

Loire 2007 harvest update

26 Sep 2007 by JR



Charles Sydney, passionate advocate of Loire wines and wine broker based near Chinon, has just sent the following report and photos. Like so many other growers in Europe, it seems that those in the Loire are benefiting from this warm dry September.

2007 in the Loire looks infinitely better than we expected ... the last three weeks of dry, sunny weather have really done the trick. (Healthy Touraine Sauvignon shown above left.)

In Muscadet, bunches and berries are small (see right), so lowish yields of really ripe, golden grapes. Nice!

In Touraine, the Sauvignons are *typé* or true to type – an almost ideal balance of ripeness to acidity. But where there has not been sufficient work in the vineyards, there's likely to be some problems with geosmin. [Geosmin is a volatile compound that produces earthy or mouldy aromas in juice and wine made from at least partially rotten grapes, even where the rot has dried out.]



Happy growers in Sancerre and Pouilly can hardly believe their luck at the turnaround in the weather and can be heard to mutter about unexpected miracles. (See left for handpicked Sancerre grapes.)

Until the grapes have fermented, it's not easy to compare vintages, but at a guess we're on a similar profile to 2002.

Reds, Chenins, etc – the harvest is only just starting, so more anon (but see below right for some good-looking Touraine Gamay).

On a less positive note, it has to be said that those growers who haven't worked their vineyards properly do have serious problems of mildew and hence underripeness. Yet again, the quality is best where growers have thinned the crop, grassed through the vines and treated whenever necessary... Perhaps this is the year when the trade will at last believe me when I say that lutte raisonnée is better for the environment (and

for the wine!) than organics!

