



THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR QUALITY



Christelle Sorge • Margaux & Haut-Médoc

Since 1928, the Sorge family has farmed vineyards on the left bank of Bordeaux. Their cellar is in Marsac, the best part of the commune of Soussans, just north of Lascombes, Labégorce, and Margaux. Even though Soussans does not have the platinum zip code of Margaux, many of the classified estates in Margaux (including Château Margaux) have blankets of vines here, where the soil is pebble and gravels over sand and clay. Christelle's choices are thoughtful: organic farming, sorting in the vineyard as well as the cellar, fermentation in cement exclusively, a liberal amount of Merlot, and a conservative amount of new oak, which never exceeds 33%. She is a fierce moderate, making wines that are shimmery but retain their appetizing core of soft and raw.

Château Valentin Haut-Médoc 2014

The 3-hectare vineyard of Château Valentin is just west of Margaux in the commune of Avensan where her grandfather was born. Marked by ancient glacial soils deposited from the Pyrenees and the Massif Central, these gravelly soils are Cabernet friendly. Valentin is handpicked Cabernet Sauvignon from 57 year-old vines, balanced by Merlot and Petit Verdot (vines approaching 100 years of age). In classic Sorge winemaking, fermentation begins in cement vats, and the wine is finished in 2 and 3 year-old barrels, reused from the Château Soussans wine; bottled unfiltered. Blackberry and plum preserved with a soft leathery texture and a refined tannin/acid balance. Classic Claret that is about as "Back to the Future" as you can get.

Christelle's affection for her 2014 Château Valentin Haut-Médoc comes across clearly:

Conditions were excellent in the spring enabling good and uniform flowering. The summer proved to be a little more difficult, but was not ultimately detrimental to the harvest. The real summer arrived late but gloriously with September and October providing exceptional sunny days almost without end, enabling us to obtain ripe, concentrated grapes and a classic Haut-Medoc that I am proud to put my name on. The harvest began on 30 September and finished on 17 October. Aged 12 months in barrels. The blend of my Château Valentin 2014 is 43% Cabernet Sauvignon, 37% Petit Verdot and 20% Merlot. The aromatic structure is very fine, while the tannins are pretty and well balanced with quite a long persistence in the mouth. The fruit on the palate is dark berry, cassis and blueberry accented by notes of allspice. Without exception, all who taste it want another glass.



Château Valentin vines that go back to the 1960's