
Chateau Cantenac Brown



OUR HISTORY John-Lewis Brown (1769-1851) acquired the estate in the early 19th century and decided to build in the village of Cantenac, a Tudor style chateau reminiscent of his Scottish origins. The building is one of the most unusual in Médoc region and is surrounded by a remarkable English-style ground. The quality of the wine was acknowledged in the 1855 classification, when Château Cantenac Brown was included into the growths. The Bordeaux winemercant and owner of several estates in Médoc, Louis Armande Lalande (1820-1894), extended the building, keeping the same architecture. One hundred fifty years later, the Simon Halabi family has given a new impetus to this estate with a British atmosphere ... which they are determined to raise to the very highest level. José Sanfins presently manages Château Cantenac-Brown. He does his utmost to make the best of the magnificent terroir, lavishing the greatest of care on the soil and the vines, with great respect for the environment. This meticulous attention to detail continues into the cellar, where everything possible is done to produce an exceptional wine.

OUR TERROIR The attractive white stones reflect the sun ' s rays onto the fruit in daytime while at night, they radiate the heat retained during the day. The quality of the wines is no accident: the predominantly gravelly slope in the village of Cantenac produces some of the best wines in the world and is location of many Crus Classés of Margaux. The soils, poor and generous at the same time, added to deep rooted vines and the vintners ' know-how lead to fine, elegant and perfectly balanced wines. The team of Château Cantenac Brown is aware of such a gift and looks continuing creating finest quality wines. Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc produce subtle wines with an intense bouquet, well-suited for laying down. Merlot makes up the remainder of the vines and contributes to colour, richness and roundness.

OUR VINEYARD With José Sanfins in charge, methods have changed. The vineyard is managed in a more environmentally friendly way: the " sustainable approach " goes without saying. The vines are cared for throughout the year and yields are perfectly controlled. Strictly plant-based fertilizers are applied in a moderately and balanced way in tune with the needs of the vines. This respect for Nature explains why the Château Cantenac Brown team continues to use the traditional soil maintenance techniques, which gradually enhance the structural, chemical and biological properties of the earth. " A perfect match between Men and Nature... " Over 400 000 vinestocks are managed every year. Pruning, removal of buds, leaves and secondary shoots, hand harvest ... , several times per year the whole team works vine by vine and checks each single cluster. Such a sharp selection does not replace the environment. The finest wines are given by the Nature.

OUR VINIFICATION September – October: Harvest put in concrete form the work after a whole year, the season is as hectic as friendly for the team. Over hundred pickers come and help us during several weeks. The team work is of prime necessity. According to their maturity, parcels are harvested one after each other. Hand-picked grapes are transported to the stainless steel temperature controlled vats. Hand-selected grapes First, the harvesting team sorts manually bunch by bunch; A second selection happens on vibrating sorting tables or with an optical sorting machine. Then start fermentations:

- Alcoholic fermentation lasts for around ten days.
- Malolactic fermentation occurs in barrels and vats.
- Plots are vinified separately according to grape variety and age, which allows for great precision in selection when Château Cantenac Brown is finally blended.

After fermentation, the wine is aged for 12 to 15 months in French oak barrels (made of split oak staves from the forests of Central France) 50% to 70% of the barrels are new and 50% to 30% are one-year old. Air slowly penetrates through the pores in the wood and gently oxidizes the wine. The oak contributes to the elegance of its tannins. At the same time, the restricted volume of the barrel facilitates the precipitation of the lees over the months. During this ageing process the wine is finely racked, thus separating the clear wine from the lees. Each racking process is carried out from barrel to barrel and clarity is checked by holding a glass of the wine before a candle. Two cellar workers are responsible for this job throughout the year. When one racking cycle has been completed, it is time to start the next one. Once aged, the wine is returned to the vats to prepare for bottling. At this point, and to ensure that all bottles are perfectly identical, another assembling operation is carried out: The wine from the new barrels and the wine from the one-year old barrels have aged differently.