

Domaine J.A. Ferret

TÊTE DE CRU "LES PERRIÈRES"

2019



Region

Mâconnais

Appellation

Pouilly-Fuissé 1er Cru

Grape variety

Chardonnay

Situation

The 1.15-hectare Les Perrières vineyard is situated to the south of the amphitheatre, on mid-slope just beneath the parcel of Le Clos. Exposed south-south-east, the slope here is steeper than it is on the Clos.

Age of the vines

The vineyard, which was planted in 1972-1974, is about to celebrate its 50th birthday.

Soil

The soil, which is derived from alluvial deposits, consists of a mix of deep silt and clay containing few stones. The subsoil features streaks of limestone and limestone marls, while the top layers, which are moderate in depth, are littered with stones on the surface.

Vinification

Fermentations and ageing take place in casks of which 25% of cask new, 75% of cask from 1 to 3 wines for 10 months. Then the ageing ends in stainless steel tank always with all their lees for another 7 months. Bottling took place on February 2, 2021, with a few rays of sunshine and pancakes.

Tasting

Undoubtedly the largest and most concentrated single vineyard in 2019, this cuvée is both saline and rich.

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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Food pairing

Thai chicken curry, scallops in a mild
curry sauce, veal in a creamy sauce
flavoured with vanilla and raisins,
creamy cow's milk cheeses.

