

## **Chateau Giscours Margaux**

### **Chateau Giscours History**

Chateau Giscours was first written about in 1330. At the time, it was listed on historical records as a fortified property. The first reference to Giscours for making Bordeaux wine dates back to 1552. Before the start of the French Revolution, Chateau Giscours belonged to the Saint-Simon family.

It was confiscated during the revolution and was resold in 1793 to two Americans from Boston, John Gray and Jonathan Davis. After that, a myriad of owners took over ownership and management of Chateau Giscours until it was bought in 1845 by Count de Pescatore who hired a new manager for their Bordeaux property, Pierre Skawinski.

### **Chateau Giscours The Modern Age**

In 1954 Chateau Giscours was purchased by Nicolas Tari that helped rebuild and enlarge the property.

In 1976, Tari, who was also the Secretary General of the Association des Grandes Crus Classes, was selected as one of 11 judges to take part in the historic "Judgment of Paris" wine competition when the results of a blind tasting had many California wines beating much more famous wines from Bordeaux. In 1995, Chateau Giscours was sold to Eric Albada Jelgersma.

Since that time, things have turned around at the estate. A large part of that credit goes to the managing director, Alexander van Beek who is also in charge of their other Margaux estate, Chateau du Tertre. Alexander van Beek began his career as a young man, just a few years out of college in 1995, he was only 24 years old at the time. Alexander van Beek started out at the estate with plans to spend 2 weeks during the harvest. He was later promoted to managing director. One of the first things that took place with the young Alexander van Beek at the helm was a continued replanting of their vineyards with the marked increase of Cabernet Sauvignon.

The efforts began to pay off in a few short years. Another change took place under the direction when Giscours switched from machine harvesting to manual harvesting.

Starting with the 2000 vintage, Alexander van Beek truly turned the fortunes of Chateau Giscours around. Each vintage after that shows signs of slow, but steady improvement in this Bordeaux wine. The estate's 2009, with its rich textures and ripe cassis filled personality is one of the finest vintage Giscours I have ever tasted.

Although, in all fairness, **the 2010 Giscours could give it a run for the money and in time, might even be the better wine.** However, the 2015 vintage is even better. And if you talk with Alexander Van Beek, the best is yet to come!

**The best vintages of Chateau Giscours are: 2016, 2015, 2014, 2012, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2005, 2001, 2000 and 1961.**

### **Chateau Giscours Vineyards, Terroir, Grapes, Winemaking**

The 102 hectare vineyard of Chateau Giscours is planted to 60% Cabernet Sauvignon,

32% [Merlot](#), 5% Cabernet [Franc](#) and 3% Petit [Verdot](#). The current plantings show a marked increase in Cabernet Sauvignon. Previously, more than 50% of their vineyards were planted to Merlot in the mid 1990's.

As you can see, that is no longer the case as the **percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon has**

The terroir is mostly gravel with sand and some limestone in the soil. The vineyard has 3 peaks, with the highest level of elevation reaching 32 meters. On average, the vines are close to 45 years of age. However, the estate has old vines that are up to 70 years of age, which are both Cabernet Sauvignon and some Merlot. The vine density is on average 10,000 vines per hectare. The higher levels of density represent the new plantings.

The vineyard of Chateau Giscours is divided into 43 separate plots. Today, 20% of their vineyards are farmed using biodynamic techniques. That is expected to continue increasing over the next few years. The best terroir is located directly in front of the chateau, which is also where you find their oldest vines.

To produce the wine of Chateau Giscours, vinification takes place in a combination of **stainless steel vats and concrete tanks**. There are 26 stainless steel tanks and 42 concrete vats that range in size from 20 hectoliters all the way up to 250 hectoliters. **80% of the Malolactic fermentation takes place in tank** and 20% occurs in barrel. **The wine of Chateau Giscours is aged in 50% new, French oak barrels for an average of 18 months.**

While Chateau Giscours is a traditional Bordeaux estate, they were one of the first properties in the Medoc to **embrace optical sorting technology**. **In fact, they were also one of the first estates to employ gravity to filling the vats in the late 1800's as you read earlier**. The production of Chateau Giscours is close to 25,000 cases per year. **There is a [second wine](#), La Sirene de Giscours.**

**When to Drink Chateau Giscours**, Anticipated Maturity, [Decanting Time](#)

Chateau Giscours needs time before it can be enjoyed. Young vintages can be [decanted](#) for an average of 2-3 hours, give or take. This allows the wine to soften and open its perfume. Older vintages might need very little decanting, just enough to remove the sediment.

**Chateau Giscours is usually better with at least 10-12 years** of bottle age. Of course that can vary slightly, depending on the vintage character. Chateau Giscours offers its best drinking and should reach peak maturity between 12-30 years of age.

**Serving Chateau Giscours, with Wine, Food, Pairing Tips**

Chateau Giscours **is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit**. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift.

Chateau Giscours is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted braised and grilled dishes. Chateau Giscours is a perfect match with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms and pasta as well as cheese.

A 63 hectare plot of vines adjacent to Chateau Giscours, but just outside the boundaries

of the Margaux appellation, is the [grape](#) source for their wine produced and bottled as Le Haut Medoc de Giscours. Other Bordeaux wines produced by the estate include Chateau Duthil and Chateau Houringe. Chateau Duthil is their high-end Haut Medoc wine, as it is made from a selection of their best parcels.

Both those estates are classified as [Cru Bourgeois](#) wines from the Haut Medoc appellation. The same technical team that produces Chateau Giscours is in charge of making their Haut Medoc wines as well.

### **Wines of Château Giscours (Margaux AOC)**

This Classified Growth in 1855 is the first label of Château Giscours. It is of great finesse and elegance. Delicacy and power are combined in this flask to bring you the elegance expected of a great Margaux wine. The aging potential of this great wine is between 8 and 20 years or even more for the most exceptional vintages.

**2010 and 2014**

**2012**

### **Technical notes: 2010 Chateau Giscourse**

The vineyard:

Soil : deep gravels

from the Garonne river and sand from the ice Age

Planted area : 94 ha

Grape varieties: 60 % Cabernet Sauvignon - 32 % Merlot - 5 % Cabernet Franc - 3% Petit Verdot

Age of vines : 4 to 10 years : 15%

10 to 25 years : 50% +25 years : 33% Density: 8 330 to 10 000 stocks /ha

Vineyard management: regular soil working, traditional thinning and manual leaf removal

Pruning : Double Guyot

Harvest : Hand-picked followed by hand sorting

Average yield : 40 to 45 hL/ha

The vinification :

Tanks : Concrete and stainless steel

Temperature management : Thermoregulation

Pumping over : varies according to the lots

Temperature during the alcoholic fermentation : 26 to 28°C

Vatting time : **18 to 28 days**

Pressing : horizontal pneumatic and vertical mechanical

Average alcohol content : from 13 % to 13,5 % of alc./vol.

Selection : plot by plot management according to the ages of the vines and the different terroirs

Ageing :

Type of barrels : 100 % French oak barrels(fine grain and medium toast)

Age of barrels : 50% new oak , 50% oak of 1 wine Ageing time :15 to 18 months  
Racking : Every 3 months with candle  
Fining : Egg white albumen

### **Wines Tasting Scores**

#### **2014 Chateau Giscours:**

**92 points**

**Polished tannins, pure, ripe, fresh, sweet, dark, red fruits, and a silky textured, fresh finish are really already showing well, with little effort. As this ages, it could score higher.**

*Tasted Feb 4, 2017*

A complex nose of earth, tobacco, mint, black cherry and raspberries, this wine is soft and polished and there is a fresh, unadulterated plum and fresh, black raspberry sensation in the silky finish. The wine was produced from a blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot and 10% Petit Verdot. 91-92 Pts

**92 points** - *Tasted Apr 22, 2015*

4345 Views

#### **2010 Chateau Giscours**

**Polished tannins, pure, ripe, fresh, sweet, dark, red fruits, and a silky textured, fresh finish are really already showing well, with little effort. As this ages, it could score higher. 94points** - *Tasted Feb 4, 2017*

A complex nose of earth, tobacco, mint, black cherry and raspberries, this wine is soft and polished and there is a fresh, unadulterated plum and fresh, black raspberry sensation in the silky finish. The wine was produced from a blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot and 10% Petit Verdot. 91-92 Pts

**92 points** - *Tasted Apr 22, 2015*

92-95 RP 91-94 WS

#### **La Sirene de Giscours 2012 Second label**

"A second wine is not created by taking the leftovers that you can't use for your first wine and making something out of it. That's not at all how it's done. You have to see your wines as a family tree."

04-Sep-2013

**89-91 WS**

### **Technical Notes**

The vineyard:

Soil : deep gravels from the Garonne river and sand from the ice Age

Planted area : 94 ha

Grape varieties: 60 % Cabernet Sauvignon - 32 % Merlot - 5 % Cabernet Franc - 3% Petit Verdot

Age of vines : 3 to 15 years : 75% 10 to 25 years : 25%

Density : 8 330 to 10 000 stocks/ha

Vineyard management: regular soil working, traditional thinning and manual leaf removal

Pruning : Double Guyot

Harvest : Hand-picked followed by hand sorting

Average yield : 40 to 45 hL/ha

La vinification :

Tanks : Concrete and stainless steel

Temperature management : Thermoregulation

Pumping over : varies according to the lots

Temperature during the alcoholic fermentation : 26 to 28°C

Vatting time : 18 to 24 days .

Pressing : horizontal pneumatic and vertical mechanical Average alcohol content : from 13 % to 13,5 % of alc./vol.

Selection : plot by plot management, young vines

Ageing :

Type of barrels : 100 % French oak barrels(fine grain and medium toast)

Age of barrels : 20% new oak , 80% barrels of 1 and 2 wines. Ageing time : 12 months

Racking : Every 3 months with candle

Fining : Egg white albumen