



CHÂTEAU RIEUSSEC 2002

■ 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 beginning of the year was characterized by average climatic conditions but it improved towards the maturation period. The early bud burst due to a warm and dry winter was followed by a rather cold and rainy period during flowering which led to incidents such as coulure and millerandage. Fortunately, the colder than usual months of July and August were followed by a superb September with favorable conditions for the development of botrytis: dry, hot and sunny in the day, cool in the evening.

The first grapes affected by noble rot were picked as from 12 September, and the first selective harvest went on until 2 October under perfect conditions. After a rather wet period, the selective picking started again on 15 October. The beautiful weather was back, resulting in an outbreak of botrytis with rich, concentrated and fruity juices for the Sauvignons and Muscadelles. The last grapes were picked on 5 November.

■ WINE MAKING SCHEME

All batches were pressed individually in small pneumatic presses. After a few hours of cold settling, the must was transferred into new oak barrels from the Tonnellerie des Domaines in Pauillac for fermentation. Alcoholic fermentation was interrupted when the desired balance between alcohol and sugar had been reached. After fermentation, the wine was aged in barrels for 26 months.

■ TASTING NOTES

The wine presents a sustained yellow color and still has some green highlights. The nose offers a lot of freshness and the botrytis is discreet. The citrus notes are dominated by grapefruit.

In the mouth, the wine keeps its very fresh tone. Its average richness in sugar (which is moderate compared to 1999, 2000 and 2001) makes this a lighter vintage full of finesse and elegance.

The combination between the dried grapes from the first selective harvest and the botrytis from the end of the harvest has given a result that was much waited for. It will characterize this very fine vintage.



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Sémillon 85%, Sauvignon 8%, Muscadelle 7%

Yield : 19 hL/ha

Alcohol content : 13.5 % vol.

Total acidity : 3.85 g/l

Residual Sugar : 121 g/l