



GRAND CORBIN-DESPAGNE

Newsletter No. 10

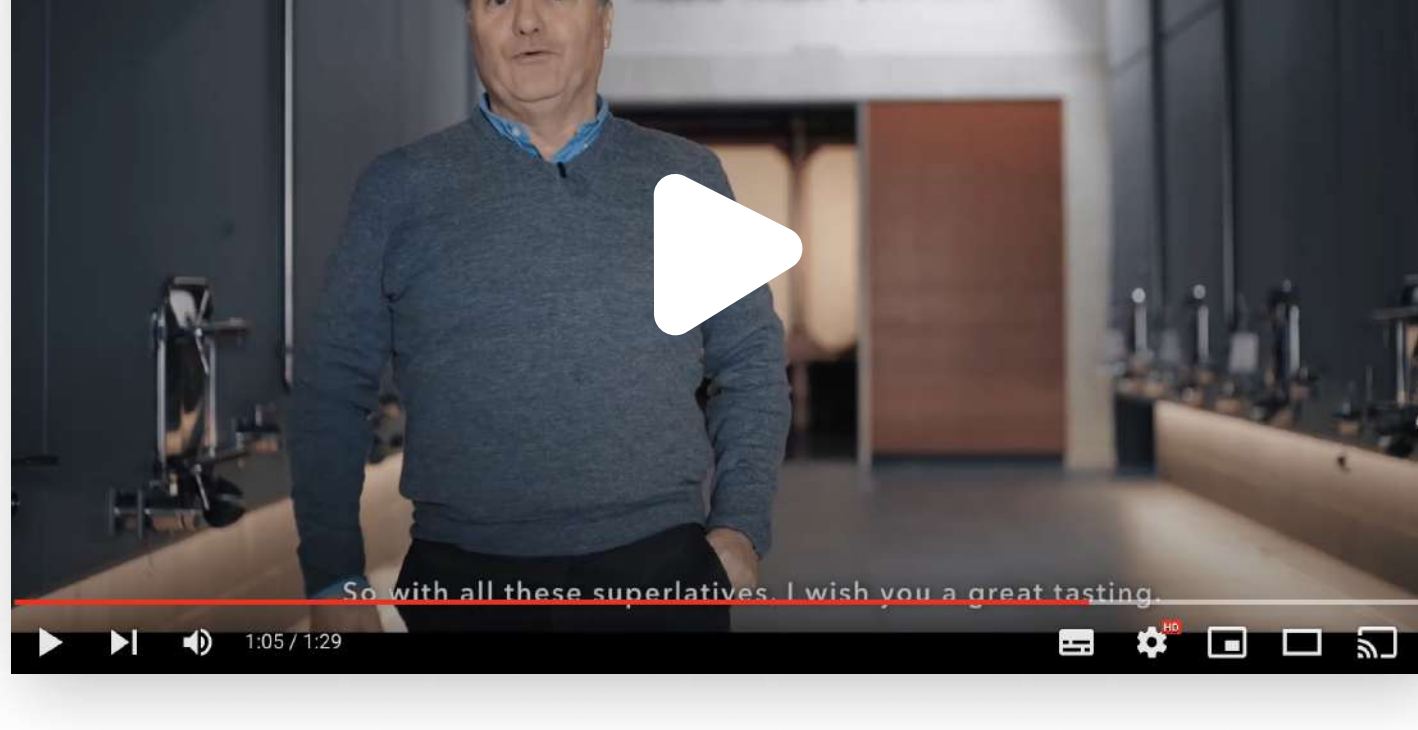
Primeurs 2022:

When the wines adapted perfectly to the sweltering heat

Dear friends,

As the primeurs campaign draws near, I'm pleased to offer you the latest news on the 2022 vintage, which is currently being aged in our cellars.

This vintage, which is already being described in the most superlative terms, went through an unparalleled physiological cycle. Six months on, we are now able to view it with a certain amount of clarity. Though 2022 fell into the hot-weather vintage category, the wine itself shows amazing classicism.



In anticipation of the searing heat, the grapes went into “resistance” mode

As I mentioned to you during the harvest, the grapes were picked in ideal weather conditions, and the quality of the fruit was magnificent. The first strategic stage (the maceration process) was carried out in a gentle manner at a cool, controlled temperature of 26°C. This was to allow the fruit to release its full potential in terms of structure and colour. We describe this winemaking approach as “infusion” rather than extraction, since the matter contained in the skins of the grapes offered such great natural richness, that it could be released almost without effort.

We were also able to observe that from an early stage of the vine cycle the grapes and their skins learned to adapt to the extreme heat and drought conditions that lasted throughout the year. This reaction by the vines began as early as their flowering and fruit set. Unlike the sweltering 2003 vintage, in which the skins of the grapes suffered the effects of sunburn during the veraison, the 2023 crop prepared itself well in advance, as if it had switched on to “resistance” mode in order to cope with the tough conditions that would follow. The grapes were thus able, slowly and calmly, to draw on the water they needed.



Once again, a vintage in which balance and freshness came to the fore

2022 has all the hallmarks of a great vintage: alcohol, a dark colour, depth, powerful tannins, great freshness on the palate, lovely acidity and a carefully controlled pH that is so characteristic of Grand Corbin-Despagne (3.60 to 3.65) –the very nature of the grapes ensuring that this balance was maintained.

Today, after six months of ageing, the wine is showing good density, an intense richness of colour, a very high tannin index and clearly preserved freshness.

The ageing process has been conducted with the greatest of care, and a part of the ageing is being carried out in amphorae (up to 10%), in order to ensure as much crisp fruit flavour as possible. The amphorae have replaced old barrels, which can sometimes produce a certain dryness on the palate.



Tasting the 2022

This magnificent 2022 primeur displays a deep, dark colour with dark purple undertones suggestive of a wine of great richness and complexity.

Black fruit aromas (blackberries) first come to the fore with fresh red berry fruits such as raspberry coming through, the fruit aroma having been ensured by the quality of the wine's ageing process. On swirling the glass, the aromas intensify with notes of liquorice coming through. The entry on the palate shows fullness and richness, while the acidity brings the wine balance.

The tannins show through harmoniously as the wine develops with great length of flavour for tens of seconds. This 2022 already seems ready to drink and will reach its full peak in 10 to 20 years and very probably beyond that.

2022, in its power, richness and elegance, is not unlike another fabulous vintage of great Bordeaux classicism: 2010, which was also a superlative year.



More good news

Being a fan of light, red wines to enjoy during summer, this year I made a claret, which I hope you will find as exciting as I did. This claret is a homage to my forbears, as well as to Bordeaux's great claret tradition. It can be enjoyed very shortly, as soon as the first warm, sunny days arrive.

I hope you'll like it!

François Despagne

Famille Despagne
Ever-present in Saint-Emilion
Owners since 1812

Château Grand Corbin-Despagne
Grand Cru Classé
Organic since 2004, officially certified since 2013

2022 : the 211st vintage of the Despagne family
in the Grand Corbin terroir
The 27th vintage of François Despagne