



LA GRANDE DAME

Champagne

1998

■ Vintage

An extremely **cold winter**, with snow on the Montagne de Reims, gave way to an unexpected warm spell with moderate rain showers. A little frost was noted in the most vulnerable areas.

Spring was **early and wet**, while **May** was particularly **hot and dry**. Rain at the end of June did not affect flowering, which took place under excellent, nearly heat wave, conditions. Rain and hot weather alternated at the beginning of summer, encouraging the vines to grow rapidly.

August was **dry and sunny**, perfect for ripening the grapes.

After a grey and cloudy two weeks at the beginning of September, the weather turned, providing the ideal dry climate to harvest the grapes, which were in superb condition.

■ Wine

The basic blend is made up of **64% Pinot Noir** grapes from the Grands Crus at Aÿ, in the Vallée de la Marne, and at Verzenay, Verzy, Ambonnay and Bouzy in the Montagne de Reims.

The blend also includes **36% Chardonnay** grapes from three Grands Crus: Avize, Oger and Le Mesnil-sur-Oger in the Côte des Blancs

■ Sensory perceptions

La Grande Dame 1998 has a **pale gold colour** with **jade glints**. The wine is **crystal clear**, with unbelievably **fine bubbles**.

On the first nose, typical Chardonnay characteristics come to the fore, with the arrival of **floral and mineral aromas** (acacia, ferns, chalk).

By agitating the wine, scents of candied **fruit** (citrusfruits, apricots, quince) and sweet almond emerge, to reappear later in the mouth. After rotating the wine for a few minutes more, rare notes such as **peaty malt, tobacco** and **delicate herbs**, are gradually unveiled.

This aromatic, impressively complex bouquet is confirmed in the mouth. **On the palate**, the wine is **clear-cut** and **pure**, perfectly balanced with a **delightful silky smoothness**.

La Grande Dame 1998, with its lace-like construction, has a long, lively, and structured finish. **This wine has unbelievable ageing potential**.

The 1998 vintage of La Grande Dame, the quintessence of the Veuve Clicquot style, reaches a peak of refinement, without losing its legendary strength produced by a blend including nearly two-thirds of Pinot Noir.