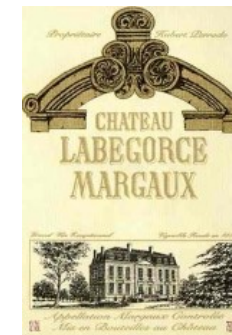




Chateau Labegorce

www.chateau-labegorce.fr Margaux, Bordeaux



“The origins of Labégorce lie in a large estate in the northern parts of the commune of Margaux which belonged to the Gorce (or Gorsse) family, perhaps as long ago as the 14th Century. The family were originally merchants, gradually climbing the social ladder in Bordeaux, assuming a more aristocratic standing in the community as they did so. They were still the proprietors here in the 18th Century, and

documents from that time indicate that there was viticulture on the estate, the vineyards dotted between fields of wheat and pasture where cattle grazed. This was the situation at the time of the French Revolution, when like so many other estates in Bordeaux, Labégorce was divided and sold off, giving rise to three estates that still exist today. The first, that which concerns us here, is Chateau Labégorce and the second is Labégorce-Zédé, named for Pierre Zédé who acquired the estate in 1840. The third is the curiously named L'Abbé Gorsse de Gorsse, an estate long defunct as far as viticulture is concerned, but which is still clearly visible on the currently available maps of the commune. Following the break-up of the original estate the modern-day Labégorce first passed to a gentleman named Capelle, and subsequently changed hands a number of times, most recently coming into the ownership of Hubert Perrodo in 1989.

Perrodo was a wealthy industrialist who made his fortune in the petrochemical industry, having been the founder of Perenco, a company specialising in exploration and the exploitation of fossil fuels. His dream as far as Bordeaux was concerned seems to have been to reunite all three of the above vineyards to recreate the original Labégorce estate, and to this end he subsequently acquired both Labégorce-Zédé and L'Abbé Gorsse de Gorsse. No doubt this would have been a fascinating and very newsworthy project, but it is one that may never now be completed. Perrodo was killed in a skiing accident on holiday in late 2006, and although the estate will now pass to his heirs, its destiny is less certain.

The Labégorce vineyards include three main plots, totalling 70 hectares in all, although only approximately 40 hectares are fully planted up. All three plots lie in the northernmost part of the commune. The largest plot, accounting for about two-thirds, lies just northeast of the fine chateau, which was constructed by the renowned architect Courcelles. There is a second plot around the chateau itself, accounting for about a quarter of all the Labégorce vines, while the smallest plot lies a little further north around the church in Soussans. The vines average 30 years of age, with the oldest vines, of which there are just four hectares, dating from between 1902 and 1950. More date from 1951 to 1985, whereas a quarter date from 1989 when extensive replanting took place. Vineyard practices involve careful use of chemicals, with no herbicide used at all, and yields are typically 50 hl/ha. Harvesting is by hand, and fermentation begins with a short, cold maceration followed by a temperature controlled process. Each parcel of vines, of which there are many, is vinified separately. The blend is 48% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. Malolactic fermentation takes place in oak, 30% of which is new, where the wine spends up to fifteen months.” thewinedoctor.com



2009 Margaux, Chateau Labegorce

“Bright red-ruby. Aromas of roasted plum, currant, blackberry and tar are lifted by a floral topnote and complicated by a whiff of leather. Sweet, silky and densely packed, with impressive thickness of texture leavened by good inner-mouth energy and florality. Fine-grained and very nicely delineated. Finishes long and ripely tannic, with lingering flavors of crushed blackberry, plum, chocolate and minerals. As of this vintage, Labegorce now includes the vines from Labegorce-Zede; new proprietor Hubert Perrodo re-unified these two properties in late 2005, shortly before his death in a skiing accident in late 2006.” Steve Tanzers International Wine Cellar

2001 Margaux, Chateau Labegorce

“Fresh fruit on the nose, dark and exotic, with some sweet oak. Medium bodied, nicely textured wine which again has a good presence on the palate. Still dominated by primary fruit flavours and oak at the moment, but with nicely put together structure.” thewinedoctor.com