

## THE 2004 VINTAGE

The surface area in production in 2004 is 73.25 ha in Saint-Julien and 12.6 ha in the Haut-Médoc appellation.

2003-2004 was marked by low rainfall which only served to maintain the lack of water over the last two years. The average temperatures were close to those of the thirty-year period. February, March and July were particularly cool, January and June being especially mild with temperatures of between 1° and 1.5° above the seasonal norms.

The cool temperatures in March held back growth, the first bunches of Merlot only appearing at the beginning of April. The Merlot began to flower on 28th May, the Cabernet Sauvignon at the beginning of June, almost a fortnight late compared to 2003. Flowering occurred in ideal conditions, over a very short period (4-5 days) Half-veraison was observed on 2nd August. After a pleasant August, September proved to be hot and dry, which allowed maturing to conclude in good conditions.

Green harvests in July and August, combined with systematic leaf-thinning in the fruit-bearing parts, contributed to maintaining an optimal sanitary state.

Grape-picking began on 30th September and finished on 16th October. The rain which started to fall from 9th October onwards did not have any marked untoward consequences on the quality of the harvest. This was abundant, with quantities close to authorised yields and of very satisfactory quality.

In order to make wine of optimal quality, any enrichment deemed necessary was obtained by concentration. 20% of the tank volume was bled each time that vine production seemed over-generous.

The wine was put into barrels of French oak in February 2005, after blending : 50% new for the *grand vin*, the rest in single-wine barrels, 21% for the second wine *Amiral de Beychevelle* and 16% for the *Haut-Médoc Brulières de Beychevelle*.

However, for almost one third of the *grand vin*, malolactic fermentations took place in new barrels from the beginning of November.

The 2004 vintage is blended in the following way:

CHATEAU BEYCHEVELLE	46% Cabernet Sauvignon
	42% Merlot
	7% Cabernet Franc
	5% Petit Verdot

AMIRAL DE BEYCHEVELLE	77% Cabernet Sauvignon
	22% Merlot
	1% Cabernet Franc

<i>BRULIERES DE BEYCHEVELLE</i>	63% Cabernet Sauvignon
	37% Merlot

Philippe Blanc, estate manager, gives his appreciation of the 2004 vintage. :

The 2004 vintage has prominent fruit aromas (blackcurrant and black cherry) therefore bearing the mark of full maturity . The woody aromas from maturing are perceptible (toastiness, grilled flavour) but remain discreet and elegant.

The wine is neat, simple, fresh, and well-balanced, with a good length in the mouth

The tannins are tasty, but without any marked astringency, with potential promise and excellent maturity.

To sum up, Château Beychevelle 2004 is marked by finesse and balance and is potentially great for laying-down.

With a yield of 53 hl/ha in Saint-Julien and 50.8 hl/ha in Haut-Médoc, the production is as follows:

CHATEAU BEYCHEVELLE	23 000 cases
AMIRAL DE BEYCHEVELLE	14 500 cases
BRULIERES DE BEYCHEVELLE	7 000 cases