



Château Magneau

Region: Bordeaux

Village: La Brède

Appellation: 41ha Graves

Growers: Ardurats Family

Website: <http://www.chateau-magneau.com>

“Graves wines, like the region, are seldom obvious, they tend to be undramatic, undemanding and gentle; with much that may be revealed to the discriminating.”

– Wines of the Graves, Pamela Vandyke Price

“Today, Graves is one of Bordeaux’s most dynamic areas. The biggest revolution has occurred in the quality of Graves dry white wines. Graves white are now more aromatic, fresh and well made; some of them with a distinctly exotic edge, with tropical fruit and a New World tang.”

– The Bordeaux Atlas, H. Duijker & M. Broadbent

The Graves region is often referred to as ‘the cradle of Bordeaux wine’ and has been described as a beauty asleep in her woods and forests. Since the Middle Ages, the city of Bordeaux and its outlying areas have had vineyards and these areas are today part of the Graves appellation. The appellation’s reputation owes much to Chateau Haut Brion which was well known by the early 17th century. Our own Thomas Jefferson, speaking of the Graves white wines, wrote in the late 18th century “those made in the canton of Graves are most esteemed at Bordeaux”. Since then the fame and fortune of the Graves has been eclipsed by the Medoc region with which it shares its geological origin, namely beds of gravel soil washed upstream from the Pyrenees. To the west, the forests of the Landes shelter the Graves region from the Atlantic Ocean. It is, though, to the eastern shore along the Garonne river that the world’s attention turns. It is here, on a fairly narrow strip of land between the river bank and the encroaching forest that one finds vineyards that for centuries have supplied wines to popes, kings, presidents and more importantly, now to us all.

Château Magneau is an ancient property that has been run by the Ardurat family since before the reign of Henri IV. It is located in the historic commune of La Brède, a mile from the historic moated castle where Montesquieu was born. Today, Chateau Magneau is run by Henri Ardurats and his two sons Jean-Louis and Bruno along with Jean-Louis’ wife, Brigitte,



who is responsible for the sales. Jean-Louis is in charge of the vineyards as well as the winemaking. He continually works on the expression of his wines by farming parcels of land individually and then vinifying each separately according to its intrinsic character. A modern winery was built in 1980 and a new barrel cellar in 1996. From one generation to the next, the Ardurats have passed on the philosophy of “quality before profit” and they have been recognized by an exhaustive list of awards. In 2002, they received the Trophée des Crus de Graves, an award which is given by colleagues and which recognizes only a few chateaux from the entire appellation. The Ardurats farm 41 hectares of land with deep gravelly soil in the heart of the Graves appellation. Farming is done without the use of chemical insecticides and harvesting is done both by hand and by machine. Before entering the winery all grape bunches are hand sorted to insure the highest quality of fruit. The Ardurats are a member of Terra Vitis, an organization that certifies the practice of sustainable agriculture as well as high standards for the wine’s vinification.

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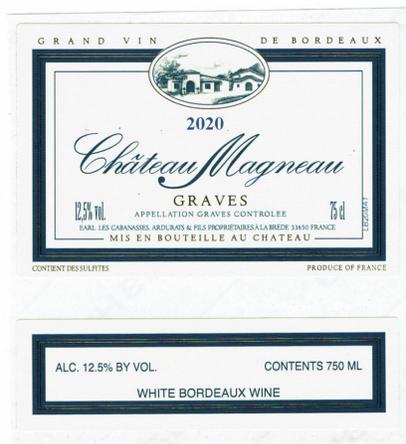
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Graves Blanc

Generally, Bordeaux wines, both white and red, illustrate the art of blending and the Château Magneau Graves Blanc is a fine example of this. The wine is made from 45% Sauvignon Blanc, 45% Semillon and 10% Muscadelle. The average age of the vines is 30 years. The Muscadelle used in a small proportion gives the wine an extroverted and inviting bouquet. The Semillon offers both ripe stone fruit flavors and a rich texture on the palate. The Sauvignon Blanc adds melon and citric flavors and provides a clean citric finish to the wine. Not one of these varieties on their own could create such a progression of flavors or balance of textures. Each variety is fermented separately in stainless steel tanks at low temperatures to preserve the grapes' aromatic qualities. The wine is blended and bottled before the spring of the following year. The Château Magneau succeeds particularly because it obtains complexity without sacrificing subtlety or elegance.



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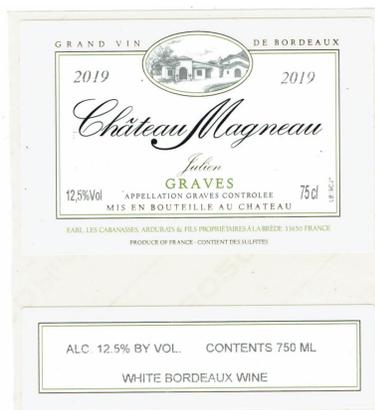
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Graves Blanc Cuvée Julien

The Cuvée Julien is a blend of 50% Semillon and 50% Sauvignon Blanc. After being manually harvested, the grapes are put whole in a stainless tank to macerate for half a day at a very low temperature. The wine is then fermented in barrel (50% new and 50% one year) and remains on its lees for 10 months during which time the lees are stirred regularly. The wine has richly layered fruit and is well structured. It will improve with bottle age for up to seven years.



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Graves Rouge

The red wine is a blend of 50% Merlot, 45% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Cabernet Franc. The grapes are destemmed and then manually sorted for quality before being crushed and put into the stainless steel fermenting tanks. Maceration lasts for 2-3 weeks with pumping over of the juice twice per day. It is aged in barrel for at least a year during which period it is racked several times and then fined and filtered before bottling.

