



2016: History repeats itself...

Wine lovers thought it couldn't get any better than the 2015 vintage. Think again: here comes 2016!

History presents **a few examples of great duos** like 28/29, 89/90 and more recently 2009/2010. Now we can add 2015/2016.

An extremely humid spring and incredibly dry summer

2016 stood out for an extremely humid spring that lasted until mid-June. Luckily, five days of dry, sunny weather made for **rapid and uniform blossoming**. Then came an **incredibly dry summer**. Temperatures shot up in August, reaching 36.4 °C on August 23. Vine growth stalled very early on, with water stress becoming ever more pronounced. Rather than nourishing the grapes, the vines became dormant. The ripening process was thus extremely slow, and people started talking about a late vintage with a profile reminiscent of 2000.

Our clays demonstrate their importance in the face of drought

Like in 2000, a rain shower on September 13 set things straight, reviving the plants and letting the ripening process proceed under perfect conditions. Sugar levels rose, while beautiful weather over the following days proved especially beneficial for the Cabernets, which were still far from ripe. This year once again, the plots rich in clay came out ahead thanks to their resilience during the summer water stress.

Oh ! Indian summer...

Harvesting began on September 27 and continued for nearly 4 weeks until October 20 thanks to a "never-ending" summer. There was no rush, since the berries' small size and thick skin called for patience to allow the tannins to mature and the aromas to develop. We picked perfectly healthy grapes featuring rich tannins and great aromatic freshness.

In addition to its fresh character, the wine offers brilliant fruity aromas that are even more spectacular and more balanced than in 2015, perhaps due to a less "sunny" quality.

We are seeing the extent to which our new vat room, in use for the past two years, helps the grapes fully express the qualities to be expected of a fine Margaux: purity, precision and elegance.

2016 or 2015? The only sure way to choose between these two great years is to let them both age to perfection!

Figures...

Harvest: September 27 to October 20

Sorting: by hand

Yield: 50 Hl/Ha (2.7 tons/acre)

Fermentation:

Selected yeasts and bacteria

Fermentation temperatures around 25°C

Simultaneous alcoholic and malolactic fermentation

Maceration period: 18 to 25 days

Blend:

■ 55% Cabernet Sauvignon ■ 33 % Merlot ■ 7 % Cabernet-franc ■ 5 % Petit Verdot

Ageing: 18 months in casks, 50% new

Alcohol content: 13.5%

Date of bottling: 05/28/2018

TASTING

The 2016 vintage, bottled in late May, displays a superb dark ruby, almost garnet red color.

An intense bouquet of black fruit stands out in the nose, along with notes of cinnamon and mild pepper.

In the mouth, the attack is at once full and fresh, promptly giving way to rich and lengthy volume. The smooth, juicy flesh coats the palate while fine notes of cocoa round out the aromatic blend. Delightfully grained tannins combine with distinct freshness and a lovely length.

The wine offers a perceptible yet discrete concentration, illustrating the full grandeur of the Château Kirwan terroir.

Superb potential for this 2016 vintage!

Ph. Delfaut, General Manager. September 2018