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## Château Palmer 2021

CSPC# 791629

750mlx6

13.4% alc./vol.

### Grape Variety

56% Merlot, 41% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Petit Verdot

### Appellation

Margaux

### Classification

3ème Cru Classé

### Website

<https://www.chateau-palmer.com/en/file/2489/download?token=VfvZJIPV>

### Sustainability

Biodynamic, Organic

### General Info

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 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 Frédérick 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.

### Winemaker

Thomas Duroux

### Vintage

While the summer put the vines on a path to greater growth, a sunny September enabled us to pick grapes bursting with promise. 2021 is a vintage in which the talents of our team made the difference, demonstrating the passion and cohesion of a collective effort.

While January heralded a cold winter, February promised kinder temperatures and nourishing rains. The return to dry weather fostered consistent budding across the vines. The spring frosts from April and May slowed growth. Flowering eventually began on May 28, in a warm, dry climate. The fruit set accelerated, and a handful of our most earliest ripening Merlots were affected by coulure. Rainfall was followed by a sharp rise in temperatures in June, leading to explosive vegetative growth. Shortly after a torrential storm on June 19, the arrival of mildew required meticulous monitoring.

A half-hearted summer until August 15 exacerbated vine growth, sparking fears of low numbers of grapes. In late August and early September, four weeks of dry weather thankfully dispelled a lot of the water and the



<b>Vintage</b>	ripening process resumed as normal, just in time for the harvest. Threatened by botrytis, the Merlot harvest started on September 24 while the Cabernets finished on October 15. Despite more modest yields than expected, the harvest was healthy with ripe grapes, and the tasting revealed a remarkably fine tannic texture. The assemblages were finalized in early December, reflecting an ever-clearer perspective of the Château Palmer plots. This 2021 batch offers exceptionally fulfilled wines, rooted in moderation and harmony, harking back to the vintages of the previous century.
<b>Vineyards</b>	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 Günst 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.
<b>Harvest</b>	picked between September 24 and October 15. 22hl/h yields (but 8ha were lost to frost, so the 'real' yield was 27hl/h).
<b>Vinification/ Maturation</b>	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 <i>chai</i> ," 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 <i>chai</i> ." 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. This vintage, for the first time, the estate used all native yeasts for the fermentation. The blending process took place before malolactic fermentation this year, which is not very common. Winemaker Thomas Duroux is also decreasing his sulfur additions, with his first addition of SO <sub>2</sub> occurring relatively late in the processing this year—not until the end of blending at the end of February. The wine is put into barrels immediately after malolactic fermentation, fining with egg whites, racking by gravity.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	Palmer is one of the most authentic wines among the 2021 primeurs. The entire team has done a good job exhibiting all the characters of the vintage in plain view, presenting us with a "true, good, and beautiful" Margaux masterpiece. The acidity of Palmer is very high this year, but it is still balanced inside out. Be it the lissome mouthfeel, silky tannins, the clean fruity aromas, or the relatively smooth finish, all shouting out loud its purest, most natural winemaking philosophy. The hard work of Thomas and his entire team does pay off, even though the final average yield is a mere 22hl/ha.
<b>Serve with</b>	Chateau Palmer is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Chateau Palmer is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Palmer is also good when matched with Asian dishes, rich fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.
<b>Production</b>	7,500 cases made.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2027-2055
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>92 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2024</p> <p><b>95+ points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - February 2024</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p><b>92-94 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent (score only) - May 2022</p> <p><b>96-97 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2022</p> <p><b>17+ points</b> - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - January 2024</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - May 2022</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2024</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2022</p> <p><b>92-95 points</b> - Thomas Parker, Farr Vintners - April 2022</p>

**94-96 points** - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022  
**96 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2024  
**94-97 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022  
**95 points** - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2024  
**93-95 points** - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022  
**18.5 points** - Matthew Jukes - August 2022  
**95 points** - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022  
**94 points** - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022  
**96-97 points** - Vert de Vin - July 2022  
**95 points** - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - May 2022

**Reviews**

*"Offers an almost juicy edge, making this difficult vintage stand out from the pack while giving its core of black cherry and black currant some energy. Subtle alder, tobacco and warm earth accents underscore the finish. Shows a late mineral twang, with just a wisp of the vintage's austerity. Serious kudos here. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2035. 7,500 cases made."*  
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"The 2021 Palmer has turned out beautifully in bottle, wafting from the glass with expressive aromas of blackberries, cherries and mulberries mingled with notions of iris, dark chocolate, and spices. Medium to full-bodied, deep, and concentrated, with an enveloping core of succulent fruit framed by rich, sweet tannins, it concludes with a long, expansive finish. It's a blend of 56% Merlot, 41% Cabernet Sauvignon and 3% Petit Verdot."*  
- WK, Wine Advocate

*"The late-ripening, low-yielding vintage has delivered a beautifully balanced wine of striking intensity in the 2021 Palmer. Unwinding in the glass with complex aromas of blackberries, exotic spices, licorice, violets and burning embers, it's full-bodied, layered and enveloping, with a deep, concentrated core of fruit, ripe tannins and lively acids, concluding with a long, expansive finish. If recent vintages of Palmer have set new records in their power and richness, the 2021 marks a return to the classical proportions of the 1990s—with all the additional concentration and precision that Thomas Duroux's pioneering viticulture and thoughtful winemaking have brought to the equation at this address in the interim. The grand vin is a blend of 56% Merlot, 41% Cabernet Sauvignon and 3% Petit Verdot, picked between September 24 and October 15. Tasted twice."*  
- WK, Wine Advocate

*"Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2021 Palmer needs a little swirling and coaxing to unlock evocative plum preserves, black cherry compote, and star anise notes, followed by earthy nuances of tilled soil, black truffles, and cracked black pepper with a touch of wild sage. Medium-bodied, the palate delivers beautifully soft, rounded tannins and lots of juicy fruit in the mid-palate, supported by harmonious acidity, finishing with beautiful purity and perfume. 65% of the crop will be aged new barriques for the first year, then transferred to foudres for the second year. 2028-2048."*  
- LPB, Wine Independent

*"There's brightness and clarity to this young wine, with blackcurrants, violets, lavender, and blackberries. Medium body with a solid core of fruit and a long, fresh finish. Fine tannins. Bright acidity. 56% merlot, 3% petit verdot and 41% cabernet sauvignon. From biodynamically grown grapes."*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"The wine is dense with warm tannins supporting black fruit tones and acidity. Juicy and spicy, the wine's Cabernet Sauvignon shows so well with black currant flavors. It is fresh and it obviously it will age well."*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"Less exuberance but Palmer identity intact, the old-vine Merlot to the fore. Dense and full with a generosity of fruit. Silky texture on attack, the tannins present but controlled. Slightly dry finish with a bit of chew. Should improve further with élevage. Drink 2028 – 2046."*  
- JL, JancisRobinson.com

## Reviews

*“Perfumed chocolate cherries with bramble tones on the nose. This has a rich and round mouthfeel, clear structure on show but also with life and lift - a sweet, bright cherry element given definition by strict but fine tannins. You have a really beautiful, delicate opening, quite wide and airy then the depth arrives on the mid palate, with chalky tannins and red fruits coming into play before the spiced liquorice enters on the finish. The texture is striking, velvet-like with layers and a sublime verticality of freshness and minty aeration. It may be less glamorous and overtly plush and seductive than bigger previous vintages, but I love the classicism on show - a focus, precision, and sophistication. Superb winemaking from Thomas Duroux who successfully navigated the difficult vintage conditions in 2021.”*

- GH, Decanter.com

*“Vivid ruby and violet colour, this is a brilliant wine, inky and with clear supple give to the tannins. Give it a full 8 to 10 years before drinking, and here you feel that they have sacrificed very little to the vintage, this feels entirely Palmer in character. Savoury but abundant blue and black fruits, plenty of crayon, cocoa bean, and slate, with a floral prettiness and a mouthwatering finish. 27hl/h yield, harvest September 24 to October 16, 55% new oak (first year in barrel, second year in larger oak casks of 3,000l).”*

- JA, janeanson.com

*“Palmer has a little more Merlot in the 1st wine blend than usual, something that is not the case for everyone this year but reflects how unusual Palmer's Merlot on gravel really is. This is one that makes you sit up and take notice; with savoury fruits that have sinew and character, juicy raspberry, blueberry and black cherry, good persistency, helped by fresh acidities and slate texture. Clear ageing potential, acidity more present than in the past few years at Palmer, but the sense of energy and momentum is entirely in the spirit of the estate. 22hl/h yields (but 8ha were lost to frost, so the 'real' yield was 27hl/h). Harvest September 24 to October 16, with the majority in by October 11.”*

- JA, janeanson.com

*“Clearly, one of the wines of the vintage, this is superb, and quite an accomplishment for the vintage. The wine is rich, concentrated, firm, and elegant with layers of black and red fruits, spice, dried flowers, tobacco leaf, and cocoa. The palate is loaded with sweet, ripe, energetic berries, dark chocolate, plums, espresso, and a hint of mint. The refined, lifted end notes keep on going. With some age, this could score even higher. The wine blends 56% Merlot, 41% Cabernet Sauvignon and 3% Petit Verdot. Yields were a paltry 22 hectoliters per hectare, so not much wine was produced. Drink from 2027-2060.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“Deep ruby, garnet in color, the wine shows off its flowers, cocoa, black plum and dark cherry, with a Cuban cigar note coming in at the end of the nose with ease. On the palate, the wine is medium-bodied, fresh, sweet, poised, and vibrant. The wine offers a lush, dark chocolate, plum, currant and coffee bean tinted mid-palate in the vibrant, lifted finish. The wine is a blend of 56% Merlot, 41% Cabernet Sauvignon and 3% Petit Verdot. 13.4% ABV, pH 3.72. Yields were low at a paltry 22 hectoliters per hectare. 55% of the harvest was placed into the Grand Vin. Picking took place September 24 - October 14. Drink from 2028-2055.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“There will be 7,500 cases of Palmer this year from a yield of 22 hl/ha. The harvest was 2 weeks later than last year with grapes picked into mid-October. Chaptalisation (used for the first time since 2013) brought the alcohol up to 13.5% abv. aged in 70% new oak. Deep purple in colour. Smoky liquorice and brooding cherry, damson and cassis fruit define the nose. The palate offers more steeped hedgerow fruit, finding an interplay between the sweet and the fresh. The tannins are initially silky but deceptively firm and plentiful. They provide a saline backbone reinforced by bright, balanced acidity. The mid-palate is impressive for the vintage, but the finish remains airy and high-toned, with violets joining sweet spice and succulent cherry. Long.”*

- TP, Farr Vintners

*“The 2021 Palmer has a discrete bouquet that demands patience. This does not race out of the blocks, rather it unfurls with subtle graphite scents, blackberry, hints of cassis, plus some of the briny aromas that I noticed on the Alter Ego. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins that frame the cedar and graphite infused black fruit. Quite strict for a Palmer, yet fresh with a cerebral, saline finish that is almost Pauillac-like in style despite the majority from old Merlot vines that are situated on some of its finest gravel terroirs. Very long, very suave on the finish. Superb. Drink 2030 – 2065.”*

- NM, Vinous

## Reviews

*"The 2021 Palmer is a heady, showy wine. Clay-rich soils yield a Margaux of breadth, power, and textural richness. Black cherry, lavender, mocha, and dried herbs infuse the 2021 with tons of character. A wine of density and intensity, this is seriously impressive. It is also going to need time to fully blossom. There's real juiciness from the Merlot, and an exotic quality that suggests it was picked on the later side. The 2021 spent one year in barrel and one year in cask, as is the norm these days here."*

- AG, Vinous

*"The 2021 Palmer is one of the truly epic wines of the year. It's not the 2018, but it is in that vein, albeit at 13% in alcohol. There's tremendous richness and sheer extract here. Blackberry jam, chocolate, smoke, licorice, lavender, and mocha notes possess remarkable primary intensity, more like a young must than a wine with a few months of age. Readers will find a Palmer that offers a compelling mix of opulence and energy."*

- AG, Vinous

*"The 2021 Château Palmer is 56% Merlot, 41% Cabernet Sauvignon and 3% Petit Verdot. It's similarly ruby/plum-hued yet is more tight and focused, with beautiful blue fruits, violets, graphite, and spicy oak aromas and flavors. As with all the top 2021s, it has an incredible purity, polished, and refinement, with silky tannins, a flawlessly balanced mouthfeel, and outstanding length. It's one of the few 2021s that demands 4-6 years of bottle age and will have upwards of two decades of prime drinking."*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*"The Grand Vin 2021 Château Palmer checks in as 56% Merlot, 41% Cabernet Sauvignon, and the rest Petit Verdot. The élevage here is unique in that the wine spends the first year in barrel (60% new) before having one-third moved into foudre for the following 6 months. The 2021 is an unquestionable success, revealing a dense purple hue as well as a powerful bouquet of ripe black and blue fruits supported by notes of tobacco, graphite, and chocolate. This medium to full-bodied Margaux has ripe, velvety tannins, a great mid-palate, and outstanding length. It's going to have plenty of up-front appeal yet still evolve for two decades."*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*"Palmer builds its wines on a base of "super-old" Merlot vines that sit atop their finest terroir – gravel shot with clay - which makes this Château's wines unique. The terroir, these vines and winemaker Thomas Duroux's sensitive winemaking have imbued in this vintage a discreetly luxurious character with silky tannins, deft precision, and a crystal-clear identity. This is another elite 2021 that could not come from anywhere else. While the complexity and refinement here are not in question, the tension and energy underpinning the lissome fruit make this such a complete wine. Very Palmer, very Margaux and very 2021 – this is a classically-shaped Palmer with a modernist twist of purity and clarity of expression. 18.5."*

- Matthew Jukes

*"Deep dark ruby, opaque core, purple reflections on the narrow rim. Spicy, dark berry fruit underscored with rosemary, coriander, black cherries and hints of liquorice, an individualistic bouquet. Complex, taut, fresh acidity, mineral-salty, subtle fruit sweetness on the finish, tightly meshed, will benefit from bottle maturation as it still needs time. Aged one year in barrique, one year in 3,000 litre Stockinger barrels from Austria."*

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

*"(56% Merlot, 41% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Petit Verdot) The nose is nicely fresh and shows complexity, nice finesse of grain, some power and depth. There are hints of fresh/blushing blackberry, raspberry and more slightly fleshy/ripe cherry combined with fine violet, iodine minerality, pulpy blackcurrant, cherry blossom, a subtle hint of toastiness, toasted almond, bourbon vanilla and discrete hints of liquorice. The palate is fruity and reveals freshness, delicacy, nice juiciness, fleshiness, a certain controlled volume, brightness of the fruit, subtle crispness, a fresh melodic side, an elegant classicism, straightforwardness with finesse. On the palate this wine expresses notes of pulpy/juicy blackberry, bright blackcurrant and more lightly fresh/juicy cherry combined with hints of violet, lily, cherry, iodine/saline minerality as well as fine hints of liquorice, sense of the place, discreet hints of tonka bean, subtle hints of fresh hazelnut. The tannins are elegant, smooth, and precise."*

- Vert de Vin