

CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC

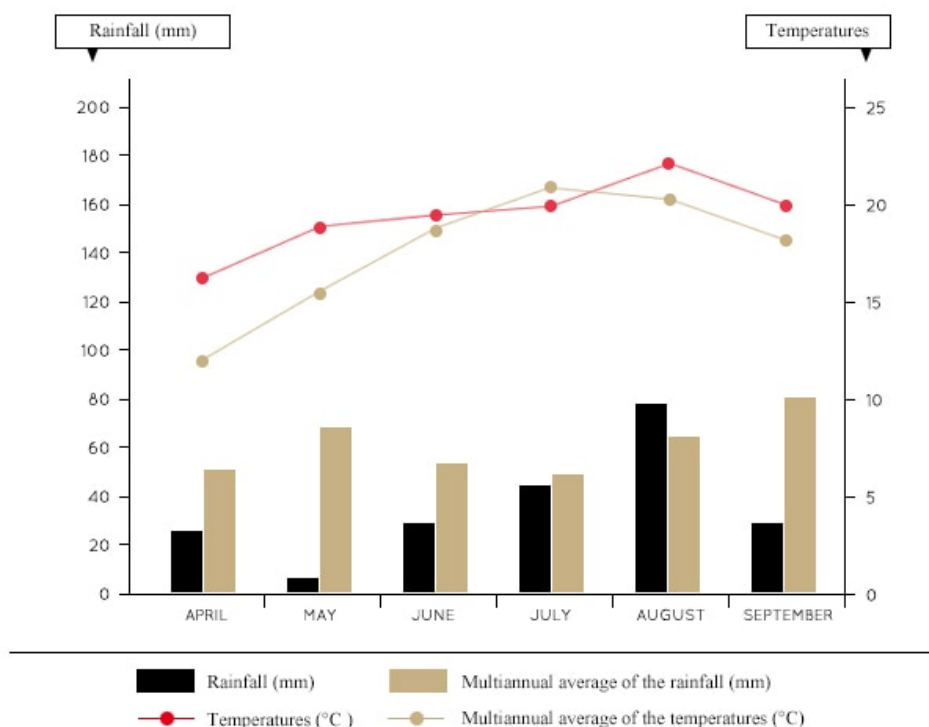
2011

Somewhat overshadowed by its two illustrious predecessors, 2011 Château Cheval Blanc benefited from dry (but not excessively dry) weather throughout the growing season. This was a beautiful, very classic vintage that reflects the estate's winemaking philosophy.

TEMPERATURES AND RAINFALL

The period of vegetative growth, from the 1st of April to the 30th of September, was warm and dry. The average temperature during this time was greater than 19°C. In the previous 15 years, only 2006 and 2003 were warmer. A record of cumulative rainfall during this same period show 2011 to be the driest in 15 years. However, a closer look must be taken to understand the background of the 2011 vintage. The months of April, May, and June were warm and very dry, but July was cool, with average rainfall. August was fairly hot, but there were 78 mm of rain, compared to an average of 64 mm. This vintage was also marked by two sets of very hot two-day periods. On the 26th and 27th of June, the thermometer stood at 37.8°C, accompanied by bright sunshine that caused some scorching of the grapes. The temperature was once again close to 38°C on the 20th and 21st of August, but without as much sunshine. The warm, dry weather in September was perfect for the grapes.

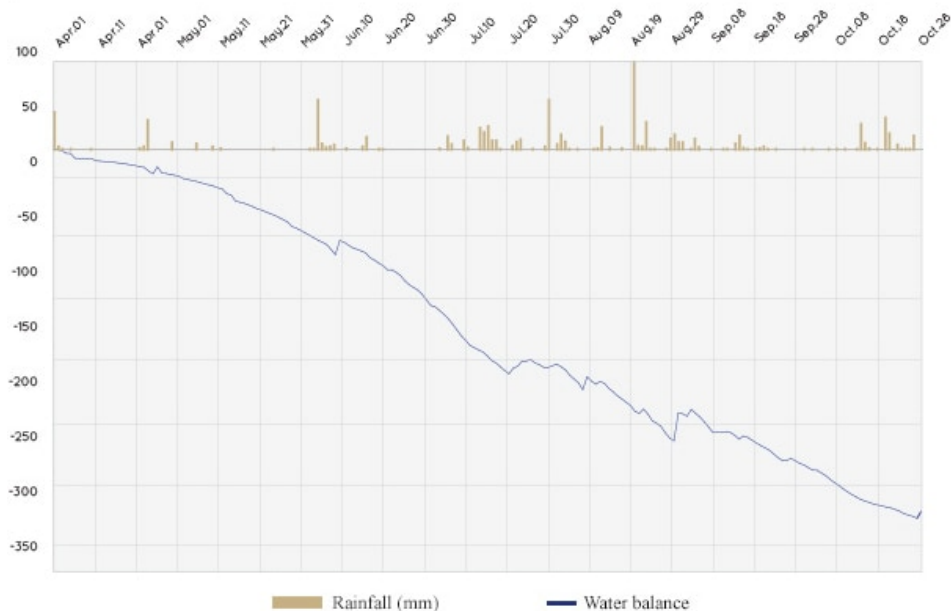
2011 : TEMPERATURES AND RAINFALL COMPARED WITH NORMAL VALUES IN SAINT-EMILION



WATER BALANCE

2011 was marked by the very early appearance of water stress. August was relatively rainy. However, the water balance up to the 31st of August shows that 2011 was the eighth driest year since 1953. Thanks to summer rain, water stress was never excessive, and appeared gradually - which is ideal for great vintages.

2011 WATER BALANCE



GROWING SEASON

Bud break was fairly early: on the 26th of March for Merlot and the 29th of March for Cabernet Franc. Flowering was exceptionally early (12th of May for Merlot and the 17th of that month for Cabernet Franc) due to the very warm weather in April and May. Mid-véraison occurred on the 17rd of July for Merlot and the 24th of July for Cabernet Franc. This was the earliest date at Cheval Blanc in 15 years. The cool weather in July and the rain in August accounted for relatively slow ripening. So, although the harvest was somewhat early, it was still less so than in 1997 or 2003. The fine weather in September brought about good ripening throughout the vineyard and enabled picking to be spread out over three weeks (from the 6th of September to the 28th of September).

Phenological stage	Merlot 2011	Average 1994-2014	Cabernet franc 2011	Average 1994-2014
Bud break	March, 26th	March, 28th	March, 28th	April, 2nd
Flowering	May, 12th	May, 30th	May, 17th	June, 1st
Véraison	July, 17th	August, 2nd	July, 24th	August, 8th

Phenological stage	Merlot 2011	Average 1994-2014	Cabernet franc 2011	Average 1994-2014
Beginning of the Harvest	September, 6th	September, 19th	September, 10th	September, 27th
End of the Harvest	September, 23rd	September, 27th	September, 28th	October, 5th
Number of days between...				
Bud break and Flowering	47 days	63 days	49 days	60 days
Flowering and Véraison	66 days	64 days	68 days	68 days
Véraison and Harvest	51 days	48 days	68 days	50 days

There were very few problems with vine diseases, especially mildew, until July. However, showers in August did induce some mildew at the end of the season as well as a few patches of grey rot, which called for careful sorting during the harvest.

RIPENING AND YIELDS

Berry weight was slightly less than the 2004-2011 average, but varied greatly depending on the soil type in each plot. Water stress arrived very early on gravel and clay soils, which tended to limit the size of the grapes. Furthermore, these had reached their full size by the time the rain arrived in August. However, the vines had not yet undergone water stress on sandy soil by August, and the grapes there continued to ripen until early September, which explains why they were much larger on sandy and clay soils.

The large number of buds at the beginning of the growing season called for bunch thinning in most plots. Final yields were slightly above the ten-year average.

2011 yields (hl/ha)		Average from 1996 to 2014
Merlot	44.6	38.9
Cabernet Franc	36.3	34.2

Sugar levels at harvest time were lower than the 2004-2011 average for Merlot. In fact, an exceedingly rare situation occurred: the Cabernet Franc grapes were sweeter than Merlot. The former, later-ripening variety took full advantage of the warm, dry weather in September. The pH was relatively low for Merlot, but higher for Cabernet Franc. Malic acid content was low for both varieties, a sign of good ripeness. Grapes from gravel and clay soils had more phenolic compounds than the 2004-2011 average, which is only logical seeing as they weighed less. The berries on sandy soil were close to average, but lower than in 2010.

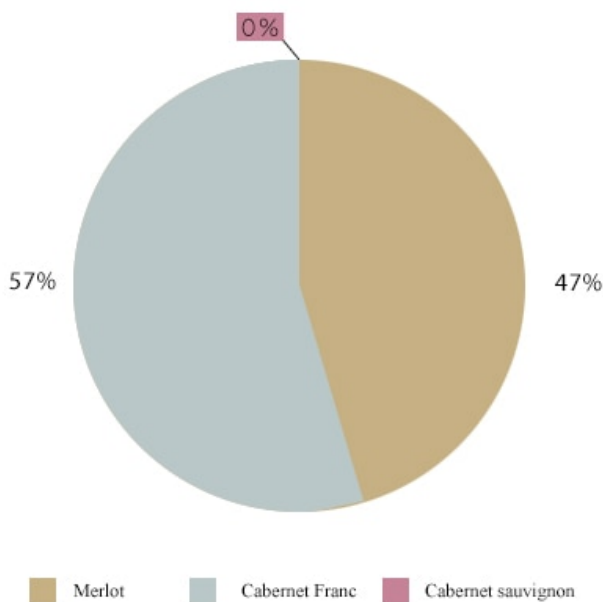
The grapes were particularly low in nitrogen. Only 2008 had less. The mineralisation of organic matter providing mineral nitrogen to the vine was very slow in spring because of the dry weather. This low level of nitrogen promoted concentration, especially with regard to phenolic compounds, and is a reflection of the very favourable weather in 2011.

CELLAR WORK

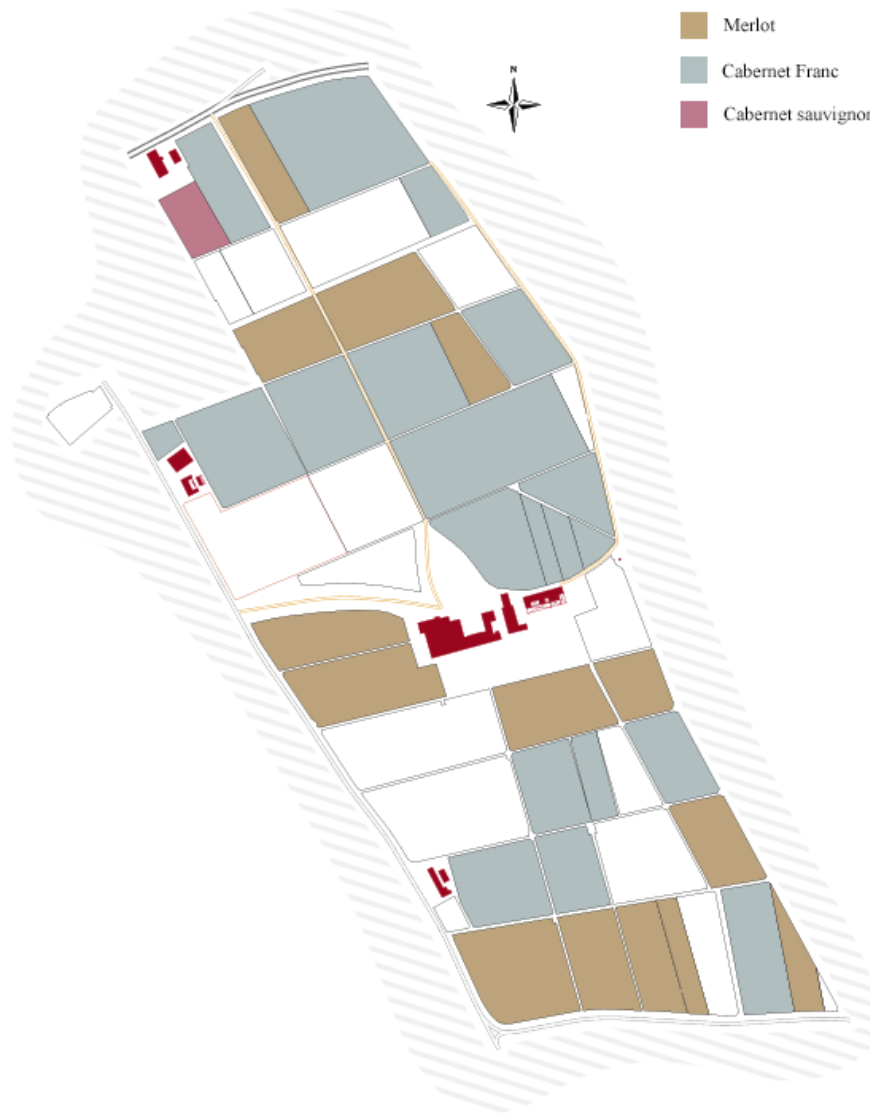
Four percent of 2011 Cheval Blanc was bled from fermentation vats. There was no press wine and no chaptalisation. The wine was entirely aged in new oak barrels for 15 months. Traditional fining with egg white was done in order to settle particles in suspension in barrel. Two egg whites were used per barrel. These were later eliminated by filtration.

BLENDING

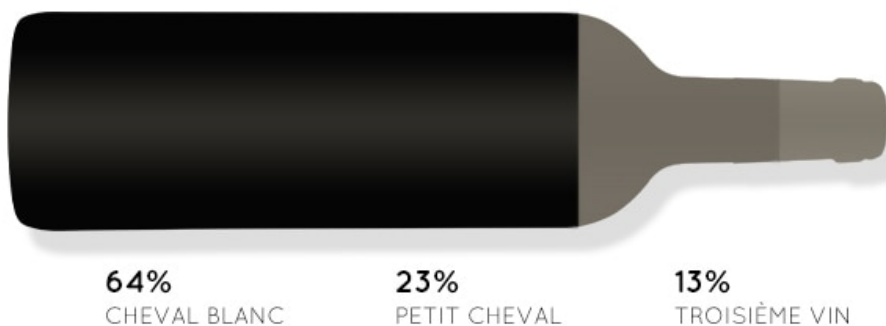
2011 CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC BLENDING



PLOTS COMPOSING 2011 CHEVAL BLANC



2011 PROPORTION OF THE DIFFERENT WINES, CHEVAL BLANC, PETIT CHEVAL & THIRD WINE



ALL 2011 CHATEAU CHEVAL BLANC BOTTLE SIZES



1 151	87 369	2 198	271	2	143	9	10	7	9
Demi-Bouteilles	Bouteilles	Magnums	Doubles-Magnums	Jéroboams	Impériales	Salmanazar	Balthazar	Nabucho donosors	Melchior

Degree of alcohol	14
Total acidity (g H ² SO ₄ /L)	2.95
Volatile acidity (g H ² SO ₄ /L)	0.7
pH	3.77
Total SO ₂ (mg/L)	126
Reducing sugar content (g/L)	1.6
IPT (DO280)	70