

CHATEAU LAROZE

SAINT EMILION GRAND CRU CLASSE

VINTAGE FACT SHEET

1999

THE 1999 GROWTH CYCLE

1999... another early year

The last decade has included a particularly high number of early years; compared to preceding periods there have been about twelve instances of flowering and the onset of ripening occurring earlier than average.

1999 was also one of the early vintages at the end of the century. This was apparent as soon as the vegetation began growing again, mainly due to the mild winter. I have rarely seen such vigorous flowering and this was also the case in many other French wine growing regions.

1999 will always be remembered for its violent outbreaks of mildew. The first botrytis symptoms were visible as early as July and disappeared in the dry, sunny weather that came at the beginning of September.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Compared to the average, 1999 was warmer and slightly wetter. Temperatures, sunshine and rainfall were close to those of 1989.

At the mid-point of the colour change of the fruit, sugar content and levels of acidity were close to average values. However the grapes were distinctly bigger... except for Laroze where average grape weight was about 15% lower than average due to the investments made in 1997 into drainage and evacuating underground water from the plots.

In the evening of 5 September a hail storm hit the Saint-Emilion area for 20 minutes, causing damage over an area of five hundred hectares. Laroze was the last estate to be hit on the north-west boundary of the hail corridor; the leaves were shredded along the exposed eastern side of the rows and all the bunches had hailstone impacts, but no fruit was knocked off.

THE HARVEST

After the hail, the fruit had to be picked fast, so that the bunches that had been hit did not have time to spoil. So we hastily started harvesting on 8 September, instead of 15 September, which had been designated as the theoretical harvest date.

Using a bigger team of pickers, the harvest was carried out quickly in five days.

## AGEING

In 1999, we started to rotate barrels, so that half of those used in ageing were new. The micro-oxygenation technique was especially appropriate for this harvest that was picked a little early. It enabled us to eliminate certain vegetal hints and to achieve an optimal expression of the fruit. This vintage needed a lot of work on the wines during ageing to very precisely bring out the velvety silkiness of the tannins in each individual batch.

## 1999 facts and figures

MID-FLOWERING DATES	Merlot: 29 May	Cabernet: 29 May	
DATES WHEN THE COLOUR CHANGE REACHED ITS MID-POINT	Merlot: 1 August	Cabernet: 10 August	
LEAF REMOVAL	Yes		
SELECTIVE REMOVAL OF GREEN FRUIT	Yes		
HARVESTING DATES	Merlot: from 8 to 11 September	Cabernet: 11 and 15 September	
WINE YIELD	40 hl per hectare		
LENGTH OF BARREL AGEING	12 months		
AGEING BARRELS	50% new	50% 1-year-old	
FINING	1st wine: No	2nd wine: No	
FILTRATION	1st wine: Filtration when bottled	2nd wine: earth filtration	
BOTTLING	April 2001		
NUMBER OF BOTTLES	1st wine: 103,000	2nd wine: 23,000	
%age 1st and 2nd WINE	1st wine: 82%	2nd wine: 18%	
BLEND (approximate)	85% Merlots	12% Cab. Francs	3% Cab. Sauv.



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