

Château Margaux 2014

CSPC# 749584

750mlx6

13.2% alc./vol.

SOLD OUT

CSPC# 860782

750mlx6

13.2% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot

Appellation

Margaux

Classification

First Growth. Premier Grand Cru Classe in 1855.

Website

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

General Info

Château Margaux, a 1er Cru Classé property, has been owned by the Mentzelopoulos family since 1978 - since then it has consistently produced the finest wines in the Médoc.

One of the grandest, most imposing buildings amongst the Médoc châteaux, Ch. Margaux in its current form was built in the early 19th century, although viticulture had been practiced on the estate for several centuries before. A chequered period of ownership in the 19th and early 20th century meant that the quality of some Margaux vintages was patchy, but the change which restored the property to its rightful status came in 1977 when it was bought by André Mentzenopoulos, Greek by birth but who had lived in France since 1958 and had made a fortune through supermarket retailing. André immediately instigated much-needed investment in vineyard and cellar, but his untimely death in 1980 saw his daughter, Corinne, take up the reins. Corinne's shrewdest move was the recruitment of young, talented winemaker Paul Pontallier to oversee the production.

Paul remains at the helm nearly 30 years later, and in that time, Margaux has produced some legendary wines, but also displays a marvelous seam of consistency through good years and the not so good.

Vintage

After a very wet and mild winter, without any significant cold spells, spring was « normal »: May was rather cool and June was quite warm, so flowering happened on the usual dates, and under very favourable conditions; it was therefore very quick and homogenous, contrary to the previous year. July didn't bring us any great surprises, but August was particularly cool, without doubt one of the coldest we have seen in recent times. These low temperatures made it difficult for the grapes to change colour, which took a long time. Fortunately, it didn't rain much, but in neither July nor August did we have a really dry spell. As it often happens in Bordeaux, at the end of August anything was still possible; a prospect of a good vintage as well as of a mediocre one...

Vineyards

The estate has 82 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. Unusually in Margaux, there is a white wine made here, Pavillon Blanc, from 100% Sauvignon Blanc, while the two red wines are, of course, Ch. Margaux itself and Pavillon Rouge. Typically, about 30,000 cases of red wine are made, with the Grand Vin usually accounting for just over 40% of the total. Production of the white wine amounts to less than 3,000 cases.

Harvest

The really fine sunny weather of September brought us exactly what we were hoping for: the heat and drought enabled the grapes to ripen perfectly, and the harvest to take place under ideal conditions. The complete opposite to what happened in 2013... The white harvest took place from the 15th to the 19th of September, and the red harvest from the 29th of September to the 10th of October.

Vinification/ Maturation

Fermentation takes place in oak vats and ageing for Ch. Margaux in 100% new barrels for 22 months. It is Paul Pontallier's firmly-held belief that it is the Cabernet Sauvignon grape which is responsible for most of the sheer class which characterises the wines of Ch. Margaux and we are seeing, in consequence, an ever-greater percentage of this varietal in the blend of the Grand Vin.



Tasting Notes What a relief after the difficult moments we had in 2013! This succession of very different vintages makes Bordeaux a unique place where experience can be learned from, without having the temptation to repeat it! Besides, in 2014, the cellar designed by Norman Foster opened our eyes to new possibilities and showed where other experiments are going to sustain the progress for the coming years. A new chapter has just begun, and we have had the joy of opening it in the euphoria of a calm and easy harvest! In 2014, we went back to almost normal quantities, certainly superior to those of 2013 but not yet to the level that we would like to reach in view of the state of the vineyard; big efforts probably need to be made in order to improve the yield on a few top-quality plots. As usual, when conditions are not those of a great vintage, the gap widens between the best terroirs and the others that weren't able, in spite of a great September, to catch up completely on the time lost in August. Only our emblematic plot of Merlot, « l'Eglise », was able to be included in the first wine, which represents only 5% of the Merlot in the blend... but it is superb and counts among the best successes of these last ten years. All the great Cabernet Sauvignons are in the right place – that is to say, the best! They provide 90% of the first wine. 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot complete this blend, all in all classic these last few years. Château Margaux 2014 contains 36% of the harvest, the hard core of the great quality. It is probably illusory to imagine going above this, and perhaps dangerous to go below because each constituent, at this stage, is necessary to the overall balance. It's a powerful wine, fleshy, whose silky tannins almost make one forget the great concentration and fine acidity. It will not rank among the greatest vintages of this century -2000, 2003, 2005, 2009 and 2010- but can certainly claim a place just below.

Production 10,875 cases made

Cellaring Drink 2014-2026

Scores/Awards

95 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2017
94-97 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2015
93-95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #218 - April 29, 2015
97 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - February 2017
91-92 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2015
97 points / Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2017
95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2015
17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2015
95 points - Decanter.com - September 2015
95-97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2015
93-95 points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - April 2014
96 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2015
18+ points - Farr Vintner - March 2015
92-96 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2015
96 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - March 2015
94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2017
93-96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2015
94-96 points - Falstaff Magazine - April 2014 (score only)
18 points - Gault & Millau (score only)
18.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only)
19.5 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)
18.5 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only)

Reviews *"This is solidly packed, with layers of warm fig bread, plum compote and black currant preserves, carried by a silky yet substantial structure. As the fruit plays out, the anise, black tea and singed alder notes in the background come into clearer focus, giving this remarkable range. Everything glides beautifully through the suave, gently toasty finish. Best from 2020 through 2035. 10,835 cases made.*
- JM, Wine Spectator

Reviews *“A light savory cassis bush hint marks the Petit Verdot in this blend, but this is quickly consumed by the Cabernet Sauvignon, with a core of well-endowed cassis and plum fruit harnessed by very long, supple tannins. Gorgeous alder, lilac and iron notes begin to emerge on the finish, though this is still very primal. Sublime in feel, this offers a caressing power. A beauty in the making. Tasted non-blind. Score range: 94-97”*
- JM, Wine Spectator

“The Château Margaux 2014, represents 36% of the year’s total production and is a blend of 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. It has a distinctly floral bouquet, those trademark wilted violet scents soaring from the glass flanked by small dark cherries and a hint of cassis. It gains intensity in the glass but never puts the pedal to the floor. The palate is full-bodied with firm and bold tannins, very good density and presence. No, compared to the top-flight vintages from the estate, it is unlikely to become a Château Margaux of compelling precision or finesse. Unusually for 2014 this is a grand vin bestowed with power and dimension. There is still a little tightness here, especially on the Pauillac-like finish, but it will turn into a great if not the greatest Château Margaux.”
- NM, Wine Advocate

“The purity of cabernet sauvignon fruit is what impresses here. Subtle and energetic plum and currant aromas follow through to a gorgeously harmonized palate of wonderful fruit and an ultra-long finish. Current bush and light earth adds to the complexity. Lasts for minutes. Drink in 2022.”
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This is a very, very muscular and toned Margaux with currants, firm tannins and stones. Full and chewy yet polished and intense. Bright acidity yet a strong and flexed style.”
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“There is a sense of pure juicy black-currant fruit that shoots through this great wine. With tannins that are firm while not a jot too much, the wine is crisp, packed with fruit and set for many years of aging. It is beautiful, fruity and intensely structured. Drink from 2027.”
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“95–97. Barrel Sample. Each year, the percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend creeps up—this year it’s 90%. Despite the increase, the very fine, elegant tannins seem suspended in the wine. Ample acidity supports the black currant fruitiness, with a firm, impressive structure that promises good aging potential.”
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Bright, glowing crimson. Very subtle, quite evolved nose. Far from intense but perfumed and relatively light. Fresher than the Pavillon Rouge. The acidity and tannin are more obvious in this than in the Pavillon Rouge. Quite transparent. Just a step up from the second wine but not a standout. Beautiful texture. Very refined and slow to open out. Recalls the build of a top red bordeaux from the 1960s and 1970s. 13.2% Drink 2026-2046”
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“Striking black fruits from 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, yet restrained, even severe, with less charm and more firmness; the opposite of showy. With great natural density and tannins that do not overwhelm, this is a classical Château Margaux that will need time to fully open up.”
- Decanter.com

“A valentine of dark chocolate and roses melded with the aromatics of licorice, blackberry and cocoa create a complex perfume. The wine is elegant with a refined character, supple tannins and a burst of fresh cassis, cherry and cocoa that builds on the palate. The most striking quality to this wine is the clarity of fruit in the finish. While this vintage lacks the weight and density found in vintages like 2009 and 2010, the length is quite similar. Produced from a blend of 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, the wine reached 13.2% alcohol with a pH of 3.68. This represents 36% of the harvest. 95-97 Pts”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews *"Mid depth; legs; earthy purple at edge; stalky blackcurrant; some graphite; briary tones; fresh and quite layered; nice fragrance; mineral, taut and concentrated on the palate with fresh acidity; some chew and texture; lacks a bit of mid palate richness but will doubtless fill out. Nice length on the finish. I'm probably underrating this at present – let's see. [90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot]. Drink 2022-2035. 93-95+"*
- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

"Paul Pontallier thinks his 2014 is "better balanced" than his 2005 and "not that far off in quality", which is high praise. This is a very polished, charming Margaux, with impressive perfume, a backbone of tannin and acidity and transparent raspberry and cassis notes. The 100% new oak is deftly handled."
- TA, timatkin.com

"Since the early 1980's Margaux has produced many excellent vintages under the assured direction of Paul Pontallier. It is always impressive, whilst remaining fine and elegant. Margaux is certainly the most stylish and sophisticated of the First Growths. Quality is maintained here by a rigorous selection process and since 2009 there has been a third wine (Margaux de Margaux) produced as well as the popular second wine Pavillon Rouge. 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot and 5% Merlot. The Grand Vin will make up 36% of the total harvest. Medium-deep ruby colour. Intense floral nose with black and red cherries and a little graphite and blackcurrant. Very elegant and perfumed with a little toasted brioche from the oak. Intense and lifted on the palate with plush, fleshy and supple blackcurrant fruit and lively acidity. Precise and with supreme balance this is a very elegant wine with a real flourish of complexity on the finish from sweet spice, dried flowers and ripe forest fruits. Very fine and elegant."
- Farr Vintners

"The nose has lots of charm fragrant with a floral mix the start of the palate light and fresh. Ripe fruit gives mid richness fine tannins a fleshy suppleness plush the sweetness and ripeness at the back give way to fresh black fruits on the finish. 2027-40"
- Derek Smedley MW

"The nose is quite closed now but the concentration is there and the palate is velvety with firm, refined tannins. Notes of dark plum, black currant and savory herbs. There is good concentration with fantastic precision. 90% Cabernet Sauvignon with only 5% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. A great vintage for Margaux."
- JCL, asianpalate.com

"The 2014 Margaux is a soft, understated wine that speaks in hushed tones. Silky, delicate and understated, it offers lovely depth in a decidedly laid-back style, even by the standards of Margaux. Deceptive in its midweight structure, the 2014 is a classy wine that will likely only show its true colors with time in bottle. The wine spent 21 months in 100 % new French oak. (AG)"
- AG, Vinous

"The 2014 Margaux opens with a wonderfully aromatic, expressive bouquet. Gracious and medium in body, the 2014 is quite understated. Dark red cherry, plum, herbs, cedar, smoke and tobacco gradually come forward in a super-refined, totally polished wine. Today, the 2014 is holding back quite a bit of its potential, but the style is one of finesse rather than pure power."
- AG, Vinous
