

Bordeaux growers thrilled with 2009

2 Oct 2009 by Jancis Robinson

The CIVB, the official Bordeaux wine organisation, has released its initial report on the 2009 growing season and harvest - blessed so far by a particularly warm, dry July, August and September.

Click below to see more detail on the weather throughout the growing season. Reports from the right bank are so far extremely enthusiastic. Left bank winemakers are still waiting for Cabernets to ripen fully and will have their fingers crossed for the next couple of weeks.

See [CIVB initial report on 2009](#).

See also [Dourthe's report dated 1 Oct 2009](#)

And here is Yvon Mau's summary:

Picking of red grapes at both Chx Brown and Preuillac began on 1 Oct. The grapes have been reaching a good degree of maturity – for instance, at 18h30 on 29 Sep the temperature in Léognan was still 28°!

Principal characteristics of the vintage are as follows:

- Yields look reasonable, even though they are reducing on a daily basis.
- The skins of all the grape varieties are extremely thick. This will clearly have implications for the winemaking and judgment on the levels of extraction.
- The pips are becoming crisp and ripe, and have a hazelnut aroma.
- Sugar levels in the grapes are high. Even in the north of the Médoc, sugar levels in Merlot are 13.5 and the ripest parcels are at 14.7.
- Total acidity is on the low side, between 3.2 and 3.4. The malic acidity is disconcertingly low, around 1 g/l on the Merlot. However, the pH is favourable, between 3.3 and 3.4, which suggests good overall balance.
- A week ago, we were concerned about the extractability of the anthocyanins, but now it looks more straightforward.
- Highly unusually, we expect to pick the Petit Verdot at Ch Brown before we finish picking the Merlot, simply because the Petit Verdot will be ripe.
- Cabernet Sauvignon is not yet ripe, but we are hopeful that the beneficial conditions will bring it to full ripeness in the course of the next fortnight.