

Château Prieuré Lichine 2017

CSPC# 866422

750mlx12

13.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

63% Cabernet Sauvignon, 32% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot

Appellation

Margaux

Classification

4th Grand Cru Classé

Website

<https://prieure-lichine.fr/en/the-prieure-lichine-wines/chateau-prieure-lichine/>

General Info

Originally a priory of Benedictine monks who cultivated grapes for service at dinner and at religious ceremonies, practices gradually evolved by the 18th century to establish sales of the wine under the name Le Prieuré de Cantenac. As a consequence of the French Revolution, the property was seized, divided and sold in 1789 to several surrounding estates, including Château Palmer. A portion was bought by Monsieur Pagès who passed on the estate to his widow, when due to its reputation and broker prices received a fourth growth classification in 1855. Several changes in ownership resulted in changes to the name, such as Le Prieuré and Prieuré-Cantenac, and when the late wine writer and authority Alexis Lichine arrived to buy the estate it consisted of 11 hectares of neglected vines.

Alexis Lichine bought the vineyard in 1951 (shortly after having purchased the Margaux estate Château Lascombes with a consortium) and work began to group and reconstitute the property on the ideal slightly-rising ground. With the money, he was garnering from the import business and a few partners, Alexis Lichine bought the Prieuré for 11,000 pounds, at the time about \$16,000. In 1953, with the help of Count Lur-Saluces of Château d'Yquem, Lichine renamed the Prieuré to Château Prieuré-Lichine.

With the estate renamed in 1953, the following year Cantenac wineries were entitled to use the appellation of Margaux Sacrificing quantity for quality, trades in portions of desirable land at a loss of two to one were made with third growth neighbours Palmer, Ferrière, Kirwan, Giscours, Issan, Boyd-Cantenac and second growth neighbours Durfort-Vivens and Brane-Cantenac, adding up to 47 acres (19 ha) of vineyards by the mid-1960s. With an aim to produce a wine well beyond its classification, extensive replanting and repairs and investments were made to the equipment, and by the 1970s the estate amounted to 58 hectares dispersed across the communes Cantenac and Margaux.

After Lichine's death in 1989, the estate was run by his son Sacha for several years, with oenologist Michel Rolland acting as consultant, until the estate was sold to the Groupe Ballande in 1999. The winery currently employs Stéphane Derenoncourt as its consulting oenologist.

Winemaker

Étienne Charrier winemaker, Stéphane Derenoncourt consultant

Vintage

The year 2017 will long remain in our collective memory in Bordeaux, because of the devastating spring frosts that occurred over the last ten days of April. In Margaux, the frosts hit hardest on the nights of 27 and 28 April 2017 causing damage that hadn't been witnessed since 1991. After a cold winter and with a shortfall in water, the vine cycle began around the usual dates at the end of March with fast, even shooting. And then came April 27 and a night that would have a huge impact on the rest of the season. One third of the Prieuré-Lichine vineyard was hit, with potential crop losses ranging from 40% to 100%. From that moment on, the whole team went into action working through the plots over and again tidying up the vines and removing secondary shoots in the frost-affected plots and keeping a particularly vigilant eye on plots that had been spared. At the beginning of May, with the return of sunny weather and milder temperatures, vine vegetation growth accelerated, and the first flowers were in evidence ten days ahead of normal schedule. This flowering took place in -ne weather conditions, and the vines were in excellent health. Heavy rainfall at the end of June provided the soils with enough water to see the vines through till



Vintage	the end of the vine cycle, and the summer months went smoothly. Harvesting dates were early, and the crop size was what we had expected in the plots spared by the frosts. Our reactivity enabled us to be precise in the harvesting dates with full ripeness achieved in all sectors that were preserved. The nice surprise was the Cabernet Sauvignon, which displayed a silky, tannic mouth-feel together with precise aromatics of small red berry fruits. It is in these difficult years that the Great Margaux Terroirs shine through and demonstrate their ability to maintain the quality potential of a vintage in spite of the vagaries of the weather.
Vineyards	The Prieuré-Lichine vineyards are naturally, in view of Lichine's many acquisitions, very widely spread across the Margaux commune. Most lie to the north of Cantenac, on one of the gravel ridges that characterise the Médoc. The vines are 54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 1% Cabernet Franc, and are planted at a density of 8500 vines/ha.
Harvest	Merlot: 14th - 26th September Cabernet Sauvignon: 27th September - 03rd October
Maturation	After manual harvesting followed by a meticulous sorting (on a sorting table and then optically), the fruits are fermented in vats without crushing for about 30 days before being aged in oak barrels (50% new and 50% one wine).
Tasting Notes	In the glass, Château Prieuré Lichine 2017 has a deep, intense purple colour with garnet tints. On the nose, it distils a fruity and floral bouquet. The scents of black fruits mingle with delicate rose fragrances as well as subtle touches of gourmet spices. On the palate, Château Prieuré Lichine 2017 offers a moderately full-bodied attack followed by a rich, full-bodied mid-palate bursting with aromas of blackberries and juicy black cherries. The freshness of the fruit is supported by a velvety texture. The fruity aromas quickly coat the tongue and the inside of the cheeks to end on a rich, elegant and remarkably long finish.
Serve with	Prieuré Lichine is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Prieuré Lichine is a perfect match with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta as well as cheese.
Production	13,750 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 20
Scores/Awards	<p>91 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2020</p> <p>89-92 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2018</p> <p>89 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2020</p> <p>88-90+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate #236 - April 2018</p> <p>93 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2020</p> <p>93-94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2018</p> <p>93 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 2020</p> <p>92-94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 2018</p> <p>16.5 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2018</p> <p>93 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2020</p> <p>94 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2018</p> <p>92 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2018</p> <p>92-94 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2019</p> <p>87-89 points - Derek Smedley, MW - May 2018</p> <p>92+ points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2020</p> <p>91-94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2018</p> <p>87 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2020</p> <p>94 points - Vert de Vin - April 2019</p> <p>91 points - Falstaff Magazine - May 2018</p> <p>16 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2020</p> <p>14.5 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - April 2019</p> <p>17.5 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2020</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Caressing in feel, with a silky structure underneath layers of warm plum, blackberry and black cherry puree flavors. Subtle black tea and alder notes curl around the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2030. 13,750 cases made."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Bright and fresh, with a mix of raspberry, pomegranate and plum notes guided by light floral and spice notes. Shows a brambly edge on the finish. On the lighter side but offers good energy."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p>

Reviews

“Medium to deep garnet-purple color, the 2017 Prieuré-Lichine is composed of 63% Cabernet Sauvignon, 32% Merlot and 5% Petit Verdot, aged for 18 months in French oak barrels, 50% new. It rocks up with expressive blackcurrant cordial, stewed plums, and boysenberries scents plus suggestions of unsmoked cigars, cedar chest and cardamom. Medium-bodied, the palate has a solid frame of chewy tannins and bold freshness supporting the muscular black fruits, finishing on a stewed tea note. Drink 2020 – 2030.”

- LPB, Wine Advocate

“Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2017 Prieuré-Lichine is scented of crushed blackberries, black cherries and roses with touches of cloves, cinnamon and dusty earth. The palate is medium-bodied with plenty of flesh, textured by plush tannins and just enough freshness, finishing long.”

- LPB, Wine Advocate

“The 2017 Prieuré-Lichine has a light, slightly earthy bouquet that is endowed with less fruit than some of its peers. There is just a touch of greenness here, though not to a degree that bothers me. The palate is medium-bodied with fine definition, a crisp line of acidity and a pretty, quite harmonious finish. It actually finishes with more panache than I expected though it does require more length. Drink 2021-2035.”

- NM, Wine Advocate

“A floral and lightly spicy red with redcurrant undertones. Medium-bodied with firm, silky tannins that are polished and poised. Give it time to open. Shows depth and intensity at the end. Try after 2022.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This is really fresh and layered with currant, berry and floral aromas and flavors. Medium-to full-bodied, integrated, and polished. Beautiful. Very focused. More cabernet in the blend than normal. Possibly at the same level as 2016.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This fruity wine will bring out black-currant flavors along with spice. The tannins are already soft leaving just a dry core to this balanced wine. Drink from 2024.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Soft and juicy, this is an open style of wine. The wood flavors are apparent, giving it a toasty character. At the same time, it has plenty of blackberry concentration to create an attractive, fruity core for medium-term aging.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Mid crimson. Sweet, punchy black fruit with a hint of oak char but the effect is more savoury than sweet. Moreish, juicy, and fresh. Finely structured, moderate length, all in balance, the finish, dry but not drying.”

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“Subdued aromatics on the attack. Brambles, tannins, and liquorice abound, this is good quality but not jumping out of the glass and the austere side of 2017 is dominant right now. Well built, and this is one that I suggest giving a full eight years in bottle before getting into its drinking window.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“This is the definition of a wine to buy in an off-vintage. It has the signature of the last few years, but in an early-drinking package. It's a little oaky and smoky for sure but handles it well and delivers punch and personality without overstating the case. Ripe damson fruits help to deliver impact, even if the fruit is generally a touch below the exuberance of the last two years. Planted in the vineyard to 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 45% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot. (JA)”

“Showing deep color, the wine opens with coffee bean, black cherry, wet earth and floral tenors. Soft and silky, round and full bodied, there is abundant sweet, fresh dark red fruit with a touch of oak and thyme in the finish.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews *“Warm and floral Margaux fruit aromas, with spices and some coffee. Fairly serious structure and depth, plenty of tannins, spices, rich fruit, coffee, and spice. A youthful but very balanced wine. Barrel Sample: 92-94.”*

- Tim Atkin MW

“The nose is firm and fresh the start of the palate light with a bramble and bilberry mix. Sweet fruit in the middle gives more depth but the back palate is lacking in richness and the finish is quite tight. Drink 2024-2037.”

- Derek Smedley MW

“The 2017 Prieuré-Lichine is powerful and dense, with quite a bit more structure and tannic heft than it showed en primeur. That is not necessarily a bad thing, but there is no question the 2017 has developed into a pretty potent Margaux. The signature red fruit and floral notes are there, but readers will have to be patient waiting for them to fully emerge. En primeur, Prieuré-Lichine was charming, but from bottle it is far less forthcoming. This deep, robust Margaux appears to have a bright future in the cellar. Tasted two times.”

- AG, Vinous

“The 2017 Prieuré-Lichine is another in a series of utterly gorgeous wines that have emerged from this château in recent years. The construction of a new cellar a few years ago seems to have made a huge difference in the precision of the wine. Soft, supple, and gracious, with gentle contours and silky tannins, the 2017 is pure class. Succulent red berry, plum, rose petal and mint infuse this gracious Margaux. The blend is 63% Cabernet Sauvignon, 32% Merlot and 5% Petit Verdot. The increase in Cabernet Sauvignon is a reflection of a desire to gradually build the wine on a core of Cabernet rather than a response solely to the conditions of the year. Stéphane Derenoncourt and his team continue to do a brilliant work at Prieuré-Lichine.”

- AG, Vinous

“Deep dark ruby garnet, violet reflections, delicate lightening of the edges, fine vanilla, a hint of black cherries, light nougat, delicate oak spice. Medium body, touch of red berries, present tannins that are still somewhat demanding, firm texture on the finish, a versatile food accompaniment.”

- Falstaff Magazine

“The nose is fruity, racy, precise, harmonious, slightly velvet and offers concentration and power. It reveals notes of cassis, wild berries, blackberry, and fine touches of black cherry, Zan, fine toasted touches associated with slight touches of violet, gray pepper, a very discreet hint of iris as well as subtle hints of spices, chocolate, and toasted oak. The palate is fruity, well-balanced, delicate, harmonious, slightly tight, silky and offers a beautiful acid frame, juiciness, a beautiful fineness of the grain, a fine suavity, tension, liveliness, gourmandize, a fine freshness as well as a small racy minerality. On the palate this wine expresses notes of red cherry, fleshy / fresh raspberry and small notes of juicy redcurrants, cassis associated with touches of dark chocolate / tonka bean, toasted oak, subtle hints of sweet spices as well as fine hints of caramelization. Tannins are fine and slightly powdered. Very fine chews on the finish. Good persistence with touches of juicy fruit (blackberry ...), toasted touches and very discreet touches of almond. Beautiful potential! (2024+)”

- Vert de Vin
