

CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC

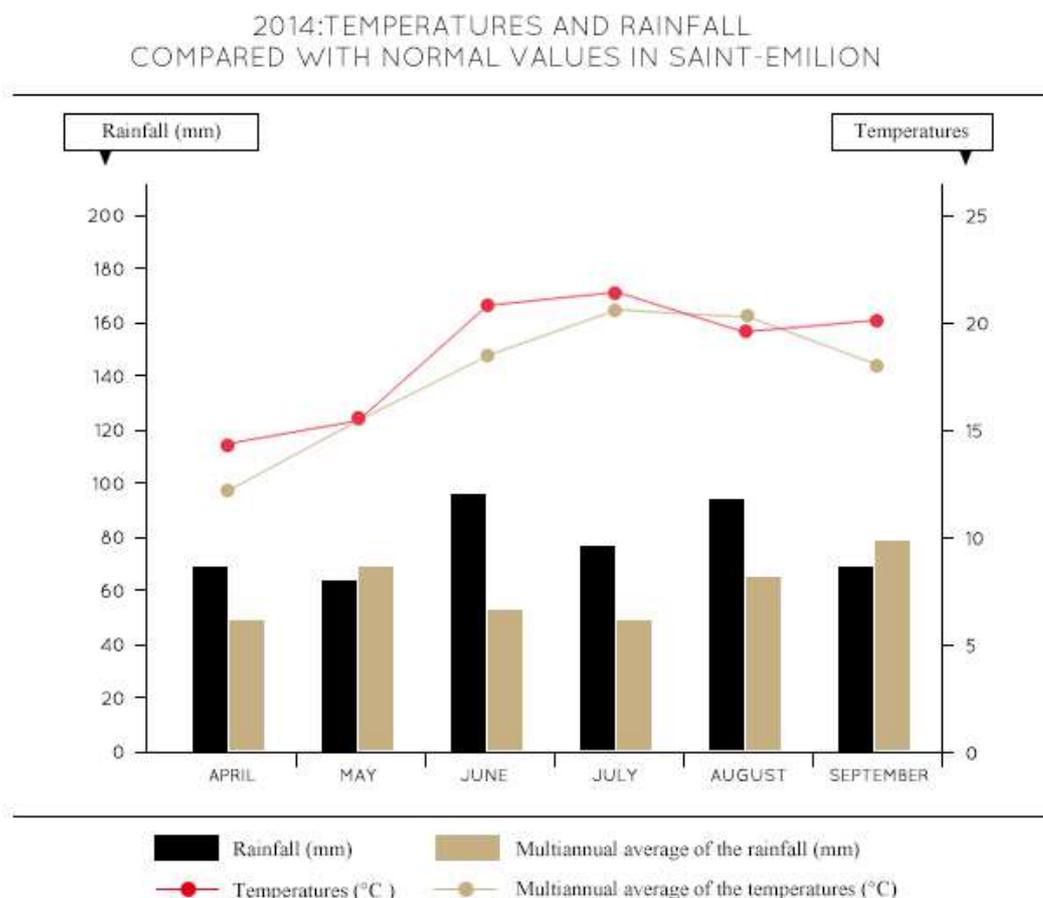
Château Cheval Blanc 2014

2014 was mainly a rainy year until the end of August. Nevertheless, thanks to exceptionally good autumn weather, it was possible to harvest each plot at peak ripeness and avoid any herbaceous aromas. Cabernet Franc grapes are very successful thanks to these hot and dry weather conditions.

Weather conditions and vine's growing cycle

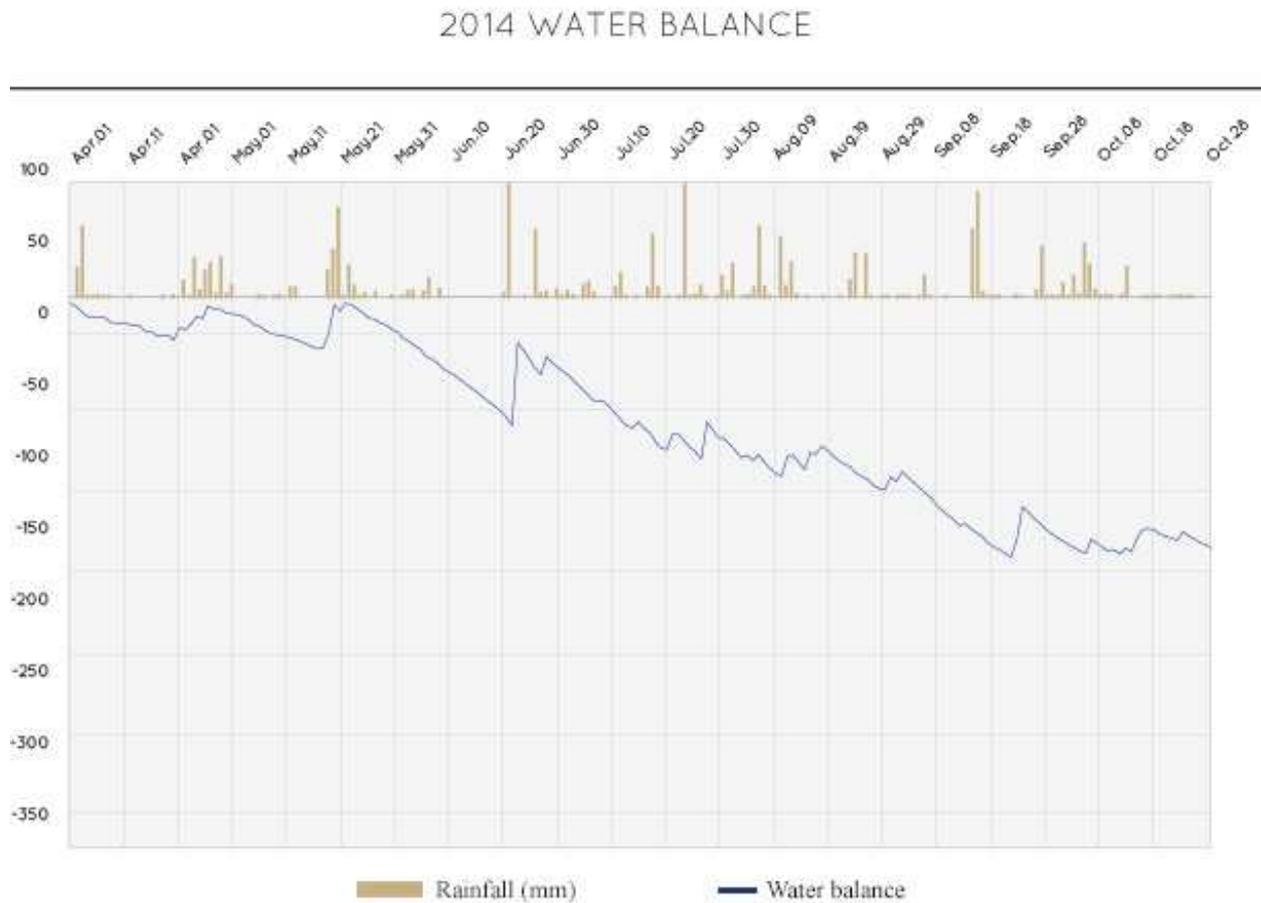
TEMPERATURES AND RAINFALL

The late winter was warm and wet. April and May were cool, with average rainfall. Dry weather from 25th May to 21st June ensured satisfactory flowering. Thunderstorms on 22nd and 27th June ended the water deficit that was just beginning to set in. July was very rainy, with near-normal temperatures. August was cool and wet. The situation changed toward the end of the month and September was hot and sunny. The weather was generally hot and dry, with only three wet days on 17th, 18th and 30th September. October was very mild and relatively dry. The months of September and October were among the warmest recorded in the past twenty years.



WATER BALANCE

In order to grow well, the vine needs for water stress to set in slowly so the grapes to ripen well and become concentrated.



GROWING SEASON

In 2014, bud-break was one day earlier than average. The first flowers were observed around 22nd May, but was spread over a long period, due to the cool temperatures at that time. Mid-flowering occurred on 2nd June for the Merlot, and 5th June for the Cabernet Franc, four days later than average. Flowering ended rapidly. Fruit-set went well on most plots. Mid-colour change occurred on 30th July for the Merlot, three days earlier than average. Mid-colour change for the Cabernet Franc occurred on 6th August.

Thanks to exceptionally good autumn weather, it was possible to spread the harvest over 23 days, from 19th September to 10th October, and pick each plot at peak ripeness. The latest Merlot plots were harvested eight days after picking started on the Cabernet Franc.

Phenological stage	Merlot 2014	Average 1994-2014	Cabernet franc 2014	Average 1994-2014
Bud break	March, 28th	March, 28th	April, 1st	April, 2nd
Flowering	June, 2nd	May, 30th	June, 5th	June, 1st
Véraison	July, 30th	August, 2nd	August, 6th	August, 8th
Beginning of the Harvest	September, 19th	September, 19th	September, 29th	September, 27th
End of the Harvest	October, 6th	September, 27th	October, 10th	October, 5th
Number of days between...				
Bud break and Flowering	66 days	63 days	65 days	60 days
Flowering and Véraison	58 days	64 days	62 days	68 days
Véraison and Harvest	51 days	48 days	54 days	50 days

Features of the vintage

RIPENING AND YIELDS

In the end, yields were nearly average for the Merlot grapes, and considerably lower than average for the Cabernet Franc. The almost total absence of water stress before colour-change was buffered on clay soils and resulted in ideal ripeness on gravel terroirs, particularly in the young vines.

2014 yields (hl/ha)		Average from 1996 to 2014
Merlot	39.7	38.9
Cabernet Franc	28.2	34.2

Sugar levels in the ripe Merlot grapes were lower than average in the past ten years. Unusually, the Cabernet Franc grapes were richer in sugar than the Merlot ones, as previously observed in 2011. As Cabernet Franc is a later-ripening variety than Merlot, it reaped the full benefit of the hot, relatively dry weather in September and October. Acidity levels in the ripe grapes were significantly higher than average, due to the presence of malic acid. The size of the Merlot grapes led to slightly lower anthocyanin concentrations, while the Cabernet Franc, harvested later, benefited fully from the indian summer, resulting in an above-average anthocyanin content.

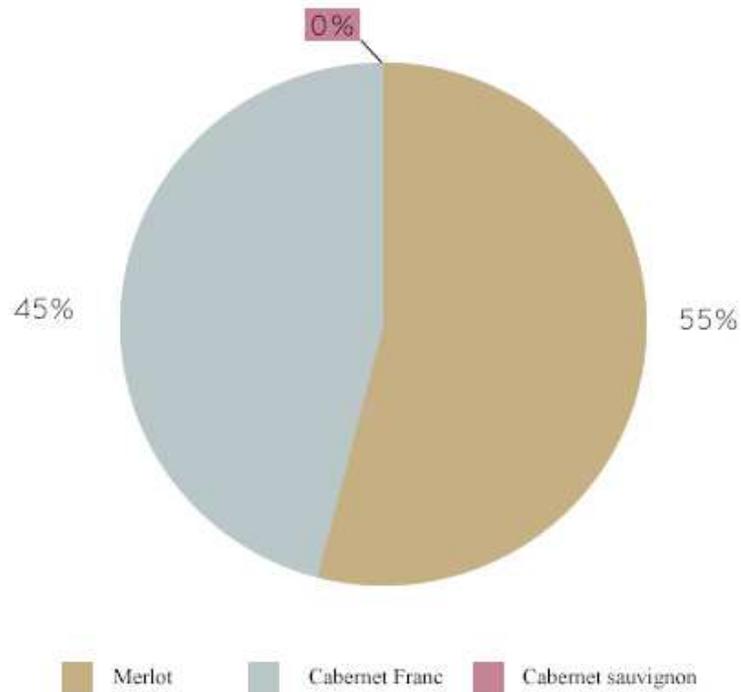
CELLAR WORK

Although Château Cheval Blanc rarely practices subtraction techniques, most Merlot vats were bled in 2014 to compensate for the huge size of the berries of this grape variety. The average bleeding on the entire crop was 10%.

In 2014 the Merlot experienced a 29 days maceration period, and the Cabernets francs 25 days.

BLENDING

2014 CHEVAL BLANC BLENDING



2014 PROPORTION OF THE DIFFERENT WINES, CHEVAL BLANC, PETIT CHEVAL & THIRD WINE



ALL 2014 CHATEAU CHEVAL BLANC BOTTLE SIZES:



895	66,644	3,780	359	0	164	18	15	22	18
Half-Bottles	Bottles	Magnums	Double Magnums	Jeroboams	Imperials	Salmanzar	Balthazar	Nebuchadnezzars	Melchior

Degree of alcohol	13,40
Total acidity (g H ² SO ₄ /L)	3,20
Volatile acidity (g H ² SO ₄ /L)	0,33
pH	3,56
Total SO ₂ (mg/L)	131
Reducing sugar content (g/L)	1,8
IPT (DO280)	63

Tasting notes

Lovely, deep ruby-red colour. The rich and elegant bouquet reflects an impressive intensity, evolving into a cedar-wood bouquet. The black- and red-berry fruits presents an harmonious blend of blackberries, blackcurrants, cherries and raspberries. It also had heady, fruity and floral overtones, reminiscent of roses. The key descriptors for the bouquet of this vintage are its aromatic brilliance and precision.

The initial impression on the palate is clean and powerful – even opulent. The mid-palate is bursting with fruit and has an unctuous texture, with a richness that perfectly envelops the density and tightness of the lovely, ripe tannins. The fresh and elegant aftertaste is remarkably long.

Benefiting from the indian summer, this vintage is already showing off and seems promising.