



## The 2010 Vintage

2010 started with a warm and dry spring until the Icelandic erupting volcano. Then the climate became cool and rainy for some weeks. This is the reason why 2010 is a year which tends to fresher vintages such as 1996.

### I. NORTHERN CÔTES-DU-RHÔNE

#### a. The Viticultural season – Harvesting

The vegetative growing was homogeneous without hydric stress. A few deficiencies appeared. The great spring and summer meteorological conditions preserved vines from cryptogamic diseases and pests.

Flowering, which was later than in 2009, was performed during unfavourable climatic conditions (wind, cold and rain). So it is heterogeneous and marked by an important flower abortion and berry-shot as well for Marsanne as Syrah variety. One characteristic of the 2010 vintage is to be very little fertile.

Dry and sunny summer and the rare rains, particularly at the beginning of August favoured the good supplying water to the vine and the good progress of the veraison.

At the beginning of September, grapes slowly ripen and kept their acidity protecting themselves from Botrytis during their maturation.

September was ideal with sunny and warm days and cool nights. The conditions were ideal for Marsanne maturation which kept their great acidity and aromas. Harvest started on September 12<sup>th</sup> with the Marsanne variety from the St Joseph slope (single vineyard "Les Granits"). Then, the same day, the very warm soil from the Meal slope was harvested.

Harvest thus occurred for more than three weeks. As for the Syrah, it also matured very slowly and thus kept a great aromatic freshness and the skins accumulated high levels of polyphenols. The first Syrah grapes were harvested on the steep Meal slope on September 21<sup>st</sup>. Vintage ended on 29<sup>th</sup> of September in the Hermitage appellation with grapes from the Ermitage plot and on 5<sup>th</sup> of October in the Saint-Joseph appellation.

#### b. The wines

The Marsanne fermentations are slowly ending and the reds have just been running off. But the aromatic profiles, their balance and their structure already allowed to define the main characteristics of this vintage

- ⇒ The Marsanne variety (Saint-Péray, Crozes-Hermitage, Hermitage, Saint-Joseph): the wines have a great aromatic purity without heaviness. Mineralities are precise and the finish mixed with salty notes.
- ⇒ The Syrah variety: the wines have a great colouring intensity, with PH favouring the expression of a great purple colour. Aromas are very well defined. Very small reduction notes appeared, marked by aromas of carbone, graphite, smoked wood and black fruits. Tannins are very tight and their textures are a good omen of a great ageing potential.

## II. THE SOUTHERN RHÔNE

### a. The Viticultural season – Harvesting

Such as in the northern valley, flowering was also late and marked by an important flower abortion particularly on our very old Grenache vines. The strong Mistral wind and the temperature fall during this very sensitive period are responsible for. For all the vine-growth period, the cryptogamic pressure was low and the meteorological conditions limited the stress phenomena.

This is also a late vintage (or rather a return to a normal vintage without excess). Indeed, comparing to 2009, maturation kept a ten-day-delay at the beginning of September, which was accumulated during all the season. Grapes slowly ripen and kept great acidity. Anthocyanins and tannins were gradually concentrated into Grenache skins. The gap between technologic maturity (sugars/acids) and the phenolic maturity (anthocyanins/tannins) is almost nil. Thus we were able to harvest the Grenache with very reasonable potential alcoholic strength.

The first grapes were harvested on September 21<sup>st</sup> in the south of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Barbe Rac was harvested on September 24<sup>th</sup> and Croix de Bois on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

### b. The Wines

The grapes, having kept their freshness during all their maturation period, the wines have this characteristic.

The Grenache have a strong and deep colour with aromas of ripe red fruits, fine spices and fruits of brambles. The palate is extremely polished with pure and powerful tannins.

### **III. The Roussillon: The 2010 vintage, strong contrasts**

The harsh, fairly dry and windy WINTER that marked the start of this year, culminated with a snowy spell giving us a rare, 40 cm beautiful white blanket at the start of March.

In SPRING the vines were two weeks' late emerging from their torpor and then enjoyed a month of dry weather and settled conditions.

The first week of May was chaotic with 75mm of rain (and a few snowflakes), pretty extreme temperatures and a windstorm with gusts exceeding 120 km/hour that severed part of the crop (Banyuls more badly hit) of fragile Syrah grapes.

The weeks that followed saw the vine continue its growth and complete its "floraison" (flowering) in fairly changeable conditions, with huge temperature swings.

On 16 June, a dreadful hailstorm traversed the vineyards from one end to the other; putting the crop in jeopardy and wrecking the vines. Fortunately this weather disaster hit early, before the end of the vine's growth cycle.

The hot, dry SUMMER that followed, combined with water brought by the hail (between 50 and 100 mm) and with repeated, plant-based treatments and biodynamic preparations, enabled the vine to reproduce a dense vegetal canopy and heal its wounds.

Serenity was therefore restored to the vines that enjoyed a stress-free summer, particularly since they then had far fewer grapes to sustain.

HARVESTING started in early September with a week's difference compared to previous vintages;

The slow, even, maturity levels and very small quantities meant we could work with a small grape picking team and "pamper" the harvest just that little bit more.

This vintage's WINES, vinified parcel by parcel, have just completed their maceration; at this stage, they are powerful on the nose and, show rich, sappy structure with fairly low acidity on the palate; Long ageing is in store to refine this great potential.