

Château Palmer 2014

CSPC# 791629

750mlx6

13.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

49% Cabernet Sauvignon, 45% Merlot, 6% Petit Verdot

Appellation

Margaux

Classification

3ème Cru Classé

Website

<https://www.chateau-palmer.com/en/millesimes/2014>

General Info

3rd classified growth in 1855. Palmer could easily claim to the rank of a second. The vine stock of merlot occupies about half of the vineyard, what is odd in Margaux, and that explains in good part the round and smooth character of the high-class wine which sometimes makes it compare with a Pomerol. But do not think incorrect, Palmer has the depth and the complexity of the great Margaux.

The birth of Chateau Palmer dates back to 1814 when Colonel Charles Palmer arrived in France with the army of the future Duke of Wellington. The owner of the Margaux estate at that time was the recently divorced Madame de Gascq. She was trying to sell the Bordeaux wine producing property. When she met Palmer, she told him, "The Bordeaux wine we produce is as good as Château Lafite!" Palmer must have agreed as he quickly soon took over the Margaux estate and renamed it Chateau Palmer. Palmer believed in the Bordeaux wine he was producing. He began expanding the vineyards of Chateau Palmer. Between 1816 and 1831, the estate acquired more land and buildings throughout the Cantenac, Issan and Margaux sectors.

In 1843, Palmer, now a Major General was forced to sell Chateau Palmer. Emile and Isaac Pereire, two brothers had always wanted to purchase Chateau Palmer. They did not come from the Bordeaux wine trade. They were involved in railroad lines and banking. In 1853, they became the new owners of Chateau Palmer.

The brothers replanted and restructured the vineyards. In 1856, they constructed the legendary château and the village outbuildings of Chateau Palmer. Due to the phylloxera epidemic, wars and the great depression, the Pereire brothers' descendants were forced to sell Chateau Palmer.

In 1938, four families of some of the wealthiest Bordeaux wine merchants joined forces to buy equal shares of Chateau Palmer; Ginestet, Mialhe, Mahler-Besse and the Sichels. Their direct descendants are the major current owners of Chateau Palmer today. Two of the families left the company, but, for the Mahler-Besses and the Sichels, it remains an important asset.

The two majority shareholders of Chateau Palmer are both négociants. The Mahler family comes from the Netherlands. Successful in the wine business, they were joined by the Sichel family from England. The Sichel family were also very successful wine merchants. After World War II and the deterioration of the château by German troops, the 1950s saw the regeneration of the vineyard under the management of Jean Bouteiller (1913-1962), the son-in-law of Frédéric Mähler, the majority shareholder at the time.

Having spent forty-two years as the director of Chateau Palmer, Bouteiller retired and was replaced by the young, energetic agronomist and oenologist Thomas Duroux in 2004. This allowed Duroux to return to Bordeaux after spending time managing estates in Italy.

Vintage

In 1814, General Charles Palmer purchased the wine estate of Madame de Gascq, and subsequently gave it his name. Two hundred years later, Château Palmer continues to write its own history from one vintage to the next. Early in the summer, the sun had played an endless game of hide-and-seek. But when the 2014 harvest ended on Tuesday, October 14, it was under the same glorious sun that we had enjoyed all throughout September. Everything had started quite well: a rainy winter had allowed the estate to renew its water reserves. In the spring, flowering went well, despite a few cases of poor fruit set among the older Merlots. At this point, we had high hopes for the quality of this new vintage. But beginning in July, the weather became



Vintage unstable and the vines focused on their fine foliage, to the detriment of their grapes. The month of August wasn't much better, veraison was slow and the berries began to swell... Luckily the sun finally returned at the end of August. Little by little, September's extraordinary weather conditions modified the profile of the 2014 vintage. The difference in veraison between the vines diminished and the size of the berries decreased, concentrating all the elements that make up this new vintage: sugar, anthocyanin and tannin levels all increased. On September 22, we harvested the first plot, beginning with some young Merlots.

The particularly good weather allowed us to harvest perfectly ripe grapes, with no risk of botrytis. In the cellar, the spotlight was on innovation. After two years of experiments in reducing the level of sulfur in our wines, we decided to not add any sulfur to the harvested grapes to let them immediately express their complexity. At this stage the wines of the 2014 vintage are an excellent reflection of the diversity of the estate's plots. Each personality is expressed in these two blends as if a veil had been lifted. It is without a doubt one of the first results of our biodynamic approach

Vineyards Palmer, with its gravel, sand and dirt terroir has deep roots, which is one of the keys to the wine's unique quality and style. Most chateaux plant merlot in clay soils. At Palmer, the merlot is planted in gravel soils. This is part of the reason for the elegance in the wines of Palmer. Located next to Chateau Margaux, Palmer can produce a wine of equal quality in select vintages. The 55-hectare Bordeaux wine vineyard Chateau Palmer is located in Cantenac. Most of the plots are situated on the plateau with a terroir of thin gravel from the Guntz period along the water. The vineyard is planted to 47% Merlot, 47% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Petit Verdot with vines that average 38 years of age. The vines are planted to a density of 10,000 vines per hectare.

Harvest 09/22/2014 to 10/14/2014

**Vinification/
Maturation** The vat rooms and Chai were entirely refurbished in 1995, its 42 temperature-controlled, conical, stainless steel vats were designed to provide optimal conditions for precision winemaking. Chateau Palmer is equipped with two cellars the so-called "first year *chai*," holds the barrels containing the most recent vintage for the initial year of ageing before being replaced by a new harvest and moving on to the recently renovated "second year *chai*." Work is once again taking place in the vat rooms. In 2010, Palmer began work on installing a new harvest reception area of 350 square meters which should be finished by 2012. The old pumping system will be replaced by gravity force. They will also build a small cellar devoted to experimental winemaking projects like producing white wine and even vin de paille. A new barrel cellar will allow a vintage to age without being moved. The Palmer village was also refurbished. The fruit is always hand harvested and sorted 3 times. In the vineyard and the vat room before and after destemming. Palmer vinifies using temperature-controlled, cone-shaped stainless-steel vats. This is done on a parcel by parcel basis and by grape variety. The wine is put into barrels immediately after malolactic fermentation, fining with egg whites, racking by gravity

Tasting Notes Palmer 2014 immediately conveys the distinct biodynamic approach to this vintage with complex aromas. This Margaux Troisieme Cru Classe is spectacularly fresh and luscious. Bursting dark fruits (cassis, blackberries, and red plums) form a beautiful tension confirmed with aeration. A clear-cut, energetic attack precedes a rare elegance and fine, soft, cashmere-like tannins: a subtle ensemble for a first-class Palmer!

A historic wine. Marking the bicentenary of the estate taking Major General Palmer's name, this vintage is proof of Palmer's relentless innovation. No sulfur was added to the harvested grapes, allowing the terroir to express all its complexity.

Cellaring Drink 2020-2050

Scores/Awards **94 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2017
93-96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2015
92+ points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate Interim - March 31, 2017
93-95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #218 - April 29, 2015
95 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - February 2017
94-95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2015
97 points/Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2017

- Reviews** **95-97 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2015
17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2015
93 points - Steven Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2015
93 points - John Stimfig, Decanter.com - April 2015
94-95 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2015
94-95+ points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - April 2015
94 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - March 2015
95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2017
91-94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2015 (score only)
94-96 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only)
17.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only)
18 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)
18 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only)

Reviews *"This has a fresh, energetic feel, with lots of bramble-edged grip pushing the core of raspberry, plum and cherry coulis flavors. The finish is very pure, punctuated by lively floral and iron notes. Flaunts minerality in the end. Best from 2020 through 2035."*
 - JM, Wine Spectator

"This is reserved in profile now, with crushed red and black currant fruit and lightly singed alder notes. Yet the core is coiled, showing very energetic raspberry and plum coulis flavors, with a lilting violet edge and a long, iron-fueled finish. There's a very refined backdrop of tobacco and singed juniper, and the finish is long and suave.—Tasted non-blind. Score range: 93-96"
 - JM, Wine Spectator

"The 2014 Palmer builds on the promise that it showed in barrel. It is clearly a more understated and nuanced Palmer from winemaker Thomas Duroux this year, but a Margaux with exquisite delineation and precision, hints of blackberry, boysenberry and a touch of pencil box. The palate is medium bodied with very fine tannin. It feels supple and lithe in the mouth. It will not have the depth and power of the subsequent 2015 Palmer, yet the "flow" is very sensual and the Merlot (45% of the blend) just lends it roundness and a caressing texture. What a beautiful Margaux and I bet it will be deceptively long-lived."
 - NM, Wine Advocate

"The Château Palmer 2014 is a blend of 45% Merlot, 49% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Petit Verdot cropped at 33hl/ha between 22 September and 14 October. There is certainly more fruit intensity on the nose compared to the Alter Ego: more density, perhaps more opaqueness in tandem with more delineation. Dark plums, boysenberry jam and mineral abound. The palate is medium bodied with fine, edgy tannin and crisp acidity (pH 3.6), a dash of cracked black pepper enlivening the back palate with a taut, quite grippy finish. This is a more masculine Palmer in prospect, one that will deserve five or six years in bottle."
 - NM, Wine Advocate

"This really develops wonderfully in the glass starting out earthy with mushrooms and spices and then turns to dark fruit such as blackberries and blackcurrants. Full-bodied, very intense and minerally. Firm and silky tannins and a long, long finish. From biodynamically grown grapes. Drink in 2022."
 - JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This has a fabulous depth of fruit and hints of licorice and spice. Full-bodied, chewy and rich with velvety tannins and a fruity finish. The tannin backbone comes through at the end, giving the wine tension and freshness."
 - JS, JamesSuckling.com

"It's easy to call this a beautiful wine—it's dense and lush, with great layers of black fruit and acidity. The first fully biodynamic vintage from this estate has certainly yielded impressive ripe fruit, with structured tannins and dark berry flavors that linger long. It has enormous potential, certainly not be ready to drink before 2027."
 - RV, Wine Enthusiast

- Reviews** *“95–97. Barrel Sample. This is a beautiful, structured wine, with great fruit. Blackberries and currants lie on a bed of structured tannins and firm wood. It is rich, while still presenting ample freshness and acidity. This will age very well.”*
- RV, Wine Enthusiast
- “Robust fruit from low yields but no less elegant. Wonderful richness, texture and structure, this will become a superbly balanced wine of great beauty.”*
- SS, Decanter.com
- “A wine to make the heart sing, this gloriously good 14 has such verve, purity, harmony and sweetness. The tannins are so fine and creamy they seem to float above the gorgeous blueberry and blackberry fruit. The deft oak is also wonderfully handled lending depth, mouthfeel and sandalwood notes. Moreover, the overlaying perfume, elegance and freshness makes you crave another sip. Really impressive and very difficult to resist even at this very early stage in its development. “*
- TS, Decanter.com
- “Espresso bean, truffle, floral, plum and earthy scents pop quickly as your nose meets the glass. A polished and elegant debutante wrapped in a gown of velvety tannins, this wine is fresh, clean and pure leaving you with a sensuous drape of lingering fruits. This wine is the first fully biodynamic vintage for the chateau. Produced from a blend of 49% Cabernet Sauvignon, 45% Merlot and 6% Petit Verdot, the reached 13.5 alcohol with a pH of 3.6. It represents 55% of the harvest, which took place between September 22 and October 14. 94-95 Pts”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “Bolder colour; tighter to rim; perfume; mineral note; little subdued; apparent depth; tight; nice fruit on the palate; tight and focused; bit closed on the day; layers and pent up; freshness. Clean fruit. Proportional. Nice length; Pretty long. Impressive on the palate and the finish. Concentrated and tight on the palate; lots of density and focus; tight. Proportional fruit with plenty of extract; lots of chew and density on the finish; extract. Length is very good. [49% Cabernet Sauvignon, 45% Merlot, 6% Petit Verdot]. Drink 2021-2035. Tasted 31 March 2015 at Château Palmer. 94-95+”*
- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com
- “Wonderful purity and delicacy in this wine with svelte, plush tannins. A hint of violets, dark cherry and cassis with a palate that is focused and pure. Flavors are not that expressive now, but it is the texture that is quite special - like thick velvet that is supple and long. This vintage had higher acidity than 2009 and 2010, which bodes well for aging. A sophisticated wine with greater subtlety since moving towards biodynamics.”*
- JCL, asianpalate.com
- ““The 2014 Palmer is endowed with serious depth and intensity. Black cherry, bittersweet chocolate, spice, leather, tobacco and menthol infuse the 2014 with striking midpalate depth, unctuousness and texture. Silky, plush and polished, the 2014 will likely offer a very long window of pure drinking pleasure. It is one of the sexiest, raciest 2014s readers will come across. The blend is 49 % Cabernet Sauvignon, 45 % Merlot and 6 % Petit Verdot aged in 60-65 % new French oak. “*
- AG, Vinous
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