

Alter Ego

2005

No one in France can remember drought conditions of such magnitude over such a long period (57% less rainfall than usual), although temperatures were never as high as during the 2003 heat wave. We carefully removed all the suckers – twice – as well as the side shoots in order to help the vines cope with reduced water consumption. This led to perfectly well-nourished grapes. After excellent flowering in early June, summer was excessively dry. Just like many other great vintages, this called a halt to premature growth. Drought conditions had two major effects on the fruit:

- small berries, meaning very low yields
- gradual concentration of flavour compounds in the grapes, very promising in terms of quality.

The grapes slowly reached phenolic maturity after a few showers in early September. Picking began on 22nd September in plots of Merlot. The grapes were impressively ripe and healthy. Starting with the first pumping over, the wine had a superb colour and filled the vat room with powerful aromas. The fact that the grapes were

so ripe also facilitated alcoholic fermentation. In fact, this was the first time anyone had ever seen sugar levels of this magnitude. Picking of Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot took place from 30th September to 7th October under clear, blue skies. Daily tasting throughout fermentation made it possible to achieve just the right degree of extraction and retain all the freshness and balance of this powerful, concentrated vintage.

BLEND

MERLOT 57%

CABERNET SAUVIGNON 43%

HARVEST DATES

22/09/2005 TO 07/10/2005

AGEING POTENTIAL

READY TO DRINK BUT CAN BE KEPT A FEW MORE YEARS