

# CHATEAU COUTET 2016 (Organic)

## Appellation Saint Emilion Grand Cru



### ~ Background ~

Château Coutet is one of the most exciting estates in the Aquitaine Wine Portfolio. Considered the best-kept secret in St. Emilion, it is a sleeping beauty that is in the process of being awakened. Well located in the heart of the golden triangle of St. Emilion, this estate of 13 hectares (in one plot) it is literally squeezed between 3 classified growths of St. Emilion: Château l'Angelus, Château Beausejour Becot and Château Beausejour Duffau Lagarosse. Not surprisingly, Coutet's unique combination of limestone, clay, and sand is the terroir of a grand cru classé (it was a classified growth in the beginning of the 20th century). Coutet, which has been in the David-Beaulieu family since 1537, was inherited by the present owners, when their 104 year old aunt passed away in the late 1990s. Because the aunt was born in the 19th century, she had no notion of pesticides, fertilizers or other "modern inventions." So, by default, the estate remains "organic," and is one of the few properties in St. Emilion (along with Cheval Blanc) that is currently going through formal organic certification, which takes 2 years. The pureness of this estate is so remarkable, that it is the home of rare tulips - that date back to the Roman times - and can be found only in the Coutet vineyards. Professor Dennis Dubourdieu, renowned oenologist and the head of the Faculty of Oenology at Bordeaux University, became the winemaker in 2012. With his passing away in July 2016, his partner, rising star Valerie Lavigne, has taken over the winemaking at Coutet. With her continuing collaboration, we believe that Coutet will reach its full potential. Enjoy it before the rest of the world discovers it!



### ~ Viticulture ~

- **60% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc, 3% Cabernet Sauvignon and 7% Malbec**
- Vineyard area: 12.5 hectares in one continuous lot located on the top of a hill and with outstanding southern exposure. The prestigious classified growths that surround Coutet are at the bottom of the hill. (See map of parcels and location.)
- Terroir: Limestone on the elevated plateau, clay-limestone on the slope, and sand-clay at the base of the slope.
- Average age of the vines: 50 years. One parcel of pre-phylloxera Merlot vines.
- Planting density: 6,000 vines per hectare
- Yield: 38 hectoliters per hectare
- Cultivation: Sustainable winemaking practices. All work in the vineyard is done by hand. No chemical treatment (weed-killers or pesticides) have ever been used at Coutet. The biodiversity of the flora surrounding the vines allows for a balanced microecology which lets natural predators keep pests in check. The work done on the soil is just as gentle. The vineyards are plowed manually or by horses. Grass is left between rows of vines to provide healthy microbiology in the vineyard, help limit erosion, and absorb surface moisture, thereby forcing vine roots deeper into the terroir. Natural composts are applied only when needed.

### ~ Winemaking ~

- Harvest: Manual harvest of each parcel at when it is most ripe, followed by a rigorous manual sort.
- Winemaking process: Thermo-regulated cement and stainless-steel vats. Fermentation and maceration is done by varieties and by age of vines. Use of only indigenous yeasts for fermentation. Daily pumping overs. Maceration lasts 3-4 weeks to ensure optimal extraction of color, aromas and tannins.
- Ageing: 18 months in 1/3 new French oak barrels.
- Average production: 47,000 bottles.

In the same family for four centuries, this estate is now run organically. A combination of mainly Merlot and Cabernet Franc gives structure and perfumed black fruits that have combined into a dense while balanced wine. Acidity and freshness are developing within the structure. Drink from 2022. Roger Voss

