

Y'Yquem (Ygrec) Bordeaux Blanc 2020

CSPC# 803071

750mlx6

14.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

75% Sauvignon Blanc, 25% Sémillon

Appellation

Sauternes – Bordeaux Blanc

Website

<http://yquem.fr/int-en/>

Analysis

Residual sugars: 7 g/L - Total acidity: 6 g/L H2T – pH: 3,20

General Info

Chateau d'Yquem also produces a dry, white Bordeaux wine called "Y," which is pronounced (Ygrec). The wine is only made in select vintages. The first vintage for the production of dry, white wine at Chateau d'Yquem took place in 1959. Close to 80% of the parcels used to produce their dry white wine can change from vintage to vintage.

Y was formerly made at the end of the harvest, with the last bunches left on the vines. These grapes, affected to varying degrees by Botrytis Cinerea, but never with more than 15% potential alcohol, resulted in a very unusual wine. This explains why it has always been produced in small quantities and on an irregular basis since 1959. Y changed starting in 1996, but without compromising its unique character, to be more in tune with the times by displaying the qualities of freshness and crispness – essential for a modern great white wine. It was decided in 2004 to make Y every year. It is thus by deliberate choice that we now harvest certain plots of Sauvignon Blanc at the beginning of the vintage, making sure to pick perfectly ripe bunches. These are completed by Sémillon grapes picked just at that fleeting stage when the grapes have reached maximum ripeness, botrytis has just appeared, and the skins have turned a pinkish colour. This is the precise moment when this grape variety's tannins are soft enough for the aromatic potential of the best plots of clay soil to come through.

Winemaker

Sandrine Garbay. Pierre Lurton, Director of Chateau d'Yquem and Cheval Blanc

Vintage

"In light of the extraordinary weather conditions in 2020, picking the grapes for Y started on the 13th of August. This was the earliest harvest date ever recorded at Yquem. We began with the Sauvignon Blanc grapes. They were picked at their optimum aromatic ripeness in two passes, the first one starting on the 13th and the second ending on the 19th of August. Thus, we preserved their acidity, which is essential to producing well-balanced wines. We waited for the Sémillon grapes to reach peak ripeness, eventually harvesting them when their skins started to become thinner, on the 27th of August. This is when the 2020 harvest of Y was completed.

Vineyards

This property is beautifully placed at hilltop in Sauternes' commune, with its 103-ha big vineyard (clay and gravel on the surface and lime stones in the subsoil), planted with 80% Semillon and 20% Sauvignon Blanc. The average age of vines is 27 years, and the yield does not exceed 10 hl/ha.

Harvest

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Vinification/ Maturation	<p>To produce the dry white Bordeaux wine from d'Yquem, the wine is vinified in stainless steel vats. In fact, in 2012, the estate added several new, gleaming, stainless steels for the vinification. There is no malolactic fermentation. The wine is aged in 50% new, French oak barrels for an average of 10 months.</p> <p>During its aging time, the wine is aged on its lees. This marks a major change in the wine, as previously, the wine was aged for up to 18 months in barrel before bottling.</p> <p>The wine receives close attention all during fermentation: light, precise pressing as well as temperature-controlled must racking and alcoholic fermentation in a new aesthetically pleasing, state-of-the-art vat room set aside just for this wine. The end of fermentation and ageing on the lees take place in barrels. Only one third of these are new, and the lees are regularly stirred (bâtonnage) for ten months. The final blend is made after tasting. It usually consists predominantly of Sauvignon Blanc and a few lots of Sémillon.</p>
Tasting Note	<p>Y is only made in select vintages. The first vintage of this dry white wine was made in 1959. The berries for Y are picked prior to the harvesting of vines for the Sauternes. Y is typically a mixture of 80% Sauvignon Blanc and 20% Semillon. The Semillon is picked just prior to developing noble rot for this wine. Y is a rare find, as less than 1,000 cases are produced of this wine a year. Y has a dry steeliness from Sauvignon Blanc coupled with the richly honeyed qualities of Semillon</p>
Serve with	Chicken, seafood, fish.
Production	<p>With an annual production of 10,000 bottles in a normal year, Y (pronounced "ee-grek" in French) is a rare wine. The production of 2020 vintage was cut by half. It is made from the same outstanding terroir and the same vines as Château d'Yquem. Although work in the vineyard is every bit as meticulous, the grapes are picked, and the wine made in a different way.</p>
Cellaring	Drink 2023-2039
Scores/Awards	<p>93+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Independent - March 2022</p> <p>95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - December 2021</p> <p>16.5 points - JancisRobinson, JancisRobinson.com - December 2021</p> <p>97 points - Jane Anson, Insidebordeaux.com - September 2021</p> <p>91 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous (score only) - December 2021</p> <p>94 points - Jean-Marc Quarin (score only) - September 2021</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"The 2020 Y (Ygrec) de Château d'Yquem skips out of the glass with energetic lemon drops, lime leaves, and green apple notes, plus touches of white pepper, coriander seed, and sea spray. Dry, racy, and medium-bodied, it delivers a satiny texture and tongue-tingling zesty layers with impressive intensity and flare. Shimmering with vibrancy at this youthful stage, it currently offers layered mineral and spice panache while undoubtedly holding something back for cellaring. Fun to drink now, give it a good 4-5 years to really start to shine, then drink it over the next 15-years+."</i></p> <p>- LPB, Wine Independent</p> <p><i>"A minerally and solid Ygrec with sliced pear, dried lemon, and some green melon. Full and layered with a lemon-sherbet aftertaste. Soft and bright. Bitter lemon at the finish. Layered. Lively. Classy. 75% sauvignon blanc and 25% Semillon. Drink or hold."</i></p> <p>- JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>"Give this 5 or 10 minutes to open in the glass because it has a pretty serious structure, deftly weighted, full of white pear, quince and apricot pit, balanced by savoury rosemary, straw and fennel notes, successful and totally moreish. A vintage that had the freshness necessary for great white wines in Bordeaux, and Y pulls away from the pack with this wine."</i></p> <p>- JA, Inside Bordeaux</p> <p><i>"Pale lemon color. Very zesty and bright on the nose – this is all grapefruit and lemon pith. The palate follows in fruit profile. The acidity is positively brisk, washing away any fat from the Sémillon. What remains is a wine of delicacy, refinement, and drive. It is already a pleasure to drink."</i></p> <p>- JH, JancisRobinson.com</p>
