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MARGAUX

2021

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

N°20/MARCH 2022



So what about global warming?

The years follow one another but each one is different. Having granted us weather that has produced great vintages for the last three years, nature reminded us of its capriciousness.

The whole of France experienced weather challenges over the course of the year, resulting in one of the lowest yields for a very long time. This year, with frost, rain and a cool summer we could be forgiven for forgetting about the global warming which paradoxically has been beneficial for the ripening of grapes in our winegrowing regions.

Fortunately, some sunshine arrived in time for the harvests, allowing us to pick Cabernet Sauvignon grapes with good levels of maturity.

The first tastings reveal very satisfactory aromatic expressions for the Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. This is a vintage in the traditional style, lower in alcohol than recent years, and is the product of our famous Médoc oceanic climate, accompanied by the expertise and talents of our winemakers. It has the classic Margaux style of the 2008, 2011 and 2014 vintages.

As always, the talents of the appellation's winegrowers will be a crucial factor in this year's successes.

Happy tasting to you all,

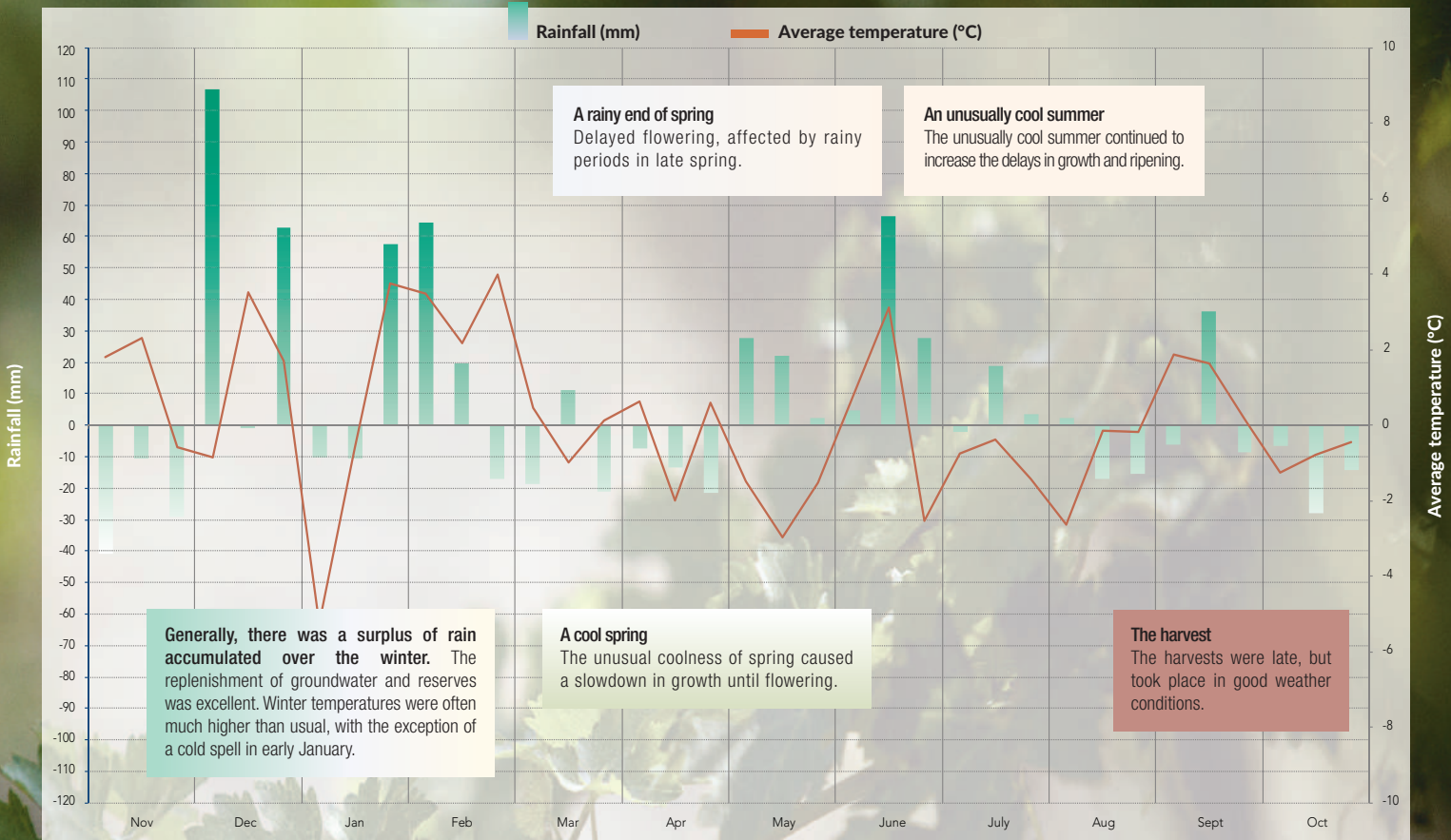
Edouard Miallhe

President of the Syndicat Viticole de Margaux

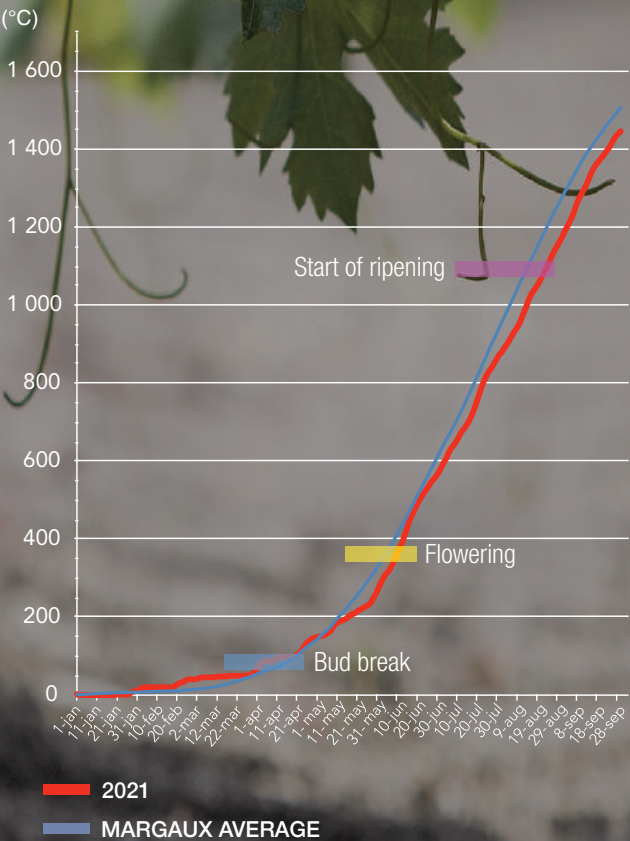
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2021 - Deviations from the average - Margaux Weather Station



Sum of Average Daily Temperatures above 10°C



The 2021 vintage

A vintage full of contrasts with a winter that was wet then dry, mild then cold, an early bud break and a rather late harvest. Storms here, periods of calm there.

A difficult vintage for the vines, which suffered from variations in rainfall and temperature, and a challenging one for winegrowers, who had to battle against frost and mildew. A struggle to preserve the harvest in the face of uncompromising weather conditions.

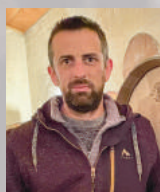
2021 was not a hot vintage, and the rather mild, not very sunny summer left us unable to predict the likely character of the wines. But we know that vines are resilient and stubborn and will push past obstacles, and we support them as best we can. Weather conditions varied enormously between properties, and each winegrower has their story to tell.

The wines are seductive, very long on the palate, with lots of character as if enriched by the trials of their epic journey...



Éric Boissenot
Oenologist,
Doctor of Oenology and Ampelography

A roller-coaster vintage!



After a mild winter, the vines' growth cycle started relatively early. This was followed by a spell of frost in the early spring which partially affected us and resulted in a small loss of the potential harvest. The stress caused by this cold spell weakened the vines and was

followed by a rainy spring and early summer, leading to the development of diseases such as downy mildew. We therefore had to be extra vigilant to combat this disease and enable the vines to defend themselves. Morale was somewhat low in August because the weather was still not good, but our efforts were rewarded when, shortly before the harvests, we finally had a period of prolonged sunshine. This allowed the grapes to ripen properly and for levels of maturity to be obtained that promised to produce a fine vintage.

We gained a lot of experience in 2021: it taught us that you should never give up!

Nicolas Jarousseau

*Owner-winegrower
Clos des Bigos*

2021 will be remembered!



A difficult vintage. It began with a period of frost that was unusual in that it was long and intense; only plots at the sensitive growth stage were affected, in our case the Merlot vines.

There were seven frosts between 23 March and 22 April, each posing the threat of rapidly visible damage if it was intense, or damage that would not emerge until flowering if it was mild. A few days of respite and then persistent rain arrived. The threat of downy mildew increased, remaining high until the much-awaited véraison (when the grapes change colour) that signals the end of the fruit's sensitive stage. This was slow due to the low temperatures, taking until 15 August for the frost-damaged plots.

The year was late, with no compensating effects, and every day of sunshine counted towards the grapes reaching maturity. The harvests were late so they could reach optimal ripeness, delayed in the knowledge that just one more day would be beneficial, and then fast because, despite preventive measures, botrytis developed, demanding a rapid response.

An eventful year for the winegrower!

Benjamin Sichel

*Managing Director
Château Angludet*

A vintage of dedication and high standards



It is years like 2021 that reveal the magic of great terroirs and the expertise of great teams. The Médoc hilltops, spared by the spring frost, were able to demonstrate their excellent soil drainage during the cool, rainy summer. This was the typically oceanic climate with which we are very familiar in Bordeaux. The management of plant cover implemented for several years at Giscours has given us a better understanding of the vineyard's water consumption and the possibility of modulating it.

It was a year in which we could rely on the experience of our teams. Choices had to be made, patience exercised, and sometimes risks taken, which were rewarded. With a lot of observation and extreme care, we harvested our plots, on a case-by-case basis, with rigorous selection, in the capricious September weather. The fine late season allowed our Cabernets to finish ripening in ideal conditions. 2021 is a promising vintage, which already has the characteristics of the classic vintages on which Bordeaux's reputation was built.

Alexander van Beek

*Managing Director
Château Giscours*

2021 Winegrowers' comments

Heavens, what a vintage!

This was an atypical vintage in many ways: first, a historic threat of

frost that we fortunately anticipated with late pruning, and which we decided to respond to by spraying with valerian in the evening and morning. These two measures enabled us to limit the damage.

Then there was heavy rain and the late arrival of sunny summer weather, requiring further tenacity in the application of biodynamic methods. We had to remain vigilant: observing, reflecting, acting, and observing again, and again.

We had to "keep our feet on the ground, and our heads on our shoulders"!

The harvest at the end of September was reminiscent of those thirty years ago. Ripe, "crisp" grapes with relatively low sugar content. Here again, we adapted the vinification process, and have managed to produce very pleasant Cabernet Sauvignons with lots of freshness and good concentration.

2021 was a challenging vintage, with Nature once again giving us a lesson in humility.

Pascale Choime

*Owner-winegrower
Closieries des Moussis*



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Terroir de biodiversité



The Margaux appellation's vineyards are managed both traditionally and with the integration of practices that fully respect our environment. Actions to protect our ecosystem and preserve our landscape heritage have been carried out by winegrowers in the appellation since 2015, in a collective approach called *Margaux Terroir de biodiversité*. This initiative brings together local entities such as the four villages in the AOC (town halls and residents), the Médoc Regional Natural Park, and the League for the Protection of Birds (LPO).

Since 2016, actions to "re-complexify" the landscape have been implemented to restore biodiversity in various parts of the appellation, such as late mowing, flowering borders and fallow land to encourage pollinators, and also the planting of hedgerows and trees.

Launched in 2018 following the biodiversity actions, the PhytAE and VITIPOLL projects have made it possible to continue the work on the appellation's biodiversity: the first initiating a collective reflection on the impact of soil maintenance practices on biodiversity, and the second aiming to restore ecological continuity opportunities for pollinators.

Finally, the winegrowers of the Margaux AOC, through their winegrowers' union, have been involved in the regional VITIREV programme since 2020 as a "Territorial Innovation Laboratory" with a view to pursuing actions in favour of biodiversity. In 2021, two working groups emerged to work on plant cover between rows, and the reduction of phytosanitary products used in viticulture, whose use has already been substantially reduced in the appellation: 80% of vines are managed without herbicides or insecticides (*). Meetings to discuss experiences and experiments, and training initiatives, have been organized to work on the issue of soil life. Educational tools relating to biodiversity in vineyards, soil fauna, birds and bats have been created, and booklets explaining the *Margaux Terroir de biodiversité* approach have been widely distributed to people visiting the Maison du Vin and the châteaux. A website communicating about the appellation, the vineyards and this approach was launched at the end of 2021. "Auxiliaries in the vineyard, bats and insects, biodiversity to the rescue!" nature excursions have also been organized for the general public, local residents and vineyard workers.

In 2021, the appellation was awarded "Site Remarquable du Goût" status, in recognition of the quality of the wine produced in the Margaux AOC, its diverse landscapes, and flourishing biodiversity.

(*) excluding treatments against *flavescence dorée* (a virus-like disease)

2015: Biodiversity assessment



2016-2019:

350 "biodiversity actions" that help protect the soil from erosion, stimulate biological activity, and provide refuges and food sources for insects and small animals

- 150 ha of late mowing
- 42 ha of fallow plots
- 5 ha of wildflower meadows
- 10 km of hedges
- 1.3 ha of copses

2018: VITIPOLL project

32 "local plant" flowering borders sown by the communes (16) and the winegrowers (16)

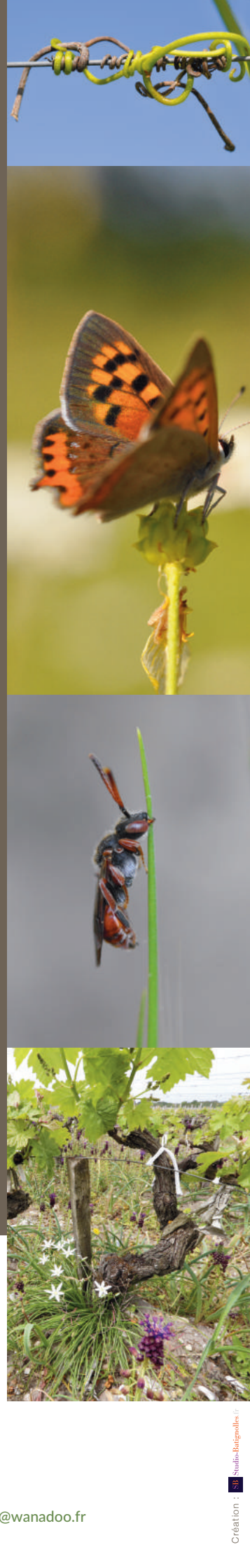
2018- 2020: PhytAE project Study of soil biodiversity:

- Auxiliary predators
103 species of spider, 52 species of ground beetle
- Decomposers (springtails and mites)

2021: Nature excursions for the general public and vineyard workers:

- Bats
- Auxiliaries in the vineyard

2021: Margaux given "Site Remarquable du Goût" status (a national programme that recognizes sites that represent France's gastronomic heritage)



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