



CHÂTEAU DES JACQUES

SYRAH 'LES JACQUES'

2018

Color / Grapes
Red/Syrah





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Vintage

Thanks to the rainiest winter for 60 years, 2018 allowed us to rebuild our water reserves after a fairly dry 2017. But, even if the average temperature was more or less normal, this figure does not reflect the variable conditions that prevailed, with a harsh December, a mild January and a cold February, the latter affected by the advent of cold air from the North Pole towards the end of the month. As a result, budbreak took place late, during mid-April, more than ten days late relative to 2017

In a similar fashion to 2007 and 2011, the arrival of spring proved to be a turning point as April - which was sunny, dry and warm - allowed the vines to catch up with themselves. The first flowers appeared right at the very end of a mild May that saw almost daily rainfall. The battle against downy mildew was fierce and the rapid flowering - it took place over the course of just less than a week - was a relief. At this stage, 2018 was slightly ahead of 2009, 2015 and 2017. The vine growth continued to be ahead of the curve, thanks to the start of June, which was both summery and rainy.

The 13th of June, the date of the new moon, provided another turning point in the tale of the vintage as this date marked the start of a drought that persisted until the first days of harvest. Despite a few welcome showers, summer saw temperatures that averaged three degrees Celsius above the seasonal norm, making this the second hottest summer ever (with 2003 the hottest). From mid-July to mid-August, conditions were stifling, extremely dry - our youngest vines, with the shallowest roots, suffered occasionally.

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During the last days of August, the 2018 vintage appeared to have more or less spared the Beaujolais vineyards from extremes of damage, which could not be said of its predecessors. It was a clear reflection of the change of climate prevailing in the region over the course of the past couple of decades. The extreme conditions of the last week of August led us to begin our harvest on the 30th. This is remarkable as picking had only begun this early twice during the course of the 20th century, while this makes the fifth August start date since the start of the 21st century. This exceptionally early start began with the first secateur cuts in our Chardonnay Clos de Loyse vineyards, before we moved on to the southerly slopes of the Côte du Py and our old vines in Thorins. Even if ripeness levels appeared to be ideal, the intense heat during the first fortnight of September meant that we continued to be vigilant and to harvest at a measured pace in order to avoid extremes of concentration and to preserve the fresh acidity and bright fruit of our Gamays.

The successor to the astounding 2015 vintage, the elegant 2016s and the vibrant (if rare) 2017s, 2018 could well prove to be, like 2009, a vintage in which the stars appear to have aligned in order to create a harmonious whole: deep colour, complex aromas and remarkable fruit density.

