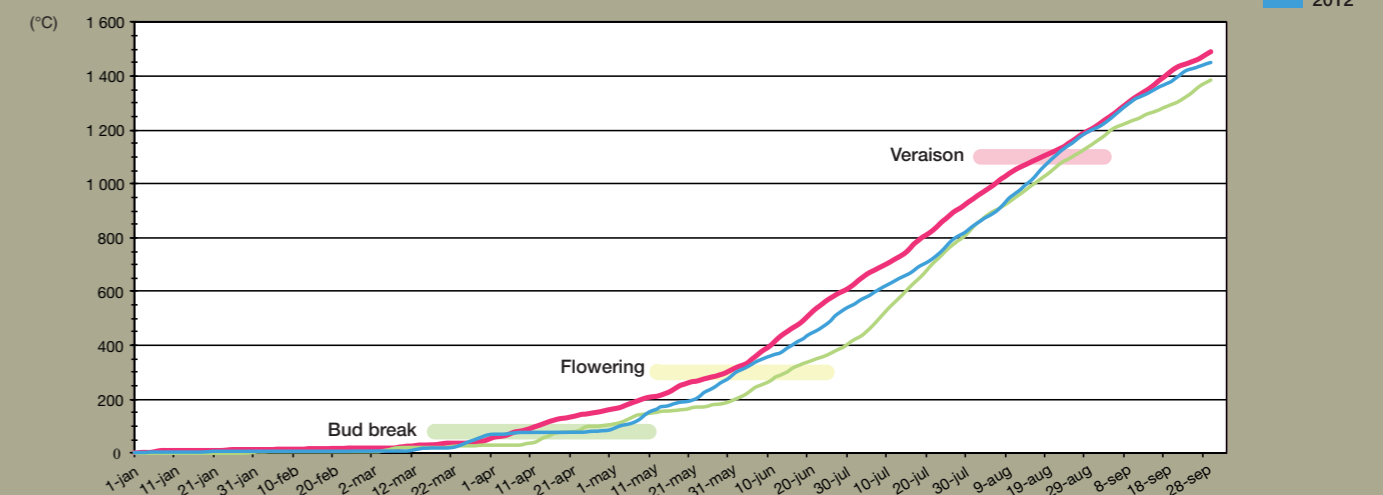
Average yield for the appellation Margaux (hL/ha)

The average level of production in the appellation returned to a satisfactory level in 2014 with 43.24 hl/ha.



Study led by **Jerome Héranval**, Director of Château Durfort-Vivens.

Sum of average daily temperatures above 10°C



Viticulturist's comments

The 2014 vintage will be and will remain one of great contrasts. After a mild, wet Winter our vines were cut back and prepared for the next crop that we hoped would be plentiful. Then came the period of growth from April to mid-June, which was very regular with warmer, more rainy weather than our average decade records. As early as mid-May we could notice the budding of few clusters. These small clusters forecast a fair amount of grapes. This natural phenomenon (flowering initiation) was the consequence of a shortage of sunshine in 2013.



The flowering period is an anxious time of nervous expectation. It is the moment which decides what the yields will be. A small Spring budding limits the wine-grower's freedom of action. The flowering in the first days of June on the most early plots, under bright sunshine and no rain, was a relief ! The first delicate period for the wine-grower was behind. The yieldings were to be higher than the year before. July and August were not to leave happy memories for the holidaymakers of the Medoc Atlantic coast. The weather records of these two months testify to unusual conditions (little sunshine, high precipitations, low temperatures...). We did not give up, proceeding to undertake numerous sprayings, pollardings and works by hand or machine in the vineyard until early September.

At the beginning of September we became aware that only a miracle could come to our rescue considering the heterogeneity of the vineyard. Often in our beautiful Bordeaux area, the word "Indian Summer" is meaningful. Rarely has it been more adequate.

Our grapes were to ripen beautifully and express the best of our soils. As the ripening was catching up with the previous delays, the happy faces of the wine-growers forecast a dazzling future. In late September the first early "merlots" were gathered, then the "cabernets francs", the "cabernets sauvignons" and eventually our "petits verdots". The plots were picked without any stress, with the grapes in full maturity in a period of more and more beautiful and warmer days.

Everybody could wonder at the quality of the wines in the vats, the colours, the strength, the aromatic freshness, the quality of the tannins: all had made their appointment. Our efforts during this campaign were rewarded beyond all expectations. The first Spring tastings testified to the high standards of this vintage. As wine-growers, once more, we had got down to work in order to discover and reveal the new parts of our soils as we had done for every vintage in the past.

G rard Fenouillet

Production Director of Ch teau Ferri re



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