



Domaine de Reuilly

HARVEST 2022: NEW CHAPTER

Dear friends and clients, please receive our first impressions after our first harvest at Domaine de Reuilly, for Marie and me.

Denis is still around, looking upon us, making sure we are not making mistakes, checking that we are staying on the path that he created for Domaine de Reuilly. Thank you so much Denis for taking care of us as you do.

We are lucky with this first vintage, very lucky ...

This harvest is very welcomed for each winegrower in France after what we had to suffer in 2021. Thank God, they are vintages where everything goes fine... And for winemakers' blood pressure it's a blessing! 2021 was indeed the lowest vintage in volume since World War 2! Winegrowers had to fight against every possible disease! From mildew to frost, even rot close to the harvest! Mother Nature has been more generous this year for our first vintage at Domaine de Reuilly.

Let me introduce you the weather conditions that contributed to create the 2022 vintage:

In Centre Loire, winter has not been so harsh and the temperature was overall above seasons average and the frost period did not last very long (only the last week of January). This winter can be qualified as cool with low rainfall levels. March and April have been usual conditions with alternance of sun and rain. This allowed the buds to pop up earlier than usual with two weeks ahead of time. They have started to blow out in the very beginning of April and popped out around April 15th.

The catastrophic frost event was the main cause of the 2021 harvest low level. It is of course in our minds when comes April because we know that, due to global warming, there is a very risky period when young buds are out as frost nights are occurring. To prevent these damages, some growers decide to buy several antifrost towers that blow air over parcels. Some others colleagues choose to set up candles in the middle of the vines, some even use helicopters to create turbulences in the atmosphere. Most of us are staying awake during those nights in order to try everything to keep alive those precious, fragile, little green plants...

At Domaine de Reuilly, we are already using a tower on Pierres Plates parcel, but Coignons valley, that has been discovered as one of the coldest places in Reuilly, does not have any, and we will put two of them there next winter. Pierres Plates Tower did start on April 10th at night as temperature fell down to 18°F! Thankfully the buds were not totally out yet and not too sensitive! There were a few losses, but nothing compared to 2021...

Beginning May, weather started to be very dry and hot which is very profitable for the vine growth. Work load at the vineyard was then intense for our team who struggled hard in order to limit grass development which is in direct competition with our sauvignons and pinots plants for the search of water and nitrogen. The work also consists in shaping vine ranks in order to capture a maximum of sun light.

In may we had only 4 rainy days with 20mm precipitation in total, and an average temperature of about 85°F. Blooming started at the end of the month with better, even ideal, conditions.



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However, at the beginning of June, we started to be afraid of the lack of water and we feared an intense drought coming on. Fortunately, we had 100mm of rain on our hills in the second part of the month. These rainfalls were associated with high temperatures and the vines pursued their active growth. Protection against mildew needs to be very intense especially when you grow organically and biodynamically, just like we do on our 23ha. But we received those rains as a blessing as they helped us going through a Mediterranean summer.

Indeed, July was hotter and dry. Beginning August, we encountered two successive heat waves. But fortunately, we had rainfalls in the middle of the month which came as a true relief.

The month of September is the moment for the winemaker to ask himself the endless question: when should he start harvesting? He will multiply tastings at each parcel and ask the oenological laboratory for biochemical analysis of the grapes.

It is always the most difficult decision of the year: too soon and it is too green, too late and the acidity level is too low and the wines are not vibrant enough, having too much alcohol content. But as a given time, all of a sudden, everything gets into place, the grapes become very tasty and there is a good balance between sugar content and acidity; it is then time to proceed and to harvest quickly...

We started to harvest the Pinot Gris on August 30th. The weather was not fully stable on that day, there were many thunderstorms all over the country, but it was definitely the time to enter this grape variety into the cellar. The first wagons comforted our hopes. We had a satisfactory volume and the quality of the grapes was there with absolutely no rot and very healthy bunches. The alcohol content of our Pinot Gris is 12,6° as an average and we can identify in the juices the characteristic aromas of this varietal with its hints of spices.

At that same moment, the Pinots Noirs still had hard skins when we tasted them in the parcels and therefore, we decided to wait for some time before harvesting in order for them to soften and allow a good tannin extraction and to favor a darker coloring. Their harvest started on September 6th and we could tell right away that we would have a good substance and the appropriate color. The juices revealed very soon the intense red fruits aromas (cherry and currant) which are specific to the Pinot Noir varietal. The malolactic fermentation is presently going on at a well monitored temperature in our different tanks.

We started harvesting the Sauvignon Pierres Plates on September 7th and the Sauvignons Coignons on the 13th of September. With this hot climate vintage, the technological maturity (sugar content) and the aroma maturity (aroma expression) do not occur at the same time, the aroma maturity coming later, and it is therefore important to wait to harvest. The average alcohol content for the Sauvignons is 13° and the acidity level of the different tanks is in between 3,4 and 4 gr/liter. The Sauvignons have their usual citrus aromas but each tank also has its own mineral character depending on the parcel it comes from.

So yes, we can say that good harvests still exist – We were a bit doubting it after the last three preceding ones.... The grapes that we entered were all very healthy and all the juices that we tasted in the different tanks are very promising and seducing. Of course, before the bottling takes place, the ageing (both in steel tanks and oak barrels) is very key for the ultimate quality of the wines but we are overly confident. We already look forward to have you taste this new vintage at the beginning of year 2023 and we are pretty sure that it will meet nicely your expectations.