



The 2018 Vintage

To celebrate our 150 years of viticulture, we needed the heavens to send us a tearaway vintage. The sort that plays tricks on us, showing us how our job should always keep us on our toes to protect our vines and our future crops.

The winter of 2018 was the coldest we have experienced since 2010, especially because of a month of February that brought down the average temperature. But above all, it was rainy... Incessant rain that continued throughout the spring. Not since 2001 had there been such wet conditions at the start of the season. These permanent rainstorms, violent at times, resulted in continuous and unparalleled pressure from mildew from May to July. It struck like it had never struck before in the memory of the vineyard teams at all our properties. Lafite, Duhart-Milon and Rieussec were able to withstand the pressure well.

But L'Evangile, where the mildew was even worse at the end of flowering, was more severely affected. Because of the temperamental weather that brought us 7 days of rain and 90% humectation on the 10 days of flowering, it was impossible to get into some plots to protect them.

Hail was also a constant threat. Our vineyards were spared in May and June, but unfortunately Rieussec was severely hit on 15 July, at the very moment France was winning the FIFA World Cup...

Summer did not begin until 16 July. We thought at the time that we had had enough water to last until the end, for a vintage that was already expected to be late. But conditions changed dramatically with the arrival of a hot spell, and temperatures continued to increase with peaks of up to 40 degrees. The soils being saturated with water, the growing cycle picked up speed and the vintage turned into an early one, with mid veraison of the Merlot on 3 August, only 4 to 5 days later than in 2017 (another very precocious child).

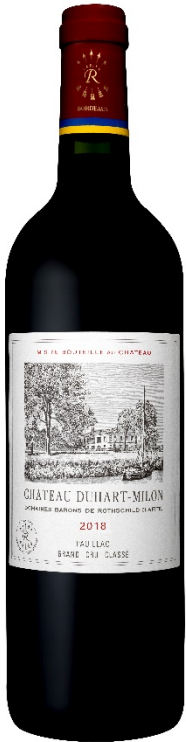
Under these conditions, evapotranspiration was very intense and water stress arrived much earlier than expected : by 10 August 1xtrém common to record hydric potentials of -1.5, and 1xtrêmes of -2.0 were reached at the end of August at L'Evangile. These very warm conditions for ripening made it difficult for the young vines and for soils that were too dried out, but were ideal for old vines in the great terroirs, because they have the capacity to absorb the excesses of the climate.

September arrived as a final twist : strong heat, cool-enough nights and a few drops of rain at the right time. Never had we experienced such a trouble-free harvest.





Château Duhart-Milon 2018



On the Duhart-Milon terroir, drier than Lafite for the Cabernet Sauvignon but with more clay for the Merlot, 2018 had two different effects. For the Cabernet, the stress was very intense in August and September but the light rains on 28 August and 5 September resolved the situation and put ripening back on track. On the clay, where our Merlot is planted, our terroir proved to be particularly well adapted to the vintage and the water stress was always perfect and without excess. We have never seen such beautiful Merlots at Duhart: which is good news, because our Grand Vin always contains them in high proportion.

Bud Burst : 16 April

Flowering : 4 June

Veraison : 3 August

Harvest :

Merlot : from 17 to 25 September

Cabernet Sauvignon : from 25 September to 4 October

Château Duhart-Milon

Cabernet Sauvignon : 65%

Merlot : 35%