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## Château Margaux 2011

CSPC# 749584

750mlx6

13.5% alc./vol.

### Grape Variety

86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot, 2% Cabernet Franc

### Appellation

Margaux

### Website

<http://www.chateau-margaux.com/en/>

### General Info

1st classified growth in 1855. The château, already known in the 12th century under the name La Mothe de Margaux, started only to resemble to what it is today when the Lestonnac family took it over in 1572 and undertook important restructuring. By the end of the 17th century, Château Margaux already covered 265 hectares (654 acres). At the beginning of the 18th century the estate manager Berlon was the first to vinify red grapes and white grapes separately and understood the importance of terroir. In 1810, a Basque, Bertrand Douat, Marquis de la Colonilla, owner since 1801, built the neo-palladian style residence of Margaux and the cellars which we still admire today. After several successions of owners, the Ginestet family bought the chateau in 1950 after being obliged by the serious economic crises to sell it in 1977 to André Mentzelopoulos, a Greek at the head of the grocery shops Félix Potin. André Mentzelopoulos sensed the opportunity and invested massively without expecting any immediate return in a market that was still depressed and a few years away from the new golden age for Bordeaux at the end of the 20th century. He made spectacular moves: in the vineyard, where better drainage was introduced and new plantations made; in the cellars, under the supervision of the oenologist Emile Peynaud, Pavillon Rouge was reintroduced with a considerable increase in selection; new oak barrels were used to age the wine, plans were drawn up for the first great cellar in the region to be built underground (a technical feat), and Pavillon Blanc was redefined. In the château and its outbuildings, under the supervision of the inspectors for Historic Monuments (Margaux is a classified monument), the reconstitution of the architectural heritage and the renovation of the interior were carried out. All of this was done with deep respect for the existing structures and with the determined aim of allowing the terroir to express its fabulous qualities. Since his death in 1980, his daughter Corinne Mentzelopoulos has been managing the estate and pursuing the investment program of her father.

### Vintage

The wine-growing year started with a virtually summery climate, the months of April and May being a lot hotter and drier than normal. The start-up and growth of the vines was, therefore, very quick and flowering was particularly early. Following that, the months of June, July and August were rather cool, but not wet enough, especially at Margaux, to really change the drought status of the vineyard, a characteristic of the vintage. The 26th and 27th of June were hotter than we had ever seen; numerous bunches of grapes, ready to ripen, taking into account the precocity of the vintage, were subjected to intense heat which caused some damage, particularly in the not very vigorous cabernet sauvignon parcels. The dryness of the vineyard after three months of drought probably amplified this phenomenon, of which the consequences remain generally limited. The harvest, which started on the 25th August for the whites, and the 5th September for the reds, benefited from generally hot and dry weather, which allowed plenty of time for the various sorting operations made necessary by the problems of intense heat. Our only disappointment is the quantity: with a yield of 29hl/ha, the 2011 vintage is the smallest harvest for 20 years!

### Vineyards

The estate has 80 hectares under vine, with Cabernet Sauvignon inevitably dominant (75%) with 20% Merlot making up most of the rest, along with a smattering of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot.

### Harvest

Picking started on September 5 and finished on September 20, 2011

### Maturation

Fermentation takes place in oak vats, and ageing is in 100% new barrels for 22 months.



**Tasting Notes** Whatever the conditions of the vintage, the « hard core » of the quality, that is to say all the parcels which make up the basis of the Château Margaux first wine blend, has been remarkably stable for the last three hundred and fifty years... These very great terroirs have a better resistance than the others to rain, drought and disease, and sometimes, even to the inconsistency of man. 2011 hasn't escaped this rule: we can find 38% of the harvest in the first wine, the same proportion as last year. Of course, the Cabernet Sauvignon also always largely dominates with 86% of the blend. This year it is uncommonly strong, vigorous and fortunately balanced with lots of smoothness; followed by Merlot (10%), Petit Verdot (2%) Cabernet Franc (2%). Château Margaux 2011 is the most concentrated wine we have ever produced. And yet, we barely notice its tannins....

**Production** 130,000 bottles made

**Cellaring** Drink 2017-2030

**Scores/Awards** **94 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2014  
**93-96 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2012  
**93 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #212 - April 2014  
**94-96 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #200 - April 2012  
**93-95 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2012  
**94-95 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2012  
**94-96 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 5, 2012  
**92-95 points** - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - April 2012  
**17.5 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2012  
**18.5 points** - Decanter.com - April 2011  
**95 points** - Jane Anson, The New Bordeaux - April 2012  
**93 points** - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only)  
**94-95 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 19, 2012  
**93-95 points** - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - April 2012  
**92-94 points** - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - April 2012  
**18 points** - Simon Staples, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants - April 2012  
**95 points** - Gilbert & Gaillard - April 24, 2011  
**95 points** - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)  
**20 points** - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)  
**95points** - Falstaff Magazine (score only)  
**18 points** - Gault & Millau (score only)

**Reviews** *"This has a restrained core of steeped plum, blackberry and anise, studded with tobacco and roasted cedar notes. The structure is silky but persistent, with an almost-succulent feel through the finish, while warm bergamot, singed cedar, vanilla and sanguine hints define the finish. Discreet today but shows the balance and precision to unfold slowly with cellaring. Best from 2017 through 2030"*  
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"This is succulent, with an almost jammy cassis, plum and black currant profile, though that's quickly harnessed by riveting acidity on the finish, which lets additional floral, bay leaf, tobacco and perfume notes play out. There's very impressive range here already. Tasted non-blind. Score range: 93-96"*  
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"The renowned Chateau Margaux's 2011 boasts a dark ruby/plum color as well as a fragrant perfume of spring flowers, sweet, supple, well-integrated tannins, medium body, and the elegance and nobility expected from a great first-growth. Although it is not as powerful or concentrated as the 2009 or 2010 (no 2011s are), it possesses finesse, elegance, purity and suppleness. The wine is surprisingly approachable already yet should keep for 15-20 years."*  
- RP, Wine Advocate

*"Administrator Paul Pontallier is nearly embarrassed to explain the amazing success of the 2011 Chateau Margaux, a candidate for wine of the vintage. With the harvest from September 5-20, it was the smallest crop in over twenty years as yields were cut significantly by the drought. The berries were tiny. Moreover, analytically, the 2011 has a higher level of concentration as well as tannins than the 2009. A blend of 86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot and the rest Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc, only 38% of the harvest made it into the grand vin. The wine offers an inky/purple color, barely noticeable sweet tannin, and a beautiful nose of creme de*

**Reviews** *cassis, spring flowers and lead pencil shavings backed up by fresh acids and good overall structure. This medium to full-bodied effort possesses tremendous personality and character. It rivals what they achieved in both 2010 and 2009, which is virtually impossible to contemplate given the quality of those two vintages."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*"Representing 38% of the crop, the Grand Vin is a blend of 86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot and 2% Cabernet Franc. Harvest began 5th September with the earlier ripening Merlot and finished around the 20th. It has a very strict bouquet, very linear, a no-frills aromatic profile that delivers straight to the senses minerality, with touches of graphite and cedar from the intense Cabernet. The palate is medium bodied with a more understated entry. The Cabernet is very pure right from the outset with blackberry, graphite, a saline tincture and a touch of black olive. It has a fine framework of taut tannins, beautifully composed as usual, with a finish that unlike 2009 or 2010, is very precise and linear, finishing off dry and abruptly. There is not a great long tail on the finish, but that would not suit this style of Margaux, one that is more masculine in style. Tasted April 2012"*

- NM, Wine Journal

*"Very elegant and ethereal with ultra-fine tannins and delicate fruit. Full body. I love the floral and aromatic quality to this. Then the tannins kick in. This has more tannins than 2010, according to technical director Paul Pontallier, and others, but you can't tell when tasting it."*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"94-96. Barrel sample. Dry with a firm core of dark tannins and solid fruits. It is packed with tannins, showing tight acidity as well as a forward black-currant flavor. It dances with the appellation's classic lightness."*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"Very small berries brought greater concentration but also had to be careful with the extraction. Deep dark crimson. Rich, dark and intense fruit on the nose. Floral note of violets too – open and expressive with plenty of fruit. Expressive on the palate – open and approachable and soft. Balanced and harmonious but almost too soft. 'Nothing sticks out', Paul Pontallier said, with a positive intention, but somehow it was a negative to me, all rather too safe and unexciting. Moderate length."*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*"Deep purple. Enticing aromas of plum, cassis and minerals. Silky but laid-back, with suave flavors of sweet spices, herbs, smoke and blackcurrant. This firmly built, very pure wine finishes with smooth, ripe tannins and outstanding length. A very successful Chateau Margaux and one of the best wines of the vintage."*

- ST, International Wine Cellar

*"Floral cassis fruit, lovely florality and perfect texture, beautifully harmony of expression above concentrated natural tannins."*

- Decanter.com

*"Also 30% less yield than last year, but same percentage of the global harvest went into the First Wine, just very small berries, so the production was lower. This is even more tannic than the 2010 wine if you look at the figures, and if you compare it over the longer term, you find 50% more tannins in the 2011 than in the 1982. But they have worked very carefully on ensuring everything is smooth and stately. Overall 13.1% abv, Margaux is the most expressive of the firsts on the nose, and here it has elegance and a haunting violet flower quality that really unfurls as you stand with the glass. 86% cabernet sauvignon, 10% merlot, 2% petit verdot, 2% cabernet franc. 95."*

- JA, The New Bordeaux

**Reviews** *“Blending 86% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Merlot, along with equal parts Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc, the wine is ruby in color. With delicate, complicated scents of violets, mocha, smoke, truffle, blackberry, cassis and an array of spices, the wine is soft, refined and elegant. It’s lacking the volume and darker berries found in the 2010 or 2009. Yet this is a very suave, fresh, pure, cassis-filled Margaux. 94-95 Pts”*  
- JL, [thewinecellarinsider.com](http://thewinecellarinsider.com)

*“Deep and saturated; creamy note; polished and perfumed; seam of black cherry fruit; focus here, elegance; quite spiky cabernet; chewy with density. Structured and quite tannic on the palate; more obviously so than past couple of vintages here. Very good wine and nicely handled. Not the ‘wow’ factor of ‘09 or ‘10 though. Expect it to improve during elevage though. 86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot, 2% Cabernet Franc. 13.1% alc 93-95+ Drink 2020-2030+”*  
- JW, [winewordsandvideotape.com](http://winewordsandvideotape.com)

*“Tasting wine at Ch. Margaux is one of the greatest parts of our job. It’s a true privilege. The most beautiful Château and always one of the most elegant and sophisticated wines of any trip. 2011 is no exception. Pure blast of vibrant Cabernet Sauvignon (86% this year) which should smell like blackcurrants or blackberries but here is fragrant strawberries and raspberries. Soft, round, supple. Elegance with generosity. Really beautiful. The residual aromas left in the glass are worth a trip to Bordeaux alone. Sensational.”*  
- SS, [Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants](http://Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants)

*“As expected from Margaux, the nose is gorgeous with aromas of violets, spices and blackberries. The flavours on the palate are rather dense this year (as is the Pavillon Rouge which has an enormous amount of density) and leans toward a full-bodied tannic style, which is atypical of Chateau Margaux. This year the grand vin had a very high density of tannins with an IPT level of 81 (most full-bodied reds are below 80). I would have appreciated slightly less extraction in both the grand vin and Pavillon Rouge.”*  
- JCL, [asianpalate.com](http://asianpalate.com)

*“EN PRIMEUR - Deep garnet-red. Pure nose of ripe raspberry, cherry and a graphite note. Full attack with velvety tannins. Full, warm, tannic and robust. Good balance. Very harmonious across the palate displaying wonderful potential.”*  
- [en.gilbertgaillard.com](http://en.gilbertgaillard.com)

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