

# 2017

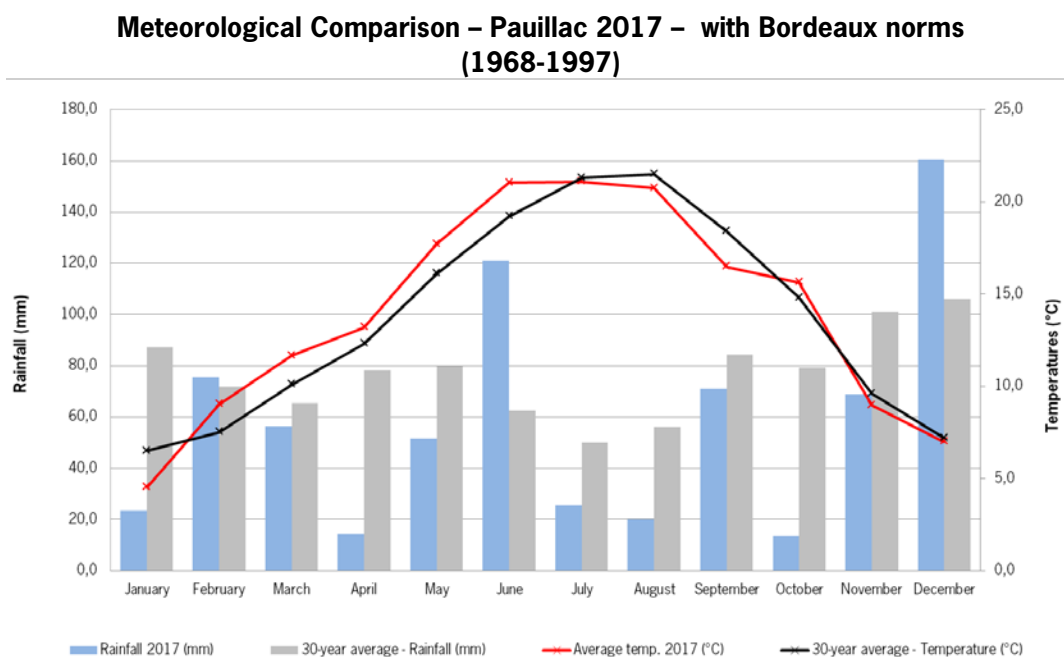
## VINTAGE CONDITIONS

### *The Magnificent Seven*

The 2017 vintage began with a very dry winter, with rainfall readings of just 187 mm between November and February (30-year average of 364 mm). A water deficit, of varying severity depending on the terroir, gradually made itself felt. Temperatures were also very mixed, with a very cool January and a rather mild February (Figure 1).

These winter conditions affected bud break, which began on around 20 March for the earliest Merlots. The beginning of spring was relatively mild, with normal rainfall, leading us to expect an early vintage. In fact, by mid-April we could see that the phenological stages were on average ten days ahead of 2016, similar to the vintage of 2014.

Figure 1



Vegetative growth at the beginning of the season was remarkable, with elongations of almost 10 cm in one week. The leaf canopy became more abundant, but then growth slowed as the temperatures gradually fell. The last two weeks of April were marked by two episodes of heavy morning frost (20 to 21 April and 27 to 29 April). The vineyard had not seen frost like it since 1991. The vines bordering the Gironde estuary were spared because it serves as a thermal regulator. No red grapes were affected at Château Lynch-Bages. And only two plots of Sauvignon Blanc, located on the eastern terroirs further away from the river, suffered partial damage.

The mild, rainy weather in May spurred the healthy vegetative development of the vines not damaged by frost, which sometimes made manual work in the vineyard, such as trellising for example, difficult. The first

flowers appeared ten days earlier than the average dates recorded over the past twenty years (on 17 May for the Merlot, and on 25 May for the Cabernet Sauvignon (Figure 2)), confirming that the vintage would be early. Flowering and fruit set occurred in very favourable conditions, effectively limiting coulure and millerandage.

Figure 2

**Dates of harvesting and crop development in the vineyard at Château Lynch-Bages**

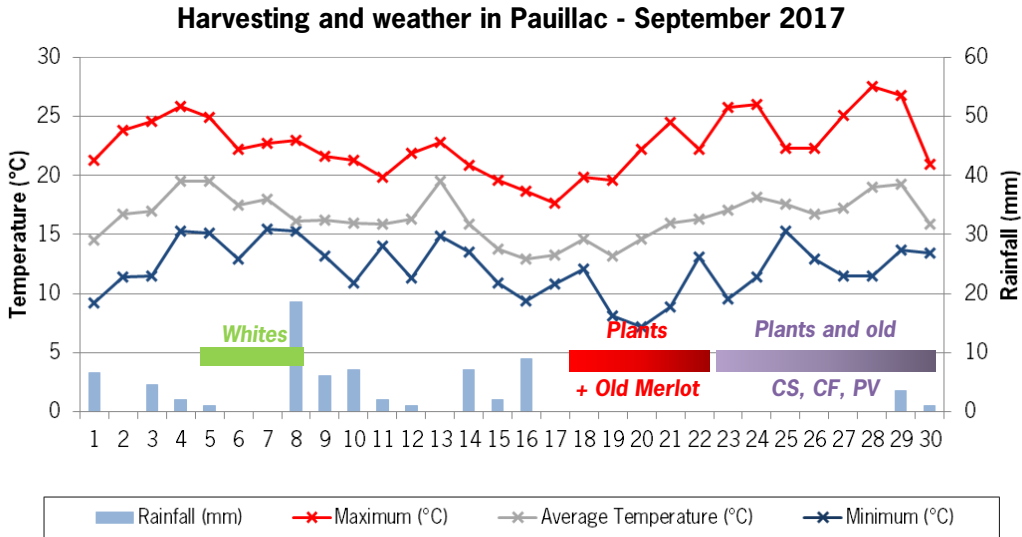
VINTAGE	Varieties	Budburst began (March)	A Mid-flowering (June)	Difference A to B	B Mid-veraison (August)	Fin véraison	Difference B to C	C Start of Harvest (LYNCHBAGES)	Difference A to C	Start of Veraison	End of Harvest
LYNCHBAGES 2009	M	29-Mar	5-Jun	63	5-Aug	17-Aug	48	23-Sep	111		29-Sep
	CF	3-Apr	6-Jun ← days →		9-Aug ← days →			5-Oct	days	16-Jul	
	CS	7-Apr	9-Jun	66	12-Aug	24-Aug	55	7-Oct	121		12-Oct
LYNCHBAGES 2010	M	6-Apr	7-Jun	62	7-Aug	18-Aug	50	27-Sep	112		30-Sep
	CF	8-Apr	9-Jun ← days →		11-Aug ← days →			6-Oct	days	19-Jul	
	CS	15-Apr	11-Jun	65	14-Aug	25-Aug	55	9-Oct	120		14-Oct
LYNCHBAGES 2011	M	28-Mar	12-May	62	25-Jul	7-Aug	48	13-Sep	110		14-Sep
	CF	2-Apr	14-May ← days →		28-Jul ← days →			20-Sep	days	30-Jun	
	CS	6-Apr	18-May	65	1-Aug	13-Aug	51	22-Sep	116		28-Sep
LYNCHBAGES 2012	M	30-Mar	1-Jun	73	14-Aug	24-Aug	50	4-Oct	123		5-Oct
	CF	1-Apr	2-Jun ← days →		16-Aug ← days →			11-Oct	days	23-Jul	12-Oct
	CS	4-Apr	4-Jun	76	20-Aug	30-Aug	53	13-Oct	129		18-Oct
LYNCHBAGES 2013	M	8-Apr	13-Jun	66	19-Aug	29-Aug	42	1-Oct	108		4-Oct
	CF	10-Apr	17-Jun ← days →		21-Aug ← days →			7-Oct	days	3-Aug	8-Oct
	CS	18-Apr	19-Jun	68	27-Aug	5-Sep	38	5-Oct	106		13-Oct
LYNCHBAGES 2014	M	20-Mar	30-May	68	8-Aug	20-Aug	46	24-Sep	114		30-Sep
	CF	27-Mar	5-Jun ← days →		12-Aug ← days →			30-Sep	days	15-Jul	2-Oct
	CS	31-Mar	10-Jun	64	14-Aug	27-Aug	52	6-Oct	116		11-Oct
LYNCHBAGES 2015	M	6-Apr	1-Jun	62	3-Aug	15-Aug	50	23-Sep	112		24-Sep
	CF	10-Apr	3-Jun ← days →		8-Aug ← days →			1-Oct	days	18-Jul	2-Oct
	CS	15-Apr	8-Jun	62	10-Aug	23-Aug	52	2-Oct	114		8-Oct
LYNCHBAGES 2016	M	31-Mar	4-Jun	64	8-Aug	19-Aug	50	28-Sep	114		3-Oct
	CF	2-Apr	6-Jun ← days →		13-Aug ← days →			4-Oct	days	21-Jul	5-Oct
	CS	4-Apr	10-Jun	66	16-Aug	25-Aug	49	5-Oct	115		12-Oct
LYNCHBAGES 2017	M	27-Mar	25-May	62	27-Jul	11-Aug	51	18-Sep	113		21-Sep
	CF	31-Mar	27-May ← days →		4-Aug ← days →			22-Sep	days	11-Jul	22-Sep
	CS	2-Apr	31-May	66	6-Aug	18-Aug	49	25-Sep	115		5-Oct
22-year average (1995-2017)	M	25-Mar	3-Jun	66	8-Aug		47	24-Sep	113		27-Sep
	CF	29-Mar	5-Jun ← days →		12-Aug ← days →			1-Oct	days	19-Jul	29-Sep
	CS	2-Apr	8-Jun	67	15-Aug		49	3-Oct	116		9-Oct

After a rainy spring, early summer was marked by high temperatures with a few peaks exceeding 35 °C. Water stress became apparent, notably on the gravelly soils, but the phenomenon was attenuated with the return of rain at the end of June.

The summer of 2017 was particularly dry (as in 2000, 2005 and even 2012), relatively sunny but quite cool despite sporadic peaks in temperature. These climatic conditions confirmed that the vintage would continue its early development through to harvest. In fact, the very first veraison was observed from 6 July. After

quite a slow start, veraison then became more widespread between 15 and 20 July. It occurred relatively homogeneously throughout the vineyard. Ripening began gradually at the end of August and was of a very high quality (with high berry sugar concentration). But the cool, wet weather in early September slowed the process down on occasion, causing an imbalance between technological maturity and phenolic maturity.

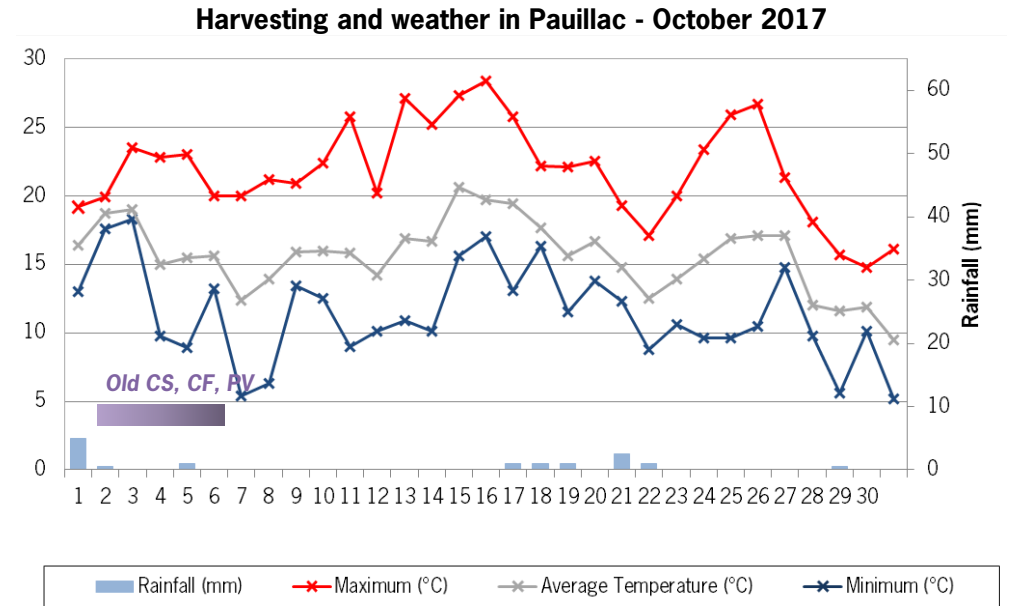
Figure 3



Harvesting of white grapes began on 5 September with a first sorting of Muscadelle, in other words eight days earlier than in 2016. It ended on 8 September with the 2<sup>nd</sup> sorting of Sémillon, just before a period of rainfall.

As for the reds, the summer conditions observed from mid-September onwards encouraged ripening and berry concentration, and were particularly beneficial for the Cabernet.

Figure 4



### **The 2017 vintage and its characteristics:**

- Because they are located near the estuary, the grapes were protected from the frost in April and produced satisfactory yields.
- It was clear from the beginning of the season that the vine's vegetative cycle was early. This head start was maintained throughout the vegetative period, since we started harvesting the first grapes mid-September at Haut-Batailley and at Ormes de Pez, and on 18 September at Lynch-Bages. The wonderful maturity of all our grape varieties has produced tannins of an excellent quality, especially as regards Cabernet Sauvignon.
- Ranging between 12.5 and 13.5% vol., alcoholic strength by volume is moderate.
- The wines display a beautiful colour with a good extractable anthocyanin content, achieved thanks to the low temperature variations observed over the summer.
- The cool ripening conditions and moderate water constraints have given the wine a great aromatic complexity and freshness.

