



CHATEAU MARGAUX



Margaux du Château Margaux 2011

Margaux, France

ESTATE

It is difficult to sum up in a few lines the long and splendid history of the estate. It was already known in the 12th century but there were not yet any vines. In the 16th century the estate anticipated the future development of the Médoc, which was to start abandoning the cultivation of cereal crops in favor of vines, and Château Margaux became a high place in the art of growing and making wine.

WINE

For nearly two decades, Château Margaux have been making a third wine from their estate as part of a stricter selection process for their Château Margaux and Pavillon Rouge. Starting with the great vintage of 2009 it was clear that there were high quality vineyards producing high quality fruit that while not quite at the level of today's Pavillon Rouge, were still of a level that would make Château Margaux proud to put their name on the label.

VINEYARD

The estate has 200 acres under vine. Each plot and each variety are treated differently from pruning throughout the growing season. Chateau Margaux' goal is to nurture and maintain vines for as long as possible, as they believe vines need to reach 20 years of age to produce great wine. The estate is constantly trying to understand through experimentation how to improve soil health and fruit quality. Today, no insecticides are used, there is an important balance of healthy insects to counter pests, and any number of experiments with ploughing, organic farming, and biodynamic applications are ongoing. A final key point to note, Margaux has for the last 30+ years had among the lowest yields in the Medoc.

WINEMAKING

Varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon made up 55% of the blend, with Merlot 45% of the blend.

Aging: The wine was aged for 15 months, in 10% new oak and 90% second use barrels. Importantly, the wine was held in bottle until ready to drink, which meant that it was released after the 2013 vintage.

VINTAGE

This vintage benefited from a summery climate in April and May, hotter and drier than normal. June, July and August were cool but dry, and amplified the phenomenon of drought conditions, most notably in the extremely low yields, the lowest in 20 years. The vast majority of vines reached perfect ripeness, resulting in not only an excellent Grand Vin and Pavillon Rouge but a very fine Margaux du Château Margaux, as well. These wines are the fruit of a rigorous selection process. Indeed, all grapes from the youngest vines, which suffered considerably from the summer drought, were downgraded into a fourth selection sold in bulk. This wine is remarkably concentrated—one of the benefits of the prolonged drought — and needed time for its imposing tannic structure to round out and soften.

TASTING NOTE

A lovely ruby color, this wine is imbued with harmonious oak notes and is floral and fruity on the nose. It is dense, powerful and lingering on the palate, yet unflinchingly balanced, thanks to its remarkable freshness.