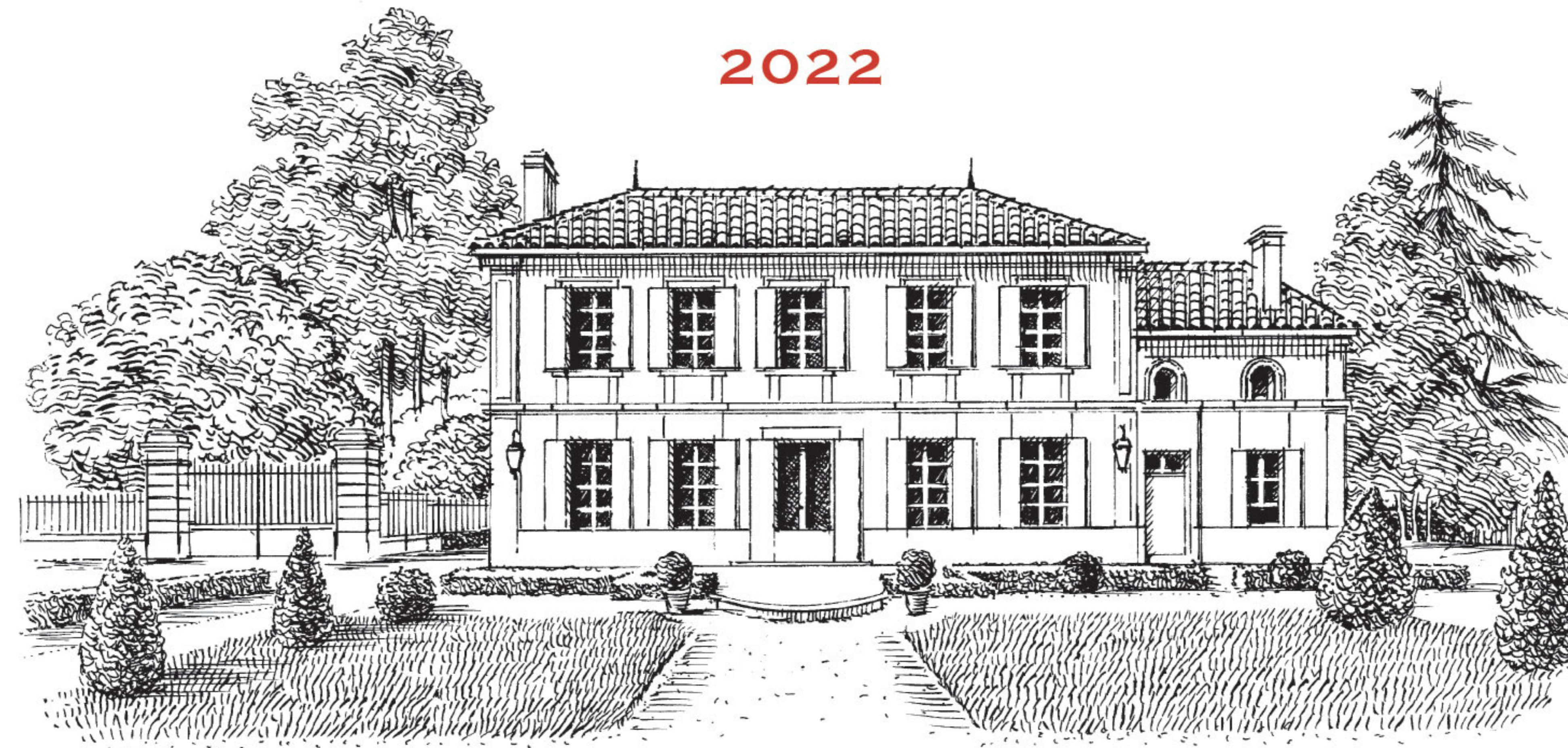


Château Fontenil
Rolland
FRONSAC

2022





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Despite extreme weather conditions which might have dampened expectations, the 2022 vintage proved the superb resistance of the vines and winegrowers alike. These two allies joined forces as they battled against the elements, adapting on the one hand and interpreting on the other to produce a rare vintage.

“Alone of all plants, only the vine can reveal to us the true flavour of the land. And how truthfully it translates it! Through each bunch it senses and expresses the secrets of the earth.” Colette

Such strength and resourcefulness against all odds!

A mild and particularly dry winter led to early bud break in late March, resulting in dramatic consequences in many areas when spring frost struck from the 2nd to the 5th of April. Fortunately, we had chosen to prune the most exposed plots in two passes, which spared us the worst. Of course, a few buds fell off and, above all, vegetative growth was brought to a halt.

The first flowers eventually appeared around the 17th of May in the southern plots, and even, quick flowering was in full swing throughout the vineyard before the end of the month.

The prospect of a dry summer was looming when a severe hailstorm significantly damaged all the plots in the northern part of the vineyard on the 20th of June: we suffered an estimated 10 to 80% losses, particularly in our small one-hectare white wine vineyard. Fifty millimetres of



2022

TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS

rain then fell until the end of the month, and were almost the last of the season, with July and August recording very high temperatures, up to four degrees above average.

The spring and summer of 2022 were mainly hot and dry (150 mm less summer rainfall than in the past ten years, combined with a winter water deficit), but the grapes were particularly healthy, with no sign of fungal diseases.

Véraison (colour change) got off to a slow start in mid-July, in the middle of a heatwave: the vines and their photosynthesis slowed down, the plants were under stress. However, the consequences of these summer heatwaves were not at all reminiscent of a sunny vintage.

Certainly, the production of phenolic compounds in small-sized grapes are physiological factors that minimise shrivelling. However, it should be emphasised that vineyard management has changed significantly over the past 20 years. We have adapted our practices, now focusing on maintaining balance, revitalising life in the soil, structuring the organic matter to provide more nutrients for the vines, and creating a clay-humus complex that aerates the soil rather than

compacts it. Our Fronsac molasses where these principles are applied were better able to resist the extreme heat. The resulting grapes were better-balanced and less dehydrated, with fresher aromas, less reminiscent of prunes.

We harvested our few white wine grapes on the 1st of September under clement conditions, followed by the Merlots, picked serenely from the 8th to the 17th. They showed thick yet smooth skins, good photosynthesis with lower sugar levels compared to previous vintages, ripe fruit with no signs of heaviness, and well-balanced pH levels and acidity. Gentle extraction yet long maceration then helped enhance the mid-palate.

The resulting wines are concentrated, unctuous and rich but not heavy, with pure fruity notes and panache – all the hallmarks of a great vintage, unfortunately produced in such few quantities.

An extreme year marked by frost, hail, drought, and heatwaves, yet a combination of late pruning, green cover, deep clay soils and an emphasis on observing rather than intervening saved the day and ensured the success of this incre-



- **Area:** Fronsac
- **Surface:** 10 ha
- **Soil:** plateaux and ledges in the foothills: limestone with red clay pad and siliceous limestone. Sandy clay and gravel, ocher clay.
- **Vine age:** an average of 50 years old
- **Plant density:** 6 000 plants / ha
- **Yield:** 26 hl/ha
- **Blend:** 100% Merlot
- **Harvest dates :** from September 8 to 17, 2022.

VINEYARD (work done):

- Soil management all year long. Groping and cover crop management
- Side shoot removal
- Organic spray program

WINEMAKING:

- Handmade harvest and double sorting
- Vinification intégrale in oak barrels and tanks (treading) - stainless steel tanks - indigenous yeasts
- Cool maceration 8 days and 40 days on marc
- Aging in barrels with 30% new.



ratings
2022

JEB DUNNUCK

92/94 PTS

The 2022 Château Fontenil is a beauty, and as with the Castillon region, Fronsac has some true gems that compete with the top wines. Black cherries, currants, spicy oak, and graphite all emerge from the glass, and this is full-bodied, with a layered, concentrated texture and ripe tannins. It's going to need 3-5 years of bottle age, but this brilliant 2022 is well worth seeking out.

THE WINE CELLAR INSIDER

94/96 PTS

With an opaque hue, the wine opens with all the black plums, black cherries, chocolate, flowers and licorice you need to start your day. But with the 2022, it is the palate, with its opulent, rich, endless waves of perfectly ripe, mineral-driven fruits that steal the show. The finish, with its layers of velvet-edged, creamy fruits finishes with salty, crushed stone accents, giving you length purity and complexity. Part of the reason the 2022 is so strong is that Le Defi was not produced this year, so all of that fruit was included this year. Drink from 2026-2042.

falstaff

94 PTS

Dark ruby, opaque core, purple reflections, subtle brightening on the rim. Ripe plumps, black cherries, some nougat, a shy bouquet. Juicy on the palate with ripe plums, some nougat, underpinned by vivid tannins, chocolatey finish, a wine with depth and a spicy food wine. Certain ageing potential. Peter Moser



94/95 PTS

The nose is elegant, racy and offers power, concentration and a beautiful balance. It reveals notes of pulpy blackberry, toasted and small notes of fleshy/pulpy strawberry associated with touches of crushed small fruits as well as hints of spices (nutmeg, etc.), pepper, slight hints of violet, a sense of place (terroir / local biotop) as well as a discreet hint of bergamot / a delicate infusion side and tonka bean. The palate is mineral, fruity, beautifully balanced and offers freshness, juiciness, roundness, suppleness, gourmandize, a nice harmony as well as a beautiful, delicate and powerful texture of the matter. On the palate, this wine expresses notes of pulpy/fleshy blackberry, fleshy cassis and small notes of crushed small red fruits associated with a touch fresh – roasted small fruits, fresh flowers, hints of racy minerality (beauty of the limestone, of the terroir) as well as hints of tonka bean, grilled/roasted and cocoa. Tannins are precise, relatively powerful and mellow.



ratings
2022

JAMES SUCKLING.COM

93/94 PTS

Blackberry, hazelnut and tar aromas and flavors follow through to a medium body, with firm and savory tannins that run the length of the wine. Savory finish. Excellent structure.



94 PTS

Dark purple colour with violet hue and black core. Rich and opulent nose with distinct toasting, slightly smoke minerality, dark chocolate and coffee backed by succulent fruit, ripe blackberries, black cherries and hints of blackcurrant jelly. On the palate well structured with ripe tannins, good mid-palate and convincing length. A rich wine with freshness. Marcus Del Monego

JEAN-MARC QUARIN

92 PTS

Couleur rouge pourpre, aux reflets noirs. Nez très aromatique, au fruité mûr, légèrement toasté. Bouche au corps tout en douceur suave, avec une pulpe inédite, une saveur florale au milieu et une fin de bouche où tout fond et se trame longtemps. 100 % merlot.

Yves Beck

92/94 PTS

Le bouquet de Fontenil révèle bien l'élevage du vin au travers de nuances de torréfaction complétées par des notes crayeuses, des fruits frais, du chocolat et une touche de garrigues. Fin, mais puissant, le vin est parfaitement soutenu par des tannins qui serrent encore un peu, mais qui harmonisent avec la structure acide. Cette dernière confère une fraîcheur bienvenue. Finale fruitée, de bonne persistance.

JANEANSON
INSIDE BORDEAUX

92 PTS

Coffee bean and smoke on the first nose, beautiful deep ruby colour, plenty of limestone fingerprinting coming through, giving a mouthwatering lemongrass edge that helps balance out the dominating spice, tobacco and grilled red fruits. 30% new oak, home estate of Dany Rolland. Plenty of estate signature, a definite crowd pleaser.

B My Bordeaux

My word for 2022 Bordeaux is Fronsac! Christer Byklum

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