

Château Margaux 2017

CSPC# 814290

750mlx6

13.5% alc./vol.

CSPC# 860783

750mlx6

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Cabernet Franc, 2% Merlot, 1% 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.

Winemaker

Emile Peynaud & Philippe Bascaules

Vintage

After a relatively dry 2016, the first months of 2017 brought the necessary precipitation to keep the water table balanced. Winter temperatures weren't particularly cold. The vines budded around April 4th, but we weren't wary enough of the spring-like temperatures and a frost on the nights of April 27th and 28th served as a reminder that, above all, winegrowers are dependent on nature. The choice location of our vineyard plots allowed us to limit frost damage: only 10% of our red vines were affected.

In the whole growth cycle, only the last week of June saw heavy rainfall. The vines had already flowered between May 25th and 30th in the most favorable conditions for efficient, homogeneous pollination. Summer 2017 more or less resembled summer 2016: warm and very dry through July and August. Light rainfall in early September was the only thing that disrupted a rare opportunity to produce a third great vintage after 2015 and 2016; we had just harvested our white grapes when heavy precipitation dashed our hopes of a truly standout year.

We then had to make a crucial decision: to harvest quickly grapes that were not yet ripe enough for fear that Botrytis would ruin them, or wait for the sun's return and harvest riper, more concentrated grapes later in September. In keeping with our high standards of quality and reassured by optimistic weather forecasts, we chose the latter and harvested the reds between September 12th and October 3rd in exceptionally fine weather conditions.

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 harvest commenced on September 18 and finished October 3 and the average yields were 35 hectoliters per hectare.
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	<p>The quality of Château Margaux 2017 comes close to its illustrious predecessors without pretending to rival the generosity of 2015 or the elegance of 2016. Nonetheless, it has a rightful place in the estate's lineage of great vintages: it is profound, complex, intense and long. In some respects, it even surpasses our hopes following September's rainfall and demonstrates yet again to what extent great terroirs are capable of transmitting all their best qualities into the wine.</p> <p>The initial tastings in the winemaking process offered a moment of astonishment. The Merlot batches are remarkable: the aromas are fruity and soft, a roundness on the palate and rich volume made it possible to include them in a proportion of 8% for the first wine. The Cabernet Sauvignon is always the heart and the framework for Château Margaux, accounting for 89% of the blend. Upon tasting, the tannins were perfectly ripe, which reassured us that our decision to wait a few more days before harvesting was the right choice. The wines' structure remains a rare combination of power and refinement. Cabernet Franc (2%) and Petit Verdot (1%) round out the blend for this wine. Château Margaux represents 37% of the harvest.</p>
Serve with	<p>Chateau Margaux is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift.</p> <p>Chateau Margaux is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised and grilled dishes.</p>
Production	10,833 cases made.
Cellaring	Drink 2024-2038
Scores/Awards	<p>95 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2020</p> <p>98 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2020</p> <p>96-98 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate #236 - April 2018</p> <p>99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2020</p> <p>97-98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2018</p> <p>96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2020</p> <p>95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2018</p> <p>17.5 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2018</p> <p>96 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2018</p> <p>96 points - Decanter.com - April 2018</p> <p>97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2018</p> <p>95-97 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2018</p> <p>17+ points - Farr Vintner - April 2018</p> <p>93-95 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2018</p> <p>95 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2020</p> <p>93-94 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2018</p> <p>97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2020</p> <p>94-97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2018</p> <p>98 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2020</p> <p>95-97 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2018</p> <p>18.5+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2018</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Seamless from start to finish, with a thoroughly caressing mouthfeel to the mix of damson plum, black cherry and black currant fruit, inlaid with a range of lilac, lavender and rooibos tea accents. The finish unfurls slowly, revealing a mouthwatering mineral edge buried deeply in the seductive fruit. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Best from 2024 through 2038. 10,833 cases made"</i></p> <p><i>- JM, Wine Spectator</i></p> <p><i>"The 2017 Chateau Margaux is a blend of 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot. Deep garnet-purple colored, it needs a little coaxing to reveal alluring notes of blackcurrant cordial, Black Forest cake and black raspberries with suggestions of candied violets, tilled soil, fallen leaves,</i></p>

Reviews

licorice, and espresso plus wafts of underbrush and rosehip tea. Medium-bodied, the elegance and finesse on the palate is simply bedazzling, exuding a quiet intensity of fresh black fruits layered with oh-so-subtle floral and earth nuances. It has a soft, velvety texture and seamless freshness to support the tightly wound flavors, finishing long and perfumed. Beautiful! This grand vin accounts for just 37% of the crop. Drink: 2024-2060"
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"A blend of 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot, the deep garnet-purple colored 2017 Château Margaux charges from the gate with opulent kirsch, raspberry preserves, wild blueberries and cassis notions accented by roses, violets, Chinese five spice and fragrant earth with touches of underbrush and truffles. Medium-bodied, it fills the mouth with vibrant, ripe red and blue fruits, layering in perfume and spice nuances. It's framed by very finely grained and plush yet firm tannins and great tension, finishing with epic length."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"There is ripeness and opulence to this, in an almost exotic and sassy way. Crushed berries with chocolate and spice. Floral and cashmere undertones. This starts off slowly and just rolls off the palate with beautifully polished tannins and a salty, mineral note to the long, extended tannins. Really brilliant. So classy. Structured. Try after 2025."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This is a very dense Margaux, and especially for the vintage, with a full body, grainy tannins and a long and rich finish. Impressive depth of fruit and structure. Luscious and muscular at the same time."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Aromas of wood and fresh fruit translate to the palate, giving this wine depth and concentration. It is powerful but also balanced and fresh, displaying the elegance of the vintage. While never overpowering, the wine's structure will allow it to age well. Drink from 2024."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"95–97. Barrel Sample. There is a firm, tannic structure here, although it certainly doesn't take away from the concentrated fruit. This wine is intense, full of black currants and great fruitiness. Both the fruit and structure are in harmony and balance. It's a fine selection, although it's not a wine for aging over many years. Drink from 2025."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Deep glowing crimson. Pure, very dark cassis fruit. Fragrant and lightly floral too. And the fruit smells sweet, the oak so subtle. Intense without being flamboyant. Firm, smooth, chocolate textured. Creamy and rich and supple on the long finish. Depth of fruit, both red and black on the mid palate. Well sustained. The tannins are powerful but hidden by the lovely fruit. Succulent even though well structured. Drink 2027-2042"
- JH, JancisRobinson.com

"Wow! This makes the whole room smile. The stunning nose hits you right off the bat, followed by wonderful fleshy damson fruit. This has some of the best aromatics in the business this year and a wonderful creamy texture through the palate. There's great density, and the tannins flatter it, but they have menace and intent too, pulling the structure inwards and bouncing along to finish beautifully. This is more opulent than the Pavillon, which has some clear austerity, and the scale of the fruit is a little fresher than the 2015, with around the same ripeness level as the 2016. The 3.7pH is a little higher than the last two years, while an IPT of 73 is the same as last year. 37% of production went into the grand vin, including a 1% drop of Petit Verdot. Drinking Window 2027 – 2040."
- JA, Decanter.com

Reviews

“Extremely elegant and finessed spicing on the nose, this has beautiful aromatics, and a seductive lead in. It has added some flesh and creaminess over the ageing, and although you still get fairly high austerity at this point it is becoming well enrobed without sacrificing precision. Good quality and highly enjoyable, this will age effortlessly, fine boned in the 2001 or 2011 sense. 1% Petit Verdot completes the blend, a little lower percentage than usual because they felt structure in the wine was already in plentiful supply. 27% of production.”

- Decanter.com

“Dark ruby in color, the wine is silky and seductive. This is not a powerful wine, instead a velvet and satin texture with complexity and length. On the palate, the wine beguiles you with its sweetness, lift and sumptuous qualities. This vintage contains a record number of tannins for the estate, yet these tannins are so ripe and soft, you’ll barely notice them. This gem will have the ability to age for several decades. Made from a blend of 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot, the wine reached 13.5% alcohol with a pH of 3.7. The Grand Vin was produced using only 37% of the return. The harvest commenced on September 18 and finished October 3 and the average yields were 35 hectoliters per hectare. Bravo for Philippe Bascules, the managing director who supervised this sublime production from start to finish.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Closed in by spicy coffee-ish oak at the moment, with deep brooding fruit underneath. Very intense fruit extraction with beautifully balanced acidity and ripe tannins. Lots of layers of flavour with spices, rich blueberry fruit, crème de mûre, cinnamon, toast, and coffee bean. Tightly packed tannins, but rounded fruit. Very deep and long. Massive, packed deep long finish. A classic Margaux. Elegance and power, perfume, and substance. Barrel Sample: 95-97”

- TA, timatkin.com

“18 of the 82 hectares were affected by frost but not the best plots. The grand vin represents only 37% of the total harvest and is made from 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot. What really suffered here was the Pavillon Rouge (22% of the total production) where the volume produced was half of that of a normal vintage. 15% of the crop went into the third wine with a further 26% being sold off in bulk. Medium-deep ruby colour with a very exotic, perfumed, and expansive nose of roses, violets, blood orange and cassis. Surprisingly open and juicy. The palate is very creamy, with opulent vanilla, milk chocolate and toasty new oak coating the core of ripe and juicy fruits. The tannins are typically silky and refined, giving a cashmere texture. The added ripeness is perhaps atypical for Chateau Margaux, but with the fresh acidity on the finish and well-integrated tannins this retains its elegance and refinement on the long finish.”

- Farr Vintners

“Floral fragrant the nose has fresh black fruits and some red. The sweet fruit in the middle is underpinned by fine tannins rich and ripe at the back black cherry the finish has hints of cedar wood and seamless length. 2026-41.”

- Derek Smedley MW

“The 2017 Château Margaux, bottled in June/July 2019, has a classic aromatic profile for this First Growth: blackcurrant leaf, raspberry, cold black tea and pressed iris rather than violet petals this time. It is well defined, if not as intense as the 2016 as you would expect. The palate is medium bodied with supple tannins, fine acidity, quite saline in the mouth with superb precision on the elegant finish. This is one of the most approachable Château Margaux that I can remember, less opulent than out of barrel and supremely refined. Drink 2024-2055.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2017 Margaux, matured in 100% new oak, was blended in the second half of February. It has a very pure, floral bouquet with scents of iris and violet infusing the black and subtle blue fruit. There are touches of crushed stone and with aeration, a little candied orange peel. The palate is medium bodied with succulent ripe tannin, very harmonious in the mouth, caressing and sensual with black fruit, hints of graphite and a light marine influence. There is a fine build to this Château Margaux, commencing almost understated but finishing with an insistent grip and a long, quite spicy aftertaste. It's not the bewitching 2015 however, it purrs like a Rolls Royce and will age with panache. Drink 2023-2045.”

- NM, Vinous

Reviews *“One of the clear highlights on the Left Bank, the 2017 Margaux is magnificent. Soaring in intensity, the 2017 exudes class from the very first taste. Margaux is so often a wine of charm and seduction, but the 2017 is anything but that. Instead, Margaux is dark, somber, and mysterious, with layers of sepia-toned nuance that opens up with time in the glass. Cabernet Sauvignon, picked 5 days later than first anticipated, is especially prominent. The 2017 is going to need a number of years to be at its very best, but it is a super-promising wine. Wow. 2027 – 2057.”*
- AG, Vinous

“The 2017 Margaux is one of the highlights on the Left Bank. Surprisingly powerful and virile, the Grand Vin clearly reflects the influence of a high percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend. Beams of tannin give the wine support through the mid-palate and into the finish. Estate Manager Sebastian Vergne told me the winemaking team opted to raise temperatures at the end of fermentation to gain a bit more color, depth, and polymerization of tannins. The Grand Vin represents 37% of the estate's production.”
- AG, Vinous

“Despite Margaux being a slightly more difficult region for the Medoc in 2017, this estate has fashioned an incredible 2017 Chateau Margaux that's unquestionably in the same league as the 2015 and 2016, and that's saying something. Based on 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot representing a draconian selection of just 22% of the total production, it reveals a deep purple/ruby hue as well as stunning notes of creme de cassis, blueberries, crushed violets, unsmoked tobacco, and Asian spice. With flawless tannins, medium to full body, brilliant concentration, and a great, great finish, it's easily one of the standouts in the vintage. It's already stunning, yet a good 7-8 years of bottle age are warranted, and it should cruise for 20-25 years in cold cellars.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“Compared to 1996 by winemaker Philippe Bascaules and from only 37% of the total production, the 2017 Château Margaux is unquestionably in the top 2 to 3 wines of the vintage, and it's certainly the wine of the vintage in Margaux. Boasting a deep purple color as well as an awesome bouquet of cassis, blueberries, smoked herbs, graphite, and crushed flower, it builds incrementally on the palate and is full-bodied, multi-dimensional, and layered. It has surprising ripeness, yet like all the wines from this estate, it stays vibrant and fresh, with plenty of tannin. While most Margaux in 2017 seem to have a charming upfront style, this backward, concentrated beauty will need at least 5-6 years or bottle age. Barrel Sample: 95-97.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“After the dark bottle, which was used for the 2015 vintage, they have decided to continue with this bottle for all three wines including the white wine. This is a very dense and very focused Margaux, with intense fruit and dark, mineral-soaked, graphite-tinged wine. The weight is so fresh and so bright it is incredible. This is not a big wine, but it is very powerful.”
- MJ, matthewjukes.com
