



BURGUNDY 2023

The 2023 vintage in Burgundy was marked by abundant yields and a growing season that brought both challenges and rewards, resulting in a harvest that is notable for its charm, increasingly promising for its quality, but troubling for its irregularity.

The BIVB says it was the largest harvest in Burgundy's history, producing approximately nearly 2 million hectoliters. This enormous crop was by and large healthy, with no signs of stress despite a record-breaking heatwave during the hottest harvest ever.

But let's step back and look, as we do each year, at the lead-up to the that harvest.

The winter of 2022-23 was very mild and dry; the spring was mild, but wetter; summer was punctuated by storms and then came a heatwave late in the season that took the crop racing towards harvest.

So despite being perhaps less sunny than recent vintages, the heat and regular rains pushed the vines to grow rapidly and the grapes to develop, albeit without serious phytosanitary (oidium and mildew) issues, if the growers were vigilant.

That said, there were those who saw the huge crop coming, and removed lots of buds early in the growing season. This not only helped manage the yield, but it also reduced disease pressure. Some say this may have been the key to quality in 2023.

A hailstorm in mid-July hit Meursault and Volnay hard (with up to 40% loss of the crop).

The harvest saw temperatures soar, with a heatwave pushing daytime highs to around 40 C (104 F). Ripening happened at a frightening speed (one producer friend said that there were no Saturdays or Sundays during harvest). This forced some growers to pick early to preserve as much acidity as possible. The result was a vintage with abundant yields and generally healthy grapes, though quality varied depending on terroir and vineyard management.

It's important to note that neither Pinot Noir nor Chardonnay like high temperatures and heat-wave harvests. So 2023 is yet another Burgundy vintage where you have to know who made the wine. Well-made whites at the moment are drinking brilliantly, with Chablis getting a lot of attention. The reds have developed slowly, but now, after some time in the bottle, they are loosening up. The fruit on both red and white is splashy. And the acidity levels seem good, considering the hot growing season. It may be a case of good malic acid replacing the lactic. But the results are showing charm. What vintages to compare these to? The whole is not far off of the precedent vintage, 2022 with maybe a little less class. In particular, the reds remind me of 2017 (which is a personal favorite at the moment), and the whites are a bit like the 2018s, in their ripeness and acidity. Watch out for wines that have a green, vegetal edge; some producers got spooked by the heat and harvested too soon. But you won't have to worry about that here at burgundywine.com. Enjoy the 2023s for what they are: ripe, juicy and voluptuous.