

Château Guiraud 1998

CSPC# 891879

375mlx6

14.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

65% Semillon, 35% Sauvignon Blanc

Appellation

Sauternes

General Info

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 vines 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 really great year, and an abundant one, which does not spoil anything. Nose offers a lot of distinction, with crystallized fruits aromas, honey, smokey, of a great complexity of citrus aromas. The wine is fat, broad, mellow with a great acidity. Just bottled, it is beginning a long career. (Xavier Planty).

Serve with

Chateau Guiraud can be served with seafood dishes, especially shellfish, lobster, crab, and oysters on the half shell. Foie gras is a perfect pairing with its natural sweet, salty, and savory characteristics. Chateau Guiraud can also be paired with roasted chicken, veal and pork dishes that are either spicy, or prepared with a touch of sweetness. Spicy Asian cuisine, raw fish, like sushi or sashimi, and cheese, both hard and soft also make great pairings.

Production

8,000 cases made

Cellaring

Drink now - 2020

Scores/Awards

89 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2008

90-94 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 1999

91-93 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #128 - April 2000 (no review)

85-87 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2000

90 points - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - Jul/Aug 2001

Review Only - Decanter.com - April 2001

91 points - Jean-Marc Quarin (no review)

17 points - La Revue du Vin de France

2 stars - Le Guide Hachette des Vins 2002

2 stars - Le Guide Hachette des Vins 2001



Reviews *"Dried apricot, salty nut and honey follow through to a full body, with pretty fruit and a creamy, light vanilla and dried lemon aftertaste. Drink now. 8,000 cases made."*
- JS, Wine Spectator

"An oily and rich young wine, with apple, pear and spice. Full-bodied and round, with a sweet finish. Stays with you a long time. Score range: 90-94"
- JS, Wine Spectator

"The nose is less expressive with powerful peachy honeyed fruits. Good acidity but a little unsettled at the moment. A touch short on the finish. Tasted May 2000."
- NM, Wine Journal

"Medium yellow. Complex nose melds pear, peach, spicy oak, licorice, and some intriguing herbal and vegetal nuances. Very intensely flavored and bright, with fruit flavors enlivened by a note of peppermint. Finishes brisk and spicy, with strong honey and licorice botrytis character. An excellent vintage for Guiraud."
- ST, International Wine Cellar

"Still in cask. There is lovely elegance and purity of the fresh concentrated fruit on the nose, while the flavour is very concentrated and fine with lovely complex flavours and a creamy texture, much richer than 1997 and close to 1996 in style but a shade richer."
- Decanter Magazine

"The nose holds a lot of distinction with luxurious but well dosed tones of wood. Exceptionally complex, the palate tends towards citrus aromas and strong acidity. This giant of sweetness and finesse makes it one of the most beautiful wines of 1998."
- Le Guide Hachette des Vins
