

## Chateau d'Yquem Sauternes 2003

Blend: 80% Semillon, 20% Sauvignon Blanc

Color: Medium gold.

Aroma: Honeyed, oaky, flowery, tropical fruit bouquet, magnificent and unique.

Palate: Rich, opulent, concentrated and full-bodied.

94-96 Points *Wine Advocate*



### Summary:

This unusual vintage will no doubt remain a benchmark for many years to come. An extraordinary summer, “total” Botrytis, and the sacrifice of part of the estate made it possible to harvest grapes with optimum fruit and concentration thanks to unusually clean botrytization.

### Weather Conditions:

June 2003 was the hottest recorded Yquem since the weather station was installed in 1896, with an average temperature of 23.3°C compared to a normal value of 18.3°C. The previous record of 21.3°C dates back to 1976. After flowering (mid-May), the vegetation was 2-3 weeks ahead of normal, indicating that it would be an early vintage. These conditions, however, were much less unusual than the extreme temperatures experienced in August 2003. The mean maximum temperature for the month was 32.5°C while the normal value is 26.4°C. The previous record was held by 1933 (31°C), followed closely by 1906, 1947 and 1949 (30°C).

Rainfall figures, however for the period from October 2002 to October 2003 were absolutely normal and the vines never suffered from the lack of water. Nevertheless, the excessive August heat (3 days with over 40°C in 2003 out of a total of 6 since 1896) had a certain impact on the grapes. Besides some scorched leaves and grapes, ripening was unsurprisingly well ahead of schedule. On August 8<sup>th</sup>, some Sauvignon Blanc already had 13.5 potential alcohol with good acidity, some 3 to 4 weeks before schedule.

### Tasting Notes:

The color is already a very pale yellow. The nose has intense fresh fruit aromas (pineapple, passion fruit and mango) accompanied by very attractive floral nuances (rose and acacia blossoms) as well as a touch of vanilla. This wine has a great deal of personality on the palate as well as beautiful volume, substance, and a perfect balance between alcohol, sugar and acidity. The overall equilibrium is extremely elegant and lively. The complexity, smoothness, and length this wine will acquire during barrel aging are sure to make this an altogether impressive Yquem.