



## — The 2007 Vintage — A beautiful wealth !

This year will be remembered for the extremely unusual weather conditions. It was a wet year judging by the number of days of rainfall and yet the water shortfall was similar to the two previous vintages with a wet July and August compared with September and October that went virtually without a drop of rain.

### ***The Flowering :***

From May 21 to 30

### ***The Veraison :***

Around July 25

### ***The Ripening :***

Slower than in previous years – we had to wait a long time for the pips to finally ripen.

### ***Our Involvement and Expertise :***

2007 is a vintage where pressure from downy mildew was high and we had to work twice as hard in the vineyard – through significant leaf removal and bunch thinning for instance – to improve ripening in the grapes and take them through to harvest in prime condition. Our efforts were more than rewarded.

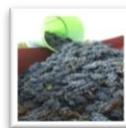
### ***The Harvest :***

As usual, we waited for the tell-tale apricot flavours – the sign of optimum ripening at Fougas – to emerge in the grapes before we started picking. The weather was so wonderful in September and October that we were able to wait and harvest “on demand”. Merlot from young vines was harvested on September 22 then picking resumed on the 29<sup>th</sup>. The Cabernets were harvested from October 11 onwards. This pace of picking suited us well for our 32<sup>nd</sup> harvest! Our efforts in vineyard management – de-budding, bunch thinning and grass cover for example – were rewarded and allowed us to pick perfectly ripe, healthy grapes. The wines display very good balance, alcohol content in the range of 12.5°C to 13.5°C and wonderful fruit aromas. Yields were very low at under 39 hl/ha. The first tastings revealed deeply coloured wines with silky, fresh textures.

In the vineyard, we doubled our teams to facilitate sorting of the odd grapes with botrytis as soon as they were picked. At Fougas, we have a zero tolerance policy with regards to leafstalks, leaves and pedicels in the tanks or fermentation casks. Grapes were sorted on two sorting tables – the first one located before the destemming machine was manned by 6 people, and the second one, after destemming, by 8 people.

### ***Our Winemaking techniques :***

These were adjusted to suit vintage conditions and involved short maceration, little punching of the cap and no use of pumps during winemaking, allowing us to make maximum use of the wonderful potential of the grapes entering the tanks. We carried out lots of alcoholic fermentation tests in casks for many single vineyards. A stellar array of aromatics. After alcoholic fermentation, the Merlots were thus endowed: they showed good natural alcohol content, acidity levels that revealed balance in progress, colour that could be described as impressive – a sign of good vine growth over the summer – wonderful fresh red and black fruit aromatic complexity and tannins that seemed refined, round and soft. Wines made from Cabernet Franc and Cabernet-Sauvignon are very interesting this year.



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## CHÂTEAU FOUGAS