



CARMES DE RIEUSSEC 2019

■ VINEYARD ATTRIBUTES

Appellation : AOC Sauternes, Bordeaux, France

The Sauternes appellation stretches on 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. Château Rieussec is one of the largest properties in Sauternes and Barsac, covering 93 hectares, made up of gravel on sandy-clay soil.

■ VINTAGE SUMMARY

The vintage began well with a mild, dry winter. The fine weather continued into early spring, resulting in an early start to the growth cycle. Day and night-time temperatures then cooled down and, between March and May, there were six occasions when we held our breath fearing a frost.

During this period, the colder and above all drier-than-usual weather slowed down the vines' growth. After a relatively cold, rainy start, June suddenly changed, bringing an early summer heat wave the likes of which had not been seen since 2003. Fortunately, it was short-lived and the vines, which were catching up in terms of growth, seemed better equipped than in previous years to cope with the heat. Some miraculous rain arrived on 26 July, at just the right moment to trigger véraison (colour change).

This year, as in 2017, the rain in September was very helpful for the botrytis. But the harvests turned out to be more complex, with sour rot threatening the purity of the grapes. We had to sort through the fruit like gold diggers to remove the sour grapes, only keeping the nicely botrytized ones. A window of opportunity arrived on 8 October to pick perfectly balanced grapes with 20% potential alcohol for the Grand Vin, including some superb Muscadelle!

■ WINE MAKING SCHEME

The grapes are pressed as soon as they arrive at the winery. After settling, the musts are transferred to new barrels for fermentation. Grapes from each plot are pressed and fermented separately. At the end of fermentation, the wines are kept on the lees and stirred regularly until mid-December. After a resting period, the wines are racked and blended before being returned to the barrels to age for about 12 months.

■ TASTING NOTES

Intense nose with beautiful aromatic complexity. Mellow, slightly minty notes promise good balance. On aeration, notes of rhubarb tart and a hint of dried apricots develop.

The palate is well balanced with the wine's freshness underscored by a pleasant acidity. There are notes of dried fig accompanied again by dried apricot. Subtly toasted oaky notes contribute to the wine's roundness and smoothness. A freshly-struck-match minerality accompanies the wine for its entire length.



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Sémillon 84%, Sauvignon blanc 12%, Muscadelle 4%

Alcohol content : 14 % vol.

pH : 3.66

Total acidity : 3.80 g/l

Residual Sugar : 91 g/l