

# Château Margaux 2018

CSPC# 847781

750mlx3

14.0% alc./vol.

<b>Grape Variety</b>	90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot
<b>Appellation</b>	Margaux
<b>Classification</b>	First Growth. Premier Grand Cru Classe in 1855.
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.chateau-margaux.com/en/">http://www.chateau-margaux.com/en/</a>
<b>General Info</b>	<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 19<sup>th</sup> century, although viticulture had been practiced on the estate for several centuries before. A chequered period of ownership in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> 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>
<b>Winemaker</b>	Emile Peynaud & Philippe Bascaules
<b>Vintage</b>	<p>The warmest year since the beginning of the 20th century, temperatures in 2018 were 3.24°F above the national average. In Margaux, the year began with a relatively mild winter with below-normal temperatures and occasional frosts in February which had no impact on our vines. The rest of the year was hot, sometimes very hot, compared with seasonal averages, marked by record-breaking temperatures in the last ten days of June and the first ten days of August, more than 7.2°F above the 30-year average.</p> <p>Rainfall in the first half of the year was heavy with nearly 25 inches in Margaux between January 1st and July 10th, making growing conditions challenging. Each rainy day made a good vintage less likely. But dry and warm summer conditions eventually reached our region and remained until the end of the harvest. Rainfall was very low between mid-July and late September at 2 inches. This rainfall pattern is reminiscent of 2009.</p> <p>Under these conditions, budbreak was relatively late between the 4th and the 10th of April. The vines flowered between the 25th and the 28th of May and, despite fairly poor conditions, we did not note, even in the relatively sensitive Merlot plots, poor or failed fruit-set. The greatest challenge was mildew which this year led to slightly lower yields than hoped for after the fruit-set.</p>
<b>Vineyards</b>	<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>
<b>Harvest</b>	<p>The red harvest took place from September 17th to October 13th in ideal conditions. Again, this year, we were able to choose the best time to harvest our grapes – no Botrytis symptoms, mild weather, ripening conditions sufficiently spread between the</p>



<b>Harvest</b>	earliest Merlots and latest Cabernets – and we had time to take the necessary care with each wine-making vat. Nearly a hundred different batches were converted into wine this year, demonstrating our continued efforts for better and more precise selections. We started the Merlot harvest September 17 and finished on September 24. Then we waited until October 4th to begin harvesting the Cabernet.
<b>Vinification/ Maturation</b>	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.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	<p>Château Margaux 2018 is one of the best wines to be produced on the Estate in recent years even taking into consideration the extraordinary quality of the 2015 and 2016 vintages!</p> <p>Château Margaux 2018 is remarkably concentrated. A small grape size and relatively low yields largely explain the exceptionally high tannin indices. The wine’s power is not, however, overwhelming and helps to considerably lengthen the aromas and structure of the finish.</p> <p>Fairly early in the wine-making process, we understood this tannic potential and moderated our extraction programs including for our Merlot plots, which are usually less dense than our fine Cabernet Sauvignon wines. The latter still form the heart of Château Margaux, accounting for 90% of the blend. They limit the alcohol content to 14° in these weather conditions.</p>
<b>Serve with</b>	<p>Chateau Margaux is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift.</p> <p>Chateau Margaux is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.</p>
<b>Production</b>	10,833 cases made.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2028-2040
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>98 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - January 2021</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2021</p> <p><b>97-100 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2021</p> <p><b>99-100 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2021</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2019</p> <p><b>18.5 points</b> - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - March 2019</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2020</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2019</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2021</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2018</p> <p><b>18+ points</b> - Farr Vintner - April 2019</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - November 2019</p> <p><b>98+ points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p><b>95-98 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2019</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2021</p> <p><b>98-100 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2019</p> <p><b>18.5+ points</b> - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2019</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - February 2021</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com (score only) - March 2019</p> <p><b>99 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2019</p> <p><b>19 points</b> - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2021</p> <p><b>18 points</b> - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - June 2019</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>“This struts along with supreme confidence, as a cashmere-textured structure effortlessly carries a prodigious set of warmed cassis, plum reduction and blackberry compote flavors along, pulling in extra alder, bergamot, black and red tea and iron notes. Still manages to come across as restrained in the end. A really beautiful wine. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Best from 10,833 cases made.”</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p>

## Reviews

*"The 2018 Château Margaux is composed of 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, representing 36% of the crop this year. The wine has a pH of 3.8 and 14% alcohol. Deep purple black in color, it slowly unfurls to reveal tantalizing scents of crème de cassis, wild blueberries and Black Forest cake with hints of redcurrant jelly, rose oil, dark chocolate and cedar chest plus a touch of star anise. The medium to full-bodied palate bursts with opulent black fruit, fragrant earth and floral layers, supported by a rock-solid structure of exquisitely ripe, finely grained tannins and seamless backbone of freshness, finishing with fantastic length. This is classic Margaux at its most seductive, although it is, rather amazingly, approachable and absolutely delicious right now. But, to enjoy its full glory, you will want to cellar it for at least 6-8 years and then watch it metamorphize over the next 40+ years."*

- LPB, Wine Advocate

*"The wine has a pH of 3.8 and 14% alcohol. Deep purple-black in color, it comes prancing out of the glass with energetic Morello cherries, black raspberries and blackberry pie scents plus nuances of fragrant soil, candied violets, lavender, sandalwood, unsmoked cigars and black olives with a gentle wave of cassis and licorice emerging with coaxing. Full-bodied, the palate is charged with the most amazing energy, delivering layer after layer of red and black fruits with tons of earthy nuances, framed by the most exquisitely ripe, fine-grained tannins, finishing with amazing freshness and an extraordinarily long-lingering perfume. Magnificent.*

*"I think September made the vintage," Managing Director Philippe Bascaules told me. "But we had to take time. Time is important for full ripeness of tannins. We started the Merlot harvest September 17 and finished on September 24. Then we waited until October 4th to begin harvesting the Cabernet. We have a lot of tannin this year. The extraction was huge in the early days. The very small berries made the extraction so easy. So, we changed the winemaking a little bit. Made it softer. We followed the maceration every day." The grand vin this year is off the charts incredible. Exotic, flamboyant, totally decadent—but what I particularly love is a freshness and brightness that comes not just from acidity (in fact, the acid is relatively low this year) but from bright red fruit and floral sparks in the wine that provide a seamlessness. Potentially perfect—bravo!"*

- LPB, Wine Advocate

*"So much ash, tobacco and earth to the bright blackberry and currant aromas. Flowers too. Fresh. Full-bodied with seamless tannins that spread across your palate and caress every square centimeter. It's shows loads of ripe-berry, cherry, currant and chocolate character, as well as walnut and light cedar. Then the finish goes on for minutes. Extremely refined and elegant, despite the structure. A joy to taste, but drink after 2025."*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"Wow. This takes off on the palate the moment you taste it. Aromas and flavors of redcurrants, flowers, cherries and hints of hazelnuts. Full-bodied, tight and compact, but the linear tannins, running down the center of the wine, draw the wine through the finish."*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"While this wine reflects the richness and density of the vintage, it also shows all the elegance of which a great Margaux is capable. The wine is powerful and beautifully structured, both ripe and restrained. It will age magnificently. Start to think about drinking from 2028. \*Cellar Selection\*."*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"It is impressive how the serious structure of this wine has been totally absorbed by the depth of fruit. A dense black currant flavor and bright acidity are balanced by the core of dark tannins and an overall richness. Currently, the end is dominated with tannins that will allow the wine to age. Barrel Sample: 97-99"*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot. Barrel sample. Intense cherry red with black core. Scented cassis and cassis leaf. Small, intense berries giving refined and intense fruit. Tannins are super-charged but not aggressive, deep, and chewy but layered rather than monolithic. There's a fine dark, charrty character on the palate, giving a savoury dry freshness. Very fine in all its tannic power. Dare I say, more Pauillac than Margaux? Elegance in power. Great length. So smooth on the finish. The concentration is carried lightly. (JH)"*

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

## Reviews

*"This is extremely powerful, with high tannin levels that are beautifully velvety and a real presence that is going to need a good 15 years before it softens. There are layers and layers of subtlety here, charcoal, earth, fresh acidity - a ton of serious character that needs time to inch towards opening. Grips on like a limpet - this needs a good half an hour in the glass to even begin to open, but as it does so you see clearly the finesse and precision of the fruit construction. Exceptionally good. 3.64pH, 2% Petit Verdot completes the blend, 36% of the harvest in the first wine. Bottled mid-September. Drinking Window 2030 – 2050"*  
- JA, Decanter.com

*"Without doubt an incredible Margaux, although whether it will equal the 2015 remains to be seen. It's less serious than the 2016 but every bit as good, floating above the palate, performing that acrobatic trick that only happens in the really great years. It's silky yet intense and powerful, with sweet, fleshy and succulent raspberry cut through with fresh rosemary and sage that add texture and grip. The menthol side of the Cabernet is already coming through, which suggests the fruit was just perfectly ripe - these are aromatics that you don't get in true heatwave years like 2003. The flavours stretch out, gently gripping and keeping you involved in what is unfurling. Harvested between 17 September and 13 October, with an average yield of 31hl/ha due to both mildew and the concentration of the berries that occurred at the end of ripening. The impact was uneven, depending on the vineyard blocks, so yields actually varied between 15 and 50hl/ha. The best plots were the least affected, which means that unusually there is more production in the grand vin and in Pavillon, with less in the third and fourth wines. Final numbers are 36% of production here, 30% in Pavillon Rouge. 83IPT. 100% new oak. 12% press wine. 2% Petit Verdot completes the blend. Drinking 2028 – 2045."*  
- JA, Decanter.com

*"Perfectly poised between opulent and refined, rich and elegant, this is a beautiful example of Chateau Margaux with intense notes of lilacs, violets, cigar box, red fruits and espresso. The palate has concentration, but there is also freshness and depth of flavor, so the silky textured wine is light on its feet and effortless to drink. The seamless finish provides great energy, soft, silky tannins and a gorgeous sense of purity to the fruit that does not want to quit. Made from a blend of 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, 14% ABV."*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"Deep in color with an intense, dark ruby hue, the nose offers violets, lilacs, espresso, wet earth and cigar wrapper along with ripe, deep red fruits. There is freshness and soft, silky vibrant tannins. The wine feels quite powerful in the moment and its classic design reminds me of 2005. This is not going to be fun to taste young but with Chateau Margaux patience is always a virtue. Made from a blend of 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, the wine reached 14% alcohol. The Grand Vin was produced using only 36% of the harvest. Picking commenced September 17, finishing October 13."*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"Deep in colour and brooding on the nose, with cassis, pepper and blackberry. The palate is silky and suave, with cashmere tannins framing ripe, juicy black fruits, dried flowers and creamy, toasty oak. This is ripe and exotic, with some warmth coming through that adds to the sweetness and pepperiness. Vibrant acidity comes in waves, and paired with the fine tannins offers great poise and precision. Powerful and long, with a floral, complex and spicy finish."*  
- Farr Vintners

*"The 2018 Château Margaux was observed over a period of 24 hours. I used the word "luxurious" to describe the nose when I encountered this First Growth from barrel, and it's still apt to use now the wine is in bottle. It just blossoms over time, revealing gorgeous blackberry, raspberry, crushed violet and peony, and hints of shucked oyster shells, all delivered with the precision one expects from a first-division Claret. The palate is medium-bodied with very fine tannins, still as silky-smooth as ever, offering blood-orange-infused black fruit that is crystalline on the finish. You almost miss the structure behind this Château Margaux that should ensure it will age over the next three or four decades. Utterly sublime."*  
- NM, Vinous

*"The 2018 Château Margaux was picked from September 17 until October 13, the Cabernet Sauvignon from the beginning of October. The word that springs to mind on encountering this for the first time is "luxurious." The supremely pure bouquet features raspberry, blueberry, violet petals, black currant pastilles and a hint of vanilla; it is opulent rather than rich. The palate is medium-bodied with very plush, velvety-smooth tannins. It sashays along nicely and, atypically for a 2018, reaches a gentle crescendo toward the linear finish. It is*

**Reviews** *amazing how well this contains the excesses of the growing season and retains the sense of Château Margaux.2026 – 2060.”*

- NM, Vinous

*“The 2018 Margaux is an infant. Today, the tannins are unusually searing, but then again, the 2018 is a wine in which all the elements are dialed up to the maximum. Time in the glass releases the fruit, revealing a luxurious, opulent Château Margaux built for the cellar. Cedar, tobacco, dried flowers and mint develop with a bit of coaxing. Rich, deep and utterly beguiling, the 2018 is a dramatic wine that will thrill readers lucky enough to own it. (AG) 98+”*

- AG, Vinous

*“Château Margaux's 2018 Grand Vin boasts off the charts textural richness and intensity from the very first taste. A huge core of dark fruit, potent, muscular tannins are two of the signatures. Dense and explosive in the glass, with breathtaking concentration, the 2018 is one of the finest Margaux's in recent memory. Lavender, rose petal and spice add striking perfume in this compelling, memorable Grand Vin.”*

- AG, Vinous

*“Based on 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% each of Merlot and Cabernet Franc, and 2% Petit Verdot, the 2018 Château Margaux is a magical, incredibly sexy expression of this Château that sports a dense purple color as well as a thrilling bouquet of blueberries, cassis, acacia flowers, scorched earth, sandalwood, and violets. Incredibly concentrated and full-bodied on the palate, it nevertheless has an almost Burgundian sense of finesse and elegance, with an ethereal texture, silky yet massive amounts of tannins, notable freshness, and brilliant length. The alcohol hit a whopping 14%, which is high by this estate's standards, but everything is flawlessly integrated, the balance is perfect, and I certainly can't find anything that could be better. This 2018 is going to be relatively drinkable at an early age (do your best to hide bottles for 7-8 years) yet last for 75+.”*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*“A thrilling, sensational Margaux that reminds me of the 2015 at this stage, it reveals a saturated purple/blue color as well as heavenly notes of black raspberries, blueberries, cassis, spring flowers, high-class smoke tobacco, and graphite. Deep, full-bodied, and seamless, it builds incrementally on the palate and carries masses of fine tannins, no hard edges, and awesome purity of fruit. Given its purity, depth of fruit, and texture, it's going to be approachable with just short-term cellaring, but I suspect it won't start to hit prime time for at least a decade.”*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*“(90 Cabernet Sauvignon, 4 Merlot, 4 Cabernet Franc, 2 Petit Verdot) | 100% new oak | 14% alc | 36% of the harvest was used for this wine | 83 IPT. They had 600mm of rain between April and July, then only 40mm in following hot and dry three months. Mildew was a threat, and they lost a part of the crop as well as losing fruit from dehydration in the summer months, too. The quality of tannins in this wine is amazing and the entire framework of the fruit is built on these foundations. The fruit is richer and more intense than Pavillon by quite a jump in power and there is obvious richness here. 13% press wine was added in this vintage on account of its sheer quality. The berries were particularly small, and this certainly influenced the density of flavour and fondant nature of this wine. Long and calm with superb balance in the mid-palate and a crunch of acid on the finish, there is not the scale of fruit here which I have seen in some of the other top wines, but it is still a lovely Margaux. I am sure that this is a vintage which some will go nuts for but for me it is a lovely interpretation of 2018, but not on a par with 2010 or 2016.”*

- MJ, matthewjukes.com