
Alter Ego de Palmer 2015

CSPC# 771453

750mlx12

13.4% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

52% Merlot, 42% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Petit Verdot

Appellation

Margaux

Classification

3ème Cru Classé

Website

http://www.chateau-palmer.com/alter_ego.php?millesime=2012&langue=en

General Info

Château Palmer is named after a British officer, Major General Palmer, who settled in Bordeaux in 1814. It is the top estate of the Margaux appellation after Château Margaux. It is located in the centre of the Margaux appellation, and its vineyards (Cabernet Sauvignon 55%, Merlot 40%, Cabernet Franc 5%) lie on a sparse gravel plateau.

Palmer is classified as a 3ème Cru Classé and was established as a Super Second long before Léoville Las Cases, Ducru-Beaucaillou and Pichon-Lalande, and in some years (1961, 1966, and 1983) it is as good as any wine in Bordeaux.

Palmer's relatively high Merlot content makes Palmer the closest in style of any leading Médoc properties to the great wines of Pomerol and St-Emilion.

Vintage

Since 1945, only the 1965 vintage wasn't up to the quality of the vintages ending in 5. So, we were "statistically" expecting an excellent harvest in 2015. And we haven't been disappointed... The beginning of the vine's growing season was characterised by a relatively dry climate. The vegetative development was extremely regular and the flowering conditions perfect. The rainfall that followed the fertilisation of the flowers enabled good berry growth. At the end of June, temperatures rose, and the dry weather settled, favouring an early end to vegetative growth, the thickening of the skins of the berries, the concentration of the tannins and the rapid growth of the pips. From the end of July, the weather conditions changed radically as we were faced with a succession of rainy periods of moderate intensity. At first, the rain triggered the beginning of the véraison (grape ripening), which was quick and homogenous in its second part, after a very slow start. Additionally, the grapes developed to reach a more classic size. The Margaux appellation enjoyed especially favourable weather conditions throughout September. With only 30 mm of rainfall, Margaux was the driest part of the Medoc.

Vineyards

The Palmer vineyards cover 55 hectares in the commune of Cantenac. Most of the plots are concentrated on a plateau of thin gravel from the Guntz period on the top of the rises of the Margaux appellation.

The gravelly soil consists of stones with complicated, poetic names, like lydite, quartzite, and chalcedony, which come down to us from the distant past – from the Quaternary era, to be precise. Swept by the flow of the Garonne River, pieces of rock from the Pyrénées were deposited along the banks of the Gironde estuary. Moving inland a number of geological folds form a series of parallel rises. The Palmer plateau is situated on these first gravelly terraces along the edge of the estuary. As the saying goes in Bordeaux, the great terroirs overlook the river.

Harvest

Harvest dates: from 09/22/2015 to 07/10/2015. We harvested a few young vines of Merlot on September 15th, but the harvest started in earnest on September 22nd. The Merlot were magnificent, aromatic and beautifully ripe. The Cabernet Sauvignon and the Petit Verdot followed and were just as promising. The 2015 harvest came to a close on October 7th. The relatively high alcoholic content of the 2015 vintage is balanced out by a dense tannic structure without any rustic notes, thanks to perfect phenolic maturity of the pips and skins. At this time, this outstanding balance leads us to believe that 2015 will be in line with recent great vintages, such as 2010, 2009 and 2005.



Vinification/ Maturation	Harvesting and vinification decisions are made based on the idea that we have of the Château Palmer and Alter Ego style. Final blend tastings usually come to confirm our intuitions. The batches chosen for Alter Ego are then blended and put into barrels to age for 18 months. The fruitiness and aromatic intensity are preserved by the use of a moderate percentage of new oak barrels (25 to 40%).
Serve with	roasted red meats or mature cheese.
Production	7,083 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2025-2030
Scores/Awards	<p>92 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2018</p> <p>91 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate Interim Issue - February 2018</p> <p>90-92 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #224 - April 2016</p> <p>91 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - March 2018</p> <p>96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2018</p> <p>94-95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2016</p> <p>93-95 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2016</p> <p>16.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2016</p> <p>91 points - Decanter.com - April 2016</p> <p>92 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2017</p> <p>94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2018</p> <p>93-95 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2016</p> <p>90-92+ points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - March 2016</p> <p>91 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2016</p> <p>16 points - Farr Vintner - March 2016</p> <p>91-93 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2016</p> <p>91 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - May 2016</p> <p>92 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2018</p> <p>90-93 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2016</p> <p>93 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2018</p> <p>17.5+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2016</p> <p>93-95 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - May 2016</p> <p>17 points - Bettane & Desseave (score only) - April 2016</p>
Reviews	<p><i>“Warm and inviting, with delightfully ripe plum and cassis notes that are lined with subtle lilac, fresh earth and singed sandal wood details before a wave of tobacco and humus comes in on the finish. Approachable, but should develop with time. Best from 2019 through 2029.”</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>“Composed of 52% Merlot, 42% Cabernet Franc and 6% Petit Verdot, the 2015 Alter Ego de Palmer has a medium to deep garnet-purple color and gorgeous nose of ripe plums, cassis and crushed cherries with touches of incense, lavender and chocolate box. Medium-bodied, very finely crafted and vivacious in the mouth, it finishes with great elegance and finesse.”</i></p> <p>- NM, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“The 2015 Alter Ego de Palmer is a blend of 42% Cabernet Sauvignon, 52% Merlot and 6% Petit Verdot. It has a very open, ravishing, quite precocious bouquet with ripe black cherries, fresh dates and crème de cassis that gain intensity in the glass. The palate is more refined, reins it all back in thanks to quite tensile tannin, a crisp line of acidity, moderate depth in the mouth and a gentle grip. There is a touch of tarriness and cracked black pepper towards the finish with very good length. Give this wine 5-7 years in bottle.”</i></p> <p>- NM, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“The 2015 Alter Ego de Palmer is a blend of 52% Merlot, 42% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Petit Verdot. Like the grand vin, this was bottled in late August/early September. The bouquet has certainly dispensed with the precocity that it demonstrated in barrel, now more refined with pure blackberry, blueberry and violet scents, precise and very focused, the new oak very well integrated. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannin, a crisp line of acidity, lightly spiced (clove and black pepper) with just the right amount of plushness toward the winsome finish.”</i></p> <p>- NM, Wine Journal</p>

- Reviews** *“This is sensational, characterized by such purity and beauty and with aromas of blackberries, dark chocolate, walnuts, cedar and lavender. Full-bodied, tight and focused — in part thanks to sensational tannin tension that is intense yet polished. Needs five to six years of bottle age to come together. Great second wine of Palmer.”*
- JS, JamesSuckling.com
- “Very solid and powerful with dried mushroom and wet earth aromas and flavors. Complex. Full and chewy yet so polished and long. Spicy, meat and gorgeous. Most serious Alter Ego ever. More inner Ego now! 52% merlot, 41% cabernet sauvignon, and petit verdot 6%.”*
- JS, JamesSuckling.com
- “Barrel Sample. This is a beautifully perfumed wine. It has ripe black fruits that shoot through the richness. It has a velvety texture, rounded and already smooth. There is just a shot of tannin and the hint of wood at the end. Barrel Sample: 93-95”*
- RV, Wine Enthusiast
- “52% Merlot, 42% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Petit Verdot, picked 22 September to 7 October. Very rich on the nose. Very sweet and with sufficient freshness. Very very round. Just on the right side of soupy - but you really have to drink this pretty young, I think.”*
- JR, JancisRobinson.com
- “Fine concentration of naturally rich floral fruit from 52% Merlot. More structure to come from perfectly integrated tannins.”*
- Decanter.com
- “This is still very tight, the focused cassis fruits given further focus by slate and rosemary herbs. This is an exceptional second wine, one that shows the beauty of this vintage. Both Alter Ego and Palmer were bottled in August 2017 - a little later than is traditional at the property, to give the wines more time to build harmony after blending. But it probably explains why they are so closed up right now. (JA)”*
- JA, Decanter.com
- “Production was split equally between the Grand Vin and this second wine at Château Palmer in 2015. This is not the most profound Alter Ego I’ve tasted, but it’s soft, sweet, supple and pleasant with silky tannins and bramble and raspberry fruit. Drink: 2020-25”*
- TA, timatkin.com
- “Rocks, stones, flowers, wet earth and inky, dark cherry, plum and even darker chocolate notes are all over the place. From the nose to the palate, you find the same expressions and complexities. The wine is richly textured, sensuous, silky and sweet. There is length and purity, this is better than any vintage of Palmer from the 70’s, most of the 80’s and the 90’s! This is the best vintage of Alter Ego ever produced.”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “With a nose packed with flowers, dark, red fruits, espresso, thyme and earth, this wine is sensuous, silky, ripe and lush, exuding freshness, polished tannins and a beautiful sense of purity and balance in the fruit. Clearly, this is the best vintage for Alter Ego and one to watch for as Alter Ego is often priced below other wines in the appellation due to its lack of classified growth status. Produced from a blend of 52% Merlot, 42% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Petit Verdot, this wine reached 14% alcohol with a pH of 3.85. The fruit was picked September 22 through October 7.”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “Mid depth, earthy purple; lots of fruit; quite strong; fatness here; but also, some strength; fresh acidity; good texture; elegant style; supple at the end; some sap and chew on the finish but satisfying. [52% Merlot, 42% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Petit Verdot, 37hl/ha]. Drink 2020-2030. 90-92+”*
- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

Reviews

"This is the second wine of Chateau Palmer and always very smooth and supple thanks to a high proportion of Merlot in the blend. In 2015 it represents 50% of Palmer's total production and the assemblage will be 52% Merlot, 42% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Petit Verdot. Maturation in 30% new oak. Deep ruby colour. This has a bright cherry fruit and violet nose with hints of rose. Very fragrant. The palate is silky smooth with very refined tannins coating a core of black cherry fruit. Sweet white chocolate, hints of vanilla and fresh flowers linger on the finish. This is fine, pure and refined. A superb Alter Ego."

- Farr Vintners

"Sweet ripe fruit the nose has depth the palate is fleshy rich with dark chocolate and ripe cassis the tannins are fine the mid palate supple. An underlying freshness balances lightens the back palate the finish has a hint of vanilla precision length and elegance."

- Derek Smedley MW

"A ripe, expressive Alter Ego with violets and cassis on the nose with lovely cassis and plum flavors. Balanced, elegant and without any extraction or warmth from the vintage. The blend in this vintage is 52% Merlot and 42% Cabernet Sauvignon."

- JCL, asianpalate.com

"The 2015 Alter Ego is just as alluring today as it was from barrel. Sweet floral notes, spice, dried cherry, mint, tobacco and crushed flowers are all laced together in this silky, mid-weight Margaux. Time in barrel has mellowed some of the exuberance the 2015 showed from barrel. Open-knit, supple and super-expressive, Alter Ego is a winner. Time in the glass brings out aromatic presence of Cabernet Sauvignon. (AG)"

- AG, Vinous

"The 2015 Alter Ego is round, succulent and also a terrific introduction to the vintage. Raspberry jam, cinnamon, flowers and mint are all pushed forward. This is an especially succulent, juicy Margaux that is firing on all cylinders. Today, the 2015 gives the impression it will drink well with minimal cellaring, as its balance and overall harmony are first-rate. The blend is 52% Merlot, 42% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Petit Verdot."

- AG, Vinous

"Very dry weather until the end of July was a worry but the showers were welcome and then September was fine at Palmer. July was the key for the phenolics, and August was the key to freshness. 2015 Alter Ego is a very good vintage, like 2005, 2009 and 2010, but the power and clarity axis are fascinating. This is a delicate wine with a very strong character and rare beauty. With a much more delicate air, albeit with masses of nerve and character, than Pavillon, winemaker Thomas Duroux describes it as his very own Audrey Hepburn."

- MJ, matthewjukes.com

"The 2015 Alter Ego de Palmer is a sensational wine in its own right. Loaded with notes of black cherries, cassis, scorched earth and hints of toasty oak all emerge from this full-bodied, ripe, yet beautifully balanced Margaux. With ripe tannin, solid mid-palate depth and ample sweet fruit, it shows the charm of the vintage and is already hard to resist yet should keep for 10-15 years."

- Jeb Dunnuck
