

The vine leaf of Château le Puy

EDITORIAL

Château le Puy currently exports to 34 countries. This year we will be adding Dubai, Australia and New Zealand, with the first orders underway.

Each country is characterised by its specific differences in the way distribution is organized. For its part, Europe presents no particular difficulties.

The Asian countries tend to be very bureaucratic. A large number of certificates are required to prove that the wine is conform. They have doubtless been victims of unscrupulous merchants in the past. As a wine producer itself, China is attempting to protect itself and restrict fraudulent imports and home produced counterfeits, something of which we ourselves have been victims.

America is a special case. While the customs duties are particularly high in the south, the north must be considered as two separate zones: Canada and the United States. We have been present in Canada for more than 30 years now. We are barely present in the United States however, due to the requirement for licenses at numerous levels and the levelling effect related to the "woody" taste which has an adverse effect on the palate and the appreciation of dishes.

Consequently, we have decided to set up directly in the USA with original distribution points to allow wine lovers to taste our wines. I will be more elaborate as to our concept in a further edition, when our plans should be well advanced.

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A WINEGROWING FAMILY

Some of our family stories are very representative of country life. This one, like many others was told to us by our grandfather, doubtless because it concerned him directly but also because one Sunday morning when he was busily buttering more pieces of bread than we could ever hope to eat, grandmother said to him "you know you shouldn't go overboard... that's caught you out before". This is all it took to arouse our curiosity and my greedy brother even promised that he would eat all of the buttered bread if grandfather explained what she meant.

- It was shortly before the war. Your dad wasn't even born then. Right in the middle of our Coussillon plots there was an old, badly maintained vineyard which produced virtually nothing. It belonged to a neighbour who lived in the village. So, as you know children, it's important to have your plots all in one piece whenever possible. That way you can avoid chemical treatments and it's easier for working the land and... Grandmother interrupted him: "Tell them the story instead of lecturing them or they'll still be drinking their bowls of chocolate at midday.

- Okay, okay. Anyway, I wanted this plot and fortunately I had some land just behind this neighbour's house. So without hesitation I proposed a swap. But I knew this old lady and she was a shrewd businesswoman, so I made her an attractive offer. We would take the old vineyard in the state it was in, and in exchange she'd get our plot. I would work it for her, give her new vines and pay the workers to plant them. She'd be getting a great deal. I went to see her to put my proposal to her.

- Did she accept? asked my sister Carol.

- Well she listened, nodding as she did so. She made strange noises with her mouth. Suddenly, she stood up. "I'll get back to you soon", she said brusquely "and now you'll have to excuse me as I've got things to do before nightfall".

- Get back to you soon? Does that mean she agreed with you? I asked, rather intrigued.

- No, not necessarily. That means that she was thinking about it and that she would let me know later. So I got up and left.

- And what did she decide, asked Carol, who always liked stories to end well.

- She came to see me the following week. I wasn't particularly worried as only an idiot would turn down such a proposal. She came into the kitchen, sat down and said "I've given it a lot of thought Robert. I'm very interested in the plot behind my house but what you are proposing in exchange is so good that there must be more than meets the eye. Then she got up and left.

- Is that all?

- We got the plot, but several years later. I'll tell you about that next time. And ever since, your grandmother has made fun of me whenever I exaggerate. Right Pascal, now you have to finish the bread and butter.

- But there's too many!

- You've just learned the same lesson as your grandfather, you greedy kid, said my grandmother to him. You should never go too far or promise too much.

Valérie Amoreau

To be continued in the next issue

TASTING NOTE

DESCRIPTION

Superb dark red colour
 Spicy nose with delicate floral notes
 Sustained and gentle attack thanks to the finesse of the tannins
 Generous on the palate with red fruit aromas (raspberry and strawberry)
 A refined and elegant overall experience with a welcoming hint of acidity and a delicate, harmonious finish.

ANALYSES

Alcohol content 20/20	12.20	%vol
Reducing sugars	0.20	g/l
Total acidity	3.80	g/l
Volatile acidity	0.64	g/l
PH	3.40	
SO2 free	Undetectable	
SO2 total	Undetectable	

YIELD

14,64 Hectolitres/Hectare

A vintage and its history... Emilien 2013

2013: a high risk year

Some years, Mother Nature can really push the winegrower to his limits, without doubt to remind us (as if we needed reminding) that she is absolutely essential and that we must respect and protect her. The year 2013 was just such a year. The weather conditions deteriorated during the flowering period, hampering consistency and generating a great deal of millerandage, (rain on the flowers, which prevents the grapes from developing). The few potential fruit on the vines suddenly became all the more precious and required all of our care and attention. But without Mother Nature we can do nothing, and the spring and summer were interminably cold and rainy.

Fortunately, the month of September gave us fresh hope, with the odd grape gingerly beginning to ripen here and there. We had to wait, as there was no question of harvesting the grapes before the moment of optimal ripeness. The sun worked its magic and at the same time warmed our hearts. However, the damp quickly returned, causing rot despite the fact that the grapes were not tightly packed together in their clusters. When we were finally able to harvest them, we had to be extremely selective in sorting them, further reducing the quantity of healthy fruit. The figures speak for themselves: 14.64 hectolitres per hectare. Never in living memory had Château le Puy had such a small harvest.

Fortunately, after two years of ageing and constant attention at every stage, this precious nectar is a delight to taste.



OENOLOGIE

PRESS WINE: at the end of the alcoholic fermentation, the wine is 'run off' from the vat. In other words, the juice is collected through a runoff or drainage process without touching the solid matter (the pomace). This wine is referred to as free-run wine. Next, the grape pomace is taken to the press to extract the wine it still contains. This operation gives us what is known as press wine. This wine is generally more tannic and less acidic. It is initially aged separately to allow for improved clarification. Later on, it can be very useful or even essential during the blending process as it gives the finished wine complexity and structure.

SHOULD I DRINK OR KEEP MY CHATEAU LE PUY?

Millésime	Température range 16°	Température range 10°	Température range 6°
1917	collection	collection	can age further
1926	collection	collection	can age further
1932	collection	collection	can age further
1955	collection	collection	to drink now
1959	collection	collection	ready to drink
1961	collection	to drink now	can age further
1970	collection	to drink now	can age further
1975	collection	past its best	ready to drink
1978	past its best	past its best	ready to drink
1982	to drink now	ready to drink	leave to age
1984	collection	past its best	ready to drink
1985	past its best	past its best	ready to drink
1986	past its best	past its best	ready to drink
1987	collection	past its best	past its best
1988	to drink now	ready to drink	ready to drink
1989	to drink now	ready to drink	leave to age
1990	to drink now	ready to drink	ready to drink
1991	collection	past its best	ready to drink
1994	to drink now	ready to drink	to drink now
1994 Barthélemy	ready to drink	ready to drink	leave to age
1995 Emilien	ready to drink	ready to drink	leave to age
1995 Barthélemy	ready to drink	ready to drink	leave to age
1996 Emilien	to drink now	ready to drink	ready to drink
1998 Emilien	ready to drink	ready to drink	leave to age
1998 Barthélemy	ready to drink	leave to age	leave to age
1999 Emilien	to drink now	to drink now	to drink now
1999 Barthélemy	to drink now	ready to drink	ready to drink
2000 Emilien	ready to drink	ready to drink	leave to age
2000 Barthélemy	ready to drink	ready to drink	leave to age
2001 Emilien	to drink now	to drink now	to drink now
2001 Barthélemy	to drink now	ready to drink	ready to drink
2002 Emilien	to drink now	to drink now	ready to drink
2003 Emilien	ready to drink	ready to drink	ready to drink
2003 Barthélemy	ready to drink	ready to drink	leave to age
2004 Emilien	to drink now	ready to drink	ready to drink
2004 Barthélemy	ready to drink	ready to drink	ready to drink
2005 Emilien	ready to drink	leave to age	leave to age
2005 Barthélemy	ready to drink	leave to age	leave to age
2006 Emilien	ready to drink	ready to drink	leave to age
2006 Barthélemy	ready to drink	ready to drink	leave to age
2007 Emilien	to drink now	ready to drink	ready to drink
2007 Barthélemy	ready to drink	ready to drink	leave to age
2008 Emilien	ready to drink	leave to age	leave to age
2008 Barthélemy	ready to drink	leave to age	leave to age
2009 Emilien	ready to drink	leave to age	leave to age
2009 Barthélemy	ready to drink	leave to age	leave to age
2010 Emilien	ready to drink	leave to age	leave to age
2010 Barthélemy	can wait	leave to age	leave to age
2011 Emilien	ready to drink	leave to age	leave to age
2011 Barthélemy	can wait	leave to age	leave to age
2012 Emilien	can wait	leave to age	ready to drink
2012 Barthélemy	can wait	leave to age	leave to age
2013 Emilien	can wait	leave to age	leave to age
2013 Barthélemy	can wait	leave to age	leave to age

Collection A wine that has aged too long, in which more than half the colouring compounds have been deposited in the bottle and which has lost more than 40% of its alcohol by volume. In fact, it has become a collector's bottle to be contemplated with nostalgia, a feast for the eyes only.

Past its best A wine at the end of its life that should be drunk in all urgency if it has not already been done: a wine that may have waited a bit too long and might prove to be a disappointment. Old vintages must be decanted before serving.

To drink now A wine that is ageing and must be drunk now to appreciate all its flavours and merits. Old vintages must be decanted before serving..

Ready to drink A stable wine in its prime. Wines from 1990 onwards should be decanted to get the best of their flavours.

Can age further An old wine that is "ready to drink" but can also be kept a little longer, as long as the cork is in good shape. Do not hesitate to change the cork if you deem fit.

Can wait Wines bottled recently with very young tannins that need to be allowed to mellow out. Can also be savoured right away after aerating well.

Leave to age A wine that will gain from ageing to round off its tannins and bring out all the aromas in its bouquet. It can gain in finesse so it would be a shame to drink it when it is not yet at its best. For young wines, this is a sign that they have hopes of ageing for many years.

The information above is valid for cellars where the minimum temperature is 3°C in winter and the maximum is 25°C in summer.

Barthélemy wines must be decanted

The temperature range is the difference calculated by taking the maximum temperature of the cellar in summer and deducting the minimum temperature of the same cellar in winter.

THE RIPENESS OF THE GRAPES

Choosing the right harvesting date is vital in our business. A few years ago, the wine grower would take this decision based on subjective personal criteria to produce his own wine. Today, wine growers are increasingly drawing upon the skills of experts of all kinds, who they rely on to tell them the best date to start the harvest. The chosen date will be based purely on analytical criteria. Always keen to combine the heritage of our past with innovation, Château le Puy's winegrowers draw upon both the more subjective visual and sensory criteria in addition to analytical criteria. The grape stalk must be properly lignified* and the berries must be easy to pick. When the grapes are crushed, the juice should have a red colour and the grape seed must be ripe, dry, without bitterness and must come away from the flesh easily. The grape skin must be firm and supple.

The analytical criteria of interest to us regarding the ripeness of the grape are a probable alcohol-by-volume level which is sufficient and if possible not too high, a malic acid level of below 2 g / l and a pH of around 3.60.

However, at Château le Puy this process is accompanied by the ongoing impressions and sensitivity of the wine grower, his empirical knowledge of his vineyard accompanied with just the right interpretation of the upcoming climate and the estimated duration of the harvest.

The different grape varieties on several plots are all subject to slight geological and climatic contrasts, which must be taken into account to begin the harvest and to then plan the picking process. A grape harvested under excellent conditions of ripeness offers the best possible guarantee of producing a great vintage during the vinification process.

Pascal Amoreau

*When the stem of the grape stalk ripens and changes colour from green to brown

THE IMMERSSED CAP

There are various types of vinification processes (closed or open vats, with floating or immersed caps). The methods used for red wine differ from the process for white wine due to the fact that pressing only takes place after the fermentation of the must. The purpose of this maceration is to extract the components of the wine, the colour, the aromas and the tannins.

For a long while now, immersed cap fermentation has been Château le Puy's chosen method.

This involves filling the vat almost to the top. During the fermentation process, the solid matter, which is naturally pushed to float at the surface, is kept inside the vat by a wooden grating. Under the effect of the carbon dioxide and the heat it generates, the juice expands and overflows from the vat into a basin provided for this purpose. Once in contact with the air, the juice cools, retracts and flows back into the vat, freeing up space for the warm juice to overflow at the same time. In this way, a continuous movement is created in each vat, allowing for better extraction of soluble substances. This particular fermentation method allows us to continually obtain the finest components to ensure optimal quality for the future wine.

This process makes it possible to obtain the very best from the harvest and is an integral part of the creation of the Château le Puy wines you know so well.

Steven Hewison

NEW-YORK, WHERE SHOULD WE EAT TONIGHT?

- **Per Se** - (Chef Thomas Keller - 3 étoiles Michelin) - 10 Columbus Circle (at 60th Street), New York 10019 - (212) 823-9335
- **Eleven Madison Park** (Chef Daniel Humm - 3 étoiles Michelin) 11 Madison Ave, New York 10010 - (212) 889-0905
- **Bernardin** (Chef Eric Ripper - 3 étoiles Michelin) 155 W 51st Street, New York 10019 - (212)554-1515
- **Daniel** - (Chef Daniel Boulud - 2 étoiles Michelin) - 60 East 65th Street at Park Avenue New York 10065 - (212) 288-0033
- **Modern** - (Chef Abram Bissel - 1 étoile Michelin) 9 Westt 53rd Streer, New York 10019 - (212) 333-1220
- **Topping Rose House** (Chef Ryan Murphy - high gastronomy on the coast) One Bridgehampton - Sag Harbor Turnpike

Bridgehampton New York 11932 - (631) 537-0870

Here are some of the Chefs who have done us the honour of choosing Château le Puy to serve with their refined dishes.

FOR THE PLEASURE OF THE PALATE

Poached pears with Emilien 2013

serves four

- 4 medium sized pears (Rocha variety)
- 75 cl of Château le Puy Emilien 2013
- Spices: 1 stick of cinnamon, 3 cloves, 10 black peppercorns, nutmeg and ginger
- 125 g of sugar
- ½ a lemon and ½ an orange

Remove the zests from the lemon and the orange. Peel the four pears. Leave them whole. Bring the wine to boiling point in a saucepan on a medium heat. Add the sugar, the spices and the zest from the citrus fruit. Place the peeled pears into this mixture and allow them to poach for 15 minutes, simmering slightly, until they are soft. Remove from the heat and allow the closed saucepan to stand in the fridge for 12 hours.

Before serving, heat the saucepan slightly to warm the pears. Drain the pears and keep them warm. Bring the spiced wine to the boil and allow it to reduce until a smooth, creamy consistency is obtained. Filter the syrup through a strainer to remove all of the skin and spices. Pour the syrup over the pears and serve.

Valérie Amoreau