

Château Giscours 2008

CSPC# 758855

750mlx12

13.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

Margaux

General Info

The first written reference to the domain of Giscours, a deed confirming the sale of the Estate for 1,000 Pounds, dates from 1330 and refers to a fortified keep. Records of Giscours' vineyards go back to 1552. Giscours early reputation for fine wine became increasingly apparent as time went on. A century later, Giscours charmed the palate of the "Roi Soleil" Louis the 14th, who is said to have had a particular inclination for the wine. Subsequent owners came and went. The most noteworthy was the Count de Pescatore, a leading Parisian banker. In 1847, he laid the cornerstone of the remarkable chateau that still exists today. It was built in order to receive Empress Eugénie in the Renaissance style to which she was accustomed. 1855 was another landmark year, in which the wine of Château Giscours was officially recognised as a 3rd growth Margaux. Then, the domain had a number of other owners and the estate was purchased by Nicolas Tari after the Second World War. He undertook a modernisation programme. In 1995, the Société Anonyme d'Exploitation was acquired by Eric Albada Jelgersma. He immediately began investing in vineyard and cellar renovation. He also put together a new winemaking team in the spirit of generations of winegrowers who made this Estate the famous great growth it is today.

Vineyards

The vineyards at Giscours are spread over four gravel outcrops in Margaux, with a poor quality, slightly sandy, pebbly soil. The estate nears 400 hectares in size, of which 85 hectares are designated vineyards, although at present there are just over 80 hectares planted up. The vines are planted at up to 10 000 vines/ha, a high-density arrangement, and include a significant number of old vines; 25% are over 40 years of age. They are predominantly Cabernet Sauvignon (60%) and Merlot (32%), the remainder Cabernet Franc (5%) and Petit Verdot (3%).

Maturation

Traditional fermentation / the wine is left on the skins for a long time at a relatively high temperature. The wine is put into barrel after the malolactic fermentation. Traditional ageing in new oak barrels (50 %) for 16 months

Tasting Notes

The long, late harvest resulted in such ripeness at Ch. Giscours that, for the first time since 1995, 5% Cabernet Franc was of high enough quality to be added to the blend (along with 65% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Merlot). Lower than normal yields have created a concentrated wine with a creamy blackcurrant palate, fine-grained tannins and spicy, oak complexity. Almost Burgundian in structure, there is a lovely roundness to this wine which is completed by an impressively long finish: a beautiful wine.

Production

22,000 cases made

Cellaring

Drink 2013-2025

Scores/Awards

89 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2011

87-90 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2009

90 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #194 - May 2011

88-90 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #182 - April 2009

91 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - March 2012

90 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 2011

86-88 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - November 2009

83-85 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2009

Outstanding and one of Wine Enthusiast's Top 100 Fine Wines of the year 2011

94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2011

92-94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - December 31, 2009

87-90 points - Ian D'Agata, ST's International Wine Cellar - June 2009 (no review)

17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2009



Scores/Awards **14.5+ points** - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - October 2010
15.5-16.5+ points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - April 2009
16 points/3 stars - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2010
91-92 points - Jane Anson, MW - newbordeaux.com - April 2009
91 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - January 28, 2011
90 points - Jean Marc Quarin - April 2009 (no review)

Reviews *"This has a solid core of dark plum and mulled black currant fruit, with sleek minerality and a dash of espresso on the finish. A touch firm but has more flesh than most of its peers in this vintage. Drink now through 2015. 22,000 cases made."*

- JS, Wine Spectator

"Blackberry and milk chocolate aromas follow through to a medium body, with good fruit, delicate tannins and a fresh finish. Score range: 87-90"

- JS, Wine Spectator

"Dark plum/garnet, this elegant, medium to full-bodied, beguiling, seductive 2008 is a sleeper of the vintage. Round and silky-smooth with lovely black cherry and black currant fruit imbued with touches of smoke, herbs and earth, this relatively evolved effort is best consumed over the next 15-17 years."

- RP, Wine Advocate

"Giscours, made by the same winemaking team that makes Du Tertre (which did not show well in my tastings), reveals sweet tannins and overall far superior quality, which makes me think Du Tertre will improve with time in barrel. The sexy, opulent 2008 Giscours exhibits plenty of dark fruit, forest floor, and earthy notes, sweet, velvety tannin, and good fresh acids. This medium to full-bodied effort should prove to be outstanding with more time."

- RP, Wine Advocate

"Tasted ex-chateau and single blind in Southwold. This is another Margaux 2008 that really stuck its head above others and surpasses my previous expectations. It has another very floral bouquet with violets and rose petals: good fruit intensity and judicious use of oak. The palate is medium bodied with very good backbone, fine definition with a crisp, symmetrical finish that shows great persistency. Tasted January 2012."

- NM, Wine Journal

"Tasted at the UGC 2008 tasting in London. This has a tame bouquet at first, unwinding nicely with aeration to reveal earthy black fruits struck through with graphite and a touch of sage. The palate is well balanced with a citric thread of acidity on the entry, firm tannins, very focused and more masculine than usual. This is showing better than out of barrel with good persistency on the tobacco-tinged finish and it should improve with bottle age. Drink 2013-2025. Tasted October 2010."

- NM, Wine Journal

"This is better than the disappointing sample at primeur. It has a ripe, clean, crisp nose with blackberry, boysenberry, wild hedgerow and just a hint of caramel. The palate is medium-bodied, slightly lower in acidity than I would like, expressive and rounded with the acidity just poking through on the finish. It still seems very disjointed with an edgy finish. Tasted September 2009."

- NM, Wine Journal

"En primeur barrel sample. This is lacking some fruit intensity on the nose: woody, some dried herbs, touch of cedar. Sharp entry on the palate, which is lacking cohesion. Some oaky black fruits on one side, a dry, hollowness on the other. Does not meld together. This is perplexing given the quality of du Tertre. Tasted April 2009.- NM, Wine Journal"

"A dense wine, powerful while also elegant. It shows all the best character of a grand Margaux, with fine tannins as well as dense structure. It will age well."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"A solid, wood and fruit balanced wine, foursquare and chunky. It has a firm backbone of tannins, and the dark plum and fig fruits match well with final lift of acidity."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

Reviews *“Healthy crimson. Already quite complex, seductive aromas. Fresh start with real spring in its step – energetic and lively and very well balanced yet with real intrigue still to be revealed. Good wine. Neat finish. Tightly packed. Limpid – wonderful confidence!”*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“This has better substance than its du Tertre stablemate and we can see this in the colour and in the texture of the wine. All the same it lacks charisma on the nose and the palate of the wine has a flat and hard shell of fruit with a rather dry and tannic back bone. There is some good acidity but overall this lacks impact, a feeling reinforced by the wine's soft finish. Compared to my impression at the primeurs I find this is not showing as well as expected. From a tasting of 2008 Bordeaux at two years of age. 14.5+/20 (October 2010)”

- CK, The Wine Doctor

“Dark, slightly withdrawn fruit here. The palate is crisp, fresh and stony, with a slightly chewy extraction of tannins. Moderate texture, good acid, giving this a fresh and defined style. There is a long, juicy finish and certainly some vigour. This could be good given appropriate time. From my 2008 Bordeaux primeur assessment. 15.5-16.5+/20 (April 2009).”

- CK, The Wine Doctor

“Black-red, very expressive blackcurrant nose, almost crème de cassis without the sweetness, good slightly earthy fruit, palate more subdued than the nose, has class and length. Drink 2014-20.”

- SS, Decanter.com

“So deep and rich, lovely nose. I like this, and it demands a bit of time to really get to grips with, opening up after a few minutes of swirling. But, it rewards time and reflection. Very good potential here.”

- JA, New Bordeaux

“Earth, truffle, tobacco leaf, cassis and notes of bitter chocolate are easy to find. The smooth textured, refined, charming wine finishes with chocolate covered cassis sensations.”

- JL, Wine Cellar Insider
