

# CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC

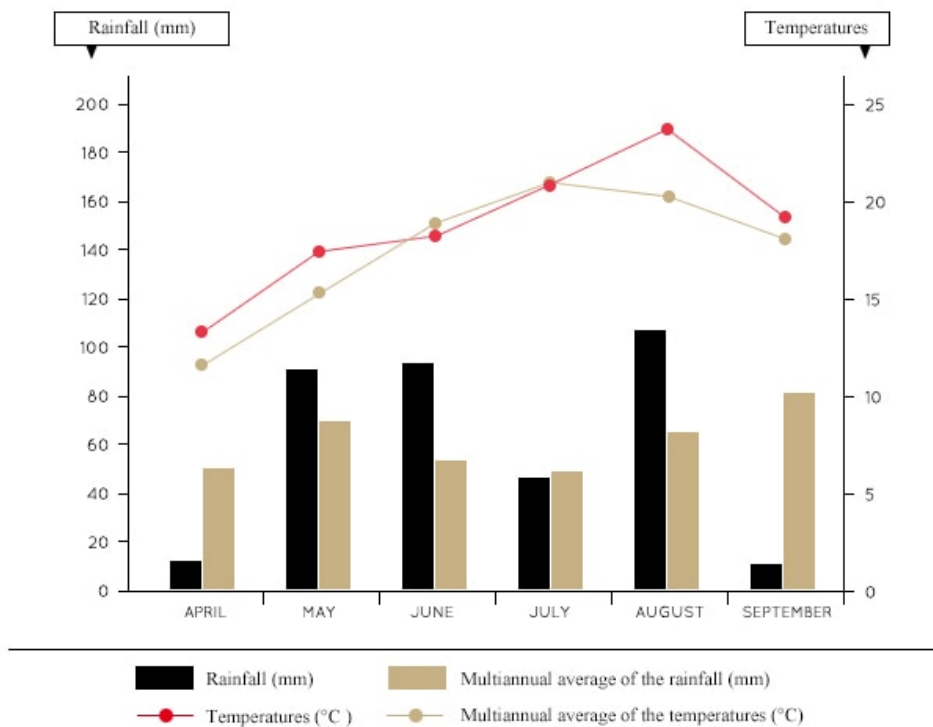
# 1997

1997 was a difficult vintage hampered by a certain dilution calling for careful sorting of grapes. The wine is nevertheless expressive and without herbaceous aromas. It is easy to drink and has aged fairly quickly.

## TEMPERATURES AND RAINFALL

Après After very cold weather the first ten days of January, with temperatures as low as  $-9^{\circ}\text{C}$ , late winter and early spring were mild and dry. May was warm and fairly wet. The showers continued into June, accompanied by unseasonably cool temperatures. The rain gradually let up in July, but started up again in August (over 100 mm). It was exceptionally hot in August, along with high humidity. September was beautiful and warm, with very strong insolation. Only 11 mm. of rain fell all month.

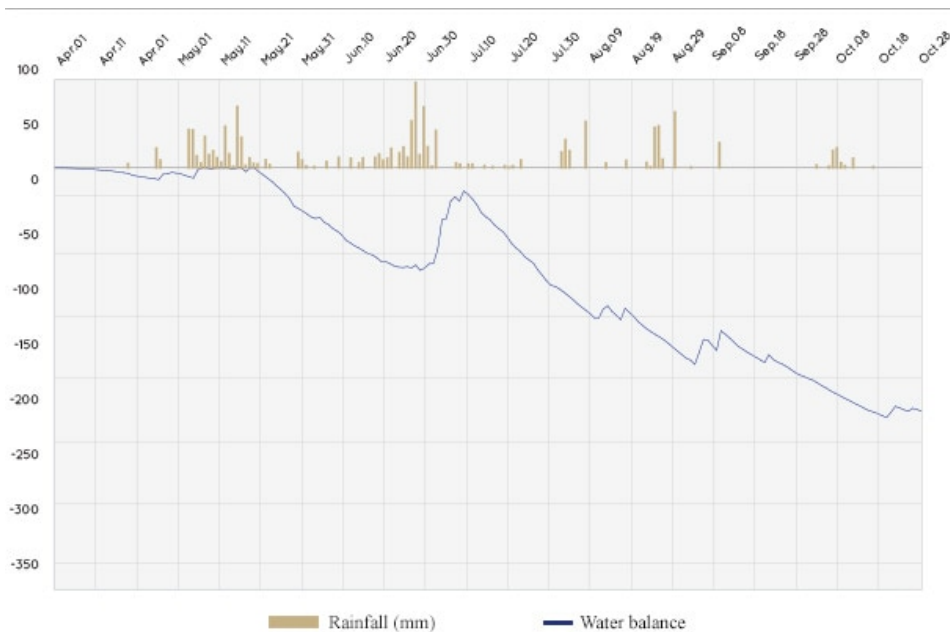
1997 : TEMPERATURES AND RAINFALL COMPARED WITH NORMAL VALUES IN SAINT-EMILION



## WATER BALANCE

In order to grow well, the vine needs for water stress to set in slowly so the grapes to ripen well and become concentrated. Due to the significant precipitation in May, June, and August, there was no significant water stress in 1997. This did, however, appear in late September, although part of the crop had already been picked by then.

### 1997 WATER BALANCE



## GROWING SEASON

Bud break was exceptionally early: on the 15th of March for Merlot and the 17th of March for Cabernet Franc. Flowering started in the first few days of May and was spread out over a long period due to the unfavourable weather. Mid-flowering was observed on the 19th of May for Merlot and the 22nd of that month for Cabernet Franc. This was three weeks ahead of the usual date. The fact that flowering was very spread out was later reflected in uneven véraison and ripening. Mid-véraison occurred on the 23rd of July for Merlot and the 29th of July for Cabernet Franc.

The heavy rainfall in August led to prolonged vegetative growth, consequently delaying ripening. The uneven degree of maturity called for a very long harvest (21 days at Cheval Blanc). Faithful to the château style and in order to put forward its intrinsic qualities, i.e. fresh fruit and elegant aromatics, Cheval Blanc does not seek overripe grapes.

A few patches of grey rot showed up in August because of the strong humidity. Fortunately, though, these did not spread because of the return of dry weather.

Phenological stage	Merlot 1997	Average 1994-2014	Cabernet franc 1997	Average 1994-2014
Bud break	March, 15th	March, 28th	March, 17th	April, 2nd
Flowering	May, 19th	May, 30th	May, 22nd	June, 1st
Véraison	July, 23rd	August, 2nd	July, 28th	August, 8th
Begging of the Harvest	September, 3rd	September, 19th	September, 15th	September, 27th
End of the Harvest	September, 11th	September, 27th	September, 23th	October, 5th
Number of days between ...				
Bud break and Flowering	66 days	63 days	67 days	60 days
Flowering and Véraison	66 days	64 days	68 days	68 days
Véraison and Harvest	43 days	48 days	50 days	50 days

## RIPENING AND YIELDS

1997 was a hot, wet year. The berries were especially weighty due to the lack of water stress during most of the growth cycle. Ripening was slow because of competition from shoots that grew right up until the beginning of the harvest. Therefore, sugar levels and the concentration of phenolic compounds were low, accompanied by higher-than-average acidity. In fact, the grapes were more affected by a certain dilution than a lack of maturity, as proved by the absence of herbaceous aromas.

It was therefore important in 1997 to control yields, which amounted to 38.8 hectolitres per hectare at Cheval Blanc. Sorting was severe since only 44% of the crop ended up in the grand vin.

1997 yields (hl/ha)		Average from 1996 to 2014
Merlot	38.0	38.9
Cabernet franc	37.4	34.2

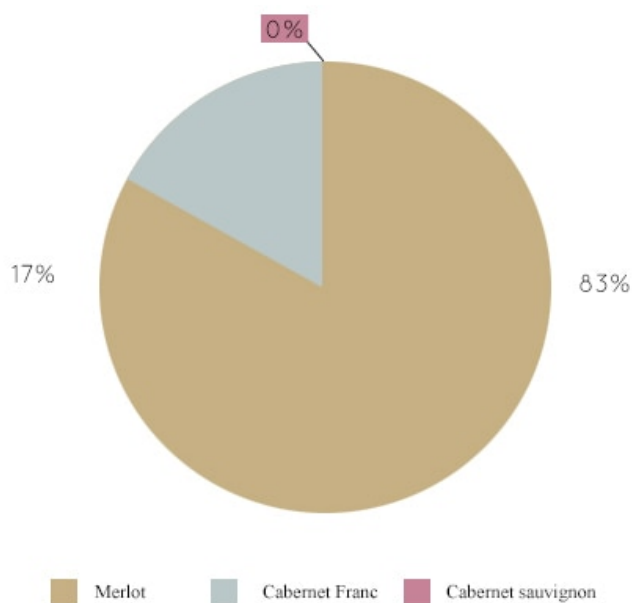
## CELLAR WORK

Consisting of 12% press wine, 1997 Cheval Blanc was aged in 100% new oak barrels.

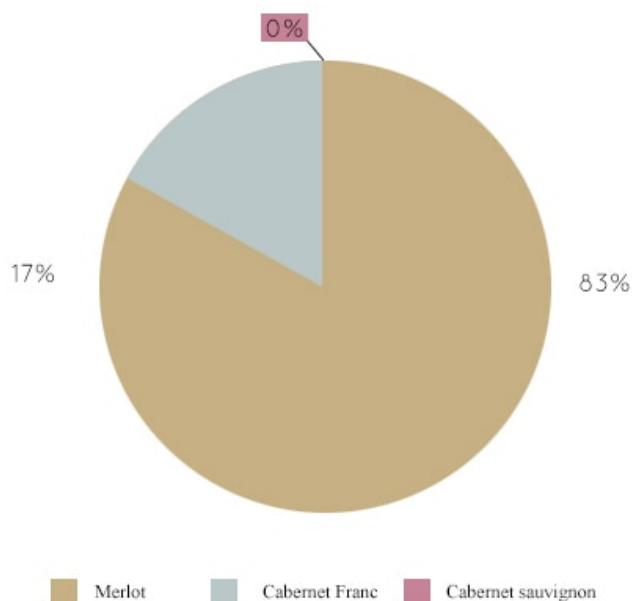
## BLENDING

The proportion of Merlot was exceptionally high (83%) in Cheval Blanc, whereas Petit Cheval had a correspondingly high percentage of Cabernet Franc (72%).

### 1997 CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC BLENDING

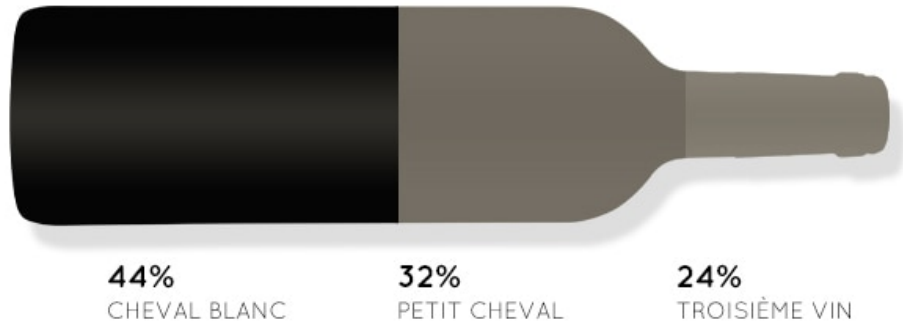


### PLOTS COMPOSING 1997 CHEVAL BLANC

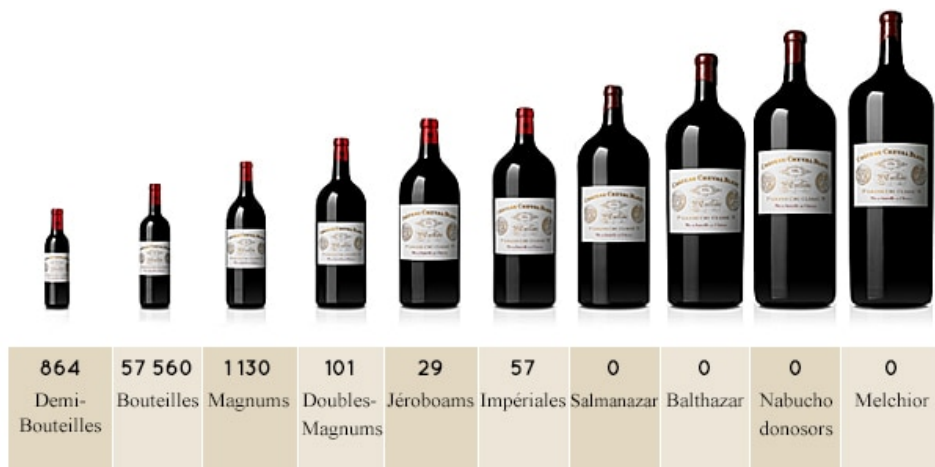


1996 PROPORTION OF THE DIFFERENT WINES, CHEVAL BLANC,

## PETIT CHEVAL & THIRD WINE



## ALL 1997 CHATEAU CHEVAL BLANC BOTTLE SIZES



Degree of alcohol	12.5
Total acidity (g H <sup>2</sup> SO <sub>4</sub> /L)	3.36
Volatile acidity (g H <sup>2</sup> SO <sub>4</sub> /L)	0.51
pH	3.63
Total SO <sub>2</sub> (mg/L)	108
educing sugar content (g/L)	1.3
IPT (DO280)	-