



GRAND VINTAGE COLLECTION 2003 Creamy – Generous – Deep

Moët & Chandon holds one of the most prestigious collections of rare vintages in Champagne.

Each Grand Vintage in the Collection is unique, expressing the personal interpretation of a remarkable year by our Cellar Master Benoît Gouez.

Grand Vintage Collection 2003 is the perfect embodiment of the Moët & Chandon Grand Vintage Collection spirit, a spirit founded on three essential values:

- freedom of interpretation
- selection of the year's most remarkable wines
- individuality of the vintage

to create champagnes distinguished by their maturity, complexity and charisma.

Weather conditions

The winter preceding 2003 was cold and harsh. January and February brought four weeks of frost and snow. In March, the weather suddenly became milder and bud break was too early. On April 7th, 9th, 10th and 11th, there was an even more severe frost with temperatures going down to -11°C (12°F). 13,000 hectares of vines were badly damaged, some totally destroyed, especially the Chardonnay and Grand Crus. We have to go back to the middle of the 20th century to see a comparable disaster. In the spring and early summer, the weather situation worsened: between May and July, there were eight hailstorms, including a violent storm on June 10th, that tore through 650 hectares, devastating the vines which, with tragic irony, had miraculously escaped the frost. Finally, moving from one extreme to the other, the summer was just as crazy as the previous year: temperatures were exceptionally high for three long months, peaking at historic levels with a dramatic heatwave in August.

Harvesting

The 2003 harvest was the culmination of an extraordinary, somewhat worrying growing season, full of excesses, with the most severe frost since 1957, the earliest flowering since 1971, the smallest harvest since 1985 and a heatwave during the hottest summer ever recorded. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these extremes concluded with the first grapes being picked on August 18th, the earliest since 1822.

The combination of a very small harvest and the heatwave resulted in the grapes ripening incredibly quickly, and harvests beginning on August 18th, the earliest for 181 years!

Blend: Meunier 43%, Pinot Noir 29%, Chardonnay 28%

Chardonnay, the ripest and healthiest of the grapes, is in the majority, while Meunier, not as mature and more fragile at the end of the harvest, is less present than in previous vintages. Pinot Noir, intermediate in terms of ripeness and health, completes the assemblage.

Disgorgement: May 2017

Dosage: 5g/liter (extra-brut)

Maturation time in the cellars: 14 years

Tasting notes

Bright, golden color, still with a hint of green.

On the nose, the dusky, creamy, velvety maturity is obvious and omnipresent.

The initial notes are of crème brûlée, praline and nougatine. On aeration, the reductive roasted layer (coffee beans, toasted hazelnuts) gives way to warm, colorful evocations of dried fruit such as apricot, date, and fig. This fruity generosity mingles with hints of tea and spices.

The palate is full-bodied, voluptuous and enveloping, without any heaviness. The wine's substance is smooth and velvety. The fruit is concentrated, reminiscent of a roasted, flambéed pineapple. After 14 years maturing in our cellars, the initial bitterness has softened, the finish has become smooth but remains surprisingly fresh with notes of sap, fig and dark chocolate.

From an unparalleled year and incomparable fruit, Moët & Chandon has produced a deep champagne, which has no need for artifice and impresses with its straightforward style. A wine which, having gone through all these trials, reveals a generous personality with a robust serenity and a comfortable presence.

Please drink responsibly.