



CHATEAU CHANGYU MOSER XV

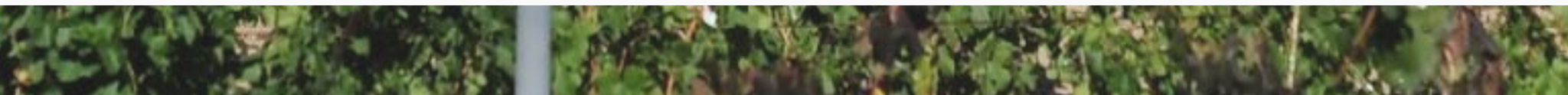
THE 2017 VINTAGE



The nature of 2017 red wines is a very special one for me. In a string of 3 consecutive great vintages (2015, 2016, 2017) I do rate 2017 the best. The best, especially from a wine lover's perspective and the enjoyment/drinking factor and also the most durable one.

Cabernet Sauvignon, for all CHATEAU CHANGYU MOSER XV wines gave us the most elegant and "freshest" wines ever. Extreme and really seductive & unique fruit concentration in the nose with red and black berry tones, pure cassis and chocolaty expressions from the perfect Ningxia fruit – the typically small berries did the trick again. Ningxia is so dry that the berries develop a thicker skin than usual and don't grow too big either, resulting in a unique concentration of flavours and tannins once mature. The 2017 grapes were the best I have ever seen – healthy, perfectly mature and harvested at the right timing. In my 3rd year of harvesting here in Ningxia I have gathered enough experience with this desert climate to perform the right timing, the right speed of harvesting – a mere 3 days longer sometimes dries out the grapes so radically ... resulting in lower acidity and much higher alcohols ...

Therefore, as intended and with the right timing in 2017, alcohol levels are down by 1 - 1.5 degrees making the wines more harmonious, balanced, easier to enjoy. The higher acidity levels enhance the freshness, "boost" the pure Cabernet fruit which is ever important in today's winemaking. The pure and super concentrated Cabernet, due to Ningxia typically small berries will be one of the differentiating pillars of Ningxia reds in the future.



One special observation in this year's harvest: I was surprised by the many "red" berries as opposed to the typical dark blue berries in Cabernet Sauvignon in 2017. Although the sugar readings were almost identical as the regular berries, the seeds were much less brown, indicating phenolic ripeness being behind sugar readings. In the end we sorted most of these berries – with the help of our ultra modern berry sorting machine from Bucher Vaslin (the only one in Ningxia).

Only a few red berries remained intentionally – for spice and extra freshness in the wines.

A beauty again is the White Cabernet! Also lighter in alcohol (1 degree), hence fresher, crisper and sensational fruit expression to be expected. The quality was so excellent that we decided to age part of it in French barriques – a limited cuvee for selected global customers to be released in mid 2019. And, what the White Cabernet did to our reds for the first time, since it was all from de-juicing our reds – resulted in a true win-win situation: first we did get the stunning White Cabernet and secondly we created a much better "skin to liquid ratio" for the reds – more to extract = more concentration and elegance in the reds – due to superbly mature berries and tannins.



THE 2017 VINTAGE

Yields were in the long term average – i.e. at the vineyard around the château with 6,000 kg per ha in the younger vineyards – 12 years old vines. Our older vines, up to 18 years gave us average yields around 5,000 kg per ha. 300 ha of grapes were used to bring in the château harvest in 2017 – the total production will be around 600,000 bottles, with ca. 180,000 bottles of white, a small production of our rosé and the balance being red.



Now we have to take great care of the wines in terms of cellar management and the right barrel regime – which will be completely different than in previous years. For the 2017 we shall use less new French oak (only up to 60 % for the Grand Vin and 30 % for the Second Vin). A different mix of oak is applied also – less toasting and less "tough/tannic" wood (i.e. Tarransaud) and more used barrels – for the first time we shall have a blending reserve in stainless steel, in order to bring the pure Ningxia fruit even better to the bottle.