



# Ballade de LA POINTE 2017

## General Information

Ballade de La Pointe

Vintage : 2017

Production : 17 500 bottles

Merlot 93% – Cabernet Franc 7%

Alcohol content : 13.5°

Appellation : Pomerol. Area : Right Bank. Region : Bordeaux.

Vineyard and soil type: 23 hectares on small gravel and pebble soils of the Isle river terrace, clayey-gravel and sandy soils over clay or gravel sub-soils.

Vinification and ageing: traditional Bordeaux methods.

Distribution : through wine merchants of the Place de Bordeaux.

Owner : SCE Château La Pointe. General Manager : Eric Monneret.

Vine and Wine Consultant : Hubert de Bouïard de Laforest.

## Weather conditions

**Two nights of rare frost, the crop was practically destroyed, the team was traumatised :**

The winter had finished on a mild note and the early spring was wet with higher than average temperatures, leading to an early budburst and vigorous growth of the vegetation. This explains why the frost that hit on the 27th and 28th April was so damaging in many vineyards. The very dry weather in April, on the other hand, modified the usual configuration of sensitive areas and the region experienced considerable loss of yields in plots rarely concerned by frost in the past. This is exactly what

happened at Château La Pointe whose vines had not seen frost since 1991, 26 years previously. There is absolutely no link between the quality of a *terroir* and the intensity of the frost. It is, above all, a question of topography or corridors that allow the cold to circulate and accumulate.

More than 80% of our crop was lost, a true traumatism for all the staff as they could only observe, powerless, as the young spring shoots, burnt by frost-bite, shrivelled with each passing hour. We had to react very quickly to establish the individual situation within each plot. Even if most were damaged at 100%, some sections had been totally spared and others were only partially damaged.

The plots that had escaped went on to a very early flowering. June was very hot and sunny. Luckily, the temperate months of July and August maintained a nice acidity in the fruit, bringing a very pleasant freshness. The sugar levels were not excessive and the vine care and development progressed normally through to harvest time.

It was however necessary to invest a great deal of effort in the partially damaged plots to guarantee regular quality and even ripeness throughout, removing the second-generation buds that had appeared spontaneously following the frost : A Herculean task performed by hand, alas rewarded by very small volumes to crop.

There were no surprises during vinification. The quality was truly very high yet when we began selecting batches during our blend trials, we were unable to find the profile of our first wine. We simply did not have the usual available palette of our different *terroirs*. We therefore made the very difficult decision to not produce a first wine “Château La Pointe” for this vintage and to blend everything, including some of our very best plots, into our second wine “Ballade de La Pointe”.

## **Tasting comment**

“ The robe is a beautiful, brilliant ruby colour with a hint of carmine. The nose offers aromas of wild flowers, violet, wallflowers...In the mouth the entry is fresh and well balanced,

leading to a well- structured mid-palate with slightly toasty notes and red fruit. This wine finishes on a sensation of pure instant pleasure.”

*(March 2018, Primeurs tasting comment by Hubert de Boüard de Laforest)*

## **When to taste ?**

To drink or to keep?

The 2017 is a high potential vintage.

Ballade de La Pointe may be opened according to your whim, either in its early years or up to eight years old and beyond.

To air, decant or just enjoy?

With *Ballade de La Pointe* our recommended approach is to avoid the ritualization around tasting, you simply choose a vintage, open the bottle, pour delicately and take your time to enjoy. Allow the wine to tell you its own story as it evolves in the glass over the evening...