



2009 FROMM VINTAGE REPORT

The Growing Season

After some decent winter frosts, the 2008/2009 growing season started off with even bud-burst, followed by a relatively wet spring. Favourable conditions at flowering provided a good fruit-set. Disease pressure, particularly for powdery mildew, was slightly higher than average.

Early summer through to January was very encouraging with welcome hot and dry periods. What followed was the wettest February since more than seventy years. This affected the more fragile, early ripening Pinot Noir clones, resulting in pre-mature shrivelling in some bunches and presented the picking team with the challenge of carefully selecting and rejecting the good from the bad. Needless to say that these first pickings were very slow and crops low, even by our standards.

However, as harvest began, the weather improved and stabilised, in fact it turned out to be a great autumn. Hand harvesting became progressively easier and there was no further deterioration noticed in our fruit. The fine weather meant there was no time pressure and the mood amongst the vintage crew changed from semi-depressed to quite excited. All in all a mixed and challenging season which finished on a high note.

The Wines

In short, the aromatic whites including Sauvignon Blanc look very expressive and exciting and so do the later ripening red varieties Syrah and Malbec. Chardonnay looks promising but as always is very slow to ferment to absolute dryness.

For Pinot Noir, it is too early to make judgment. As so often seen in previous years, speculation on the quality of Pinot Noir before the completion of the malolactic fermentation is just that – speculation. It was very important this year to respect the limitations of the earlier ripening clones and maximize the potential of the later maturing ones. Careful, clean picking was another key factor for a successful outcome and all together we are confident that the extra efforts will result in some very fine Pinot.

Our best guess at the moment is a Pinot Noir vintage to enjoy earlier with medium cellaring potential (5 – 10 years), whereas Syrah, Malbec and all the whites have the ripeness and structure to mature into typically ageworthy Fromm wines.

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