
Château Margaux 2012

CSPC# 742350

750mlx12

13.0% alc./vol.

CSPC# 749584

750mlx6

13.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot

Appellation

Margaux

Classification

First Growth. Premier Grand Cru Classe in 1855.

Website

<http://www.chateau-margaux.com/en/>

General Info

1st classified growth in 1855. The château, already known in the 12th century under the name La Mothe de Margaux, started only to resemble to what it is today when the Lestonnac family took it over in 1572 and undertook important restructuring. By the end of the 17th century, Château Margaux already covered 265 hectares (654 acres). At the beginning of the 18th century the estate manager Berlon was the first to vinify red grapes and white grapes separately and understood the importance of terroir. In 1810, a Basque, Bertrand Douat, Marquis de la Colonilla, owner since 1801, built the neo-palladian style residence of Margaux and the cellars which we still admire today. After several successions of owners, the Ginestet family bought the chateau in 1950 after being obliged by the serious economic crises to sell it in 1977 to André Mentzelopoulos, a Greek at the head of the grocery shops Félix Potin. André Mentzelopoulos sensed the opportunity and invested massively without expecting any immediate return in a market that was still depressed and a few years away from the new golden age for Bordeaux at the end of the 20th century. He made spectacular moves: in the vineyard, where better drainage was introduced and new plantations made; in the cellars, under the supervision of the oenologist Emile Peynaud, Pavillon Rouge was reintroduced with a considerable increase in selection; new oak barrels were used to age the wine, plans were drawn up for the first great cellar in the region to be built underground (a technical feat), and Pavillon Blanc was redefined. In the château and its outbuildings, under the supervision of the inspectors for Historic Monuments (Margaux is a classified monument), the reconstitution of the architectural heritage and the renovation of the interior were carried out. All of this was done with deep respect for the existing structures and with the determined aim of allowing the terroir to express its fabulous qualities. Since his death in 1980, his daughter Corinne Mentzelopoulos has been managing the estate and pursuing the investment program of her father.

Vintage

2012 marked the return of a great climatic classicism: a cold winter, especially in February, followed by a very wet spring, then a very dry summer before a return to rainy weather as from September 20th. The heavy rain which lasted until July 15th, created very favourable conditions for the development of mildew. However this year we intensified our organic programme with great success: not only have we not used any insecticide on the estate for 10 years, but in 2012 we only used one chemical treatment, as opposed to the usual 7 or 8 on the great wine plots. We're almost there... From July 15th onwards, the weather was dry and moderately warm but punctuated by a few very hot days. Such conditions are typical of great Bordeaux classic vintages: they allow for the simultaneous ripening and concentration of the grapes. Only the less good terroirs and young vines suffered from the sudden transition from a very wet spring to a very dry summer. The weather changed again from the first day of autumn: the moderate rains, which fell regularly from September 20th onwards, arrived too late to greatly upset the ripening or health of the grapes, but probably prevented, by a few days, 2012 from being the great vintage it should have been. The harvest of the whites took place between the 10th and the 14th September, while the harvest of the reds was carried out between the 25th September and the 16th October, just before the weather really deteriorated...



Vineyards	The estate has 80 hectares under vine, with Cabernet Sauvignon inevitably dominant (75%) with 20% Merlot making up most of the rest, along with a smattering of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot.
Harvest	The harvest of the whites took place between the 10th and the 14th September, while the harvest of the reds was carried out between the 25th September and the 16th October. The draconian selection – a little less than 34 % of the harvest in the first wine - can for the most part be explained by the heterogeneity of the 2012 vintage, which is mainly due to the hydric stress experienced by young vines and sensitive terroirs. How disappointing not to have been able to add this fabulous plot of young 13-year-old Cabernets, which had done so well in 2010 and 2011, to the first wine! But how wonderful to see our greatest plots of mature vines reach such heights of concentration and elegance! The Cabernet Sauvignons (87% of the blend) are remarkable: powerful, dense, full-bodied and refined. The two usual batches of Merlot (10%) as well as the small batch of Cabernet Franc (2%) that usually join them didn't fail but aren't better than in 2011. As for our only old plot of Petit Verdot, it produced a superb wine, very different from the younger ones.
Maturation	Fermentation takes place in oak vats, and ageing is in 100% new barrels for 22 months.
Tasting Notes	Château Margaux 2012 is "almost" a great vintage, ultimately not that far removed from the 2010. It has more power, and the same purity, balance and charm, perhaps a little less depth? In any case it's a good step above the 2011. (April 2013)
Production	10,833 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2023-2040
Scores/Awards	<p>95 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2015</p> <p>93-96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2013</p> <p>95 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #218 - April 2015</p> <p>92-94 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #206 - April 2013</p> <p>93-95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2013</p> <p>94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2015</p> <p>93-94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2013</p> <p>95 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 1, 2015</p> <p>94-96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 12, 2013</p> <p>90-93 points - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - April 2013</p> <p>18 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2013</p> <p>18.75 points - Steven Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2013</p> <p>96 points - Jane Anson, The New Bordeaux - April 2013</p> <p>95 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2013</p> <p>94 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)</p> <p>93-95 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 25, 2013</p> <p>95-96+ points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - April 2013</p> <p>18 points - Farr Vintner - April 2013</p> <p>92-95 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2013</p> <p>93 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - April 2013</p> <p>19 points - Tom Cave, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants - April 2013</p> <p>97-99 points - Gilbert & Gaillard - April 16, 2013</p> <p>19 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)</p> <p>93-95 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only)</p> <p>18 points - Gault & Millau (score only)</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Bay leaf and menthol hints lift a core of crushed plum and warm cherry confiture notes while the background fills steadily with black tea, singed alder and iron elements. Turns a little darker on the finish, with a coating of bittersweet cocoa powder and roasted vanilla bean accents, while the minerality stays buried for now. Remarkably dense and packed yet refined. Needs some time to unwind. Best from 2018 through 2030. 10,833 cases made."</i></p> <p><i>- JM, Wine Spectator</i></p>

Reviews *“Shows a tight nose, but manages to convey pure, fresh notes of red fruit and violet. Almost sleek, with fine-grained tannins carrying the red currant paste and iron accents. The plum skin-tinged finish sings, displaying remarkable integration already. A very impressive showing today. Tasted non-blind. Score range: 93-96”*
- JM, Wine Spectator

“The 2012 Château Margaux is showing much differently from bottle than it did from cask. Seemingly much fuller and richer, it has a dense ruby/purple color, representing a blend of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon and the rest mostly Merlot, as well as only 33% of their harvest. It possesses hints of spring flowers intermixed with blueberries, blackberries and cassis fruit, moderate tannin, a multi-dimensional mouthfeel, and a long, structured finish. This 2012 was charming, up-front and precociously styled from barrel, but in bottle it is more masculine, dense and rich. This wine needs a good 5-7 years of cellaring and should keep well for 25 or more years. This is a great effort from Château Margaux and should handsomely repay those who buy it. Anticipated maturity: 2023-2040.”

- RP, Wine Advocate

“This quintessentially finesse-styled Margaux exhibits notes of pure black currants, spring flowers, graphite and forest floor. With supple tannins and medium body, this pretty, stylish effort reminds me of the 2001 or perhaps a modern day, improved version of their 1979. The lovely 2012 should be drinkable in 4-5 years and last for two decades.

Only about one-third of the total production made it into the 2012 Chateau Margaux, which is a blend of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Like many Medoc first-growths in this vintage, this estate's aim was to make an elegant, supple-styled 2012 that emphasized the fruit, charm and delicacy of this terroir rather than pushing extraction and going for a powerhouse, which would have been difficult to produce in a vintage like 2012. The natural alcohol is 13%.”

- RP, Wine Advocate

“The 2012 Chateau Margaux, 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot and 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot was picked around September 25th with the early ripening Merlot and the heart of the harvest was in early October. Most of the harvest was in before the rains. It has a very fragrant bouquet with macerated dark cherries, minerals, cold stone, a touch of seaweed and a seam of graphite. The palate is medium bodied with superb tension on the entry. It is very focused with tensile tannins. There is not a huge a huge weight here – and it segues into a Pauillac like, edgy finish. Tasted April 2013.”

- NM, Wine Journal

“Wonderful aromas of flowers such as roses, violets, strawberries and a hint of wet earth. Wet stones as well. Full to medium body, very firm tannins and a long, racy finish. Minerals and chalk on the aftertaste. Needs three to five years to soften. Better in 2020”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This is tannic and rich on the finish. Lacks a bit on the center palate, but full and very pretty fruit. Long finish. 90% Cabernet Sauvignon and Franc, 9% Merlot, and 1% Petit Verdot.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This elegant wine is very much in the classic style of Margaux. Although the wood is still showing, the wine has fresh black currant fruits along with an underlying firm, long-lived tannic structure. The aftertaste with its dryness and acidity confirms that. Drink from 2025.

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“94–96. Barrel sample. A surprisingly fresh Margaux considering that it's dominated by 87% Cabernet Sauvignon. Dense tannins, black fruits and tight acidity combine to present a wine that shows, for a Château Margaux, medium-term potential.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

Reviews

"(87% cabernet sauvignon, 10% merlot, 2% cabernet franc and 1% petit verdot; 34% of the total crop): Dark ruby-red. Refined aromas of fresh blackcurrant, spices, dry herbs and cedar on the very classic nose. Enters fresh and lively, showing spicy black fruit, green coffee bean and herb flavors. The long finish features smooth tannins but somewhat edgy acidity, with a repeating leafy nuance. While this wine's tannins are much finer than they were in Bordeaux wines of decades past, this vintage Margaux seems like a throwback to the more herbal wines of the 1970s. Managing director Paul Pontallier told me he included 17% press wine this year, because he thought it was of outstanding quality, but that seems like a bit too much to me. The yield was 40 hectoliters per hectare, vs. 29 h/h in 2011, the lowest production at Margaux since 1981. Pontallier told me the estate made a large quantity of a fourth wine this year, in order to make a better third wine, recently named Margaux du Chateau Margaux. The new third wine will go on sale for the first time this year, beginning in four traditional markets: France, the U.S., the U.K. and Japan."

- ST, International Wine Cellar

"Heady and very much in the same style as the Pavillon but a bit more emphatic. Grand - not in a monumental sense because there is nothing big about this. Very discreet and I think the two wines are closer together than usual."

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Superb density of 87% Cabernet fruit, supreme ripeness, depth and perfect harmony, has firmness for a great future."

- SS, Decanter.com

"Blend here is 1% petit verdot, 87% cabernet sauvignon, 10% merlot, 2%cabernet franc. Immediately feel the solid, high density of fruit, this is lovely, rich and full, still silky, good persistency, 17.5% press wine, 13% abv, ph. 3.74 so a little lower acidity than the Pavillon Rouge, although total acidity is 3.51, IPT 72, beautifully well worked, sucrosité sans sucre, the grain of tannins is very fine. This is highly polished and seductive, as you would expect from the team at Margaux – beautifully gentle extraction, which is how they manage to get such a high quantity of press wine (one consultant – not Boissenot – told me that when he tasted Margaux's press wines blind, he had no idea that they were press and not free run juice, because the quality was so high). This is very good – but will clearly be approachable far earlier than the 2010, and perhaps even the 2009. 96 / 19. Outstanding"

- JA, The New Bordeaux

"Just in case you're tempted to dismiss 2012 as a light vintage, Paul Pontallier points out that this impressive Margaux has "significantly more tannin than the 1986". This is certainly dense, with plenty of toasty oak backed up by perfumed, leafy fruit, fresh acidity and a herbal undertone. The acidity is quite marked at the moment but will ensure that the wine ages gracefully in bottle. Serious, elegant and refined, this is priced appealingly, too. Drink: 2022-40"

- TA, timatkin.com

"Blending 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot, with coaxing flowers, blackberries, cassis, gravel, fennel, coffee bean and mint. Refined and structured, with plush, polished tannins, tangy black cherry notes add to the fresh, persistent and elegant finish. 93-95 Pts."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Mid depth; healthy looking; perfume; cassis and blackcurrant from the Cabernet; layers and perfume here; violets and depth; layered and tight yet ripe on the palate; density but not dry tannin; very precise and focused with structure; very fine tannins; very nice length; very good purity overall and far, far better than 2011 here; 100% new oak but not at all noticeable. Very good length indeed. 87% Cabernet Sauvignon 10% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc. 95-96+ Tasted at the chateau Thursday April 11, 2013. Drink 2020-2030+"

- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

Reviews

"Since the early 1980's Margaux has produced many excellent vintages under the assured direction of Paul Pontallier. It is always impressive, whilst remaining fine and elegant. Margaux is certainly the most stylish and sophisticated of the First Growths. Quality is maintained here by a rigorous selection process and since 2009 there has been a third wine produced (which will be released in autumn 2013) as well as the popular second wine Pavillon Rouge. In 2012 the Grand Vin represents 34% of the total harvest and is made from 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot. There is a beautiful, perfumed, floral nose here. The palate has ripe berry fruit with touches of brioche, coffee bean and mocha. Plush, plump, soft, rounded and layered. A lovely blend of rich cassis fruit with toasty new wood and ripe, succulent tannins. This is all about balance and elegance. Silky and harmonious, long and persistent but never heavy. Pure Margaux. A lovely wine."
- Farr Vintners

"The nose seems very concentrated with lots of brooding black fruits. The palate starts with ripe cassis and plum the fleshiness helped by ripe rounded tannins. The sweet fruit on the mid palate is underpinned by freshness red cherry and wild strawberry yet there is a richer feel towards the back fleshing out the finish. 2020-40."
- Derek Smedley MW

"The freshness of the 2012 was the most notable aspect, backed up by ample, cool fruit. This is very much an archetypal Ch. Margaux with its gentle, spicy aromas that will develop and intrigue. If priced correctly, which it should be, this will prove to be a classic and thoroughly enjoyable Margaux from a vintage where Paul Pontallier and his team deserve praise for creating such a success from a less than easy vintage. The terroir tells."
- TC, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants

"Lovely, very typical Chateau Margaux nose - violets and jasmine along with blackberry, cassis and cedar. Very approachable with silky texture and good density. The perfume surfaces after about 10 minutes in the glass. This is a classic, cool vintage for Margaux with 13% alcohol and wonderful freshness. The attractive, supple texture will make it approachable when young, but it will age easily for a few decades. Very long finish. 87% of the blend is Cabernet Sauvignon. Tasted in Bordeaux, France. Maturity: Young. (06-Apr-2013)"
- JCL, asianpalate.com

"Subtle, fresh fruits, floral tone and a mineral touch. Rich, full palate that is delicate yet well-structured. The oak is melted allowing fruit expression with a long racy finish showing notes of graphite and mild spices. Remarkable. (16-Apr-2013)"
- en.gilbertgaillard.com
