
Seigneurs d'Aiguilhe 2012

CSPC# 765371

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon

Appellation

Côtes de Castillon

Website

<http://www.neipperg.com/index.php?act=1,12,1>

General Info

The d'Aiguilhe seignury would appear to have covered a vast territory in the Middle Ages, encompassing several large feudal estates. Located on the border between French and English-occupied zones during the Hundred Years' War, Château d'Aiguilhe's allegiance changed according to the tides of war.

This very ancient estate, undoubtedly one of the oldest in Bordeaux, was a key element in the defence network established by the kings of England to protect their holdings in the province of Guyenne. It was therefore long a bone of contention between the French and Anglo-Bordelais armies. After this tumultuous period of its history, Château d'Aiguilhe went back to more peaceable pursuits, namely developing exports of its wine, especially to Northern Europe. Starting in the 19th century, the wines of Château d'Aiguilhe were shipped from the port of Castillon to England, Holland, and ports belonging to the Hanseatic League.

The château was acquired by the d'Albret family and then came into the hands of the Leberthon family, who produced many members of the Bordeaux parliament. The Leberthons sold Château d'Aiguilhe on the eve of the French Revolution to a certain Etienne Martineau. He expanded it into a huge estate with four hundred hectares of vines in a single block. His descendents remained owners of the château until 1920.

Stephan von Neipperg acquired Château d'Aiguilhe in December 1998. One of the most beautiful vineyards in the Côtes de Castillon, d'Aiguilhe now benefits from the same exacting standards as the von Neipperg family's estates in Saint-Emilion. A new approach in the vineyard has raised this wine to new heights, and it has received near universal praise since the change in ownership.

Seigneurs d'Aiguilhe is the second wine of Chateau d'Aiguilhe.

Vintage

After the very cold and dry winter of 2011–2012, bud break lasted throughout April. The rains of April and May, coupled with mild temperatures, resulted in significant mineralization and strong vegetative growth of the vines.

Flowering was late (29 May) and drawn out, with a delicate fruit set. The old Merlot plants have at times seen yields reduced due to coulure (shatter, a failure of the fruit to set) or millerandage (shot grapes, incomplete development).

There was settled summer weather from 15 July, with the hottest August since 2003, allowing partial recovery of the growth cycle. From mid-July onwards, 2012 was one of the driest vintages of recent years (along with 2005, 2009 and 2010), resulting in a significant water deficit (120mm lower than the thirty-year average). Ripening in early August was prolonged, with peaks of temperature from July to September and reduced rainfall. The biggest daily temperature difference recorded was 12.9°C, the highest in eight years, favouring a high level of anthocyanins and aromatic intensity. September and October were mild, close to the seasonal norm (27–28°C on 5 October).

Vineyards

At Chateau d'Aiguilhe, the vine density ranges from 5,500 vines per hectare to 9,000 vines per hectare. The density continues to increase as the vineyards are replanted. The Cotes de Castillon vineyard of Chateau d'Aiguilhe is planted to 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc. On average, the vines are 28 years of age. Sustainable viticulture and a biodynamic approach characterize vineyard management here by Stephan Neipperg. This means no herbicides, pesticides, or insecticides are used. Harvesting is manual into small plastic crates. The fruit is sorted before and after destemming. The fruit is whole berry fermented in a combination of oak and stainless-steel tanks, all equipped with temperature control. There is a second wine, Seigneurs d'Aiguilhe.

Harvest	Harvesting: by hand, into small crates to avoid bruising. Sorted before and after destemming. No crushing. The grapes are put into vats by gravity flow
Vinification/ Maturation	Fermentation in wooden vats for 25 days. Extraction by pneumatic pigeage (punching down the cap). Maturing in oak barrels (60%), on the lees for 18 months. No fining or filtration.
Tasting Notes	Stephan von Neipperg of Canon-La-Gaffeliere, Clos l'Oratoire and La Mondotte also owns Chateau d'Aiguilhe in the Castillon appellation. This is the 2nd wine from that over-achieving property and is a stunning value every vintage. This is supple, rich and elegant showing classy restraint and wonderful pedigree. This is one of the best values in Bordeaux.
Serve with	Suggested pairings / wine Stuffed vegetables, ham, andouilletteà mustard, stuffed tomatoes, fontainebleau, red meat, white meat, game, cooked with beef (8 years), roasted rabbit, madeira sauce, lamb skewers, capon stuffed with morels, rabbit hunter, guinea fowl, guinea fowl roasted saddle of rabbit, aanglier bordelaise
Cellaring	Drink now to 2020
Reviews	<i>Stephan von Neipperg of Canon-La-Gaffeliere, Clos l'Oratoire and La Mondotte also owns Chateau d'Aiguilhe in the Castillon appellation. This is the 2nd wine from that over-achieving property and is a stunning value every vintage. This is supple, rich and elegant showing classy restraint and wonderful pedigree. This is one of the best values in Bordeaux.</i> - Steve Bearden, KL Wine Merchants

This is the second wine from Château d'Aiguilhe, whose property dates back to the 12th century and is linked to the Knights Templar. The current château, a "fortified farmhouse," was built in the 13th century. The Right Bank terroir, with its clay-limestone soils, produce outstanding Merlot and Cabernet Franc grapes. This is always one of the best values in red wine. Hamburger and this red-perfect.

Drink from 2015 to 2025
- Clyde Beffa Jr, KL Wine Merchants
