

Château Giscours 2020

CSPC# 758854 750mlx12
CSPC# 866087 3000mlx3
CSPC# 888342 5000mlx1

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety
Appellation
Classification
Website
General Info

56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot
Margaux

Third Growth. Troisieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.
<http://chateau-giscours.com/en/>

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 recognized 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 vineyards 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. Giscours is run with brio by Dutch manager Alexander Van Beek.

Winemaker
Vintage

Lorenzo Pasquini. Cellar Master: Denis Uteau. Thomas Duclos consults.

2020 - a year of more than the usual challenges. In a few words, 2020 is a high-quality vintage of less than normal quantity. The mild and wet spring led to early flowering which in turn turned into a hot summer including over fifty days of drought, and a heat spike during the summer. The diminished yields of the year resulted from mildew pressure in the spring and a few hail-producing thunderstorms, and in fact is one of the lowest yield vintages in the last decade. The heat throughout but particularly at the end of the summer led to concentrated fruit. And of course, COVID 19 led to most critics' inability to travel to the various Chateau or en premiere events to taste, most were able to taste from home. Not an ideal circumstance but given the year's weather and the expertise of these top producers, critics are overall excited and pleased with the prospects of the 2020 vintage.

Vineyards

The vineyards at Giscours are spread over four gravel outcrops in Margaux, with a poor quality, slightly sandy, pebbly soil. The estate is nearly 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%).

Harvest

From September 8th to October 2nd. Yields were only 36 hectoliters per hectare.

**Vinification/
Maturation**

Optical and manual sorting. Concrete and stainless-steel tanks. Maceration 35 days at 28°C
Ageing in French barrels. 50% new oak. 17 months of ageing in barrels

Tasting Notes

Chateau Giscours is very proud of the 2020 vintage. Château Giscours offers all the classicism of a great Margaux: fine tannins, purity, soft and refined elegance, great roundness in the mouth. It is a wine that evolves magnificently over time and whose pleasure of tasting is transmitted from generation to generation.



Winemaker's Notes	<p>For this 2020 vintage, our aim was to continue in the same vein as 2019, while preserving the typical characteristics of Château Giscours. To achieve this, our objective was to work on two notions that are close to our hearts: aromatic brilliance and fine tannins.</p> <p>The technical team at Giscours took great care to give each plant individual attention. Our vine-growers and winemakers have detailed knowledge of the terroir and the rows they are in charge of, and they consider these plots of vines as micro-gardens that they tend with great care.</p> <p>We are very proud of the 2020 vintage. Our team's in-depth knowledge of the terroir and their risk-taking have produced a voluptuous wine. It is generous, with great personality. It has all the power and fleshiness of Château Giscours and evokes a taffeta texture with silky tannins.</p> <p>It is a vintage that reflects the meticulous and bold approach that guided our team during this atypical year.</p>
Serve with	Chateau Giscours is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
Production	unknown
Cellaring	Drink 2027 – 2065
Scores/Awards	<p>92 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2023</p> <p>95+ points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023</p> <p>92-94+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021</p> <p>92-94 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent (score only) - April 2022</p> <p>96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2023</p> <p>96-97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021</p> <p>96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021</p> <p>95 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p>96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023</p> <p>95-97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021</p> <p>93 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021</p> <p>91-93 points - Farr Vintners - April 2021</p> <p>94 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - December 2022</p> <p>93-95 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021</p> <p>96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p>93-95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021</p> <p>94+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023</p> <p>93-95 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021</p> <p>92 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2021</p> <p>97 points - Yves Beck - March 2023</p> <p>93-95 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021</p> <p>94-95 points - Vert de Vin - May 2021</p> <p>92 points - Andreas Larsson, Tasted - May 2021</p> <p>92-94 points - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021</p> <p>94-96 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - July 2021</p> <p>95 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - July 2021</p> <p>17 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2021</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Ripe but fresh and sleek in feel, with black cherry and blackberry puree notes gliding through, infused with sandalwood, bay leaf and black tea accents. This has a pleasant dark earth tint to the finish, though the fruit still holds sway. Nicely done. Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Drink now through 2035."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"This estate is now enjoying its finest run since its glory days in the 1970s, and the 2020 Giscours is excellent. Unwinding in the glass with deep aromas of blackberries, cassis, pencil shavings, rose petals and sweet, loamy soil, it's medium to full-bodied, ample, and fleshy, with a layered and seamless mid-palate, excellent concentration, and powdery structuring tannins.</i></p> <p><i>Giscours produced some brilliant wines in the past, with a string of notable successes in the 1970s and early 1980s, but then it fell victim to neglect. The predominance of Cabernet Sauvignon in those old vintages, sometimes representing more than 80% of the blend, gradually ceded ground to more productive and facile Merlot; and the estate's reputation declined. When the Albada family acquired Giscours in 1995, all that began to change. Fully 140,000 missing vines were replaced, cultivating the soils was resumed, and the winery was renovated. A young Alexander van Beek arrived for harvest in 1995 and ended up staying to oversee the work. And the results today are very exciting indeed. Giscours itself occupies three large gravel domes: one opposite the chateau itself, the other on the other side of the road and a third inland that hits fully 21 meters above sea</i></p>

Reviews *level. There's a large park with a river at the heart of the estate, and the team are creating wildlife corridors and hedges to bring life back into the vineyards. Seeded cover crops now protect the soils, and canopies are a touch lower to limit excess sugar accumulation. At harvest itself, vines of different age have been marked out to be harvested separately, an immense task, considering that Giscours has 100 hectares under vine in the Margaux appellation alone."*

- WK, Wine Advocate

"A blend of 50% Cabernet Sauvignon and 50% Merlot, the 2020 Giscours reveals a deep garnet-purple color and compelling notes of crushed redcurrants, plum preserves, and Morello cherries, leading to hints of lavender, wild sage, damp soil and black truffles with a touch of licorice. The medium-bodied palate bursts with vibrant red and black fruits and lots of savory accents, supported by soft, very well managed tannins and plenty of freshness, finishing on a lingering fragrant earth note."

- LPB, Wine Advocate

"Fascinating aromas of blueberries, crushed stone, and blackcurrants. Very aromatic. Full-bodied with juicy tannins that are creamy and intense. Slightly bitter, burnt citrus character. This is very muscular with velvety tannins. Needs time to soften. Try after 2025 but will age a long time."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Aromas of crushed berries, dried flowers, and spices with undertones of ink and iron. Full-bodied with wonderful, fine tannins that are totally embedded in the structure. Endless length and such refinement. Rather ethereal. Another winner from Giscours."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Perfumed, ripe and juicy, this structured wine is already impressive. Its layered texture and black plum fruits have serious potential, packed with fruit and tannins with a generous aftertaste."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"This is an excellent Giscours, extremely precise, well drawn, and seductive. There is both concentration and spice, and a vivid sappy feel to the raspberry and bilberry fruits, all drawn out through the palate as the slate texture kicks in. Plenty of things to keep track of here, not least that this is now the only estate in Margaux owned by the Albada family, as they have sold du Tertre. The focus is now entirely on Giscours, and I would expect to see a concerted effort to raise the visibility of the property. Changes include Thomas Duclos as consultant since 2019, and vineyard choices such as intra-plot harvesting, meaning going in waves through the plots picking individual vines when they are at full ripeness. Barrel Sample: 95."

- JA, Decanter.com

"Richly colored, the wine kicks off with an intense display of flowers, with additional nuances of tobacco leaf, earth, currants, black cherries, spice, and cigar box. The wine is silky, vibrant, sensuous, and long with layers of ripe, sweet, vibrant red and black fruits that build in intensity. There is a beautiful purity to the fruit and symmetry on the palate, with a sexy endnote. Drink from 2026-2055."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Deeply colored, the nose kicks off with an intensive display of flowers, truffle, cigar box, cedar, red and black currants, lead pencil and savory herbs. Full-bodied, silky, sensuous, rich, and vibrant, the layers of black, red, and blue velvety, spicy fruits hit everything just right. There is a beautiful purity to the fruit and symmetry on the palate. The sexy finish goes on and on as it lingers and expands. The wine blends 56% Cabernet Sauvignon with 44% Merlot, 13.5% ABV. Picking took place September 8, October 2. Yields were only 36 hectoliters per hectare."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews

"The 2020 is a blend of 56% Cabernet Sauvignon and 44% Merlot that will be aged in 50% new French oak for 17 months. Production is down over 25% on last year. Bright ruby in colour with a cool, hedgerow-fruit perfume on the nose. The spice is subtle and adds complexity to the floral, herbal tones. The palate starts with a silky, fresh entry that allows the red fruit to shine through before a crunch of tannin adds weight to the wine. This is classic and savoury, with notes of cedar, camphor, and undergrowth. The finish is delicate yet persistent, ending on high-toned red fruit."

- Farr Vintners

"The 2020 Giscours has a fresh and vibrant bouquet with blackberry, blueberry, crushed violet, and iris flower scents. As I remarked from barrel, there is a conspicuous gap between the Grand Vin and Deuxieme Vin this year. The palate is smooth on the entry, quite sapid with hints of black olive infusing the black fruit. Harmonious, the 50% new oak neatly folded in, especially on the seductive finish. Interestingly, a decanted bottle had a bit more austerity on the finish than the one just poured."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2020 Giscours was picked from September 8 to October 2. The huge difference in quality between the Grand Vin and Deuxième Vin is apparent on the nose of crystal-clear black fruit intermixed with raspberry, crushed stone and light crushed violet aromas. The palate is medium-bodied with fine-grained tannins, taut and crisp, and quite tensile, leading to a classically styled, sapid finish. This is a classy Giscours with plenty of breeding."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2020 Giscours is every bit as compelling as it was from barrel. Succulent dark cherry, plum, new leather, licorice, menthol, and mocha fill out the layers nicely. There's a good bit of Merlot this year, which lends quite a bit of mid-palate juiciness and textural depth, but there is also plenty of supporting structure underneath. The 2020 is both flamboyant and serious, a pretty appealing combination, I have to say. Tasted two times."

- AG, Vinous

"The 2020 Giscours is surprisingly juicy and forward, with lovely mid-palate richness from the Merlot that comprises 44% of the blend. Inky dark fruit, new leather, spice, menthol, and dried herbs all meld together effortlessly. In 2020 Giscours is a real charmer. I imagine it will drink well with minimal cellaring. Harvest started on September 8 for the Merlot and finished with the last of the Cabernets on October 3, which is a good week ahead of schedule. Yields are down about 25% from the 2019, mostly because of heat and dry weather during the summer. New oak is 50%."

- AG, Vinous

"The Grand Vin 2020 Chateau Giscours is based on 56% Cabernet Sauvignon and 44% Merlot that spent 17 months in 50% new French oak. It has a gorgeous perfume of pure cassis, graphite, and flowers that gives way to a medium to full-bodied Margaux possessing ample tannins, a layered, concentrated mid-palate, remarkable purity, and one heck of a great finish. It's another beautiful Margaux in the vintage that will benefit from 4-5 years of bottle age and evolve for at least two decades. Best After 2027. Rating: 94+"

- Jeb Dunnuck

"One of the most seamless Margaux in the vintage, the 2020 Château Giscours checks in as 56% Cabernet Sauvignon and 44% Merlot, brought up in 50% new French oak. Offering a wonderful, rich, powerful style that's classic Giscours, it has lots of cassis and darker currant fruits as well as notes of dried flowers, sandalwood, licorice, and earth. The tannin quality is spot on, which is rare in Margaux in 2020, and it has medium to full body, a great mid-palate, and a silky, layered mouthfeel. It's a beautiful Margaux."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"Deep dark ruby, opaque core, purple reflections, bright rim. Attractive dark cherries and wild red berries under which lie notes of nougat and a tobacco savouriness. Juicy, fresh, and elegant, a touch of plum and fig, ripe tannins, pleasant nougat echo, mineral finish; very good future potential."

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

Reviews

“On the nose, fruity and elegant, with controlled intensity, brilliance, and a slight peppery edge. It reveals notes of bright red currants, pulpy blackberry and hints of blackcurrant combined with touches of pepper, fresh flowers and a seedy minerality, blueberry, subtle hints of Cuban pepper, chocolate, saffron, and wafts of vanilla bean. On the palate it is fruity, balanced, distinguished with juiciness, suavity, with a certain subtle gourmandize, a nuance of bitterness that lengthens the palate, density, richness, a fine texture, and a nice tannic structure. The wine expresses juicy/pulpy blackberry, bright blackcurrant, and slightly crushed raspberry notes with hints of pulpy/ripe red currant and nuances of fresh tobacco, fine margalaise gravel, graphite, a discreet hint of black tea, a subtle floral side, and notes of sweet spice The tannins are refined, precise and finely mellow. Good length and good sapidity on the palate.”

- Vert de Vin

“Pure nose offering fresh red currant, plum, some herbal notes and discreet oak. Rather full palate, classically built with in a medium bodied, fresh style with a fine tannic backbone, discreet oak, and good length, understated and age worthy style.”

- AL, Tasted.com

“I have never hidden my deep attachment to Giscours, the wine I shared during the first meal shared at the restaurant with the woman who was to become my wife. And then I recall the brilliant 1964, or the 1966 without counting the 2000 or the 2005. And then there is the 2020, which does not just remind us that Giscours can be very large... and not only in terms of area! The entry on the 2020 stands out for its freshness and floral nuances. Thus, it reveals scents of iris while notes of cassis appear after aeration. Very nice density on the palate where the wine not only shines with its precision, but also with its depth. The tannins, very compact, impart a hell of a lot of energy, commonly with a juicy, saline acid structure. Energetic, powerful, accomplished and persistent. Everything takes shape, everything merges. Power and bitterness are essential assets for this wine which offers very good prospects and which Place Giscours where it deserves: right in front! 2027-2047. “

- Yves Beck

“(56% CS, 44% M; two thirds harvest; 36hl/ha; 50% new)

Dense, sweetly red-fruit ripe nose, subtly wild-rose herbal; rich, concentrated without any excess, moderate in superfine tannin, and with a perfectly integrated tannin and acidity; delicately sweet-cored, with a lovely aromatic scope, complexity and length, a superb combination of fruit, aromas, and silky texture, very long across the palate, with a finesse not seen here before, and with lovely delicate, fragrant length. A wine that very clearly signals a new era for Giscours, working with OenoTeam’s Thomas Duclos, and picking in tries, as in Sauternes, parcel by parcel, according to vine age, the maturity of individual vines, and so on. It certainly shows! A most beautiful Giscours, dense yet light on its feet, transparent and so fine in texture. Very Margaux—which, for all its virtues, was not something one often said about Giscours in the past. This is in a different league, and in a very different style, from the famous ’70s Giscours: 1970 and 1975. Really a revelation of the terroir! Alexander Van Beek’s smile was as wide as his wife Véronique’s in her new winery at Haut-Bailly! 2028–50+”

- MS, The World of Fine Wine