

Château Guiraud 1989

CSPC# 758869

375mlx12

14.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety
Appellation
General Info

65% Semillon, 35% Sauvignon Blanc
Sauternes

Paul César Rival acquired the property in 1932, and sold it in 1981 to a Canadian family named Narby. Having accrued great wealth in the transport industry, the Narby children were keen to take on new and perhaps more challenging tasks. For Hamilton Narby, Guiraud was that challenge. Under his direction (and subsequently that of his father, Frank Narby, who took control of Guiraud from his son in 1988) the estate has seen an unprecedented level of investment, refurbishment, repair and re-equipping. Under Xavier Planty, who was appointed manager by Frank Narby in 1988, the estate went from strength to strength.

The Narby-Planty era has seen Château Guiraud rise phoenix-like, with some fabulous vintages along the way. Much of the credit in this respect must be directed towards Planty, who has been exacting in his work in the vineyard, moving Guiraud increasingly towards sustainable, environmentally friendly and ultimately organic methods of viticulture. In more recent years the pace of change has picked up, both in terms of developments in the vineyards and cellars, and also in the quality of the wines. In part this is because, since taking part-ownership of Château Guiraud in 2006, Planty has increased freedom in deciding the direction in which he takes the estate.

Vineyards

Only Semillon (65%) and Sauvignon (35%) are planted at Guiraud with a pruning "à cots" or "in fan" for the Semillons and long branches for the Sauvignons. The density of plantation is 6660 vine per ha (Root stock Riparia 33 09, 101 14,161 49). The average age of the vines is 35-40 years. The average yield is 12hl/ha. The maximum yield allowed by the appellation is 25hl/ha.

Harvest

Harvest is only done hand picking by successive waves through the vineyard (2 to 7 selections), picking only the botrytised berries. A minimum of potential alcohol (20°) must be reached before starting the harvest.

**Vinification/
Maturation**

The fermentation is made in 90% new oak barrels over a period of three weeks to two months. Different batches are fermented until they reach their own equilibrium which depends upon their selection. Chaptalisation, cryoextraction and any other techniques used to enrich the wine are absolutely prohibited. The aging in barrels lasts 24 months.

Tasting Notes

"A lot of freshness, which means a great wine. Our favourite, because it is the best expression of botrytis. The nose is all complexity: fruits (pear, apricot, apple, mandarin, crystallized fruits, coconut), flowers (violet), vanilla, mint, spices, pepper, almond, hazelnut, botrytis. Rich, fine, full bodied, aromatic and complex. The mouth is round and full bodied, wide and smooth, a lot of matter and length. Spicy notes, humus, mushroom, crystallized fruits. All freshness." (Xavier Planty).

Production

8,000 cases made

Cellaring

Drink now - 2020

Scores/Awards

- 92 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - April 15, 1995
- 86 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #98 - April 1995
- 86 points** - Robert Parker, Bordeaux Book 3rd Edition - January 1998
- 90-93 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #98 - April 1992
- 87 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - September 2011
- 88-90 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - June 2001
- 88 points** - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - Jul/Aug 1998
- 18.5 points** - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - May 2008
- 4 stars** - Decanter Magazine, Bordeaux Supplement - September 28, 2011
- Review only** - Decanter Magazine, Bordeaux Supplement - December 2000
- Review only** - Wine consultants of Canada - May 1997



Scores/Awards **17.5 points/95 points** - Jean-Marc Quarin - November 2009 (no review)

18 points - La Revue du Vin de France - January 2003 (no review)

Reviews *"This full-bodied Sauternes stretches the limits of botrytis. Offers loads of beeswax, almost moldy aromas, yet it is fresh and zingy with plenty of honey, spice, toast and lemon flavors. Try in 1998."*

- JS, Wine Spectator

"The 1989 is extremely disjointed. Although big and rich, it tastes like a glob of sugar, alcohol, and wood. This was a disappointing showing for the 1989. Look for the 1989 with luck to gain focus and return to the form predicted for it when it was in barrel."

- RP, Wine Advocate

"The 1989 is extremely disjointed. Although big and rich, it tastes like a glob of sugar, alcohol, and wood. This was a disappointing showing for the 1989. It should gain focus and return to the form predicted for it when it was in barrel. Last tasted 11/94"

- RP, Bordeaux Book

"Huge, as well as penetrating aromas of vanillin-scented, smoky new oak and super-ripe pineapple soar from the glass. In the mouth, this is a terrific, rich, full-bodied, in-your-face style of Sauternes that goes right to the edge of being almost too massive and overbearing. Fortunately, there is enough acidity to give it grip and focus. It will have to be monitored during its evolution given its precarious balance, but there is no doubting the sumptuous appeal of this very sweet, alcoholic, honeyed wine. Anticipated maturity; 1993-2006. Tasted six times. Consistent notes. "

- RP, Wine Advocate

"The nose is a little one-dimensional with clean botrytized fruit: quince, a hint of apricot and lemon zest, but it needs more vigour and lift. The palate is viscous on the entry with marmalade and butterscotch, but it is slightly cloying towards the finish. Not a bad Guiraud, but it pales against recent vintages. Tasted May 2011."

- NM, Wine Journal

"Quite an exotic nose with scents of almonds and nuts. The palate has a lovely balance with nuts and almonds coming through again. Moderate botrytis and good concentration. A fine, if rather incongruous Guiraud compared to other vintages. Tasted June 2001."

- NM, Wine Journal

"Brilliant nose; honey, oranges, marmalade, with a moderate presence of botrytis. Full, creamy palate balanced with fresh acidity. Broad, stylish. Touch of opulent weight but maintains a stylish character. Lovely finish with good length. Drink now and over the next ten years. From a Lay & Wheeler tasting. 18.5/20 (May 2005)"

- CK, Wine Doctor

"Lovely flower blossoms nose. Lovely steely fruit acidity touches of oak and almonds combines with the lush sweetness. The lively steely fruit acids are there from the outset to match the rich sweet honeyed crème brule tests. Fine balance and intensity. Seems very elegant crystallized fruit sugar beads in a fruit acid liquid."

- Wine Consultants of Canada

"Oranges, peaches and honey aromas. Big peach and syrup flavours on the palate with touches of prunes and figs."

- Decanter Magazine

"Has a bouquet of lovely honeyed fruit. This is fresh, concentrated, and reminiscent in style to 1986, but less evolved. The flavour is superb, the great richness market by lovely complex candied fruit – much richer than 1988. This is a majestic wine, perfect to drink now but with a long life potential."

- Decanter Magazine