



Clos Cantenac

Saint-Emilion
GRAND CRU

CLOS CANTENAC

Saint-Emilion, France



Martin Krajewski

“One of my top five most improved estates on the Right Bank in 2011.”
James Lawther, Decanter (May 2012)

OWNERS: Martin Krajewski & Marcus Le Grice

FOUNDED: Under current ownership since 2007

WINEMAKER: Valérie Valmy

SIZE: 15 acres

HARVEST: September

TRELLISING: Vertical shoot positioning

ANNUAL RAINFALL: 36 inches, falling mainly Sept to Feb

CLIMATE: Maritime, with short, mild winters and hot summers; autumn and winter rains; moderated by influence of the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf Stream

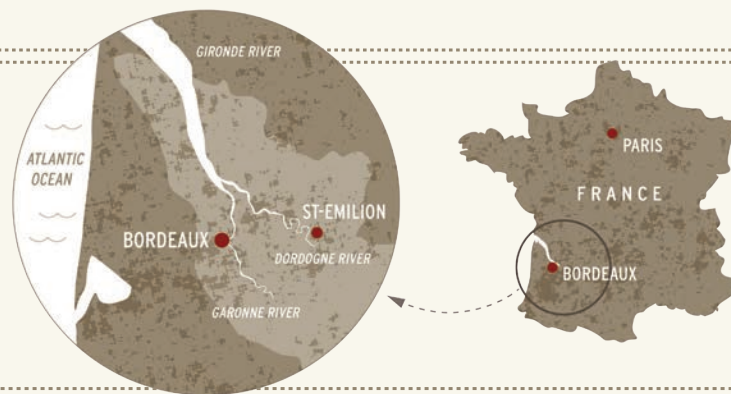
SOILS: Deep gravel, sand and clay over limestone

VARIETIES PLANTED: Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc

WEBSITE: www.closcantenac.com



The Clos Cantenac estate in Saint-Emilion



PROFILE: Clos Cantenac is a small but seductive 15 acre property with carefully planted vines on an exceptional “terroir” of deep gravel, sand and clay over limestone situated close to the prehistoric “Megalith de Pierrefitte.” This enchanting Saint-Emilion vineyard was purchased in January 2007 by Martin Krajewski, already the owner of Chateau de Sours, along with his dear friend and wine enthusiast Marcus Le Grice from New Zealand. The pair immediately made a multitude of vineyard improvements and renovated the ancient 200 year old winery in preparation for the first harvest in late September 2007. Clos Cantenac proudly respects both the history and culture of the region to traditionally craft these fine Grand Cru wines.

VITICULTURE: The winery's philosophy is that great wine is made in the vineyard, and understands that the team working in the vines plays just as critical a role as that of the winemaker. Clos Cantenac's vineyard team tends to the vines on a block-by-block basis, according to age, condition and seasonal requirements of the estate's gently sloping, south-facing vineyards. They have re-introduced grass seeding within the rows and manage the estate using only sustainable products and techniques. Careful canopy management, de-budding, crop thinning and de-leafing protect and enhance fruit quality. Rather than working to a set timetable, the vineyard team observes and reacts to the ever-changing climate, the development of the vines and the maturity of the fruit, often visiting individual blocks several times before harvesting.



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THE WINES

By qualification a Saint-Emilion Grand Cru, Clos Cantenac plants in a certain density and adheres to strict guidelines with regards to yields, use of oak, bottling and winemaking, all in its own cellar within the appellation. The two wines, Clos Cantenac and Petit Cantenac, are forward in style and approachable quite young, although wines from the best years will age very well for upwards of 15 to 25 years with proper cellaring and willpower.

Clos Cantenac: Made from 16-year-old estate Merlot vines planted in one south-west facing five acre block, the wine sees 18 months in 100% French oak barrels before bottling. Good aromatic range on the nose, starting with notes of blackcurrant, and raspberry then developing to Havana cigar, mocha and a very subtle hint of graphite. Smooth on the palate, underlined by silky tannins and an extremely long, elegant finish.

Petit Cantenac: Made from beautifully ripe Merlot, complemented by a little Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc, all grown on the Clos Cantenac estate. On the nose, powerful aromas of ripe plums and cherries develop into more complex notes of forest floor, moss, spice and toast, as well as a hint of licorice and menthol. Seductively supple on the palate mirroring the characters from the nose, with generous, well-balanced, smooth tannins and a persistent finish.

L'Exuberance: A Merlot-based rosé handpicked from estate vines. Half of the juice was fermented in mostly seasoned French oak barrels, the balance in stainless steel tanks. Intense aromas of ripe cherries, raspberries and wild strawberries, with underlying notes of grapefruit, and bay leaf. On the palate, the wine shows the same fine register of red summer berry fruit flavors with a soft attack of smokiness and more delicate notes of vanilla and caramel. This seductive rosé is fresh, balanced, silky and lasting.

La Devine: Made from beautifully ripe Merlot, complemented by a little estate grown Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Aromas of ripe damson plums and black cherries are revealed next to more savory notes of forest floor, spice and toasty oak. Hints of licorice, menthol, smoke and leather furthering the spicy aromatics. The palate is soft, supple, generous and well-balanced with an elegant persistency and a freshness on the finish.

WINEMAKING: When Martin Krajewski & Marcus Le Grice purchased the Clos Cantenac property, it was just an old shed and a forgotten brand; the wine had been last bottled in 1982. While it had been in the same family for more than 100 years, the property had been split up by inheritance over many generations. In 2008 the new owners built a new, modern cellar, adding new equipment to the fruit receival hall in 2010. In 2010 they also updated the winery's cooling and heating systems. 2013 saw the completion of a brand new barrel hall, as well as a laboratory, office and tasting room. Today, the wines are made in a vibrantly textured and approachable style. After the grapes are hand harvested, they immediately undergo a cold maceration for five to seven days to develop fruit aromas prior to fermentation. After fermentation is complete, the wines undergo a ten day maceration period to refine the tannins, followed by malolactic fermentation before transferring to French oak barrels for 18 months of aging before bottling. In 2014, the winery will complete the rebuilding of a stone wall around the cellar, barrel hall and vineyards that sit immediately by the cellar, creating a proper 'clos' once again.



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The newly renovated Clos Cantenac cellar



Vineyard workers hand sorting just-picked grapes



Vineyards overlooking the town of St. Emilion