

FIGEAC

1st Great Classified Growth

2003 Vintage

Geographical situation and vineyard :

Situated half-way between Saint Emilion and Libourne, on the D243 road, the estate of Château Figeac is located in one single block covering an area of 53 hectares (130.91 acres), of which 40 hectares (98.8 acres) are under vine.

Figeac can definitely claim originality with its vines planted over three gravel mounds and its unusual proportions of grape varieties for Saint Emilion :

- 35% Cabernet Sauvignon
- 35% Cabernet Franc
- and only 30% Merlot

The vines have an average age of 35 years, and those which provided the selection for the great wine have an average age of 45 years.

Vineyard management :

Sustainable viticulture techniques are carried out in the vines of Figeac. In those soils where gravel predominates, traditional ploughing is done ; only a few plots have grass seeded between the rows, in order to keep down the yields more easily.

Weather conditions :

The characteristics of the 2003 vintage were above all influenced by the exceptionally dry summer weather. This drought, however, only affected the top soil, since the water tables remained at satisfactory levels.

The adverse effects of this extreme weather were mainly limited to the very young vines (planted in 1999), which suffered badly and had to be harvested very early. The rest of the vineyard did not suffer very much in spite of the fact that very low yields of 29 hectolitres per hectare were produced. This is largely thanks to the light rain showers at the beginning of September, which also allowed the ripening process to pick up once again, particularly in the case of the Cabernet varieties.

Harvest :

We therefore had the earliest harvest ever recorded at Figeac, and also the most spread out :

- From the 4th to the 6th September for the Merlot
- From the 12th to the 25th September for the Cabernet Franc
- From the 29th to the 30th September for the Cabernet Sauvignon

Vinification and ageing :

The vinification was carried out in classic, traditional manner in our oak vats, given the fact that the yields were so low. The wine is being aged in 100% new barrels for the great wine, and in second fill barrels for the second wine. The expected ageing time is 18 months.

Blending :

The blend is expected to be made up of an equal share of each of the three grape varieties.