

R I E U S S E C

SAUTERNES

CHÂTEAU RIEUSSEC 2020

■ VINEYARD ATTRIBUTES

Appellation : AOC Sauternes, Bordeaux, France

The Sauternes appellation stretches along the left bank of the Garonne, about 50km South of Bordeaux. The natural humidity arising from the Ciron river provides the ideal conditions for the development of Botrytis Cinerea, also known as noble rot.

Terroir : Château Rieussec sits on the border of Fargues and Sauternes, bordered by Château d'Yquem to the West. Rieussec is one of the largest properties in Sauternes and Barsac, covering 85 hectares of gravel sitting on sandy-clay soils.

■ VINTAGE SUMMARY

The autumn-winter of 2019-2020 was one of the warmest for the last ten years in Bordeaux, resulting in an early bud break around 20 March. There was frequent rain from April to June, obliging us to take measures against a significant threat of downy mildew. The vines stayed ahead of their usual growth cycle, flowering around 19 May. There was then a fairly abrupt transition with 55 days without rain over the summer months. Véraison (colour change) started around 25 July. We detected quite severe water stress in some parts of the superb gravel terraces. The soil on the hillsides and at the base of the slopes, and the limestone marl soil fared much better in the hot, dry weather. For the sweet wines, it was quite a challenge to find botrytized bunches. The sun-drenched grapes did not offer ideal conditions for botrytis and, after waiting until 21 October, it was our Sémillon from the plots around the château that offered the best quality this year and which formed the heart of Château Rieussec.

■ WINE MAKING SCHEME

The grapes were harvested by hand in small crates and refrigerated before pressing to reduce oxidation. Pressing is gentle so as to preserve the grapes' aromatic freshness. After a resting phase, the Sémillon must is transferred to new oak barrels for alcoholic fermentation, while the Sauvignon must is generally left in temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks for fermentation. At the end of the fermentation process, the wine in barrels is aged on the lees for six months with regular stirring. After racking, the Sauvignon is aged in vats to preserve its aromatic qualities.

■ TASTING NOTES

Fresh, expressive nose. The initial nose reveals fruity notes of quince jelly and tangerine zest. Secondary aromas develop of everlasting flowers, reminding us of the heat during the vintage. Oaky, lightly roasted notes are well integrated and remain in the background.

On the palate, the attack brings the freshness of candied citrus fruit. The mid-palate is full and generous with notes of patisserie reminiscent of rhubarb tart. The wine's mineral character comes through with some scents of fresh peat. The finish offers more oaky, lightly roasted notes, evoking a well-balanced brown butter.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Sémillon 92%, Sauvignon blanc 8%

Alcohol content : 13.5 % vol.

pH : 3.75

Total acidity : 3.30 g/l

Residual Sugar : 124 g/l

