CHÂTEAU SIRAN
APPELLATION MARGAUX

SUMMARY

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A Notable Vineyard

Château Siran, a 25-hectare vineyard in a single block located in the Margaux appellation, has been managed since 2007 by Édouard Miailhe, the sixth generation of the same family since 1859, who has undertaken an in-depth restructuring of the estate.

In 2008, Édouard Miailhe concentrated his efforts on the vineyard and launched a major replanting programme. The vines are cultivated in sustainable agriculture with experimentation in organic farming on several plots since 2018. The vineyard is worked like a garden, plot by plot, according to the requirements of the terroir: tillage, grassing and green work... The use of inputs is limited to the strict minimum, with a preference for organic products or techniques.

Each year, improvements made to the vineyard, the search for optimal maturity and a serious sorting at harvest time enable the cellar master to vinify grapes of the highest quality.

In 2018, six new vats were added to the property's thermo-regulated stain-less steel vats to allow even more refined vinification and more complex and precise blending possibilities. In 2019, the malolactic fermentation cellar was rebuilt.
The name Siran appeared for the first time in the Médoc, on 18 September, 1428 with Guilhem de Siran who swore allegiance to the abbot of Sainte-Croix in the church of Macau.

Several plots of vines from Siran in La Barde were mentioned in the inventory of the property of Marie de Pontcastel, wife of Jean Lucinet. Their daughter Flore Lucinet brought them by marriage to Jean II du Boscq in 1662.

At the time of the French Revolution, Siran had been the possession of François Augustin du Boscq, esquire, since 1751. The estate then passed on to his daughter Marie-Anne du Bosq, and by marriage in 1789 to Count Jean-Charles Flotard de Laroque-Bouillac, head of a cavalry squadron and mayor of Labarde. In 1810, their daughter Jeanne-Adèle brought the estate as a dowry to the Count of Toulouse-Lautrec Monfa, great-grandparents of the painter Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec.

Although its location, its terroir and its reputation largely deserved to be included in the 1855 classification, the Toulouse-Lautrec family, owners of Siran, Legitimists and faithful to their family tradition, had declined the invitation to be included in this “Bonapartist classification”.

At one time classified “Cru Bourgeois Exceptionnel” alongside the châteaux Phélan-Ségur, Haut-Marbuzet, Chasse-Spleen Château Siran is now charting its own unique and singular path on the road to excellence.
The Siran estate is an ecosystem that extends over 88 hectares; 38 hectares are planted with vines. The rest of the estate, composed of woods and meadows, contributes to the biodiversity desired by the owners. Protecting the life of the earth, preserving the biodiversity of the estate and questioning the daily practices to manage the vineyard responsibly for the well-being of all are their priorities.

The High Environmental Value certification (HVE 3) is a recognition of its efforts to preserve biodiversity that have been undertaken for many years at the property, and of the team’s sustained commitment to controlling its environmental impact.

The estate is also involved in VITINNOV research programme, carried out by the winegrowers who are members of the Margaux winegrower’s union. This project’s aim is to revitalise the biodiversity of the fauna and flora of the Margaux area through actions such as planting fallow land with endemic seeds, replanting trees and hedges and late mowing, thus favouring green corridors along the perimeters of the vineyards.
In the heart of the Margaux appellation, surrounded by three Grands Crus Classés, the Siran vineyard is on the ridge of fine siliceous gravel and benefits from the topography of the Labarde plateau, with a gentle but nevertheless perceptible difference in altitude. This natural slope follows a gradient ranging from 4m to 13m and allows efficient drainage, reinforced by the constitution of the subsoil.

Resulting from a tertiary landslide during the Quaternary period, the Labarde plateau is characterised by the superficial fluvial and estuarine formations of the Garonne. Essentially made up of gravel, sand and pebbles, this filtering layer ensures good aeration of the soil and makes it possible to regulate the water supply.

Situated near the Gironde estuary, the Siran vineyard benefits from a temperate oceanic-type climate ideal for vines, favoured by its southernmost location in the Médoc. However, a climatic disturbance in the region has marked the last few years which has led to a succession of contrasting vintages, with late frosts, dry years and wetter years. Thanks to the micro-climate of the Labarde plateau, the Siran vineyard has for the moment been spared from the successive frosts that have hit the Bordeaux vineyards.

Climate change appears to be one of the problems that Siran’s teams have been trying to anticipate by choosing new rootstocks that are better adapted to enabling the vines to better resist very hot summers.

The study of the vineyard’s soil parcels has allowed us to verify the viticultural and oenological potential of Siran’s terroir and to confirm the planting choices made previously in order to optimise the replanting undertaken since 2007. The results obtained for the 2014, 2015 and 2016 vintages are testaments to the excellent suitability of Siran’s grape variety and terroir.
Thirty-seven plots make up the identity of the Siran vineyard.

The oldest parcel dates back to 1920. On terroirs sloping towards the Gironde and facing east-west, Merlot slightly dominates the grape varieties (46%), followed by Cabernet Sauvignon (44%), Petit Verdot (9%) and Cabernet Franc (1%) with an average age of 32 years. This specificity comes from the unique suitability of the grape varieties to the soil and the climate, but also from a rather high percentage of petit verdot, which ripens well on the terroir of Siran.

The Siran vineyard benefits from what is known as an “early terroir”; its gravelly-sandy warms up very quickly, similar to that in Pomerol, with an early vegetative cycle and therefore always one of the first flowering and veraison in the Médoc. Each vintage is worked in such a way as to reveal the complexity of Siran’s terroir.

The vineyard is spread over three appellations and includes 2 hectares in Haut-Médoc and 11 hectares in Bordeaux Supérieur, in addition to 25 hectares in Margaux.
VINEYARD MANAGEMENT

The vineyard manager, Jean-Luc Chevalier, surrounded by a team trained in environmentally friendly cultivation practices, has set up a traceability system for operations and a daily monitoring system that is attentive to the vines. It is the quality of the grapes that will make the quality of the wine. Precision work begins in the vineyard, “plot by plot”. Each course of action intends to optimise the quality of the grapes.

At Siran, previous generations had already favoured small yields and moderate use of inputs. Since 2000, the choice that has been made to practice sustainable agriculture with daily efforts to find a better balance between mainly climatic constraints and the desired respect for the environment and mankind. The mode of agriculture leans towards organic farming but with the will to preserve the soil while awaiting resolution to the major problems of mildew and powdery mildew. Management efforts are focused on matters that affect the health not only of the vineyard, but equally, that of its team members and neighbours as well.

Soil studies are regularly carried out to monitor pH levels, the presence of mineral elements and organic matter in the soil and to know their nutrient requirements. We use two types of organic inputs: green waste and manure, for the richness in their mineral elements that in particular help the vines to resist drought. Aware of the importance of maintaining structural stability and biological activity in our soils, we are undertaking trials of “green manure” sowing.

Tasks in the vineyard are managed similarly to a garden, i.e. with great attention to detail. Pruning in double guyot, takes place from November to the beginning of March. The pruning starts with the grape varieties that bud later and finishes with those that are more sensitive to frost. The team has undergone four years of pruning training in order to manage and anticipate disturbances in sap flow. The durability of our vineyard is built by considering each vine as a particular case.
Vincent Manosque

Vineyard Management (continued)

Ploughing is limited to four passes per year, two “on” and two “off”. Practiced in the past to prevent heavy winter frosts, ploughing nowadays helps to control weeds and to remove superficial roots in order to better manage climatic hazards and to favour the expression of the terroir.

Carried out after pruning, the de-budding, splitting and lifting also involve rigorous and precise work, and contribute to the good hygiene and health of our vines. The lifting of the vine allows us to guide the vine and to avoid the accumulation of vines, which can lead to the development of diseases. In the summer, the winegrowers proceed with leaf thinning in order to aerate the bunches of grapes, which facilitates the synthesis of polyphenols and diminishes the vegetal aromas. Thinning out, by selecting the bunches, helps to reduce crowding and improves the quality of the harvest. Parcel knowledge of the terroir through observation, but also the study of the soil and daily tasting before the harvest, allow us to harvest grapes at perfect maturity.

Grapes are picked by hand in crates. The grapes are sorted before and after destemming for a selection of the best berries.
Vinification is done with as little interventionist as possible.

Marjolaine Defrance, cellar master and oenologist, directs the key stages of vinification and aging of the wine in the new cellars inaugurated in 2011. Maturity checks are carried out regularly, but it is the tasting that enables the date of the harvest to be fixed. The cellar master and the vineyard manager taste together several times a week until the decision is made.

The extraction is gentle and aims to obtain a balance on the fruit, freshness, finesse, roundness. The vinification remains classic in order to respect the elegance of the Margaux terroir and Siran’s true identity. It is made as close as possible to the plot in temperature-controlled stainless-steel vats of 60-180h/l.

Fermentation is controlled by the use of active dry yeasts selected for their fermentation capacity and oenological potential. The hot post-fermentation maceration between 28-32° and maceration durations of 7 and 20 days vary according to the vintage and the batches. The best batches do their malolactic fermentation in barrels, which gives extra richness to the final blend.

The blending is decided by the whole team and the estate’s consultant oenologist. The permanent search for a wine that is faithful to its terroir, refined and elegant, presides over the concerns of each individual, while guiding the natural process of the wine’s evolution and not intervening excessively.
Aging in new barrels is done sparingly to keep the character and expression of the Siran wine. Aware of the richness of the Margaux terroir, we want our wines to be faithful to the identity of Siran. Siran wines are aged for 12 to 14 months in French oak barrels, fine grain, medium toast with 38% new barrels.

The choice of barrels is studied based on their capacity to respect the aromatic potential of the wine. Siran’s team works with six coopers whose barrels are tasted by modality (forest, grain, toast) in order to evaluate and select those that restore the wine’s identity. The diversity of the barrels enriches the final blend.

During the maturing process, regular racking and topping up are carried out. Sulphur is used sparingly: Siran wines have total SO2 contents that comply with the standards for organic wines (<100 mg/l).
United by the same desire for excellence, Édouard Miailhe and the team he has built fully assume their ecological responsibility. Since taking office in 2007, Édouard Miailhe has introduced many changes in the vineyard, the winery and the property in general.

Jean-Luc Chevalier has been Château Siran’s vineyard manager since 2008. His sense of ecological responsibility has enabled him to form a team committed to environmentally friendly growing practices. At Siran, Jean-Luc Chevalier practices sustainable agriculture and is evolving toward organic farming with trials on several plots since 2018.

Marjolaine Defrance, a trained oenologist has been Château Siran’s cellar master since May 2016. Dedicated to making wines that are faithful to the terroir of Siran, she works in close collaboration with Édouard Miailhe.
THE WINES

It is said in the Médoc land that the great estates look out over the Gironde. Château Siran belongs to this family of first-rate growths, perched on a plateau of fine siliceous gravel, admirably exposed to the south of the Margaux appellation, a few meters from the estuary.

Produced on a soil made up of deep gravel, the wines of Siran, faithful to their terroir, are the very expression of the elegance of the great Margaux wines with a dose of gourmandise and pleasure that is typical of Siran.

Like all Grand Cru, Siran produces a great wine and a second wine called “S de Siran”. If for the first wine it is the aromatic richness, elegance, roundness and a certain tannic structure that are sought after, the second wine is characterised more by suppleness, charming aromas and the freshness of its fruitiness.

Thirteen hectares in the Haut-Médoc and Bordeaux Supérieur AOC, located on the edge of the Margaux appellation, enable the production of two other high-quality wines: Bel-Air de Siran and Saint-Jacques de Siran.
Château Siran, a recognized wine of the Margaux appellation, is the result of a subtle blend of Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot, which reflects the identity of its terroir. The relatively high percentage of petit verdot, counting in some years up to 10% in the blend, brings a spicy note that reinforces the unique character of Siran’s wines.

Powerful and subtle, Siran’s wines always seek a balance between the softness of the tannins, the intensity of the fruit and a persistent freshness. The complexity of these wines is evidenced in the delicate aromas of red fruits and spices, and is reflected in the softness of the melted tannins, which are prolonged by a beautiful length of mouth.

Siran favours the finesse and elegance of the Margaux wines, while preserving the power of the Médoc wines. A wine for long ageing, Siran has a velvety softness and a richness of aromas that become more refined with age.

S de Siran, is considered to be the cadet of Château Siran. Coming from the same gravel plateau as Château Siran, S is the result of a rigorous selection of younger vines. Vinified in the same way, it is distinguished by a predominantly Merlot blend that gives it immediate charm.

Both fine and complex, S de Siran is a seductive wine, much appreciated by connoisseurs. It is one of the classics of the appellation and can be drunk young or kept for 5 to 10 years.
**Bel-Air de Siran Haut-Médoc**

In the Haut-Médoc appellation, Bel Air de Siran is a wine made from the sandy-gravelly soil that surrounds the Margaux parcels of Château Siran. This noble terroir, planted with two traditional Médoc grape varieties, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, benefits from the same care given to the other wines produced by the estate.

Perfectly balanced in its structure, Bel-Air de Siran relies on its freshness, resting on a crisp fruit, notes of liquorice, blackcurrant and a long finish. Recognizable by the pink turret of the estate that adorns its label, Bel Air is a fine and elegant wine. Quickly accessible, this wine can be kept for 5 to 8 years.

**Saint-Jacques de Siran**

Saint-Jacques de Siran is an integral part of the Siran vineyard, planted mainly with Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. This terroir of “Terrefort” takes its name from a chapel which was one of the steps on the road to Compostela, and which is still in the middle of the vines.

Carefully developed by the Siran team, Saint-Jacques de Siran is the fruit of their know-how which results in an authentic wine with aromas of black cherry, wild strawberry and vanilla, supported by lively tannins. Generous and fruity, it is a wine for every day that will charm Bordeaux lovers with its richness and smoothness. It can be opened quickly or kept for 3 to 5 years.
The family history started in the middle of the 18th century, when this complete, harmonious estate, rich in biodiversity, with its undeniable charm seduced Léo Barbier. The 17-hectare vineyard in a single block, in the heart of the Médoc’s greatest terroirs, is a guarantee of its homogeneity. Léo Barbier, a Bordeaux wine merchant, recognized the qualities of this jewel. After it was acquired on 14 January 1859 from Jeanne-Adèle, Countess of Toulouse-Lautrec, he decided to develop and embellish the property.

His two daughters married the brothers Paul and Alexandre Sollberg in 1866. But the two sons-in-law went bankrupt around 1883-85 and left in a hurry to live in Argentina. In 1885 the family called upon a nephew, Frédéric Miailhe, son of Elie Miailhe and Lovely Sollberg, to manage Siran with a Sollberg son-in-law, Marcel Mortier. Frédéric Miailhe, a wine broker fell in love with Siran and devoted himself to it, so much so that in 1915, he bought back the shares of his Sollberg aunts. We owe him great thanks, especially also for the still delicious 1918 vintage.

Established in Portets in the seventeenth century, the Miailhe family counts among its members mayors, jurats and advisers to the king. Elie Miailhe took up the profession of broker in 1793. His descendants continued to work as brokers until 1970. Their dynamism encouraged them to invest in the Médoc wine industry between 1920 and 1950.

Louis and Édouard, Frédéric’s sons, succeeded him. Louis brought to Siran a passion for Petit Verdots and Merlot, which can be found in the other properties that belonged to the Miailhe family such as Pichon Comtesse de Lalande or Palmer.
After the death of Édouard Miailhe in 1959, the properties were managed in the family undivided ownership, and then in 1978, divided among his three children: the shares of Palmer went to Monique Sichère, Siran to his son William-Alain, and the shares of Pichon-Longueville Comtesse de Lalande to May-Éliane de Lencquesaing.

William-Alain Miailhe managed the property from 1978 to 1988. He equipped the estate with modern winemaking tools and hired the first consultant oenologists, Émile Peynaud, Guy Guimberteau, then Jacques Boissenot. Brigitte Miailhe, his wife, succeeded him from 1988 to 2007. Both great art lovers, we owe them the series of labels of the great wine, created by renowned artists, which will enchant Siran lovers for more than 20 years.

In 2007, their son, Édouard Miailhe, took over the reins of the estate. He has undertaken very important investments to restructure and modernize the vineyard, the vat room, the reception area of the harvest, the winery, the tasting rooms, the shop and the cellar. These considerable efforts allow Siran today to fully assume its place as one of the assimilated Classified Growths of 1855.
WINe-TourISM

“For more than 160 years, my family has been striving to produce a wine of pleasure, a wine for sharing, which finds its perfect expression in this beautiful phrase from Stéphanie de Saint-Aubin, Countess of Genlis: “One can only enjoy well what one shares.”” Edouard Miailhe

A forerunner in the field of wine tourism, Siran has been open to visitors for over 40 years and offers to share the family’s passion for the art of creating great wines and tasting them. Siran is one of the few châteaux in the Médoc that can be visited every day from May to September and the rest of the year, from Tuesday to Saturday, by appointment.

In addition to an elegant chartreuse built at the end of the 18th century by the Toulouse-Lautrec family and a superb garden full of roses and cyclamen, the visit allows you to discover the cellars and old wine-making facilities as well as the remarkable collection of wine-related objects created over the years by Brigitte and Alain Miailhe, beautifully displayed in the new Chai des Collections. This space won Wine Tourism’s Best of d’Or in 2017. Since 2020, the collection of works of art that decorated the labels of the great wine from 1980 to 2007 is also displayed.

Siran is an original property with many unique surprises including the panoramic terrace with a superb view of the Médoc and the Gironde estuary and the atomic shelter built to house the Château Siran wine library dating back to 1912.
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