

# Château Margaux 2020

CSPC# 847781

750mlx3

14.0% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety**  
**Appellation**  
**Classification**  
**Website**  
**General Info**

89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot, 1% Cabernet Franc  
Margaux

First Growth. Premier Grand Cru Classe in 1855.

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

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 19<sup>th</sup> century, although viticulture had been practiced on the estate for several centuries before. A chequered period of ownership in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> 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**  
**Vintage**

Emile Peynaud & Philippe Bascaules

As in the preceding vintages, 2020 saw average temperatures that were among the highest ever recorded due to a series of heatwaves and an exceptionally dry summer. After abundant rainfall at the end of 2019, there was very little rain in the first quarter of 2020, 80 mm (3.15 inches) less than the thirty-year average. Winter 2020 stood out for its mild temperatures. Average temperatures were 3°C (37°F) above the thirty-year average and temperatures in February sometimes exceeded 20°C (68°F). Only four light frosts occurred in what was otherwise a mild winter. As a result, bud break was extremely early, from the 22nd to the 26th of March depending on the grape variety, approximately ten days earlier than average. The 2020 vintage promised to be an early one.

The spring was also very mild. Temperatures in April were among the hottest since 1962. Flowering occurred between the 21st and the 26th of May, in excellent conditions. There were no signs of coulure or millerandage. The spring was particularly wet, which meant a greater risk of disease that we nonetheless managed to control (very few signs on the leaves and none on the bunches).

The summer brought long and intense heatwaves between the 23rd of June and the 12th of August, as well as significant drought, with no rain at all between the 19th of June and the 10th of August. Ripening occurred between the 23rd and the 26th of July. It was only during the second ten-day period of August that rainfall helped limit potentially excessive hydric stress. Nearly 80 mm (3.15 inches) of rain fell on August 13th. In spite of the thunderstorms that followed, the rainfall did not significantly penetrate the soil. However, the storms did cause the temperature to decrease and limit sun exposure thus contributing to maintaining good acid potential in the berries. Conditions in September were also ideal for the grapes, with glorious sunshine by day, cool nights and only 14 mm (0.55 inches) of rain.

**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



<b>Vineyards</b>	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.
<b>Harvest</b>	We began to harvest our early Merlots on September 10th. There were just a few days in mid-September when it became too hot to harvest during the afternoon. The harvest began on a larger scale on September 21st when all our grape-pickers arrived and immediately began picking our Cabernets. The harvest ended on September 30th.
<b>Vinification/ Maturation</b>	<p>The Grand Vin of Château Margaux 2020 follows in the footsteps of those of 2018 and 2019. It is very rare for three consecutive years in Bordeaux to be so homogenous and of such high quality.</p> <p>The final blend is very similar to those of the most recent vintages: Cabernet Sauvignon accounts for 89% of the blend, completed by 8% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot and 1% Cabernet Franc. The Grand Vin represents 36% of the harvest. There is a perfect balance between the density and the fineness of its tannins.</p> <p>Several factors contributed to making this a superb wine: homogenous flowering, summer conditions that favoured small berries and therefore concentrated wines, and excellent harvesting conditions. Only the yield was not as we had hoped. The fertility of the grape varieties was lower than in previous years, with 1.6 bunches per shoot, compared to 2 in 2019. The average yield on the estate was therefore 36 hl/ha.</p>
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	The final blend is very similar to those of the most recent vintages. The Grand Vin represents 36% of the harvest. There is a perfect balance between the density and the fineness of its tannins. Several factors contributed to making this a superb wine: homogenous flowering, summer conditions that favored small berries and therefore concentrated wines, and excellent harvesting conditions. Only the yield was not as we had hoped. The fertility of the grape varieties was lower than in previous years, with 1.6 bunches per shoot, compared to 2 in 2019. The average yield on the estate was therefore 36 hl/ha.
<b>Serve with</b>	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. 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.
<b>Production</b>	10,833 cases made.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2030-2060
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>97+ points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021</p> <p><b>99 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - March 2023</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2023</p> <p><b>99-100 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021</p> <p><b>98-100 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021</p> <p><b>19 points</b> - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021</p> <p><b>99 points</b> - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2023</p> <p><b>98-100 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - January 2023</p> <p><b>98-100 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Farr Vintners - May 2021</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p><b>98-100 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - June 2021</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2021</p> <p><b>99 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - December 2022</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021</p> <p><b>97+ points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2023</p> <p><b>99 points</b> - Yves Beck - June 2021</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - Vert de Vin - May 2021</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - Andreas Larsson, Tasted - May 2021</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021</p> <p><b>99-100 points</b> - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2022</p> <p><b>97-98 points</b> - Bettane &amp; Desseauve (score only) - July 2021</p> <p><b>19 points</b> - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2021</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<i>"The 2020 Château Margaux is a brilliant young wine, unfurling in the glass with aromas of dark berries and cherries mingled with hints of rose petals, iris, burning embers and pencil lead. Medium to full-bodied, deep and concentrated, with terrific tension, beautifully refined tannins and a long, penetration finish, this is a</i>

**Reviews** *vibrant, dynamic Margaux that stands out as the most classically proportioned wine of the 2018, 2019 and 2020 trio.*

- WK, Wine Advocate

*“Displaying an opaque purple-black color, it needs a lot of air, time, and patience to coax out the youthfully reticent nose of blueberry preserves, blackcurrant pastilles and Black Forest cake, followed by suggestions of lavender, clove oil, iron ore and menthol with wafts of star anise and candied violets. The medium to full-bodied palate is wonderfully opulent, featuring tightly wound yet beautifully pure layers of black fruits and earthy nuances within a solid structure of firm yet velvety tannins and exhilarating freshness, finishing with very long-lingering earth and mineral notes. Another stunning expression of the vintage by Philippe Bascaules and his team—bravo!*

*“What I like in 2020 is the intensity of the flavors, the wines are more floral. It is amazing to have a young wine so immediately complex,” said Chateau Margaux’s technical director, Philippe Bascaules. “We had 80 millimeters of rain on the 13th of August. This completely stopped the stress on the vines; it stopped the dehydration. In 2018, we had dehydration in September, even in 2019. This explains the higher levels of alcohol. We didn’t see this dehydration in 2020. But why do we have this high level of phenolics? Because the skins in 2020 were even richer than in 2018 and 2019—they were rich in phenolics. Even if we didn’t have the higher alcohol as a solvent, we had more tannins in the wines. They diffused very easily to the juice. It was a sign of very good ripeness. We picked 10th through 30th September. Fortunately, we had an early harvest—before it turned cold and wet.” No doubt thanks to the deep, free-draining gravels accounting for much of the vineyard area here and quickly dispensing with excess water during the August rains, the grand vin of Chateau Margaux is an absolute standout among my tastings of the wines of Médoc. It has grace with just enough generosity and sustained mid-palate intensity as well as a long finish. The quality of the tannins and the layers are phenomenal, but it is the freshness that is truly mind-blowing. Sensational performance in 2020!”*

- LPB, Wine Advocate

*“The 2020 Chateau Margaux is deep garnet-purple in color. After a couple of swirls, notions of blackcurrant pastilles, redcurrant jelly, and juicy black plums soar from the glass, leading to underlying suggestions of dark chocolate, candied violets, cast-iron pan, and forest floor. The medium-bodied palate is satiny smooth, vibrant, and energetic, featuring floral, mineral, and black fruit layers, finishing very long and shimmering. Cabernet Sauvignon accounts for 89% of the blend, completed by 8% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot, and 1% Cabernet Franc.”*

- LPB, Wine Independent

*“Gorgeous aromas of dark plums and violets. Orange peel, too. Some crushed stone. Bark. Stems. Iron shavings. Full-bodied, but very tight and compacted. The tannins are all here making it very structured, yet they are polished and melted together. Needs years to show all of its greatness. Incredible polish and structure. More structured than the 2019. Try after 2030 and beyond.”*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“So floral and perfumed with blackcurrants, blackberries, and some asphalt. Full-bodied with super, fine tannins. Extremely refined with great length and intensity. The wonderful combination of refinement and power is already evident. Superb finish. Another great Margaux.”*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“The fruit, with the acidity that is a hallmark of the year, gives black currant flavors from the nearly 90% Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend. The tannins seem supple with a structure that leans into the fruit. It’s a remarkably consistent wine, velvet while structured.”*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“36% of the production. Cask sample. Gorgeous wine that is both classic and expressive. Aromatically complex with floral, mineral, and dark-fruit notes. The quality of tannins superb from entry to finish, the texture smooth and velvety. Lovely freshness, poise, and length. Perfect pitch. Definitely has the edge on 2019 and 2018. (JL) 13.5%. Drink 2030 – 2055.”*

- JL, JancisRobinson.com

## Reviews

*“Cool and confident, an effortless Margaux that’s a clear success in 2020. Vivid colour in the glass with a delicately perfumed nose. Smooth and graceful on the palate, silky yet rich too, deepening in layers, much more vertical than wide at this point but with clear concentration. It expands slowly but surely, really taking its time before the juicy, chewy, succulent blackcurrant, liquorice, clove, sweet spice, and cooling menthol touches come forward. Nuanced and detailed with precision and clarity to the taste and overall sensation. A Margaux for the ages.”*

- GH, Decanter.com

*“A brilliant Margaux; one that takes a sigh and then releases the huge floral, eucalyptus and crushed mint whoosh that comes in waves though the palate. You get the concentration of the vintage in an entirely positive light, with a suave softness to the tannins that makes it stand head and shoulders above many others. Plenty in common with the 1996 vintage - the knitted down tannins, the completeness, the juicy blackcurrant purity and acidity on the finish, and the certainty of long ageing. Real clarity of flavour. Alcohol level is lower than both the 2018 and 2019, but tannins and anthocyanins are at the same level as in 2018.”*

- JA, Decanter.com

*“This has grip and poise, it edges forward with slate textured tannins, not giving too much away at first, but sit with it, because the future brilliance of this Margaux is there to be seen if you take your time. It displays a seriousness of intent that sets it apart in expression from vintages like the 2018 and has dense and powerful red and black fruits along with supple and plentiful tannins that have no intention of relinquishing their hold for decades to come. Gingerbread, liquorice root, grilled sandalwood, red peppers, mint leaf, and peony flowers add waves of complexity as it widens and softens through the mid palate, along with raspberry puree and edges of patisserie cream. A Margaux for the ages. 100% new oak, 36hl/h yield after the dry summer.”*

- JA, janeanson.com

*“The purity of the fruit in the nose is striking. From there you move to notes of allspice, tobacco, roses, truffle, smoke, roasted plums, cherries, and currants. Incredibly sensuous, silky, and fresh, the fruit literally coats your palate with layers of velvet and silk textured berries. Intensely concentrated, weightless, and effortless to drink, the wine seamlessly glides across your senses and holds you for at least 60 seconds. This is a prodigious vintage of Chateau Margaux. The product of an early vintage, picking took place September 10 to September 30. Yields were 36 hectoliters per hectare, with the Grand Vin produced from only 36% of the crop. 13.5% ABV, 3.68 Ph. 98-100.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“The yield of Chateau Margaux in 2020 was 36hl/ha but only 36% of the total production has gone into the grand vin. The abv is 13.5% and it is made up of 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot and 1% Cabernet Franc. Production is 20% down in 2019. Carefully extracted due to very high levels of tannin in the grapes. Deep ruby colour. Very fragrant and classically Margaux with notes of violet and cherry blossom yet the depth of cassis underneath. The spices are subtle and perfectly weighted against the fruit. The palate is effortlessly intense, gentle yet with great depth. The silky, rich cassis fruit is framed by refined, persistent tannins. There is superb delineation of fruit and spice. A wine of purity and depth with a lingering finish that showcases its ageing potential.”*

- Farr Vintners

*“The 2020 Château Margaux was one of the highlights of the barrel samples originally sent to my home during the lockdown, a wine that I afforded 24 hours to open. Visiting the château to taste the wine in bottle, alas, I cannot loiter around an entire day! But it has a compelling bouquet with blackberry, crushed stone, pressed violet and a light petrichor scent - perhaps stricter than I recall from barrel. The palate has wonderful balanced, filigree tannins, creamy in texture with enormous depth and gentle grip. There is mesmerizing symmetry in this First Growth with a precise and very sustained slightly peppery finish. It’s a Château Margaux from the top drawer. Drink 2026-2060.”*

- NM, Vinous

*“Much like the Deuxième Vin, the 2020 Château Margaux has a discreet nose; it is not interested in fireworks or in dazzling the taster. At first unassuming, it unfolds with black cherries, blueberries and signature crushed violet aromas, all delivered with the delineation and purity expected from an estate of this standing. Looking deeper, one finds touches of potpourri and India ink. The palate is medium-bodied with fine-grained tannins and crisp acidity, perhaps more noticeable in the 2020 compared to the previous two vintages. This Margaux is*

**Reviews** *surfeit with tension and coiled-up, nascent energy, then it tightens up toward a linear finish that strangely recalls a Pauillac, thanks to a subtle graphite note that lingers on the saline aftertaste. This is a classically styled Château Margaux that will gain weight and depth during its élevage. Cerebral and sophisticated, and one of the wines of the Left Bank in 2020. Drink: 2026-2060"*  
- NM, Vinous

*"The 2020 Château Margaux, re-tasted at the château, is a little more open on the nose, revealing even more of its stunning delineation, just so pixelated. Black cherries, blueberry and perhaps a tad more red fruit than I noticed in the sample tasted in the UK, more classic in style. The palate is harmonious and poised with ethereal delineation, building in the mouth towards an almost pixelated finish that is utterly irresistible. There is heightened mineralité compared to the previous sample with astonishing persistence. I suspect this is one Left Bank where the 2020 will surpass the previous two vintages, but as Philippe Bascaule himself commented, it is a wine for his children rather than himself. This is even better than the sample sent to the UK, hence my higher score. Will it achieve perfection? We'll find out soon(ish)."*  
- NM, Vinous

*"The 2020 Margaux Grand Vin is ravishing. At once refined and exuberant, Margaux beautifully captures the spirit of the vintage. Layers of dark fruit, spice, lavender, crushed flowers, and leather open graciously, revealing a wine of uncommon depth and finesse. The 100% new oak is not at all perceptible. Enveloping on the palate, with striking resonance and exceptional balance, the 2020 is very clearly a great modern Margaux. It's a brilliant effort from Margaux and the team led by Managing Director Philippe Bascaules."*  
- AG, Vinous

*"A stunning, riveting wine, the 2020 Margaux is classic as classic gets. Racy, elegant, and super-refined, the 2020 possesses magnificent balance. Inky red/purplish fruit, lavender, rose petal, spice and bright mineral notes build as this super-expressive Margaux builds over time in the glass. The 2020 is not an obvious wine, but then again Château Margaux rarely is. I love the energy and vibrancy here. Margaux is very clearly one of the wines of the vintage in 2020. It's a tremendous effort from the team led by Estate Manager Philippe Bascaules."*  
- AG, Vinous

*"As to the Grand Vin, the 2020 Chateau Margaux is 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc, pulled from a tiny 36% of the total production, that spent 20 months in new barrels. It has that classic Chateau Margaux sense of elegance and complexity and offers full-bodied aromas and flavors of ripe currants, blueberries, acacia flowers, crushed stone, and sandalwood that develop with time in the glass. With remarkable purity as well as flawless balance, it's a seriously concentrated, powerful 2020 that still just glides across the palate with no hard edges, silky tannins, and a great finish. I love everything about this wine. It's going to flirt with perfection in 7-8 years and evolve for 50-75 years. It actually reminds me slightly of the 2016. Best After 2030."*  
- Jeb Dunnuck

*"The 2020 Château Margaux is a more concentrated, dense wine that has the vintage's massive dry extract paired with more moderate alcohol levels and building tannins. Blackcurrants, sandalwood, tobacco leaf, and graphite give way to a full-bodied, rich, powerful Château Margaux that's flawlessly balanced, has a stacked mid-palate, and a great finish. It's one for the ages, though, and don't expect much up-front appeal. It almost reminds me of the 1996, yet with slightly more density. It's a quintessential beauty that will be just about immortal."*  
- Jeb Dunnuck

*"Deep dark ruby, opaque core, purple reflections, discreet ochre rim. Fine tobacco, a touch of leather, graphite and cedar, black cherries, cassis, and orange zest. Juicy, rich ripe cherries, elegant texture, full of finesse, lively acidity, silky, well-integrated tannins, chalky minerality, fresh red berry finish. Excellent potential."*  
- PM, Falstaff Magazine

**Reviews**

*“On the nose, distinguished, fine, fruity, offering power (in finesse and fullness), a very nice finesse in its richness and in its grain, an airy power, freshness, excellence as well as a nice depth and width of the aromatic palette. Notes of bright boysenberry, pulpy cassis and more lightly cornflower, violet, strawberry associated with touches of bourbon vanilla, lilac, saffron, star anise as well as discrete points of black tea and a subtle hint of hazelnut. The palate is fruity, elegant, delicate, powerful, nicely defined and offers depth, finesse, tension in delicacy, richness in subtlety/finesse, excellence, fullness, harmony, sapidity, energy as well as silkiness and an airy character in the balances. Nice mid-palate with an aspect of multi – layering. On the palate, expressing notes of pulpy/juicy blackberry, bright raspberry and more lightly bright cassis combined with touches of bright red currants, hints of pulpy/juicy blueberry, cornflower/lily, star anise as well as discreet hints of tonka bean, chocolate, toasted hazelnut, and a subtle touch of black tea. The tannins are elegant, soft, and polished. Presence of an imperceptible hint of Bourbon vanilla pod, white flowers, and toast on the finish/persistence. A very nice persistence. A wine filled with a classical style in its noblest sense. Congratulations!”*

- Vert de Vin

*“Refined, floral and superbly elegant with violet notes, plenty of crushed berries, cassis, black truffle, fine tobacco, and discreet wood notes underneath. Excellent grip and structure on the palate, really mouth-filling without heaviness, refined texture with powdery cocoa powder like tannins, great volume with layers of supple dark fruit, packed with freshness, there’s excellent purity and nuance followed by a tremendously long and lingering finish. Great combo of freshness and power in Margaux’s classically elegant style not immensely bold but extremely fit with only muscles and no fat.”*

- AL, Tasted.com

*“(89% CS, 8% M, 2% PV, 1% CF; 36% harvest; 13.5% ABV; 100% new)*

*Black-purple; crisp red- and black-fruit nose, with a subtle, persistent gravel aroma; rich, concentrated, vital, and very finely tannic wine; a wine with an emphasis on definition and freshness, but with no lack of ripeness and concentration of fruit; deep and gently sweetly ripe, long and even to taste, red and black fruit like the nose, prolonged, with a beautifully delicate core of flavor, a mouthcoating fragrance all the while and gorgeous scented length. Density and delicacy. A sort of cross between 1996 and 2010. 2035–60+.”*

- MS, The World of Fine Wine

*“Château Margaux 2020 is very diligent in its way of revealing and profiling itself. So, he must imagine a series of elements that are displayed in a coordinated way, taking care not to not overtake or obliterate others. The olfactory finesse is perfectly reflected in the mouth, from the attack where the wine shines with its roundness, fullness and tenderness embodied by tannins soft and velvety. This is the beginning, because we suspect that it will not stop there... and this becomes evident as you progress through the palate. The tannins assert themselves on the finish and are ideally supported, respectively completed, by a structuring acidity and well sharpened that acts behind the scenes. It is somewhat underestimated, just like the tannins by the way, but the whole supports the finale in a convincing and imposing way. A very large Château Margaux that we will have to wait wisely. And since we will also have to wait for the Pavilion Red, it will remain the White Pavilion for a lot of pleasure and a little thirst! 2027-2047.”*

- Yves Beck

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