

RIEUSSEC

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SAUTERNES

CHÂTEAU RIEUSSEC 2019



■ VINEYARD ATTRIBUTES

Appellation : Sauternes, Bordeaux

The Sauternes appellation stretches along the left bank of the Garonne, about 50km South of Bordeaux. The natural humidity arising from the Ciron river provides the ideal conditions for the development of *Botrytis Cinerea*, also known as noble rot.

Terroir : Château Rieussec sits on the border of Fargues and Sauternes, bordered by Château d'Yquem to the West. Rieussec is one of the largest properties in Sauternes and Barsac, covering 93 hectares of gravel sitting on sandy-clay soils.

■ VINTAGE SUMMARY

The vintage began well with a mild, dry winter. The fine weather continued into early spring, resulting in an early start to the growth cycle. Day and night-time temperatures then cooled down and, between March and May, there were six occasions when we held our breath fearing a frost.

During this period, the colder and above all drier than usual weather slowed down the vines' growth. After a relatively cold, rainy start, June suddenly changed, bringing an early summer heat wave the likes of which had not been seen since 2003. Fortunately, it was short-lived and the vines, which were catching up in terms of growth, seemed better equipped than in previous years to cope with the heat. Some miraculous rain arrived on 26 July, at just the right moment to trigger *véraison* (colour change).

This year, as in 2017, the rain in September was very helpful for the botrytis. But the harvests turned out to be more complex, with sour rot threatening the purity of the grapes. We had to sort through the fruit like gold diggers to remove the sour grapes, only keeping the nicely botrytized ones. A window of opportunity arrived on 8 October to pick perfectly balanced grapes with 20% potential alcohol for the Grand Vin, including some superb Muscadelle!

■ WINE MAKING SCHEME

All batches are pressed individually in small pneumatic presses. After a few hours of cold settling, the must is transferred into new oak barrels from the Tonnellerie des Domaines in Pauillac for fermentation. Alcoholic fermentation is interrupted when the desired balance between alcohol and sugar had been reached. After fermentation, the wine is aged in barrels for 24 months.

■ TASTING NOTES

Delicate golden colour with soft green glints. Intense nose with tremendous aromatic richness. Initial notes of citrus zest are followed by lemon tart, and then toasted notes reminiscent of freshly baked brioche. The palate offers mandarin zest and candied orange, enlivened by a touch of star anise which underscores the wine's aromatic freshness. Dense and rich, the palate has good length with a pleasant hint of bitterness on the finish.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Sémillon 89%, Sauvignon blanc 9%, Muscadelle 2%

Alcohol content : 14 ABV

pH : 3.70

Total acidity : 3.97 g/l