

Château Rieussec 2009

CSPC# 744975

375mlx12

13.75% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

84.5% *Sémillon*, 11.5% *Sauvignon Blanc*, 4% *Muscadelle*

Appellation

Sauternes

General Info

1st Cru Classé in 1855. The vineyard is located in Fargues on a gravel crest close to Yquem. Domaines Rothschild (Lafite) have really succeeded in developing it. Rieussec is naturally powerful, with a liqueur-like intensity that sometimes disconcerts. This wine must be kept more than 10 years to express its complexity. For several generations, Château Rieussec has been a leading name in Sauternes wines. As early as 1868, Charles Cocks remarked that "Beyond any of the others, Rieussec produces wines that are very similar to Yquem wines". In the 18th century, the Rieussec estate belonged to the Carmes de Langon monks. The confiscation of the estate during the revolution led to its public sale around 1790 as an "object of national heritage" to Mr. Marheilhac, the period's owner of Château La Louvière at Léognan. For the 1855 classification, M. Mayne was the owner of the estate. The quality of the Rieussec soil earned its ranking as a first growth Sauternes and Barsac. After that date, Rieussec's history involves many changes of owners: Charles Crepin (around 1870), Paul Defolie (1892), Mr. Bannil (1907), then the Gasqueton family (owner of Château Calon-Ségur at Saint Estèphe), P.F. Berry during the war (an American citizen and brother-in-law of the Vicomte de Bouzet), Mr. Balaresque (1957) and lastly, Albert Vuillier (1971), who was passionate about Sauternes "sweet wines". Château Rieussec was acquired by Domaines Barons de Rothschild (Lafite) in 1984. The estate then included 110 hectares, including 68 hectares of vineyards. A new cellar was built in 1989 to extend ageing in barrels. In 2000, renovations to the ageing cellar, construction of a fermenting cellar, and the technological modification of the receiving and pressuring rooms also represented strides forward in a quality policy undertaken since 1985.

Vintage

The beginning of the growth cycle was a tricky period due to a rather warm, very wet spring. The team had to be particularly vigilant in order to protect the vines. Fine, stable weather returned in June and continued throughout the summer. In fact, conditions became drought like, interspersed in July, August and September with welcome periods of light rain. Plenty of sunshine, with temperatures that were high without becoming scorching, and fairly cool nights enabled slow ripening that pushed the start of the harvests back to the end of September. Exceptionally favourable weather conditions, crowned by harvests in the sun, made for a vintage that is certain to be outstanding.

Vineyards

The vineyards, which occupy one of the highest points in Sauternes after those of Yquem which are adjacent, to the east, cover 90 hectares of the 130 hectare estate, and the *terroir* underfoot is typical gravel interspersed with lime. The vines, which average 25 years of age, are predominantly Semillon (90%) with 7% Sauvignon Blanc and 3% Muscadelle. Yields were always high for Sauternes at 22 hl/ha but there was always strict selection in the *chai*, whereas nowadays more selection takes place in the vineyard, so reported yields are lower with 15 hl/ha being typical.

Harvest

Thursday, September 17, 2009 - Thursday, October 15, 2009

Maturation

Aged 55% in new barrels

Tasting Notes

The nose is fleshed out by ripe fruit, apricots, pears and fleshy yellow peaches. The lushness is balanced by lime & lemon freshness that gives a more elegant, racy feel on the mid palate and helps to bring out the Noble Rot spice that lurks towards the back.

Serve with

Serve as an aperitif with rich pates or foie gras, as an accompaniment to creamy desserts, cakes or blue cheeses.

Cellaring

Drink 2019-2049



Scores/Awards **92-95 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2010
95-97 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2010
96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - September 8, 2010
93-95 points - Ian D'Agata, ST's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2010
18 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 20, 2010
18-19+ points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - March 2010
18 points/4 stars - James Lawther, Decanter.com - April 2010
89 points/16 points - Jean Marc Quarin - March 2010
93 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2010

Reviews *"Lemon peel and pear tart on the nose. Full-bodied and medium sweet, with good acidity, lemon meringue flavors and a spicy finish. Score range: 92-95"*
- JS, Wine Spectator

"The minerality and stoniness really comes through on the nose of this Rieussec, more than the 2007. The palate is very well balanced with superb acidity, real tension, steely with great precision with notes of apricot, white peach and honey on the beautifully defined finish. Probably the best Rieussec since the astounding 2001."
- NM, Wine Journal

"Concentrated and dense, this is a wine that fits well into the power of 2009. There is richness, but as well there is great elegance, a great structure of richness and sweetness, with the final bite of honey."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Bright yellow-gold. An initial whiff of alcohol is quickly followed by subtle aromas of flowers, fresh citrus, ginger and vanilla. Racy and delineated, with excellent intensity to the pristine flavors of fresh pineapple, tangerine, lemon and spices. Comes across as quite sleek and precise thanks to laser-like acidity, which frames and lifts the wine's superb tight core of fruit. Not at all an unctuous style, this compellingly vibrant wine finishes very long and very smooth, with a hint of vanillin oak. This outstanding vintage of Rieussec should be forgotten in the cellar for at least 6 or 8 years and then enjoyed for at least another 30 years after that. The grapes were harvested from September 17 through October 15 in four tries"
- ID, International Wine Cellar

"Showing a pale-yellow color, this wine offers a fruity and slightly wild nose of botrytis. Melting on entry, it then evolves, rich in sugar and slightly thick in the end. Yet, the finish remains long and aromatic. A blend of 84% Semillon, 11 % sauvignon and 4 % Muscadelle - Alcohol content: 13.75% - Residual sugar: 160 grams."
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Dense and rather withdrawn on the nose, with tight and honeyed fruit. Massive depth on the palate here, textured and intense. Decent acidity, great grip though, and a seam of nobly bitter botrytis substance. A very rich style with great potential. Impressive. From my 2009 Bordeaux en primeur assessment. 18-19+/20 (Mar 2010)"
- CK, The Wine Doctor

"Massive, with great transformed level of alcohol, useful when the sugar content is so high too, a monument of a wine, but a wait of 10 years at least will be necessary to do justice to its majestic power."
- JL, Decanter.com

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- J-MQ

"Punters who want to secure a rare case of Château Lafite are often required to purchase one or more cases of Rieussec, too. This won't be a hardship in 2009, because the wine is very stylish, with flavours of pears and cinnamon, good acidity and plenty of sweetness (160 grams per litre). Not quite a superstar Sauternes, but certainly an impressive wine. 10+ years."
- TA, timatkin.com
