



MAISON FONDÉE EN 1776

LOUIS ROEDERER  
CHAMPAGNE

## THE 247<sup>th</sup> HARVEST

29<sup>th</sup> August to 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022

*Under the sun!*





*It is this climatic variability that is often responsible for the unique character of each of our vintages!*

JEAN-BAPTISTE LÉCAILLON, CELLAR MASTER

The 247th vintage at Louis Roederer is the exact opposite of 2021: whereas 2021 had an "oceanic" influence, i.e., wet and rainy, here we have 2022 with a strong "continental" influence, i.e., particularly sunny and generally dry!

One of the special features of the Champagne region, in addition to its northern geographical position and its chalk soils, is that it is geographically located at the heart of the climatic junction between the ocean and the continent.

So, 2022 was... *"particularly sunny"*... because we recorded the sunniest July since 1959 and no less than 5 temperature peaks between spring and summer...

and... *"generally dry"*... because, although people will certainly remember the lack of water, we also had some welcome thunderstorms in June, bringing us some rare yet precious, and sometimes unexpected, oceanic rain. This resulted in a June that was wetter than usual, with over 100 mm of rain in some places, but ideally distributed to allow the vines to continue their vegetative growth unimpeded.

Added to this was the *"gift"* of the *rainy spells* that arrived in mid-August, which came at just the right time to prevent the vines from suffering from a lack of water and to pump the berries full of juice.



*Some people are already making comparisons with 1976 and 1959...*

Two other magnificently sunny vintages, although it appears that the region's soils and rivers suffered less in 2022.

Moreover, the vines stayed particularly green throughout the season, showing that the hydric stress remained moderate and with little impact on the vines.

# E

PHEMERIS  
OF A "SUNNY" VINTAGE

## *Winter*

The winter of 2021/22 followed a classic pattern with little rain. The excess rainfall of the previous campaign had automatically replenished the water tables. The winter work in the vineyards (spreading compost, lowering the wires, pruning, tying up, crushing the vine shoots, etc.) all went off smoothly. The winegrowers were able to catch their breath after what had been a very trying campaign in 2021.

The distinctive feature of winter 2021/22 is the widespread use of green manure sowing in the vineyards with more than 100 hectares sown. Each winter, these areas are covered with a mixture of clovers, vetch, radish, oats and mustard... up until March/April, i.e., for more than half of the year. This, in addition to the many kilometres of hedgerows planted (and more to come!) in which we have installed nesting boxes for chickadees and bats, creates greater biodiversity and is all part of our "Green Revolution", coupled with organic growing certification, aimed at boosting the biodiversity in our ecosystems and further regenerating our priceless old winegrowing soils!





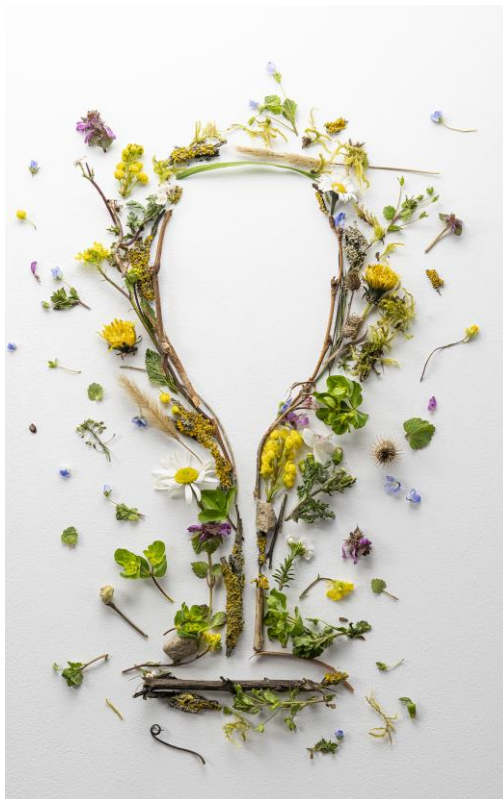
# Spring

APRIL – MAY

Spring got off to a cool start. On the weekend of 2nd-3rd April, some polar air masses descended on the Champagne region, causing "black frosts", which were fortunately localised. The following week, we had some "white frosts", intensified locally by the humidity caused by the heavy rainfall a few days previously. Our "Rivière vineyard", the Vallée de l'Ardre and the Vitryat, concentrated these phenomena and, after a few days of warming up, the frost damage was estimated to be 6% of the vineyards, where the buds had died.

This was the moment chosen by our vines to emerge from their winter rest: bud break (opening of the buds) was observed on 11th April for the Chardonnay, followed by the Pinot noir on 16th April and lastly the Meunier on 19th April. These dates are 4 days later than the ten-year average.

Thanks to the arrival of warm, dry weather in the second half of April, and in particular to the still-cool night-time temperatures, the vegetation was able to grow steadily and evenly.



At the start of May, a few spells of light rain intermittently fed the soil without being conducive to the development of mildew. The vine accelerated its cycle, helped by the heat, and acquired up to 3 leaves per week during the disbudding period. Growth was rapid and our vineyard teams had to work hard to keep up!



# Spring

JUNE

These magnificent and very "continental" spring conditions stimulated the growth of the vines, which flowered in perfect weather on 30th May for the Chardonnay, on 2nd June for the Pinot noir and on 7th June for the Meunier, i.e., 10 days earlier than the ten-year average.

We therefore had the phenomenon of very fast vegetative growth in the first part of the cycle, between budburst and flowering, with 48 days this year compared to the historical average of over 60 days! As a yardstick, this brings us close to the record of 46 days in 2018.

A hot and stormy June brought welcome rainfall, almost 100 mm, which, from the Whitsun weekend onwards, removed any concerns about potential drought. The timely rainfall was not the only good news: it also had the good grace of not encouraging the development of mildew, which remained thankfully absent. The end of flowering was a little spread out in some areas, but the sweltering heat of mid-June allowed the grapes to plump out very quickly.

# Summer

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## END OF JUNE

From 22nd June, the bunches were already hanging heavy due to the swelling of the grapes. We were getting near the point of cluster closure and the pace had slowed down a little: the Pinot noir seemed to be better able to withstand the high temperatures and lack of water and took full advantage of these conditions; the Chardonnay, on the other hand, seemed to be struggling more and was slowing down.

This year there was no sign of downy mildew and grape berry moths were few and far between. Only powdery mildew and late botrytis might be a problem should there be a wet summer... we were getting ourselves prepared for this!

## JULY

But July stayed hot and dry, the driest, in fact, since 1959 according to Météo France. The 14th July (Bastille Day), which had brought torrential rains in 2021 (and led to significant crop losses), gave us another gift: radiant sunshine and sweltering temperatures that intensified as the month went on!

We were still worried about scalding or "sunburn" on the bunches because the foliage was not as thick as usual due to the low rainfall so we sprayed the vines with some kaolin-based sun protection. In the end, there was very little scalding. It seems that the rainfall in June and on 20th July was effective in reducing any scalding and water stress.



## Summer

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END OF JULY – AUGUST – SEPTEMBER

The situation eased at the end of July. We were back to summer temperatures of around 30°C and the nights became cooler. We started to observe the veraison (change in the grapes' colour) at the end of July but its pace was rather slow... it was as if the vines had gone into "slow motion". The year was perfect for trying to push the ripeness levels a bit further and therefore produce some rosé and Côteaux Champenois...

This was the moment we decided to carry out some "green harvesting" in the few plots dedicated to these wines. This is a very rare operation because it is only carried out in "generous" years and allows us to regulate the grape load to attain an extra degree of ripeness with concentrated juices and high-quality tannins.

The storms on 3rd and 15th August were again beneficial and allowed the vines to continue their cycle, and the grapes to ripen, in perfect conditions. Of our three vineyards, "La Côte", "La Rivière" and "La Montagne", it was the latter, the Montagne de Reims, which experienced the driest conditions in 2022.

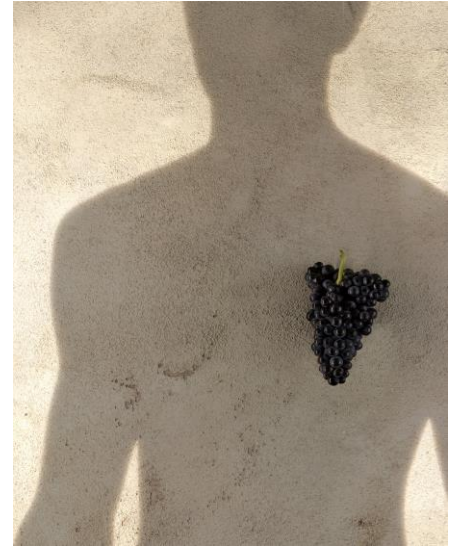


# Ripening

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From Monday 8th August, we started monitoring the ripening process. This year, the "ripeness monitoring" team was made up of 11 people. Every day, they took samples and analysed the grapes from between 30 and 60 plots in a very specific process: First of all, they had to go to the plots early in the morning and take homogeneous and representative samples; return to Reims at the end of the morning to observe the veraison, the visual appearance and health of each cluster; weigh them to check the evolution of the weight, and then press them to analyse the juices and measure the sugar and various acids which would allow us to determine the ripening dynamics; and lastly to carefully report everything in our monitoring system to determine the behaviour of each plot. These samples indicate the trend and determine the ripening "window"... but it is the tasting, and only the tasting, that will be our guide when it comes to deciding the exact date of the harvest.

The first samples showed a rather slow development of the grapes, which was confirmed by a veraison (grape berry colouring) that was very late in relation to the accumulation of sugar. With this heat, the sugar/acid cycle was out of sync with the aromatic maturity: the sugars had increased faster than the aromas, which were slow to lose their vegetal notes. We should always remember that it is the taste and the dry extract that will stand the test of time and reveal our champagnes, not the sugar or the acidity!



# Ripening

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The ripening was therefore rather slow this year and this slowdown was even more pronounced after the rain on 15th to 18th August which filled the clusters with precious juice. We therefore had to be patient, trust Nature, adapt and wait for the moment when the final concentration phenomena would take place.

Another criterion, which I consider to be extremely important, is the number of days between full flowering and the start of the harvest: I truly believe that we must allow "time" to shape the taste of the grapes! The history of the Champagne region shows that when the Pinot noirs are at less than 90 days, and a few days longer for the Chardonnays, we run the risk of finding unwanted "vegetal" characteristics in the wines. This is also why we taste the grapes a lot in the final phase of ripening: it is the only way to make sure that the vegetal flavours have completely disappeared from the skins and pips.



In 2022, once again, we had to push the sugar levels while waiting for the vegetal elements to disappear... this is becoming a constant within the context of climate change. We therefore started harvesting on 29th August in the "South" Pinot noirs of "la Rivière", and on 2nd September in the "North East" Pinot noirs of "la Montagne", i.e., about 90 days after full flowering. We started harvesting the Chardonnays from our "La Côte" vineyards on 31st August, 93 days after full flowering.

*That was  
when... and only  
when... we had the  
most intense flavours!*

# The 2022 Vintage

*An extraordinary year in the vineyards...  
gifting us what we refer to as a  
winemaker's vintage!*



Our final yield was 12,206 kg/ha, which is remarkable considering our commitment to working organically, the high rate of renewal of our vineyards and, above all, the quantity of rosé champagne and Côteaux Champenois we plan to produce.

This gift of Nature, this unprecedented ripeness, obliges us to be even more ambitious... We must continue the great work and carry out "haute couture" vinification to draw out all the superlatives from this extraordinary vintage. 2022 will therefore be more of a... winemaker's vintage.

2022 will therefore be more of a... winemaker's vintage!



I have always believed that a "grand vin" is first and foremost a powerful, collective and human adventure, a blend of tradition, know-how, experience, passion and dedication to our region. We therefore need to have a close-knit and efficient team if we are to succeed in producing a large number of high-quality wines.

I believe that is also where our success and our uniqueness within the world of Champagne lies. So, a big thank you to each and every one of you, whatever your role in the team, this success is also thanks to you!

*So...crack open the CHAMPAGNE!*

JEAN-BAPTISTE LÉCAILLON, CELLAR MASTER



MAISON FONDÉE EN 1776

**LOUIS ROEDERER**

C H A M P A G N E

Pour vivre l'expérience du voyage au cœur des vendanges 2022 chez Champagne Louis Roederer, rejoignez-nous sur le compte Twitter de la Maison :  
[@LouisRoederer\\_](https://twitter.com/LouisRoederer_)

CRÉDITS PHOTO

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