



ALENTEJO - PORTUGAL

**CORTES DE CIMA**

FAMILY VINEYARDS

## 2017 VINTAGE REPORT

**2017 marks the 21st vintage at Cortes de Cima. An exceptionally early and compressed harvest, resulting from one of the hottest and driest years in decades.**

An atypical dry and warm winter was followed by an unusually cold and dry spring. The little rain that fell was distributed between November and March, leaving soils with a low moisture content at the start of the growing season, meaning irrigation was crucial from the start. Budburst occurred a week later than usual, on the 9th of March. For the first time in our winegrowing history we were hit by a late frost in April, which affected, but was thankfully also limited to, the early budbreaking Alicante Bouchet. Temperatures picked up late spring, speeding up the subsequent phenological development of the vines. Warm and dry weather ensured an even flowering and fruit set, about 2 weeks earlier than normal, securing stable yields. Low disease pressure was assured by the warm and dry weather that followed.

Summer was marked by a number of very hot days, which meant meticulous irrigation management to control vine stress levels and precise canopy management to protect bunches from direct sunlight in the hottest parts of the day, were instrumental to maintain high quality post veraison.

One of our earliest harvests ever, we started picking whites during the second week of August. Albeit no rain, the hot weather persisted throughout the harvest, leading also to one of our shortest vintages lasting just over one month as it was crucial to harvest the grapes to avoid raisining of the bunches and retain freshness.

Despite the warmer ripening period, the subsequent shorter hang time resulted in lighter, elegant wines, with an underlying freshness, which are now safely maturing in our cellar.

Our vineyards on the Atlantic coast experienced similar weather patterns although, as per usual, with less marked temperature extremes due to the proximity of the ocean. The cooler ripening period allowed for excellent flavor development of our coastal fruit. The wines are showing great fruit purity and freshness and promise another great coastal vintage.

