

## Languedoc-Roussillon vintages

3 Sep 2008 by Jancis Robinson

2012 has been described as the worst the Languedoc has seen for 22 years. Yields were low thanks to drought at one stage and rot at another. Late, uneven ripening resulted in wines without fully developed varietal character in many instances. It certainly was not a complete disaster but overall the feeling is one of disappointment.

**2011** A rainier year meant that volumes were finally back to normal after three lean years - however, it also created a problem with rot in the vineyards. A difficult year.

**2010** Quantity is down - again - but quality is good, with minimal rot thanks to dry, windy conditions in August and September.

**2009** A warm and smaller than average year, especially for whites. Quality is very high quality across the region.

**2008** Variable weather and drought in the summer made this a challenging year, but has created some concentrated, fruity and aromatic reds.

**2007** Very cool, grey summer left grapes struggling to ripen properly.

**2006** Relatively soft wines for medium-term drinking.

**2005** Almost great but rain at harvest time diluted the potential somewhat.

**2004** Traditional growing season. Very good, well-balanced wines that are drinking well in 2008.

**2003** The heatwave resulted in some very strange musts with such low acids and such high sugars than some fermentations got stuck, resulting in sweetish wines. Definitely not for the long term.

**2002** Extremely variable. An unusually grey summer ended with disastrous floods in the *Gard département* in the far east of the region although many growers in the hills managed to make good wine.

**2001** Summer was so hot and dry that some vines shut down and stopped ripening. Rain in September was a relief for those who picked after it although the wines picked too early may be uncomfortably tough. White wines are particularly concentrated.

**2000** Devastating floods in November 1999 damaged some vineyards, as did storms in June and July but the summer was warm and dry (though not excessively so) and was followed by a prolonged harvest with some very good quality wine. Lovely, round, supple wines with ripe tannins.

**1999** An exceptionally dry winter was followed by heavy rainfall, and some hail in Roussillon, at the end of April. Wines are respectable but not as exciting as the vintages immediately before and after.

**1998** Very good, small crop.

**1997** Large crop, difficult season.

**1996** Large crop and a rainy summer which affected reds more than whites.

**1995** Excellent ripeness and concentration in reds, especially in the hills.

**1994** Probably France's most successful region: a small crop with real richness and concentration.

**1993** After a wonderful summer this was an exciting vintage.

**1992** Irregular quality inevitable after localised autumn downpours.

**1991** A really outstanding year of rich, dense and big-structured wines, especially in Roussillon.

**1990** Generous weather gave excellent wines that were fruity and delicious.