

AUTUMN 2012 NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2012

Dear Club de Vin Member,

Harvest magic approaches at Château Fonplégade! The baskets are piled high, our clippers are sharpened and the sorting table is ready to receive the first exceptional 2012 grapes. There is excitement in the air as our seasoned vineyard team gets the latest input and direction from Eloi Jacob, our technical manager, before they begin handpicking the fruit.

In 2012, the vines blossomed a touch later than usual, with sunny days alternating with cooler weather and early-season showers until late May. Summer brought more abundant sun to our vineyard, helping the berries to ripen on the usual timetable, with August bringing a mix of warm days and sparse showers. As organic winegrowers, we were very proactive in the vineyard to prevent some of the issues that can arise from the more variable weather we saw in 2012.

History of Saint-Emilion Classification

Harvest is not the only eagerly anticipated upcoming event. We are also holding our breath for the new Saint-Emilion Classification. This famous ranking will fix for the next ten years the right to bear the name "Saint Emilion Great Classified Growth," as recognition of our outstanding quality. Since the initial classification in 1955, Fonplégade has always been part of this prestigious list, and we are confident that we will once again receive this classification as a testament to the hard work and investment that guide Château Fonplégade.

The desire to guarantee the origin, authenticity and quality of our region's wines can be traced back to 1199, when John Lackland, King of England, created the Saint-Emilion Jurade. These magistrates and notables were empowered with the assessment of wine quality, and no wine could be sold without bearing their "Grand Vinetier" seal engraved on the barrels. Unlike the Médoc, Graves and Sauternes Classification of 1855, the Saint-Emilion list is updated approximately every ten years, with lists unveiled in 1955, 1969, 1986, 1996 and 2006

2012 Classification

Following the cancellation of the last Classification as a consequence of legal disputes, 2012 marks a new beginning with revised rules. Only Châteaux inside the Saint-Emilion area that respect the rules for "Grand Cru" can apply for the Classification. The 2012 Classification is an assessment of:

- Quality & consistency over the past 10 vintages.
- Terroir & soil quality
- Fame/reputation of the Château
- Winegrowing and winemaking practices

A mark of up to 20 points will be given to each Château after the study of its application, blind tastings and controls. More will be written about the Saint-Emilion Classification in future newsletters. For now, we turn our attention to the 2010 vintage. By the time you read this newsletter, those of you who reserved the outstanding 2010 vintage as futures will have received your wines. 2010 was near perfect in our region, with Wine Spectator bestowing a glowing 96-99 point rating on the overall Saint-Emilion growing season. We look forward to hearing your thoughts on our 2010 wines.

Last, but certainly not least, we are pleased to enclose your September Club release featuring our Château Fonplégade 2007. With lovely fruit, a fresh mineral touch and velvety tannins, this wine will seduce you. Enjoy it now, or in the years ahead. We are also happy to share the sought-after Château L'Enclos 2008! This coveted wine sold out a few months ago, but we set aside a small amount for our wonderful Club de Vin members, with just enough to offer it to you as an exclusive add-on opportunity! If you like the spicy side of Pomerol, try it now, or wait a few years for the blackberry aromas to develop an incomparable subtlety...

Warm regards,

The Fonplégade Club de Vin Team
Bordeaux, France