



FAMILLE HUGEL



Gewurztraminer VENDANGE TARDIVE 2003

AOC Alsace, Alsace, France

great specialty for several generations of the Hugel family, who drafted the law on late harvest.

Wine with great power and longevity to taste religiously by itself during a special occasion.

QUICK VIEW

These wines made from overripe grapes are picked well after the classic vintage and in the greatest years only. The action of noble rot (*botrytis cinerea*) gives them an almost unlimited ability to age. They are part of the elite of the greatest wines in France.

THE VINTAGE

2003 was the earliest vintage in Alsace since 1893 !

It was a very unusual year that will long remain in our memory. Budburst was early, flowering began at the end of May, summer was scorchingly hot and dry, and picking for the still wines began on 8 September. For young vines and for vines planted on lighter soils the crop was particularly small. Results vary widely from vineyard to vineyard, but in general it was a better year for clay-limestone soils.

Overall volume was 25% below average. The wines are rich and full, with low acidity levels, much like in 1947. A small quantity of late-harvest Vendange Tardive wines was produced, but no Sélection de Grains Nobles due to the absence of botrytis (noble rot). The wines should be quick to develop and ready to drink quite soon.

IN THE VINEYARD

Produced from over-ripened grapes in a selection of the oldest plots of the Hugel estate in the heart of the grand cru Sporen made up of Lias clay-marl, decalcified on the surface, exceptionally rich in phosphoric acid

Harvest date: 9, 14 & 15 Oct. 2003 Potential alcohol: 17°4

WINEMAKING

The grapes are taken in small tubs to the presses, which are filled by gravity, without any pumping or other mechanical intervention.

After pressing, the must is decanted for a few hours, then fermented in temperature-controlled barrels or vats (at 18 to 24°C). The wine is racked just once, before natural clarification during the course of the winter. The following spring, the wine is lightly filtered just before bottling, and the bottles are then aged extensively in our cellars until released for sale.

PRESENTATION

Photos of bottles and labels, 3 definitions, max 300dpi

VARIETAL

Gewürztraminer 100%

11.95° VOL.

TECHNICAL DATA

Residual Sugar: 92 g/l

Tartaric acidity: 4.3 g/l

pH: 3.67

Age of vines: 35 years old

Yield: 30 hl/ha hL/ha

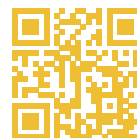
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ABUSE OF ALCOHOL IS DANGEROUS FOR YOUR HEALTH. DRINK RESPONSIBLY.



TASTING NOTES BY SERGE DUBS, WORLD'S BEST SOMMELIER 1989

Dense, with a silky sheen and unctuous in appearance, bright yellow gold in colour, the wine trickles slowly down the glass, bright and beautiful. The intense bouquet, still rather closed, recalls very ripe, lightly botrytised grapes, allied to an agreeably vinous palette of very ripe fruit : yellow peach, greengage, mirabelle, apricot, pear, candied quince, honey and a touch of warm brioche dusted with vanilla. The bouquet is less spicy and perfumed than in a vintage without a heatwave.

The wine comes into its own on the palate, being sensationally fleshy, juicy, unctuous, voluptuous, richly full-bodied and full of charm. It is harmoniously well balanced and generously opulent, an almost liqueur-like sweet wine.

Drink it at 6°C with blue cheeses like stilton and roquefort, or with munster, or foie gras, or with desserts like fruit tarts : apple, pear, dates or... just on its own.

7 October 2008

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