



Château Canon

1^{ER} GRAND CRU CLASSÉ
SAINT-ÉMILION

PRESS KIT

Press contact : Hélène Perromat

h.perromat@chateau-canon.com - +33 (0)7 64 02 32 48

Château Canon - BP22 - 33330 Saint-Emilion, France - www.chateaucanon.com

As you look out from the village of Saint Emilion, you will see a landscape unlike any other - parcels of vines on dark green hillsides surrounding Château Canon. The Merlot and Cabernet Franc vines, whose grapes go into the château's wine blend, flourish here on this limestone plateau with slopes which glide gently down to the Dordogne River.

Here you can feel the presence and tranquility of time, like nowhere else on earth. Protected by high stone walls, the hillside vineyards produce wines of great depth and elegance. At Château Canon, history seems to be immutable, like the geological strata which lie below. And yet...

THE CANON CHARACTER

The property is "discovered", rather than spotted, from behind a labyrinth of walls and a maze of roads that wind over the Saint-Emilion plateau. Looking out from the village, whose buttresses can be admired from the château's salon and courtyard ... the silhouette of the château appears frozen in time. The soft light is reflected on the white stone facade, suggesting that life here is gentle and refined.

Château Canon was gradually brought into the 21st century after its acquisition in 1996 by the CHANEL Company. It took twenty years to restructure the vineyards, reinforce the underground galleries and return this 1er Grand Cru Classé to its former glory. Today, the property has reclaimed its original luster.

Château Canon still retains that fine play between that which is displayed and that which is hidden, an intrinsic harmony between the prettiness of the château's facade and the perfect structure behind it. With its hidden doors and secret corridors, there is plenty to feed the imagination. Take, for example, the cleverly concealed door in the library, leading directly down to

the barrel cellar, or the inconspicuous staircase descending to the bottle cellar, where the old vintages lie slumbering.

When architect, Peter Marino, restored the property in 2015, he respected its history, its furnishings and its veneer of time. Within the new interior design, precious woods, crystal and natural stone rub shoulders with eclectic, silk-covered furnishings in a shimmering array of rich colours. An 18th century atmosphere still pervades this Romanesque dwelling.

Château Canon is a family home, with a sweeping staircase and a charming library. This is no ordinary château, far from it. It is a living home which has been handed down through the generations, with an art book left casually on the coffee table, a bustling kitchen, and various rooms, all different one from the other.

In winter, a fire can be heard crackling in the living room hearth. In summer, picnics are enjoyed by the pond in the cottage garden, under the shade of the Holm Oaks.

NICOLAS AUDEBERT



NICOLAS AUDEBERT, GENERAL MANAGER

When he was recruited by CHANEL to keep an eye over Château Canon and Château Rauzan-Ségla, their property in Margaux, Nicolas had just moved to Bordeaux from Mendoza, Argentina, where he had lived with his family for 10 years. His ambition at Canon is to put the property back in the spotlight after 20 years of hard work and investment. He is also determined to produce consistently excellent wines over the long term. “We are people of the land and we should be proud of this. Our wines are intended for enjoyment, not speculation, they should provide pleasure and emotion.”

Born in the South of France in 1975, the son of a naval officer, Nicolas soon developed a pronounced taste for travel and cultural exchange, whether in the French West Indies or Africa. An agricultural engineer, a graduate of the Institut Supérieur des Techniques d’Outre-Mer in Paris and the Ecole Nationale Supérieure Agronomique in Montpellier, he also holds a degree in oenology. He has worked with Moët & Chandon and Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin, and did his training at Krug, where, before the age of thirty, he was participating in the coupage of the champagnes alongside the Krug family. He vinified several of their Clos du Mesnil, a reference among fine wine lovers. Prior to his arrival at Château Canon, he was oenologist and winemaker at Cheval des Andes in Argentina, a joint venture between Terrazas de Los Andes, a Moët-Hennessy subsidiary, and Château Cheval Blanc, a Saint Emilion Premier Grand Cru Classé “A”.

« The Malbec arrived in Mendoza via Bordeaux 150 years ago.
I am making the same journey, but in the opposite direction, it's a return to my roots. »

A ROMANTIC HISTORY

When buccaneer, Jacques Kanon, acquired an estate surrounded by vines on 2nd April, 1760, little did he know that, 250 years later, the château would be world-famous for its wine, ranked among the finest of crus. But he did give it his name for all posterity. Over the course of history, the K was changed to a C, a clairvoyant move, given that the château is now owned by the brand with the double C!

This property with a war-like name arose from the fascination of a sea-faring man for the Saint-Emilion area. It was he who had the château built and created the wine estate that produces soft, feminine, elegant and well-balanced wines. A transcendent serenity emanates from its vines which grow together in a single vineyard. The impossible symbiosis between the call of the open sea and the draw of the land.

Vines have been grown on these same parcels for 500 years. Their roots plunge down into sediments which have survived the ages. As a witness to the forces that shaped and sculpted the fossil-rich limestone subsoils, the wine of Château Canon combines power and finesse and has excellent cellaring potential.

When the CHANEL Company bought Château Canon in 1996, having already acquired Château Rauzan-Segla in Margaux in 1994, it decided to invest heavily in the property to enable its wines to attain the full magnitude of a Saint-Emilion 1er Grand Cru Classé, once again. The vineyards, winery and facilities are as they are today thanks to a true concern to preserve the heritage of the past.

This is how a great wine is made – with a healthy regard for time, never trying to hurry it along. Since 1760, the château has been transmitting this philosophy to the men and women who have lived within its walls.

CHANEL's investment plan was complemented by the acquisition, in 2011, of a bordering estate on the foothills of the Saint-Emilion plateau. This 11-hectare vineyard, the flagship of the Saint-Emilion Grand Cru appellation, has spawned a new wine: "Croix Canon Saint-Emilion Grand Cru". A former 12th-century chapel is home to this second wine, produced with all the expertise of the 1er Grand Cru Classé, and which has its own facilities, vat-house and cellars for vinification and ageing.

REDISCOVERED TERROIR

SAINT-EMILION

Synonymous with the greatest wines in the world, the “jurisdiction of Saint-Emilion” is a veritable wine paradise with several hundred châteaux producing wine in its appellation area – a remarkable group of properties. Unspoiled Unesco World Heritage landscapes, unchanged for centuries, invite the visitor to contemplation and reverie.

There are vines everywhere, with vineyards stretching out as far as the eye can see, glimpsed through a window, or espied through the crumbling walls of some ruins. This is wine land, it always has been. Château Canon’s remarkable walled vineyard borders the entrance to the village. You can go through a door and walk up to Château Canon’s parcel of vines growing in the centre of Saint-Emilion. This unique plot of vines, surrounded by houses, is ploughed by horse and harvested by hand, respecting traditional practices. Its grapes go into the composition of the Grand Vin.

THE SOIL

Several million years old, Château Canon’s soil is very homogeneous. The vine grows leisurely and harmoniously on limestone bedrock veined with clay. Its roots plunge down into the sediments, which have survived the ages, flourishing in the soil’s clay texture with good water retention. One of the characteristics of clay is that it stores water and returns it to the vine in times of drought. As the vine is subject to slight water stress, its roots dig down deeper into the soil, which benefits the health of the vine, resulting in a slow, even ripening of the grapes and a high-quality harvest.

QUARRIES

Under Château Canon’s vineyards lies a 30-kilometre labyrinth of underground galleries. These galleries are unique in the world and a well-kept secret. A few rootlets laden with water droplets hang from the roofs of the galleries which men have dug into the limestone over the centuries - a wonderful testament to history. To reach them, you have to go down a few dozen steps below the winery, walk across the old cellar, and penetrate the bowels of the earth. These underground galleries, resembling great limestone cathedrals, allow visitors to walk some 8-12 metres beneath the vineyards, thereby discovering the terroir of Château Canon at first-hand.

TIMELESS WINES

In Saint-Emilion, the Merlot grape reigns supreme. Its name, a diminutive of “merle”, meaning “blackbird” in the local dialect, comes from the grape’s colour, like that of the bird. The restructuring of Château Canon’s vineyards has restored the planting to its original proportions - primarily Merlot with around one-third Cabernet Franc. With 30-40% Cabernet Franc, Château Canon’s planting is also typical of the Saint-Emilion appellation. This complementary varietal has been traditionally combined with the Merlot in this appellation, where it works wonders.

THE MERLOTS

The Merlot’s leaves are broad, dark green and deeply-lobed. Below them grow big, long, loose clusters. The small spherical grapes display a dark blue hue when mature, and their juicy flesh is particularly sweet.

Although hardy, the Merlot vines are early-growing and therefore vulnerable to spring frosts. They thrive on clay-limestone soils that retain freshness even in summer.

After the harvest, the fruit aromas and anthocyanins from the lightly-crushed Merlots will be released through low-temperature maceration. This important process produces a fine, gentle extraction from the carefully selected grapes.

Regular tastings, throughout the alcoholic fermentation and maceration processes, steer the winemaker in his work.

Blessed with beautiful intensity of colour and an elegant tannic structure, the Merlot brings smoothness and finesse to the blend, along with intense fruit flavours.

Soft, supple and gentle on the palate, the Merlot is a flattering grape variety: it creates a lovely character and smoothness to the palate. Its aromatic complexity reveals perfumes of red and black fruit. Notes of spice and undergrowth emerge with age. Subtle, refined, with fine, silky tannins, the Merlot gives Château Canon’s wine suppleness, smoothness and charm.

THE CABERNET FRANC

Small and compact, the clusters of Cabernet Franc are sheltered under shiny, light green, slightly rounded leaves. The small grapes, with a thick bluish-black skin, are often tightly packed together. Their flesh is juicy and slightly acidic.

The exposure of Château Canon’s limestone plateau helps the grapes to reach full maturity, which is more difficult to achieve, as they ripen later than the Merlots.

The vinification process is tailored to the Cabernet Franc with its fine, subtle tannins. The work carried out during alcoholic fermentation and post-fermentation maceration respects the quality of the grapes and is carried out at a moderate temperature. The work is gentle, measured and precise in order to create the wines of legendary elegance and freshness. The Cabernet Franc, which adds length and structure to the wine through its aromatic complexity, also increases its cellaring potential.

It makes up 30 to 40% of the blend, depending on the vintage. Cabernet Franc gives Château Canon’s wines freshness, finesse and structure. It produces subtle wines with good acidity and endows them with lovely aromatic length displaying a variety of complex empyreumatal and mineral notes.

PHILOSOPHY

At Château Canon, we work alongside Nature. It is through the reiteration of Nature's seasons and colours and the repetition of painstaking work, that our wines are built. It is an intimate journey that challenges perceptions. Pruning, training, de-budding, harvesting and blending - the rituals themselves are almost immutable, yet each vintage is a new beginning.

It takes years of experience and long hours of hard work, to ensure the vineyard is the way we want it, harvesting vine by vine, cluster by cluster and marrying one parcel to another at the time of blending. At Château Canon, we prefer to use craft methods, believing in the value of work carried out by hand. History and tradition are not regarded as a burden, but as a blessing. With each motion, the wine is reborn in the vineyard each year.

Due to the care that goes into their production, only a small number of bottles leave Château Canon's cellars each year. We take the time required to age the wines, until the tannins are well "melted" (a description typically used for the greatest of grand crus). The wine is therefore a reflection of its terroir and its vintage and will deliver a wealth of emotions at some point in a distant future, never failing to show its exemplary nature.

CHARACTER

Château Canon reveals itself to those who take time to discover it. Its decor is brought to life by a play of light, time can almost be felt. It resonates in the introverted, somewhat cerebral and, sometimes even inaccessible, character of its wine.

The wines, left to rest for at least two years before allowing them to be tasted, conceal real power under the fragility of their light hue.

Château Canon is a wine that speaks of longevity. It evokes the history of the property and resists the passage of time. It is both ageless and timeless. Voluptuous, full-bodied and silky, Château Canon defies the years.

THE CANON “ALLURES”

The parcel of vines in the centre of the village of Saint-Emilion is harvested by hand and ploughed by Percheron draft horse. It takes two years for the wine to reach the bottle and sometimes a decade before it is opened and enjoyed. Time at Château Canon flows by at its own pace, while elsewhere in the world, old vintages are being opened and enjoyed in bustling megalopolis. The contrast could not be greater.

At Château Canon we refer to these different tempos as “Allures”

Like the different gaits of equine animals, they allow us to have a better understanding of our wines, their vintages and their unique characteristics. These classifications can be considered as different versions of the same style.

There are **elegant** years, such as 1955. The mesmerizing texture of their wines is close to that of cashmere. With their extreme precision, these fine, elegant wines embody a certain refinement and distinction. They include 1998 or even 2001.

With its vertiginous power, the Château Canon 2003 can be classed among the **extreme** vintages. The meticulous work carried out in the vineyards and cellars allowed us to rise to the challenge and overcome the year’s unusual weather conditions, in the same way as a sailor has to work with a storm. However, like the 2005 or the 1975, Château Canon

2003 is a controlled wine, with a fairly classic make-up. Its strong personality shows through in its complexity, intensity and tension.

A historic year, the 1982 is the archetype of the **aesthetic** vintage. Its pure, radiant façade masks an imposing character, found in the legendary wines of 1929 or 2010. Over time, it is acquiring the patina of a contemporary home, turned into a sound architectural investment.

A **tightrope** vintage would be the most accurate descriptor for 2014, 2008 or even 1989. Their creation was complicated, “on the wire” so to speak, due to the weather conditions, but it was always under control. These intense, soft wines are balanced with precision and concentration, like a tightrope walker advancing carefully along the high wire, never once stumbling.

The 2015 vintage is the yardstick for the fifth allure of Château Canon - **carnal**. Solar, sensual and rich, the wine is simply enchanting. 2015 was an exceptional year for Château Canon in more ways than one. According to wine critics, it was one of the greatest vintages ever made at the château. Château Canon 2015 is opulent, intense and very aromatic, as are the 1962, 2002 or 2009. It expresses the generosity of the vintage, but also has depth and structure.

Personalities, friends of Château, talk about the “Allures” of Château Canon in this series of video clips.

THE ELEGANT VINTAGES BY VERITY SMITH
BLIND INTERNATIONAL DRESSAGE RIDER, FRANCE



WATCH THE VIDEO : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPfxq2nFwPI>

THE AESTHETIC VINTAGES BY ALEXANDER GILKES
AUCTIONEER, NEW YORK



WATCH THE VIDEO : <https://youtu.be/PGepPo6VYEA>

THE TIGHTROPE VINTAGES BY NICOLAS AUDEBERT
GENERAL MANAGER, CHATEAU CANON, SAINT-EMILION



WATCH THE VIDEO : https://youtu.be/E467cl_vUqA

THE EXTREME VINTAGES BY XAVIER KUHN
WORLD CHAMPION IN SKI CROSS, CHAMONIX



WATCH THE VIDEO : <https://youtu.be/aNdNdXqvedg>

THE CARNALS BY ALICE RENAVAND
DANSEUSE ÉTOILE DE L'OPERA DE PARIS



WATCH THE VIDEO : <https://youtu.be/K72eW5nqZYE>

CHÂTEAU CANON

IN NUMBERS

34	>	HECTARES OF LAND OWNED
2/3	>	MERLOT
1/3	>	CABERNET FRANC
30 years	>	AVERAGE AGE OF THE VINES
4 692 000	>	SNIPS OF THE SECATEURS OVER ONE YEAR
204 000	>	NUMBER OF THE CHÂTEAU'S VINES
1869	>	THE OLDEST VINTAGE IN THE CELLARS
286	>	VARIETIES OF DIFFERENT FLOWERS IN OUR GARDENS
32	>	NUMBER OF CANDLES USED FOR RACKING OPERATIONS EACH A YEAR
14	>	PORTALS AT CANON
13	>	KM OF QUARRIES UNDER CHÂTEAU CANON
3,452	>	KM OF WALLS SURROUNDING THE PROPERTY



1 BOTTLE OF CANON OPENED EVERY
6 MIN 57 SECS SOMEWHERE IN THE WORLD

IN IMAGES

