2023, THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE NET

Photography: Henrike Stahl

IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO ADMIT just how reliant the creation of a fine wine is on random occurrences, on auspices, and that, much like terroir or winemaking instinct, it is often the result of good fortune.

Although an unpredictable start to the summer cast doubt on the potential quality of the harvest (while failing to hinder the dynamic growth of our vines), two successive, unprecedented heatwaves nudged the vintage up a level – to the one occupied by elegant wines set to go down in the estate's history.

As the dust settled over a generous harvest – although less opulent than anticipated – density, amplitude, and texture remained the watchwords of the 2023 vintage. Now more than ever, Château Palmer and its Alter Ego continue to shine through their singularity, their resonant power, and their unwavering fidelity to this exceptional terroir, the understanding and interpretation of which have forced the hand of chance and the fickle skies.

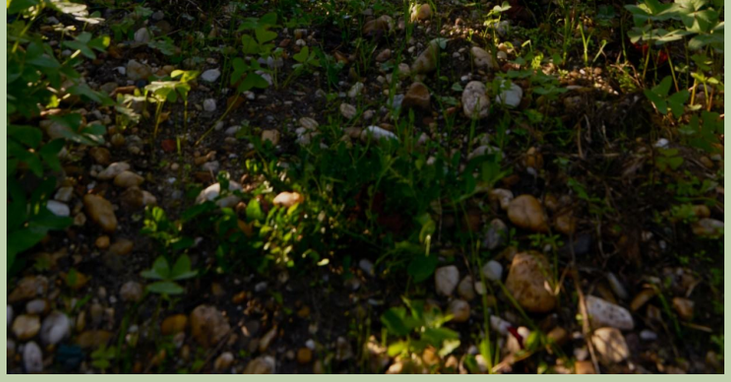
While nothing is ever lost, nothing is ever eternally gained, either.

— THOMAS DUROUX, DIRECTOR OF CHÂTEAU PALMER

“DENSITY, AMPLITUDE, AND TEXTURE REMAINED THE WATCHWORDS OF THE 2023 VINTAGE”

THOMAS DUROUX — DIRECTOR, CHÂTEAU PALMER

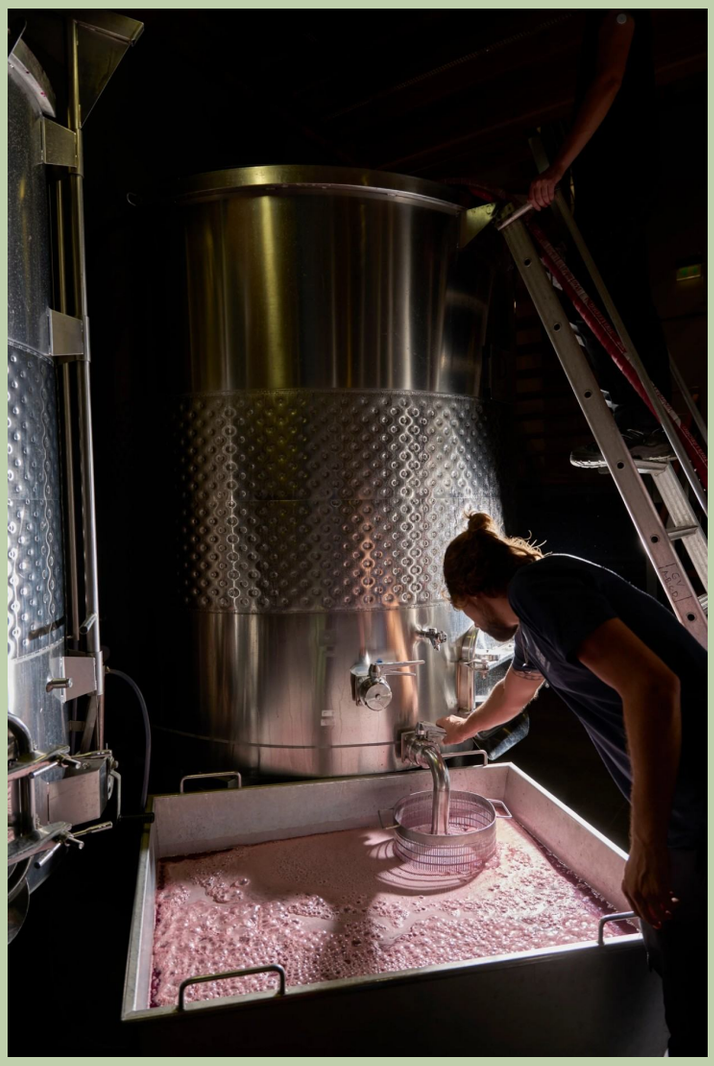
AT THE CLOSE OF a relatively cool, wet winter, the Merlot vines began to bud in the final week of March. On the night of April 4, a minor frost heralded an unstable, warm, wet spring, exacerbating the vine's growth. Vigilance and experience were key to containing the resulting cryptogamic pressure. The vines flowered from May 31 to June 5, in dry, sunny, almost summery conditions. Growth continued, promising a very high harvest potential.



JUNE USHERED IN A PARADOXICAL SUMMER: hot, cloudy, with scattered thunderstorms. The ripening midpoint was reached on July 25 for our Merlots, and three days later for the Cabernets. A gloomy August sky made us fear for the quality potential of the future harvest. But then the game changed. An initial heatwave ran from August 17 through 24, bringing plant growth to a halt and promoting fruit ripening and the production of phenolic compounds. A second one hit on September 4, a blow for younger vines but a boon for the concentration of the grapes. As a result, the harvest was cut by a fifth.

THE HARVEST BEGAN on September 11, with fragrant Merlot grapes packed with majestic tannins. Against a stormy backdrop, the harvest was suspended for a week, which allowed the Cabernets to be harvested at their peak at the very end of the season. The fruit exuded harmony; the tannins were exceptionally ripe. In the cellar, balance, phenolic maturity, and tannin quality all spoke for themselves. The assemblage of our wines was completed in December.

VINTAGES FOLLOW one after another, and no two are ever the same. Under an opaque, illegible sky, an intimate interpretation of the place led 2023 into the circle of great Palmer wines: wines of harmonious mastery and fine aromatic freshness that promise to cultivate their singular, velvety identity.



“UNDER AN OPAQUE, ILLEGIBLE SKY, AN INTIMATE INTERPRETATION OF THE PLACE

LED 2023 INTO THE CIRCLE OF GREAT PALMER WINES”

THOMAS DUROUX — DIRECTOR, CHÂTEAU PALMER

CHÂTEAU PALMER
Merlot 46%
Cabernet Sauvignon 50%
Petit Verdot 4%

ALTER EGO
Merlot 43%
Cabernet Sauvignon 53%
Petit Verdot 4%

HARVEST DATES
From 11 september to 05 october 2023

YIELD
32 hl / ha

ALTER EGO 2023

Born from the fine, gravelly soil so typical of its appellation, Alter Ego continues to develop the delicacy and sophisticated texture of great Margaux wines year after year. Bringing the very best out of its aromas and full body, the Indian summer of this 2023 vintage has inspired a particular burst of red and black berries, already making it irresistible. With fine tannins, a heady bouquet, and fresh fruit notes, Palmer’s Alter Ego shines brightly as it pursues its ascent.

CHÂTEAU PALMER 2023

The eighty-year-old Merlot vines on the Plateau des Brauzes, the first terrace of clay-rich gravelly soil overlooking the estuary, play a major role in the deep, velvety character of Château Palmer.
The score of this 2023 vintage – an ideal median between saline elegance and finely structured tannins – maintains its harmonious and persistent note. The aromatic layers arrive in succession, intertwining and echoing one another, making Château Palmer 2023 a fine wine of profound substance.