
Château Margaux 2015

CSPC# 860782

750mlx6

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot
Appellation	Margaux
Classification	First Growth. Premier Grand Cru Classe in 1855.
Website	http://www.chateau-margaux.com/en/
General Info	<p>Château Margaux, a 1er Cru Classé property, has been owned by the Mentzelopoulos family since 1978 - since then it has consistently produced the finest wines in the Médoc.</p> <p>One of the grandest, most imposing buildings amongst the Médoc châteaux, Ch. Margaux in its current form was built in the early 19th century, although viticulture had been practiced on the estate for several centuries before. A chequered period of ownership in the 19th and early 20th century meant that the quality of some Margaux vintages was patchy, but the change which restored the property to its rightful status came in 1977 when it was bought by André Mentzenopoulos, Greek by birth but who had lived in France since 1958 and had made a fortune through supermarket retailing. André immediately instigated much-needed investment in vineyard and cellar, but his untimely death in 1980 saw his daughter, Corinne, take up the reins. Corinne's shrewdest move was the recruitment of young, talented winemaker Paul Pontallier to oversee the production.</p> <p>Paul remains at the helm nearly 30 years later, and in that time, Margaux has produced some legendary wines, but also displays a marvelous seam of consistency through good years and the not so good.</p>
Vintage	<p>Winter, which was appreciably colder than those of the previous years, caused late, but perfectly regular blossoming. Dry and sunny weather in the spring made for optimal conditions, so flowering took place very quickly and homogeneously. This hot, dry weather persisted throughout the months of June and July, to a point where we were afraid there could be water stress, at least in the most sensitive plots. Fortunately, a little rain in August arrived just in time to ensure a quick and regular colour-change. The drought, which arrived again in September, together with very warm days and cool nights, enabled the grapes to balance their richness in sugar with good acidity, to render their tannins silkier and to make their aromatic potential more complex. The harvest of the reds took place from September 8th to October 6th. The small size of the grapes and their thicker skins indicated a very high concentration of tannins. The 2015 weather conditions are, in fact, the feature of very great vintages, like 2005, 2009 and 2010</p>
Vineyards	<p>The estate has 82 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. Unusually in Margaux, there is a white wine made here, Pavillon Blanc, from 100% Sauvignon Blanc, while the two red wines are, of course, Ch. Margaux itself and Pavillon Rouge. Typically, about 30,000 cases of red wine are made, with the Grand Vin usually accounting for just over 40% of the total. Production of the white wine amounts to less than 3,000 cases.</p>
Harvest	<p>2015 was, literally, an historic year at Château Margaux. We celebrated the bicentenary of the Estate's buildings dating from 1815, and the inauguration of the new facilities, designed or reorganised, by Norman Foster. It is easy to imagine how much we dreamed that 2015 would be a great vintage! Without doubt, some of the result is owed to decisions made at the time of blending; only 35% of the harvest went into the first wine, which was a record of severity for a vintage of this standard. As usual, it was the Cabernet Sauvignon in first place with 87% of the blend; in addition to its concentration and finesse, this year it has an unusual vigour and strength. The Merlot has nothing to be ashamed of, at least in the great plots; it</p>



Harvest	makes up 8% of the first wine. Cabernet Franc (3%) and Petit Verdot (2%) also find their place in this elitist blend, which confirms that, enable all grape varieties to express their own propensity. How can we compare 2015 to its predecessors? It is a thankless task, and a little futile, particularly for the great vintages. There are, of course, similarities, affinities, and also some differences where we do not expect to find them... But we can evoke a combination of the strength of 2005, the flesh of 2009, the subtlety of 2010, and the inimitable charm of Château Margaux. (April 2016)
Vinification/ Maturation	Fermentation takes place in oak vats and ageing for Ch. Margaux in 100% new barrels for 22 months. It is Paul Pontallier's firmly-held belief that it is the Cabernet Sauvignon grape which is responsible for most of the sheer class which characterises the wines of Ch. Margaux and we are seeing, in consequence, an ever-greater percentage of this varietal in the blend of the Grand Vin.
Tasting Notes	The 2015 Margaux is a dense, rich and powerful wine that shows a velvety texture and a long, sweet finish. There is plenty of structure and tannin here for the long haul, but it is difficult to find underneath such copious amounts of fruit. Along with nearly perfect balance this definitely a candidate for wine of the vintage!
Production	10,833 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2014-2026
Scores/Awards	<p>99 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2018</p> <p>99 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate Interim Issue - February 2018</p> <p>98-100 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #224 - April 2016</p> <p>99 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - March 2018</p> <p>100 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2018</p> <p>100 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2016</p> <p>100 points / Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 2018</p> <p>19 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2016</p> <p>98 points - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2016</p> <p>100 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2017</p> <p>100 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2018</p> <p>96-98 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2016</p> <p>98-100 points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - March 2016</p> <p>97 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2016</p> <p>19+ points - Farr Vintner - March 2016</p> <p>95-98 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2016</p> <p>99 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - May 2016</p> <p>99 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2018</p> <p>95-98 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2016</p> <p>100 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2018</p> <p>19.5+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2016</p> <p>96-98 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - May 2016</p> <p>19.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - June 2016</p> <p>19 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - April 2016</p> <p>19 points - Gault & Millau (score only) - June 2016</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Sublime, with captivating sandalwood, black tea and mesquite aromas that infuse the core of gently steeped red and black currant and raspberry fruit. The structure is seamless and thoroughly embedded throughout, letting warm tar, lilac, juniper and iron notes display themselves at will through the finish. The finish is about as long as it gets, with echoes of fruit and warm earth that should prove haunting when this reaches full maturity. Best from 2030 through 2050. 10,833 cases made."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"The 2015 Chateau Margaux is a blend of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. Medium garnet-purple colored, the nose features oh-so-seductive notes of warm blackberries, cassis and black forest cake with touches of forest floor, sandalwood, anise and cigar boxes plus a waft of lavender. Medium to full-bodied, it delivers taut, muscular, densely packed black fruits and exotic spice flavor layers supported by a very firm backbone of grainy tannins with oodles of freshness and a long, savory finish. It is tightly knit and a little reticent at this very youthful stage; afford it at least 15 years in the cellar, and it will open out into a classic Chateau Margaux of incredible proportions. Readers may be interested to know that this wine</i></p>

Reviews *is beautifully packaged in a special commemorative bottle honoring winemaker Paul Pontellier, who passed away in 2016. The gold-etched black bottle bears the message, "Hommage à Paul Pontellier" at the bottom. This 2015 is an achingly beautiful swan song from an incredibly gifted winemaker, taken from us too soon. In my view, this alone makes this vintage more than worth the investment for the many lovers of history in a bottle.*
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The 2015 Château Margaux is a blend of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, all together representing 35% of the total production at the estate. Raised entirely in new oak, it has a lucid garnet color. The bouquet is aimed directly at the senses - there is no dilly-dallying about, as it almost knocks you off your stool with its intense mineralité embroidered into this iridescent, graphite-tinged nose. The focus and penetration here ranks among the finest that I have tasted at this estate since first coming here in 1997. The palate is astonishingly well balanced, perfectly poised with super-fine tannins wrapped around pure blackberry, bilberry, graphite and cedar fruit. Like the Pavillon Rouge this year, there is a Pauillac-like sense of authority and aristocracy, leavened by Margaux-inspired femininity that completes that standout 2015 on the Left Bank. Beg for a bottle and worry about the cost later. Post script: I composed this tasting note five days before the passing of Paul Pontallier. It is a final gift from a gifted winemaker."
- NM, Wine Advocate

"The 2015 Chateau Margaux was the final vintage under Paul Pontallier before his untimely passing in April 2017 and a specially engraved bottle has been made to honor the gentleman that did so much for this first growth. Nevertheless, one must be objective about the wine. It was so impressive in barrel, perhaps the finest from the left bank. Would it match up in bottle? The answer is an unequivocal affirmative. It has an incredibly perfumed bouquet with pure black fruit, oyster shell, crushed flowers and just a faint hint of black truffle. It is more nuanced than when I tasted it from barrel, taking its time to unfold in the glass with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with very fine, almost chiseled tannin and a perfect line of acidity. Continuing from its showing in barrel, the Cabernet Sauvignon drives this wine forward and imparts a keen graphite thread from start to finish that lends it a Pauillac-like personality. Think of a more feminine Château Latour and you would be close. It is a long-term Château Margaux that will give pleasure for many decades, a fitting tribute to the man whose name is engraved on the bottle."
- NM, Wine Journal

"This is a haunting young wine that shows you a subtle and hidden strength on the nose with rose petals, currants, currant leaves, stones and plums. Wonderful ripeness yet brightness, too. Takes your breath away with the intensity and structure. Full-bodied, powerful and muscular, yet there's an agile undertone to the whole thing. Compact and condensed. A new legend for Margaux. The 1961 that didn't happen. Try in 2024."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"The greatest Margaux ever made. More than perfection. Full body, firm and ultra-silky tannins. Black currant, mineral and floral character. It starts slowly and seems almost endless on the palate. Seamless. I want to sing! This is the wine that Margaux never made in some of the classics vintages like 1961, 1959 and 1945. Maybe it's the 1900 all over again? Breathtaking."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Predominantly Cabernet Sauvignon, this wine shows a wonderful black-currant purity on the palate, along with intense, vibrant acidity. The background is all tannin, which speaks to its aging potential. This wine is the last vintage produced by Paul Pontallier, who was general manager from 1990 until his death in 2016. It's a memorable wine and one for aging. Drink from 2027."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot. 13.5% - record alcohol for the grand vin. Great breadth and savour on the nose. Lovely freshness and sophistication. Lots of fine tannins. Very aérien. Really flies! Perfect Margaux. A great welcome for the new chai and memorial for Paul Pontallier. Still tight but nothing out of balance. Very Margaux. Very classic claret. Quite brave because there is nothing showy about this wine, but it could truly be described as beautiful."
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

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"My joint top wine (with Ch Mouton Rothschild) of the vintage. Pure charm: the palate is discreet at the start and then goes on forever, always with the château's silky texture and fine, firmly structured tannins. This will become a very great wine."

- Decanter.com

"Château Margaux's grand vin accounts for 35% of production in this vintage. It stood out as a potential wine of the vintage during en primeur and it is more than living up to its promise. The concentration is stunning, with a fruit structure that is darker, tighter and more insistent than Pavillon. It's so fresh, there is an opulence here, a dense silkiness to the tannins that is fleshed out across the palate, building to a big finish with menthol freshness. This is classically-styled Margaux with aromatic acrobatics and tannins so fine that the stitching is seamless and perfectly pulled together. Even though extremely ripe, there is freshness too - the acidity measures 3.6pH. The 100% new oak is barely perceptible even now, fresh out of the cask. One to savour over the long term. Bottled in August 2017. (JA)"

-JA, Decanter.com

"Deep, shiny, dark ruby in color, this rocks as soon as the wine is out of the gate, or should I say out of the bottle and into your glass. Cherry blossoms and lilacs make it seem as though you are in a flower shop. On the palate, the wine is rich, full bodied and concentrated, yet the wine is light on its feet. There is a purity in the fruit that is off the hook. There is a sensuous, textural quality that makes it so you cannot help but take another sip, to make sure the experience is real, and because it is so good! The wine is a testament to Paul Pontallier, as this is in some ways, a culmination of his life's work."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"The color of a dark, blood red ruby, this wine makes a powerful opening statement. On the nose, the luscious inhale as the door to the flower shop opens, a row of Spanish cedar cigar boxes still filled with a stash of Cohiba, the not-too-sweet aromatics of cherry pipe tobacco -- all combined with cherries, licorice, forest floor, creamy espresso and blackberry liqueur. On the palate, the wine melts into a buttery wealth of fresh fruit, gratifying tannins and a finish that saunters, taking it's time to linger close to 60 seconds while slowly expanding at the same time. Rich without being heavy, this wine is aristocratic and refined. This wine is deceptively easy to taste, and if it puts on weight during the aging period, which it probably will, it should hit triple digits. Produced from a blend of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, the wine reached 13.5% alcohol with a pH of 3.65. 13.5% is the highest level of alcohol ever recorded at Margaux; the previous high was 13.1%, achieved in 2010. This represents 35% of the harvest. The picking took place from September 18 to October 6"

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Deep and beautiful looking; lovely vibrant purple edge; beautiful, pure fruit; sense this will be very harmonious indeed; more blackcurrant cassis notes unfurl from the glass; very seductive stuff; wonderfully balanced on the palate; seductive fruit tones continue; elegance and intensity; tannin at the end is wonderfully ripe. This is potentially perfect Margaux. No better tribute to the great Paul Pontallier. [87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot, 13.5% alc]. Drink 2025-2045. 98-100."

- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

"A great vintage at Château Margaux and a fitting tribute to the memory of the equally great Paul Pontallier. This is a poised, elegant, beautifully framed claret, with perfume, structure, acidity and a core of red and black fruits complemented by notes of graphite and green pepper. Au revoir, Paul. Et merci. Drink: 2022-35"

- TA, timatkin.com

"Since the early 1980's Chateau Margaux has produced many excellent vintages. It is always impressive, whilst remaining fine and elegant. This is where we most often find the "Iron Fist in a Velvet Glove". Margaux is certainly the most stylish, charming and sophisticated of the First Growths. Quality is maintained here by a rigorous selection process and since 2009 there has been a third wine (Margaux de Margaux) produced as well as the popular second wine Pavillon Rouge. There is also a 4th wine sold off in bulk to a local négociant. Tragically, the man responsible for 30 years of great vintages here, Paul Pontallier, passed away in early 2016 but he was able to see the outstanding promise in this, his final vintage, as well as the completion of new building work designed by Lord Norman Foster. The 2015 vintage Chateau Margaux represents 35% of the total production and is made from 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot in 100% new oak. Deep purple colour. Layers of blue and purple fruits on the powerfully aromatic nose that is just

Reviews *bursting from the glass. Violets, truffles, sweet smoke, incense, and cedar are all in evidence. The palate is immediately ripe, smooth, supple and layered. Superb levels of ripe blackcurrant, black cherry and plum give a juicy entry that build with silky tannins that build through the mid palate to perfectly frame the huge intensity of fruit. There is an unctuous ripeness that still manages to retain a floral, mineral edge as the smoky, sweet vanilla oak builds on the finish. Incredible purity and layer upon layer of complexity. A real triumph, and doubtless wine of the vintage. A truly wonderful wine."*

- Farr Vintners

"Fresh and fragrant the nose has a mix of red and black fruits the start of the palate sweet with ripe fruit. Supple generous in the middle a complex mix of fruits. Perfect balance freshness yet sweetness fine tannins ethereal a stylish elegance. Richer at the back the fruit is sweet with depth on the finish."

- Derek Smedley MW

"This vintage of Margaux has an amazing perfume of violets, cassis and layers of sweet spices. A seductive, powerful, intriguing Margaux that has both structure as well as intense power. The tannins are silky and persistent with a very long finish. A typical blend of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon in this vintage."

- JCL, asianpalate.com

"The 2015 Margaux is a compelling, arrestingly beautiful wine that expresses all the best qualities of the vintage. Dark, fleshy and richly textured, the 2015 nevertheless retains the super-classic Margaux sense of structure. Time in the glass brings out the wine's rich, multi-faceted personality. I imagine the 2015 will enjoy a very long and uninterrupted drinking window that will last decades. As exceptional as the 2015, it is not easy to taste. I walked the vineyards at Margaux with Paul Pontallier in late July of that year. A few months later, Pontallier's life was tragically cut short by a very aggressive cancer. The 2015 will live on as a fitting testament to the legacy of a man who did so much for Chateau Margaux and Bordeaux. (AG)"

- AG, Vinous

"The 2015 Margaux is a super-classic wine. In 2015, most Margauxs are notably intense, but Château Margaux expresses the richness of the year in its surprising tannic backbone and overall structure. Far from an up-front or sensual wine, the 2015 Margaux is likely to require considerable cellaring. It is a tightly-wound wine that manages to be both powerful and crystalline in its translucent purity. The 2015 is a wine of real density and yet so very much Margaux. About 35% of the crop went into the Grand Vin."

- AG, Vinous

"With exceptional intensity and masses of power balanced with extraordinary subtlety and intellect, this is an exquisite wine. Similar to the 2010 in terms of classical dimensions and 2009 in terms of richness, it is the perfect embodiment of Paul Pontallier who passed away one week before the En Primeur tasting week. His son, Thibault, gave the most moving tasting, referring to his father throughout and he was so proud that his father had presided over this magnificent wine. I am shocked by the depth and also the finesse here. The length is mind-blowing, and the power is otherworldly. This wine is only a half-step back from the perfect 20/20 score of the 2010 vintage and yet I wonder if that during the remaining time spent in oak the flavours will grow further pushing this wine up to another perfect score. I trust that Paul's aura is still taking care of this vintage right through until bottling and so the chances are that it will."

- MJ, matthewjukes.com

"The grand vin is the 2015 Château Margaux and it's as good a wine as I've ever tasted. Coming from just over one-third of the total production and a blend of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and the balance Petit Verdot, brought up in 100% new French oak, its deep ruby/purple-tinged color is followed by a thrilling bouquet of crème de cassis, toasted spice, hints of toasty oak, and cedar wood. Incredibly elegant and finesse-driven, yet packed with fruit, depth, richness, and structure, it has as much class as you can fit inside a glass. While the vintage provides plenty of upfront charm, this is a wine to cellar for at least a decade, and enjoy over the following 40+ years."

- Jeb Dunnuck