

CHATEAU DU CAILLAU 2018

Appellation Cahors

~ Background ~

Chateau du Caillau is located in the Cahors appellation in southwestern France. Situated in the but-tress of the Valley of Lot in the Garonne region, it is approximately 160 kilometers southeast of Bordeaux and 50 kilometers east of Agen. This wine is produced by the Chateau Clos de La Coutale, which has been in the Bernède family for six generations. The 100 hectares comprising Clos de La Coutale and Chateau du Caillau are a part of the most ancient vineyards in the Cahors appellation area, which have been producing wine since 92 A.D. By 1310 in the Middle Ages, the Cahor wines, nicknamed “Black Wines” by the English, were so successful that they represented 50% of the exports from Bordeaux to England. The wines were also highly prized by the royal courts of England, Germany, Holland Russia. In 1877, the phylloxera parasite destroyed 100% of the vineyards: 68,000 hectares. Today, there are only 4,500 hectares under plantation, less than 8% of the plantation pre-phylloxera. The best terroir is located on the steep terraces throughout the region, but the high cost of planting new vines and the manual work required to maintain vineyards on steep slopes have discouraged expansion of the appellation. Part of the original cellars of Chateau du Caillau & Clos La Coutale date to 1779. But it was under Charles Bernède, an agriculture engineer and the great-great grandfather of the present owner, that the vineyards were restructured and replanted (after the phylloxera crisis) over a 40 year period. Today the estate is owned and managed by the multi-talented Philippe Bernède, engineer, who has combined his talent for winemaking and genius for inventions to produce what many consider to be as the flagship wine from Cahors.

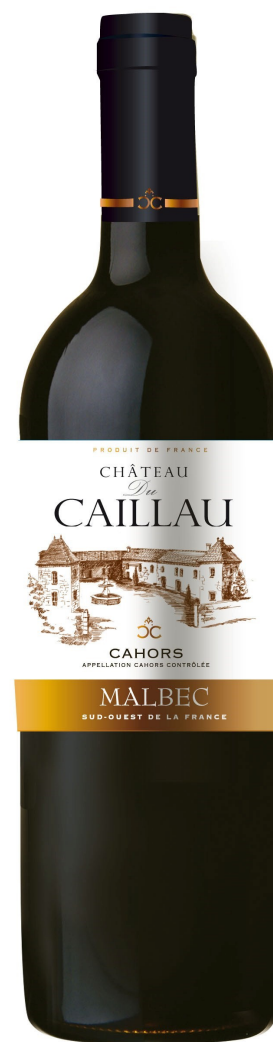
Unknown to many, Philippe Bernède is the inventor of the patented “Coutale double hinged corkscrew” (he sells +1 million corkscrews annually). Philippe also invented the “Coutale Pigeur”, which is today used by many of the 1st and 2nd growths of Bordeaux (e.g. Latour, Brane Cantenac, etc...). This revolutionary universal lightweight “pigeur” system has a pneumatic cylinder fitted with adjustable arms that extend out, rotate and then punch down the cap (the grape solids which aggregate at the top of the tank during fermentation), ensuring that 100% of the cap is immersed in wine. The result is a fruitier, richer wine with more structure. Recently, Philippe introduced the “Coutale Atacher”, which automatically attaches vines and stalks to trellises in less than 6 seconds (today it is done manually).

~ Viticulture ~

- 10 hectares cultivated for the Chateau du Caillau label.
- **100% Malbec**
- Average age of vines 25 years old.
- Soil is composed of gravel originating from the riverbed and a clayey limestone originating from mountain debris.
- Single Guyot pruning with seven buds only; severe suckering to reduce average yield to 45 HL per hectare.
- Mechanical working of the soil; manual leaf thinning and green harvest; no chemical fertilizers; no weed killers.
- **Currently in organic conversion.**
- Late harvest in mid-October.

~ Winemaking ~

- Hand sorting.
- Fermentation at 28°C with a maceration period of 15-18 days.
- The “Coutale Pigeur” is used to punch down the cap during fermentation for gentle phenolic extraction and the production of a fruity wine with a rich, round and fat mouthfeel.
- Vinification by parcels.
- Blending of wines in January after malolactic fermentation.
- Racking every 4 months before final blending.
- 50% ageing in oak barrels & 50% in wooden tank for one year.



A fresh, fruity red with cherry and lemon character. Medium body and firm, silky tannins. Savory. Drink now.



~ Tasting Notes ~

Incredibly bright colour like the skin of a black cherry. This wine seduces with an intense nose of ripe black fruits, cassis, mineral aromas and spicy black pepper. The palate is rich and loaded with delicious fruity flavour. It is round and tannic with superb balance and structure. **Ageing potential** : Ready to drink now, or can age well until 2023.

