

## *2001 Vintage Château Fogas Maldoror*

To produce a quality vintage every year, the winegrower must be attentive to the particular character of the land, the complexity of its subsoils and its specific climate conditions, as well as understanding the growth processes of the vine throughout its vegetation cycle. Our action as winegrowers must be adapted to suit the conditions of the year, with vine-growing techniques varying from one vintage to another.

Each operation must be carried out at the right date and within a limited period of time to fit in perfectly with the growth of the vine.

In the time-honoured tradition, the vines were pruned quickly by our highly-skilled workers in February-March.

This was followed by removal of excess buds and the branches that would not bear fruit. These operations require intensive labour.

Flowering started on 30 May. The bunches closed around 10 July and the colour change began on 25 July, lasting one week for the Merlot and covering about two weeks for the Cabernets.

Given the rainfall situation, we carried out manual leaf-stripping around the bunches before the colour change and then the traditional “green harvesting” leaving one bunch on each branch.

A second manual leaf-stripping was carried out after the colour-change of the grapes. All the under-developed bunches were removed from the plots of Cabernet.

Manual grape-picking (with a sorting table) started when the grapes reached phenolic ripeness on 26 September for the Merlot, coming to and end on 12 October for the Cabernet Sauvignon. The harvest was late but the grapes were very ripe and healthy.

The winemaking process took place in small 110-hectolitre vats keeping the grapes from the different plots separate. Any pips that were not ripe were removed from the cap. After pre-fermentary maceration in cold conditions for about one week (between 5°C and 8 °C) cap punching was carried out at the start of alcoholic fermentation to extract all the richness from the skins. After fermentation, the wine was macerated again for quite a long time before going into new barrels for malolactic fermentation. It is currently in the barrels, maturing on the lees. We are trying to diversify our choice of barrels, working with the best cooperages to enhance quality levels.

**The 2001 vintage of Château Fogas Maldoror is most promising. It is nicely balanced with lovely complex flavours, a ripe fruit bouquet and silky, refined tannins.**