

WINTER 2010 NEWSLETTER

Winter 2010

Dear members,

As I sit down to write this, the 2010 harvest is complete, and after the energy and excitement of crush and fermentation, there is calm in the air as the wines have finally gone to barrel. At Château L'Enclos, we started picking on September 26th, with the grapes for Château Fonplégade beginning to come in two days later on the 28th. At both, we were able to pick at our desired pace, with harvest concluding in the middle of October. The weather in the run-up to harvest was excellent, with dazzling, sun-filled days producing ideal maturity in the grapes, and fresh, cooler nights offering the plants an important chance to recharge their batteries. In the winery, the grapes benefited from our new state-of-the-art La Mistral sorting table, which allowed us to select only the most pristine fruit.

The exceptional quality of our 2010 wines was apparent almost immediately. Indeed, a mere 24 hours after the vats were filled with grapes, juice that is usually slightly red, was a stunning dark purple, and was even black in some vats! Just as exciting, we could smell powerful red-fruit aromas emanating from the vats. These wonderful signs indicate that we are in the presence of another exceptional vintage!

2010: 2009's ALTER EGO?

Even at this early stage of their development, our 2010 wines share a number of similarities with the great 2009 vintage. Both possess perfect, velvety tannins, beautiful extraction and the natural acidity to ensure long aging. They both also have an average alcohol of 14.5°, and a rare pH of 3.35 (which may well be the result of our adoption of organic farming methods). As I consider the phenomenal quality of these wines, it is interesting to note that two decades ago, 1988, 1989 and 1990 offered three successive remarkable vintages. I believe that 2008, 2009 and 2010 will live equally as long in our memories and our cellars.

OUR SPECIAL INTERN – CLUB MEMBER OLIVIER FLUET

Back in September, club member Olivier FLUET won a very special contest at our Fall Pick-up Reception. As his prize, Olivier joined our Fonplégade winemaking team as a guest intern for the 2010 harvest. We are pleased to share some of his reflections on the experience:

I was so amazed when I saw the care and quality of the winemaking at Château Fonplégade! While I was initially impressed by the technical aspect—from temperature control to the extent of the laboratory analysis—what really inspired me was the enormous hard work and passion of Franck the winemaker, and his assistant, Eric.

After watching them punch-down the vats two to five times per day, I tried it myself for 15 minutes and I can tell you that my shoulders are still hurting!! Viewing all of their efforts, such as traditional pump-overs to ventilate the wines, tasting from the vats to assess quality and evaluating the new French oak barrels to understand their potential aromas, was simply magical!!

I shared my experience with a talented friend who owns an organic vineyard and here is what he said: "What a surprise! They work exactly the same way than I do!"

Finally, as winemaker, I would like to thank you for your faithfulness to Château Fonplégade. In crafting offerings like the Château Fonplégade 2006 and Château L'Enclos 2007 enclosed in your current shipment, I never lose sight of the fact that our members share these wines with friends and family—that they are enjoyed as part of life's joyful moments and great celebrations. This knowledge is an honor, and an inspiration as a winemaker. Thank you.

On behalf of our entire team, I wish you all the best for the holidays.

Franck JUGELMANN
Winemaker of Château Fonplégade
Bordeaux, France.