



## BURGUNDY 2015 VINTAGE

We have resisted writing the Elden Selections Burgundy 2015 harvest report until now (April 2017), mainly to let the hub-bub and hyperbole settle down, but more importantly to be sure that the claims we are about to make are justified. We've seen too many vintages vaunted as 'the year of the century', when really the wines simply showed well young. Burgundy 2015 is a truly extraordinary vintage. The reds are rich, ripe, balanced and powerful. And from all over the region they express chiseled, focused terroir. Despite their youthful seductive charm, these are wines to keep, with serious ripe tannins already melted into explosive fruit.

Comparisons have been drawn with the 2005 vintage, though there is more concentration in the 2015s than in the 2005s. Like a caterpillar changing to a butterfly, great vintages often go to sleep in the bottle. And 2005 is just reawakening from several 'dumb' years. It's been worth the wait. The wines have metamorphosed. 2015 might be similar. And if the comparison is apt, investors in 2015 should appreciate the youthful beauty of this great vintage now, but be prepared to be patient.

That said, 2005 was no 'year of the century'. But 2015 is also being compared to 1990, which arguably was. And I hear that Michel Lafarge, one of Burgundy's respected elders, says he remembers drinking 1929s, and he draws parallels. The whites are a bit more uneven, and early reports claimed that the vintage lacks acidity. Certainly, these are wines which are riper and more luxuriant than the exquisite purity of 2014 white Burgundy. But there is no risk that well-made wines will be overly ample or flabby. The best wines will have benefited from the barrel. Comparisons are drawn to 1985, one of the great vintages in white.

The heterogeneity in 2015 white Burgundy is due to the tricky growing season, which was mostly hot and dry, but which cooled significantly in September. Was it better to pick early or late? And did the wine deserve more or less barrel aging? These are questions which will be answered producer-by-producer, bottle-by-bottle over the coming years. But what is clear is that they 2015s are concentrated, fresh and structured.

We believe that to understand a vintage, it is important to look at the weather. Because Burgundy is a single-grape wine, the only thing that changes from year to year in a producer's vineyard is the weather. So we look for patterns and try to analyze what makes a good year, a bad year...and in this case, an excellent year.

The winter of 2014-2015 was uneventful. It was never really cold, but when it was, it was dry. Mostly it was mild, so we had more rain than snow. We would need the replenished water reserves in the long hot summer ahead.

April was warm and dry, and bud-burst took place early. Mornings in May were sunny, afternoons cloudy, and overall cool and dry. The vines began to flower in the last week of the month, so we knew we were looking at a harvest in early to mid-September.

In early July, the mood started to mount towards hopeful. The weather had been steady, dry and cool. But slowly during the month, temperatures began to rise, and in the last week of July hit 30C. The flowering had been successful, so there was a good crop on the vines.

Day after day of warm dry conditions brought drought considerations into play. But no hail for once! August continued in this way. Hot and dry. A little welcome rain later in the month, but just enough to keep the stress levels down. But no storms or hail. And extremely healthy fruit on the vine. No rot, no mildew, no odium. The mood was optimistic, even euphoric.

Harvest ostensibly started the first Monday of September. And days later the weather broke, and a cool period set in for ideal harvest conditions, stabilizing acidity levels. It stayed this way until September 12th when the

first serious rain in two months fell in the southern part of the region. Harvest was disrupted for a few days, but the 19th, it was pretty much all over.