

Chateau Musar Red 2016



Overview

Our expectations for the 2016 harvest were obviously influenced by our thoughts of the adverse weather we experienced in 2015 but we did have a positive start in December 2015, the month providing 130mm of rainfall. This was followed by 360mm in January accompanied by a good deal of snow, providing the soils with much needed moisture and nutrients. February and March proved cold and rainy with a further 300mm of rainfall which was hugely welcomed by the dry terrain. April was warm with an average night temperature of plus 5 degrees Celsius rather than the minus 5 of the year before. May arrived with 45mm of rain, enough to boost the vines and from then on, we began to have higher expectations for this year's harvest. A sunny June followed with low humidity and in July, we enjoyed an average temperature of 34 degrees throughout the month. This was key in pushing the harvest towards early maturation, faster than any previous year!

Cabernet Sauvignon was the first to be harvested on 16th August from silty soils encouraging early ripening. Cinsault followed on the 2nd September with Carignan on the 7th.

Grape Varietals

An equal blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault, Carignan

Winemaking

Each varietal was fermented with natural yeasts in concrete vats, then aged for 12 months in French oak barrels before blending in February 2019 and bottled without fining or filtration during the summer months of July and August. Fermentation proceeded smoothly, with an average temperature between 27 and 29 in concrete vats. After the various fermentations, our first discovery was the quality of the Cabernet which was outstanding, with a great depth of fruit and concentration. Cinsault was elegant and silky with an explosion of aromas reminding us that this grape is actually our very own Lebanese Pinot. As usual, Carignan showed its quality, benefitting from the warm conditions sacrificing yield though in turn, gaining greater concentration. This is an exceptional grape which truly typifies the terroir of the Bekaa.

Tasting Notes

Our 2016 vintage is deep ruby in colour with high viscosity. Red cherries, plums, carob and figs dominate the nose with a hint of eastern spice. Kirsch and plums follow through to the palate with blackcurrant and chocolate. The tannins are velvety soft and this wine has a lot of depth and fruit concentration with a long finish.

The 2016 harvest showed without a doubt, that global warming is causing higher annual temperatures and at the same time, successive years of low rainfall have resulted in drier soils. Clearly, these factors may affect maturation of the grapes as well as the wine-making process but for 2016, with the much needed rainfall and almost perfect climatic conditions, we have high expectations for this vintage's future for decades to come.

Alcohol

14% Alc./Vol