

Alter Ego de Palmer 2019

CSPC# 771453

750mlx6

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

51% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% 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.

Winemaker

Thomas Duroux, Winemaker

Vintage

While January was marked by a few days of extreme cold, the rest of the winter proved relatively mild. Throughout the season rainfall was moderate but sufficient to partially replenish essential reserves in our soils. The vines' bud burst began almost a week ahead of schedule but would progress thereafter in a smooth and even manner. The spring that followed was cool and rainy, requiring a high degree of precision in our management of the vineyard. Despite the capricious weather, flowering unfolded without difficulties, fueling hopes of a bountiful harvest. Then, at the end of June, the weather conditions would change radically. A lasting period of hot and dry weather set in. Two heat waves between the 26th and 27th of June and the 22nd and 25th of July were fortunately endured without consequence. The limited summer rainfall – 50 mm between July and August – fostered the accumulation of polyphenols in the berries. The grapes underwent their colour change in excellent conditions and by mid-August the prospect of a fine vintage was clear. We began harvesting the Merlot on September 19th amidst weather conditions close to those of summer. The berries were concentrated, aromatic and loaded with sugar. The harvest continued and we entered the autumn under fine, steady rainfall which lowered the potential alcohol of the Cabernet Sauvignon. By October 11th the harvest was complete. In the vat room, the Merlot grapes would shine in their exuberance. The Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot would exhibit remarkable finesse. Today, both Alter Ego and Château Palmer express a purity and aromatic clarity rarely seen in an abundant vintage. These wines don't lie; they are remarkably true to the terroir of Château Palmer.

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

The 2019 vintage brilliantly confirms the excellent work carried out by the technical teams of the estate. Beginning with the Merlot on September 19 and ending on October 11, the harvest at Château Palmer yielded sublime fruit. The Merlot



Harvest	displayed a beautiful exuberance while the Cabernet Sauvignon and the Petit Verdot showed exceptional finesse. Ultimately, 2019 resulted in wines that are faithful to the terroir of Chateau Palmer, wines that will once again mark the history of the estate's great vintages.
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%).
Tasting Notes	With its dark red robe, Alter Ego 2019 immediately impresses with its explosive aromatics. Subtle notes of red fruits evoking raspberries and redcurrants blend harmoniously with the floral fragrance of a field in spring. The sensation on the palate, initially refreshing, unfolds into a texture of great softness and length. This is Alter Ego at its best – a wine perfectly true to its identity.
Serve with	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.
Production	7,083 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2025-2035
Scores/Awards	<p>90 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2022</p> <p>91 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p>96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - December 2021</p> <p>17+ points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - June 2020</p> <p>95 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2022</p> <p>94 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - June 2020</p> <p>93 points - Jane Anson, Insidebordeaux.com - January 2022</p> <p>93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2022</p> <p>93 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2022</p> <p>94 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2022</p> <p>94 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2020</p> <p>95 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - February 2022</p> <p>17 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2022</p>
Reviews	<p><i>“Caressing, offering plum and cherry sauce flavors, hints of ganache and tobacco, with a sanguine hint on the fresh humus-tinged finish. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2030.”</i> - JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>“Aromas of sweet cherries, raspberries, berry fruit liqueur, licorice and spices introduce the 2019 Alter Ego de Palmer, a medium to full-bodied, fleshy, and enveloping wine with lively acids, melting tannins and a lavish core of ripe, creamy fruit. It's more immediate than the more muscular, powerful grand vin. Drink 2021-2039. Thomas Duroux continues to produce singularly textural, powerful wines at this historic Margaux property, where he has introduced a new focus on parcel-by-parcel viticulture and vinification, as well as pioneering biodynamic methods, over the better part of the last two decades. Today, cover crops are the order of the day, much of the vineyard isn't hedged, and fruit trees are being planted in the rows as part of an agroforestry initiative. The core of Palmer derives from the plateau around the château, where soils consist of a millefeuille of sandy gravel, clay-rich gravel, sandy gravel again, and then a meter of pure clay; and it's old-vine Merlot, planted on these soils, that lends Palmer its richness and flesh. There are other parcels dotted around the appellation, of course, including a large block of coarser gravel surrounded by trees, not far from Bel Air Marquis d'Aligre.”</i> - WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“Intense aromas of blackcurrants, cedar, and ripe tobacco with hints of violets, following through to a full-bodied palate with extremely refined tannins that are well-integrated into the wine and are long and subtle at the finish. Such precision and harmony with structure. From biodynamically grown grapes. Best after 2023.”</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>“51% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Petit Verdot. Barrel sample. Vigorous, fresh, and expressive – just so much life! Floral aroma with a savoury edge. Smooth attack then generous fruit across the palate, the texture silky and fine. Lifted and vivacious. Tannins so fine you almost forget them. Approachable but could surprise with age. Drink 2025 – 2035.”</i> - JL, JancisRobinson.com</p>

Reviews *“Gorgeous rich dark purple in the glass. Quite jammy and concentrated on the nose, heady and perfumed with a lovely delicate florality to it too. Great freshness on the palate, juicy but a dark blackcurrant and cherry fruit juice. Beautifully balanced with integrated tannins and oak. Well defined fruit, generous and quite abundant against softly grippy, velvety tannins that just give support to the overall frame. It's serious but with a lightness of touch and playfulness - energetic and lively but still with depth. A great Alter Ego and confident winemaking on show. Drinking Window 2027 – 2043.”*
- GH, Decanter.com

“Cinnamon spice on the nose, with a patisserie edge to the fruits that gives a rich, creamy impression. As ever with the Palmer stable of wines, you can pick out the individual flavours clearly, with careful and precise delineation of cassis, bilberry, slate, and tobacco notes, but overall, this is an outstanding Alter Ego that puts the emphasis on pleasure. Tannins are extremely precise but feathery and pliable. An extremely low 37ppm of SO2 at this stage, in keeping with biodynamic principles and a desire to let the fruit speak.”
- JA, Decanter.com

“Enveloping aromatics, velvety and welcoming. This has fine spice and is full of momentum and clarity. Supple tannins supporting layers of damson fruits, holding on tight through the mid palate with anise and black pepper then softening into gourmet brioche, espresso, and cigar box notes. 45hl/h yield, 45% of overall production. Great to see this wine again, after no Alter Ego was produced in 2018.”
- JA, Inside Bordeaux

“The 2019 Alter Ego de Palmer has a classically styled bouquet featuring a mélange of red and black fruit, briar, hints of cedar, and a touch of black tea, all showing lovely delineation. The palate is fresh and vibrant, displaying a touch of sour cherry on the granular-textured opening. There is something very "old school" about this Alter Ego in contrast to the 2018. Very saline toward the finish, with good persistence. Drink 2025-2045.”
- NM, Vinous

“The 2019 Alter Ego is a huge, dense wine. Ripe, exotic and packed to the core, Alter Ego makes a convincing first impression. Time in the glass brings out floral accents and redder tonalities of fruit. Partial aging in foudres has introduced an element of rigor and tension here that is so alluring in the way it complements the natural richness these wines always show. Drink 2026 - 2039.”
- AG, Vinous

“The second wine of Château Palmer, the 2019 Alter Ego De Palmer is rock-solid and reveals a dense purple hue as well as deep, rich, concentrated aromas and flavors of ripe black cherries, blackcurrants, tobacco, graphite, and chocolate. It might be the richest, most concentrated second wine out here, and truthfully, it tastes like a Grand Vin. Medium to full-bodied, layered, and textured, it has ripe tannins, a fleshy, mouth-filling texture, and a great finish. It's beautifully done”
- Jeb Dunnuck
