



CHAMPAGNE GRATIOT-PILLIÈRE

— à Charly-sur-Marne —

Newsletter – February 2019

Dear Friends and Clients,

It gives us great pleasure to share with you the news from our Maison from the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019:

A 2018 Harvest of our dreams.

With the exception of a very wet month of May, the 2018 season rolled out under the best auspices. The sun came out from the very first few days of June, right at the start of the budding phase of the bunches of grapes (flowering) and stayed fixed on our hillsides right through the maturation cycle of the grapes at the end of August. These favourable summer conditions brought about the start of the harvest on the 28th of August. 28.



From 2003 onwards this is the fifth time we have started cutting the grapes in August. The global warming phenomenon is clearly visible on our northern vineyards.

The Pinot Meunier (see photo) and the Pinot Noir, often planted in the chalky clay soils which retain more moisture, responded better to these extreme drought conditions. The chardonnays, more often planted on lighter, better draining sandier soils experienced a more complicated ripening process. This exceptional and qualitative year will permit us to produce a wonderful Cuvée Millésime and a very high quality Cuvée HERITAGE.

The single minor negative point in the organization of the 2018 harvest was that we encountered more difficulty in recruiting for the picking. As a result, this has caused a 13 day harvest period instead of the usual 10 day period.

More and more winemakers rely on the services of people from nearby countries such as Portugal, Poland or even the Romania. We have been seeing whole bus loads of them arriving in Champagne...

Towards Certification in the Vines.

For the harvest of 2019, our wine-making practices will be subject to tighter controls through the VDC certification (Sustainable Viticulture in Champagne). It is an official recognition of the environmental performance of the champagne growers. The VDC covers the application of the principles of sustainable development to viticulture.



It is a voluntary approach that relies on our daily commitment to minimize the impact of wine-making practices on the environment (air, climate, water, soil, biodiversity, landscape).

More than 120 points are covered by the Sustainable Viticulture standards in the Champagne region, implemented by the Interprofessional Committee of Champagne Wines (the CIVC) and recognized by the Department of Agriculture in May, 2015.

The audit of our operation and the allocation of the VDC certification will take place in October or November by an approved independent certifying body.

<https://www.champagne.fr/fr/developpement-durable/champagne-et-developpement-durable>

35 years of loyal service.

Arriving in 1983 at the age of 18, Christian has been working in our vineyards for more than 35 years. On January 25, on the festival of St-Paul, the Patron Saint of winemakers in Charly-on-Marne, he was awarded the gold medal from the Corporation of Winemakers in Champagne.



A huge THANK YOU to Christian for his loyalty, dynamism in the workplace and his good humour.

Export.

Full steam ahead in Asia ! This year our focus will essentially be on the Asian Market. We are already seeing some nice sales in Hong Kong and the town of Shenzhen in south west China. We have important projects in other neighbouring countries and will keep you abreast of developments in our next Newsletters as to their success.

In Finland, our distributor [Bornicon & Salming](#) continues to do a great job with the professionals in the restaurant world and d' [Alko](#), the Finnish wine merchant who has a monopoly on the retail sale of all liquor in the territory. We are, as of now referenced in all of their stores.

The Netherlands, [Premier Cru Wijnen](#), we are generating good sales with a new distributor we met last summer. It is a promising market for our champagnes, and we are in good hands!

BREXIT ! An English market in turmoil. Our distributor has alerted us to the likelihood of lengthening delays in the delivery of the goods from the European Union to the United Kingdom after Brexit. The rules governing the export of goods will harden and trade will be much less fluid. We are staying tuned to our distributor for whom this situation is not simple.

IN the USA, the market is complicated, demands a lot of work and a great deal of attention. We are continuing to explore this big market.

Receive our updates by e-mail.

Starting this year, we are starting to communicate by email, replacing our traditional letters sent by post. For those who have not yet had the opportunity to communicate with us by e-mail, please send us your Mail address upon receipt of this mail. Thank you very much for signing up.

The advantages of e-mail, are that you get to keep all our information stored on your computer or phone, you can view them and print them at any time, but it also makes it easier to forward our information to interested individuals.

Keep up with our news.

On our [site](http://www.champagne-gratiot-pilliere.com) : www.champagne-gratiot-pilliere.com

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We remain at your disposal for any further information.

Sparkling greetings,

Olivier et Sébastien GRATIOT