

# Château Prieuré-Lichine

GRAND CRU CLASSÉ EN 1855

MARGAUX

## 2020



3 key factors marked the 2020 growing season all of which impacted significantly on the profile of the wines:

- A rainy spring,
- Persistent drought conditions in summer
- An earlier than average vine cycle

The 2019/2020 winter was very rainy in November and particularly mild in February. Bud-break occurred early, around the middle of March, followed by even shooting and the promise of a large crop.

Very wet spring weather in April and at the beginning of May brought about severe downy mildew pressure, which the vineyard crew fought to keep at bay with multiple interventions in the vineyard.

The flowering took place in fine weather conditions.

As from mid-June, the weather pattern changed and summer temperatures set in with highs being reached around July 19th and throughout the first ten days of August. Drought conditions were extreme with 0mm of rainfall from 18th June to 11th August. The young vines at the estate showed clear signs of suffering, while the old vines with their deep roots coped with the extreme conditions better.

The ripening process went quickly, although unevenly from one plot to the next, and the skins remained thick.

The storm that broke on 15th August brought relief to the suffering vines, but the downpour flowed mostly away and failed to make up for the shortfall of water in the soils.

With another hot spell forecast, we decided on 14th September to immediately start the harvesting of the Merlot. The hot dry summer had impacted on the grapes, leaving them with low levels of acidity.

Because the ripeness dates varied over the four communes, we were constantly in the process of harvesting and brought in grapes that displayed very good conditions of health. The picking was completed on 1<sup>st</sup> October with the last of the Cabernet.

Transferring the fruit to vat by gravity-flow enabled us to avoid any detrimental forcing of the berries. The vinifications went smoothly with reasonable alcoholic degrees being registered, particularly for the Cabernet Sauvignon. Maceration times for the top vats were around 28 days and resulted in wines with a tannin-rich, velvety profile.

The tulip vat room and pigeage system were used to great effect. The wines offered good levels of ripeness, a silky, velvety mouth-feel, and a wide aromatic palette centred on black fruits and spice, with the expression of Prieuré-Lichine's great terroir clearly showing through.

- **OWNERS:** SAS Château Prieuré-Lichine
- **WINEMAKER:** Étienne CHARRIER
- **CONSULTANT:** Stéphane DERENONCOURT
- **TOTAL SURFACE AREA:** 85 ha (212 Acres)
- **AVERAGE AGE OF THE VINES:** 30 years
- **SOIL TYPE:** Günz-area Garonne gravel
- **VINEYARD GRAPE COMPOSITION:**
  - Cabernet Sauvignon: 50%
  - Merlot: 45%
  - Petit Verdot: 5%
- **DE-LEAFING:** On one side of the row in June on Merlots
- **START AND END OF HARVEST:**
  - Merlot: 14<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> Sept.
  - Cabernet Sauvignon: 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept. – 1<sup>st</sup> Oct.
- **HARVEST RECEPTION:**
  - Grapes picked into small crates
  - Vibrating sorting tables
  - Manual sorting and optical line
  - No crushing
  - Gravity flow vat-falling
- **SURFACE AREA OF VINE:**
  - 77.5 ha (191 acres)
- **VATTING PERIOD:** 25-28 days
- **OVERALL YIELD:** 34hl/ha
- **YIELD FOR FIRST WINE:** 32hl/ha
- **BLEND FOR FIRST WINE 2020 VINTAGE:**
  - Cabernet Sauvignon: 65%
  - Merlot: 30%
  - Petit Verdot: 5%
- **AGEING:**
  - 40% new barrels
  - 60% second fill barrels

Château Prieuré-Lichine, certified High Environmental Value in 2019, is engaged in a sustainable certification procedure.

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