

1993 vintage – A Dawning

Weather conditions

The spring of 1993 was frequently warmer than usual, with temperatures 1.5°C to 2°C (35-36°F) higher than normal for this time of the year. Following a fine summer, the autumn was wet and the weather deteriorated seriously after the 10th September.

Growing conditions

1993 began well with, in particular, early budburst and good potential. Flowering was also early (mid-flowering around 7th June) and fast. Veraison was fairly uniform and took place virtually at the same time in the Merlot and Cabernet vines, around 8th August. To encourage air to circulate around the grape clusters and, hence, promote the good condition of the grapes, a number of secondary buds were removed. We also carried out cluster thinning or 'green harvesting'. These practices aim at reducing yield with a view to improving the aromatic quality of the remaining grapes, as well as to speeding up their ripening process.

Grape harvest

Picking was carried out in line with unchanging tradition at Château Fougas, by hand, from 25th September to 5th October. The sun and rain alternated over this two-week period. Our pickers were instructed to pick only those grapes they would like to eat. We tasted each and every cartload upon its arrival at the winery, so as to keep a good eye on the quality of the future Maldoror.

Vinification and maturing

The grape juice was heated to 26°C (79°F) before fermentation. For the first time at Fougas, we conducted malolactic fermentation in new barrels, followed by topping up twice a week and frequent tasting to monitor the development of the barrels.

The 1993 Maldoror was made exclusively from Merlot grapes and matured for sixteen months in new barrels.