

2.2 “Vistalys”

The ultimate grapes sorting technology for Lapostolle Wines: Cuvée and Casa!

A few years ago, our Technical Manager, Jacques Begarie, was amazed by a technology able to perform an optical selection of fruit and vegetables. For example; with tomatoes, the machine was capable to choose only the best fruit by a visual selection. How can this be done? You must first establish desired parameters in a computer: for example size and color, then the machine does the rest. When he heard that the French company Bucher was working on a new machine with this type of technology, he had no reservations cooperating with them to develop this type of machine selection for grapes. Beginning with the 2009 harvest the machine was ready to be used in real life. It was named “Vistalys”.

Here Jacques tells us his about it:

How does Vistalys work?

“Well, first of all you have to know that our objective during the grapes reception is to select the best berries to go into the tanks; without raisins or pieces of stems and leaves;

pure fruit only. So first we need a “destemming machine” which will separate berries from stems. But destemming machines always need some extra help to clean the fruit. Traditionally this extra help is done by hand on long sorting tables, but today we have a new technology: Vistalys. Now, Vistalys has an optic selection, it means that the berries pass through a camera which transfers an image to a computer which identifies the undesired elements, like pieces of leaves, raisins, unripe berries and stems. These “undesirables” will be ejected by an air flow.”

What is the benefit for the wines when using the Vistalys optic selection?

“We wish to achieve wines with abundant fruit aromas; we achieve this with better control over the selection; this is exactly what we look for in our wines and what the machine gave to us.”

Jerome Poisson, assistant winemaker, who works with Jacques Begarie, has said *“The sorting of Vistalys is faster than a 7 person team. It also works constant over time, it is more efficient. So today, we can do a better, faster and homogeneous selection for all the grapes: Casa and Cuvée Alexandre. In addition, Lapostolle is the first winery in the world using Vistalys for large scale production.”*

