

The 2020 vintage

A great classic, the result of a unique year

Bourgogne, 9 November 2020



According to many wine professionals in Bourgogne, the 2020 vintage is quite unique. To begin with, the conditions and context surrounding its production were relatively complicated for everyone. In addition, this year was a historically precocious one, from budburst to harvest. In the end, for many winegrowers, the results have been absolutely exceptional, and remarkably classic!

When the lockdown began in mid-March, the weather was beautiful in France. It lasted until mid-September. The vines took advantage of this to get a 3-week head start at budburst. They were able to maintain their advance until harvest, which began on August 12 in the Mâconnais.

Very early flowering raised hopes for an abundant harvest. High summer temperatures, coupled with the lack of rainfall, caused a significant water deficit, albeit unevenly from one area to another. These shortages created a few occurrences of very concentrated grapes and even slight scorching on bunches facing the sun. This vintage is, more than ever, a mirror of Bourgogne's diversity. Within different appellations, or sometimes even within the same appellation, the maturities were occasionally staggered, as was the case with the flowering and depending on whether or not rainfall was present. Winegrowers thus needed to keep a cool head, and exercise patience when choosing the harvest date.

Vinification was easy, thanks to the extremely healthy condition of the grapes. There was practically no disease or rot due to the absence of rain. Sorting tables were only used to pick out a few scorched grapes.

Wine professionals have been enthusiastic by initial tastings: the particular conditions of this vintage have created unprecedented and unique balances. Of course, there is a subtle richness, but at the same time a pleasant tension, especially for the reds. Many are already anticipating 2020 as a vintage that will age exceptionally well, for both white and red wines. To be confirmed after the barrel ageing!

White wines

The white wines are fruity and express a beautiful aromatic complexity, with very good acidity. In spite of the summer heat, they are well balanced, with a classic freshness that meets the expectations of a typical bourguignon vintage.

Red wines

The red wines stand out with their incredible colors! They have beautiful sustained colors, a sign of abundant anthocyanins. The ideal conditions of sunshine and heat during ripening have led to concentrated wines, with lots of character, but without being heavy. Like the white wines, they have kept their freshness and offer luscious black fruit notes such as blackberry, blueberry, black cherry...

Crémant de Bourgogne

This will not be a “solar” vintage, although the base wines are offering some intense aromatic expression. These are rich, complex, and indulgent wines, with a surprisingly high level of acidity and low pH resulting in perfect balance.

The Pinot Noirs reveal delicious and very expressive aromas of red fruit such as cherry and raspberry, underscored by wonderful vigor.

The Chardonnays are also very aromatic, with good tension resulting from a marked acidity. One typically enjoys aromas of citrus and sometimes tropical fruit like pineapple.

The Gamays are marked by crisp and tart red berry flavors with aromas of strawberry and grapefruit.

The Aligoté varietal, which was more generous this year, is revealing fine volumes in the mouth, with wines that preserve all their vigor with lovely acidity.

Discover the video of the 2020 vintage



This press release only offers a general snapshot.

Because each wine and each winemaker is unique, wines need to be tasted individually before being characterized.

2020 Weather conditions



"Surprising", "Astonishing"! This is how this vintage, like the year 2020, is characterized by many professionals in Bourgogne. This vintage promises to be remarkable with some exceptional results in certain areas. This can be explained by the weather, which allowed, in spring, a flowering in ideal conditions, followed by warm temperatures during the summer. The combination of warm temperatures and dry weather, have nevertheless contributed in obtaining an attractive vintage with beautiful balance and freshness.

A very mild start to the year with a summer-like spring

The very mild winter, with temperatures above seasonal averages, led to early budburst throughout the vineyards. Plenty of rainfall enabled the vines to replenish their water reserves. The early budburst confirmed that the vines were ahead of schedule. **Estimated dates for the mid-budding stage (50% green tips) place 2020 among the earliest starting vintages.** It was even a week earlier than in 2019, regardless of the grape variety, thus placing it in the top three earliest vintages!

April prolonged the trend, averaging +3.6°C above normal! In mid-May, during the "Saints de Glace" period, there were some morning frosts, but fortunately without any serious consequences, thanks to the low humidity.

Beginning on May 14, the temperatures started to soar. The heat persisted well above normal until May 23. That encouraged **rapid progression of the flowering in certain areas and for certain grape varieties.** The first flowers appeared very early, taking the winegrowers by surprise, and at a time when they hadn't even finished raising their trellising wires.

Flowering was frankly magnificent. Flowers were well formed and plentiful, which implied a voluminous harvest. Nevertheless, the blossoming unfolded over a certain period of time. For the very first vines, fruit-set occurred around the 23rd of June. The latest vineyards saw this happen during the first week of July. It is at this moment that differences were apparent from one parcel to the next.

A summer marked by the lack of water

Summer weather barely slowed down the vine. Temperatures remained high and rainfall low, even very low, with disparities by location. In July, **rainfall was rare and inconsistent** throughout Bourgogne. Deficits ranged from 77 to 87% compared to a normal year, while temperatures were higher than normal (+1°C on average).

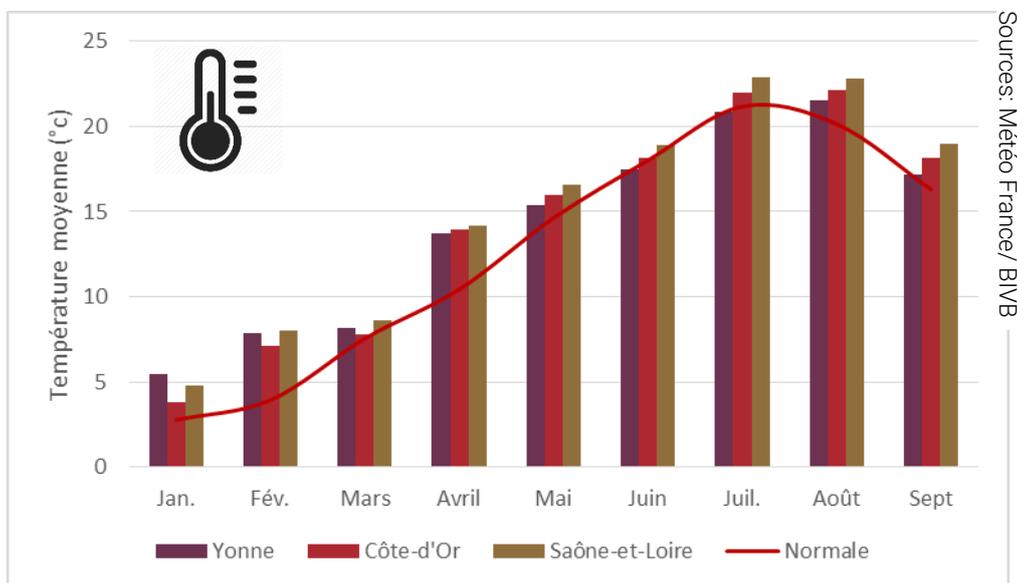
August provided some extremely localized tempestuous downpours. This mainly happened in the Chablis / Grand Auxerrois and Mâconnais areas.

These conditions led to slowing and sometimes even blocking veraison in some areas or plots. As a result, ripening was uneven, and the mosaic of Bourgogne's terroirs was more evident than ever!

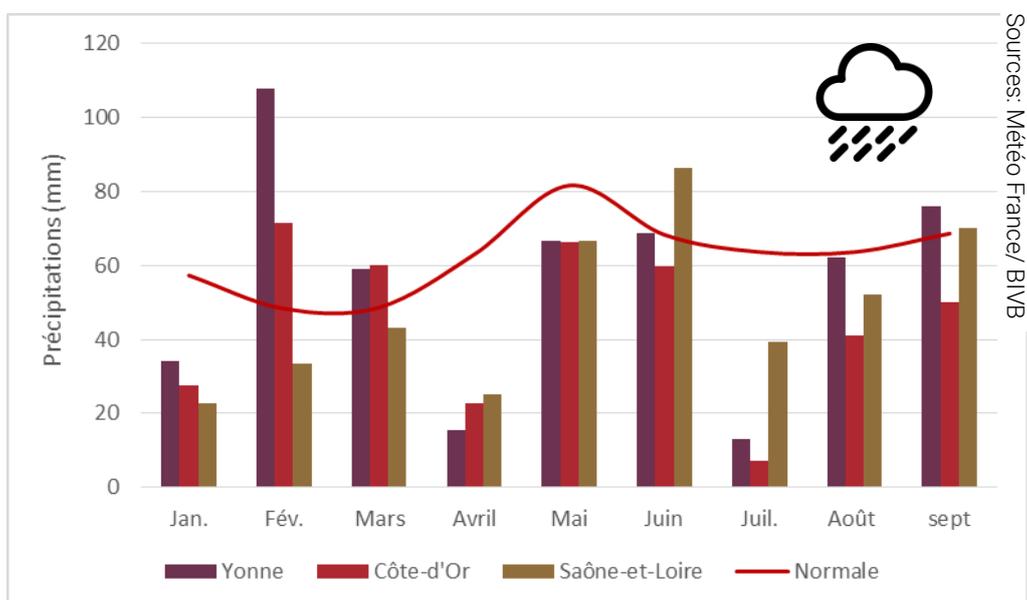
When harvest time came, all these differences had to be taken into account. While some plots were very early, mainly for Pinot Noir, others required more time to reach their optimal maturity. This was especially the case for Chardonnay.

Nevertheless, for many people, and for the first time in the history of Bourgogne, the harvest began and ended in August! In the Hautes Côtes, the last grapes were harvested before mid-September.

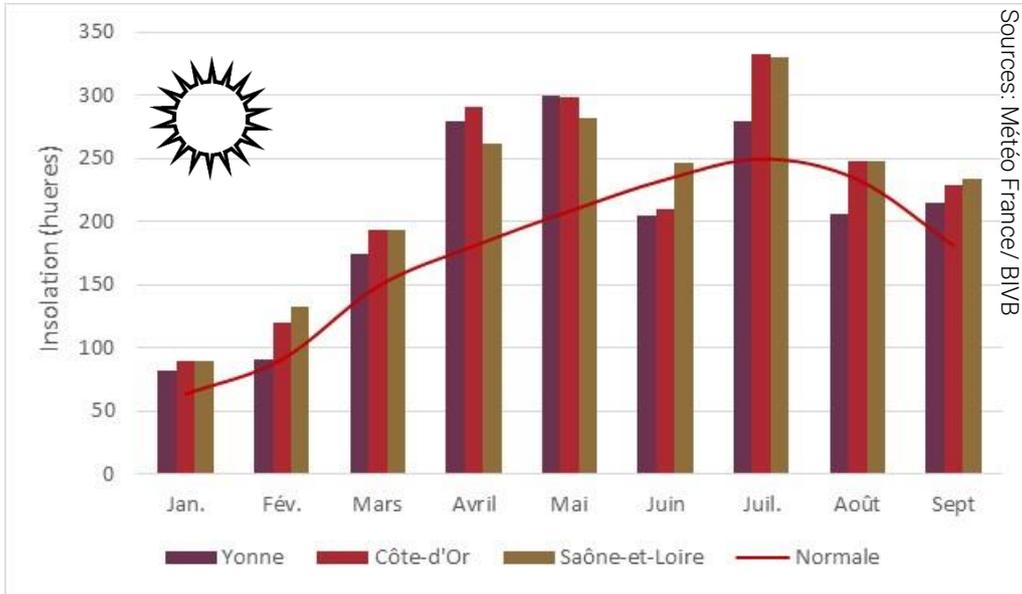
Average monthly temperatures (°C) - Bourgogne 2020
Comparaison to normal by department



Average monthly rainfall (mm) – Bourgogne 2020
Comparaison to normal by department



Average monthly sunshine (hours) – Bourgogne 2020
Comparaison to normal by department



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