

# Château La Colombière

**Region:** Southwest

**Information:** The Côtes du Frontonnais AOC designation from the South-West of France is located 15 miles North from Toulouse in the hillsides of the left rim of river Tarn, an affluent of the Garonne. It is characterized by 2 wines, Fronton and Villaudric, and by its grape variety, the Négrette, that makes it a unique French AOC.

The Négrette Varietal is indigenous to Cyprus, known for producing famous wines at the time and where it is still cultivated, the Négrette is believed to have been imported during the 12th Century by Knights Hospitaller of St John of Jerusalem because the wine it produced had helped wounded Crusaders recover health and valor!

From Palestine via Cyprus, Malta and the many European commander's residences, Fronton being one of them, the Négrette traveled through History and probably via Spain and Mexico to California where it is now known under the chivalrous name of Pinot St Georges!

In 1975, the Côtes du Frontonnais AOC brought together the 2 local vineyards, Fronton and Villaudric that had remained Church property until 1789. It definitely recognizes the quality and specificity of its red and rosé wines, made from a large proportion of this historical varietal that found in this area the soils propitious to its best expression.

## **The vineyard of Château la Colombière**

The vineyard covers 79 acres:

- 65 acres of vines aged from 5 to 33 years
- 7 acres of young plantation,
- 7 acres being replanted.

It is planted with 6 noble vine varieties:

- Négrette (63% of the vineyard), variety specific to the Appellation, which brings to the wines from the Château typicality, suppleness and flavor.
- Cabernet Sauvignon and Franc (23% of the vineyard) that provides the red wines with structure and the capacity to mature.
- Gamay (10% of the vineyard) that brings liveliness and shrewdness to the grey wine.
- Syrah, Cot and other (4% of the vineyard), for their interest during the blending.

At Château la Colombière, grape gathering remains entirely manual for both the Négrette and the Gamay. Bunches of grapes are hand-picked during the harvest and carried to the wine house, packed in 80lbs boxes. The grapes, thus preserved from any external attack, are processed without destemming, using carbonic steeping. This simple and natural method is well known particularly

for making wines to be drunk young. It allows also, like Pasteur studied it, to obtain red wines of high expression that develop the tang of the soil and the vine flavor.

The "grey wine" is obtained by direct pressing of the grapes without any steeping, fermentation occurs at low temperature. This method protects the subtlety and the primary flavor of the grapes.

Other varieties are mechanically harvested and proceeded using semi-carbonic steeping, without destemming the grapes.

### **The wines.**

The style of Château la Colombière expresses the flavor, elegance, roundness, the long finish of the Négrette in its wines made from the varieties, the soil and the wine-making methods of the Château, recognized by the customs of Appellation Côtes du Frontonnais Contrôlée.

### **The soil of Château la Colombière**

Soil, varietals, and wine making methods which include clarification and wort blending, and in house rearing, are the qualitative elements that guarantee the authenticity and style of the wines from Château la Colombière.

The soil of Château la Colombière is made of barren lands of 50% of "graves siliceuses" and 25% of "rougets ferrugineux". Highly representative of the Villaudric vineyard, those 2 kinds of soil are propitious to the production of both the Château tradition and the Vin Gris, of high expression, and of the Baron de D, to be kept. "Boulbènes argileuses" constitute the remaining 25% of the vineyard.

### **Wine Making**

Our wine making methods are what places Château la Colombière in the Appellation Côtes du Frontonnais. Each varietal is processed separately and the worts are not filtered. They are drawn off, raked and then clarified. Such a natural decantation preserves the structure of the wines in its entirety, which is mandatory for their further ability to mature. After a 4 months rest period, the varietals are sampled, selected and blended to make the different wines of the vintage. Blending respects the intrinsic qualities of the varietals but also, with the passing years, allows for the expression peculiar to each wine from the Château. The wines, stored in vats, are aged on their fine lees issued from the fermentation. They are regularly drawn off. This kind of rearing that gives fullness to flavors is preponderant to favor bouquet expression and contributes to give their particular style to the wines from Château la Colombière.

Oenological follow-up is continuous during the aging periods which last 2 years minimum for Château and Baron de D and generally 2 winters for Réserve du Baron. The Vin Gris is marketed in the year that follows the harvest.

Bottling is done at the Château. Each year, the harvest produces roughly 160,000 bottles. The burgundy bottle has been used since 1963 and is now specific to the Château wine making method and to the Villaudric wine.

Wines are sold at maturity although red wines can afford some more years of maturing, in bottle, to reach their completeness. This maturing time depends on the vintage and the personal taste of the connoisseur.

These quality principles, that Château la Colombière bring into operation to obtain and to guarantee authenticity and style timelessness for its production, deserve it, since more than 20 years, recognition during wine testing competitions: First Grand Prix et Gold Medals in Mâcon, Gold Medals in Concours Général de Paris, Silver Grape and "Coup de Coeur" for the Guide Hachette ; and for wine and cooking professionals like Alain Senderens from Lucas Carton, Philippe Faure-Brac, world's best wine waiter, Robert M. Parker who marked 87/100 and the "Oenologues" that gave to Château la Colombière their Grand Prix d'Excellence des Vins à Haute Expression.

Organic Estate.  
Female Winemaker:

### The Wines:



#### Cuvee Vinum

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#### Cuvee "Coste Rouge"



Wines are sold at maturity although red wines can afford some more years of maturing, in bottle, to reach their completeness. This maturing time depends on the vintage and the personal taste of the connoisseur. Négrette (63% of the vineyard), Cabernet Sauvignon and Franc (23% of the vineyard), Gamay (10% of the vineyard), and Syrah, Cot and other (4% of the vineyard)