

Newsletter no. 5

Indigenous yeasts: going right to the end

Dear friends,

While the harvest has just finished at Grand Corbin-Despaigne, rounding off what was a tricky year to say the least, I wanted to offer you some thoughts on our work with yeasts.

As I'm sure you know, yeasts are the engine of the alcoholic fermentation process. In 2014, I began a rethink about the indigenous yeast strains in the wines made at our estate in the context of increases in alcoholic degrees brought about by global warming. Everywhere in the vineyards, these climatic changes have led to a confirmed trend towards using exogenous yeasts, which are selected for their resistance and their great capacity to transform sugar into alcohol.

I've always considered, as a scientist but also as the custodian of the heritage of this magnificent terroir passed down to me by my ancestors, that the more soils are alive, the better the quality of the wine will be; and this is why we have been practising for almost two decades now an eco-friendly viticulture, rejecting all synthetic chemical sprays and investing our time and efforts in biodiversity.

In our cellars, a similar mentality prevails. Our aim is to limit inputs as much as possible and to ensure that those that are used come from our own terroir. This is the reason why we wanted to select yeasts from our vineyard which can do the job and put us on the path of the most virtuous cycle possible.

This work on yeasts was begun in 2020, thanks to the PolyChainReaction technique known as PCR, which we've known only too well since the beginning of the health crisis. Thanks to an amplification of the DNA, this technique makes possible a better identification of the yeast strain. Science thus becomes a great ally in favouring greater autonomy in our vineyard.

Four yeast strains emerged from the batches during the lab trials, each standing out for their organoleptic and œnological properties. Each will be trialled in isolation in a micro-vinification on a batch from the estate. The results will enable us to determine those which will have their place in future vinifications.

And in other news from the estate...

As I mentioned to you on a prior occasion, our new vat room has just received the 2021 crop. Built with the collaboration of the Mazières company in Bordeaux and its architect Audrey Pedezert, it was entirely designed in concrete and is now equipped with micro-vats to carry out plot-by-plot vinifications with even greater precision.

This new vat room has already had a chance to fulfil one of its purposes, which is to provide flexible vat capacities according to crop sizes. Though a good quality vintage, the vagaries of the climate, frost and coulure (fruit set failure) in 2021 were a constant threat. And even though we managed to come through these inconveniences well, thanks to constant rigorous supervision of the vines, the crop size appears to be no more than 50% of normal.

Grand Corbin-Despaigne comes to you...

Ever eager to ensure the promotion of our wine, we would like to inform those of you from Paris that we will shortly be present in the capital and would be delighted to see you at the Master Class Pro

event organised by *La Revue du Vin de France* magazine and Bettane & Desseauve's *Paris Grand Tasting*.

For my part, I am thrilled to be able once again to travel throughout France and Europe during the last quarter of 2021. I will be delighted to meet up with you soon, as I will be to welcome you at the estate to taste our wines and show you around our new facilities. As I'm sure you know, you are always welcome at Grand Corbin-Despaigne!