

Domaine J.A. Ferret

POUILLY-FUISSÉ

2019



Region

Mâconnais

Appellation

Pouilly-Fuissé

Grape variety

Chardonnay

Situation

A blend of the best parcels from Fuissé's amphitheatre.

Age of the vines

Planted between 2018 and 1947, a little more than 70 years separate the youngest vines from the oldest. The average age is 40 years. You might like to know that one of the oldest plots used in this cuvée (Les Vernays, planted in 1955) is the source of the massal selection made by the domaine.

Soil

Within this one cuvée you can find a snapshot of Fuissé's geological complexity. A third of the vines are grown on west-facing granit soil - a mixture of schists, volcanic sedimentary sands and rhyolitic tuff - the remainder, which face east, are mostly planted on limestone and Jurassic marls, but there are also some deposits of clay.

Vinification

Exceptionally on this vintage, the cuvée was, because of its exceptional concentration vinified with a proportion of cask more important than usual. (80% of casks including 25% new casks). Vinification, then ageing 10 months in barrels, then another 6 months in vats to perfect its cladding. The bottling on 11 January 2021 was accompanied by the rare snowflakes of the year.

Vintage

The mild conditions that prevailed throughout January and temperatures that reached more than 20°C by mid-February were the earliest hints that this was going to be an unusually challenging vintage. No one mastered nature's trials in 2019. And, unlike the prevailing conditions in 2018, water reserves at the end of winter were already low, so there was already a noticeable water deficit by the time the vegetative growth kicked off.

The somewhat scary mildness of winter was followed by a painfully cold spring. In April frost ravaged some of the budding vines at the heart of the village of Fuissé. Luckily, however, the vines planted on the slopes were spared.

As in April, the temperatures in May were below the seasonal norms. Any precocity shown by the vines as a result of winter's gentleness melted away like a snowdrift on a sunny day. By the end of May, we were looking at some 13 days of delay relative to the previous year.

At the start of June the first flowers brought great promise. The number of incipient bunches seemed almost abundant... But our hopes were dashed by poor fruit set, in Fuissé at least. Harsh winds gusted across the amphitheatre of vines, reducing some of the promised generosity, then the bunches had to survive an unprecedented early heatwave. But all was not lost. June also saw some rainfall that was more abundant than the average for the decade. This gave us a glimmer of hope. There were no surprises in store for us in July - it's warm, dry conditions were pretty much in line with current norms. We had no need to fear the development of downy mildew this year, although powdery mildew was pretty aggressive.

Amazingly, veraison rolled out fairly homogeneously around 5 August. Several rainy episodes brought us both water and hope. Towards the end of August, the bunches in the Tournant de Pouilly weighed less than 50 grams. Skins were still very hard. We waited. We waited for ripening to proceed, we waited for the skins to soften, we waited for the grapes to reveal their flavours.

Despite the quasi-Mediterranean conditions, we began picking on 10 September, scarcely earlier than in the Côte d'Or, or even Chablis.

We struggled to fill the picking bins, even though we continued to cut. The musts were both pure and concentrated, with elevated sugar levels and unexpectedly high acidity.

On 23 September, the winery doors closed on our modest harvest.

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Tasting

Pretty texture balancing between juicy crunch and gourmet mellow . A reductive wood of good augur for the guard signs this cuvée.

Food pairing

Shellfish and molluscs, seafood risotto, grilled or pan-fried fish, veal cutlets with creamy sauces, goat's cheeses and hard cow's milk cheeses.

