

## Couvent des Jacovins

THE 4<sup>TH</sup> GENERATION PERPETUATING...
...700 YEARS OF HISTORY

Media Kit



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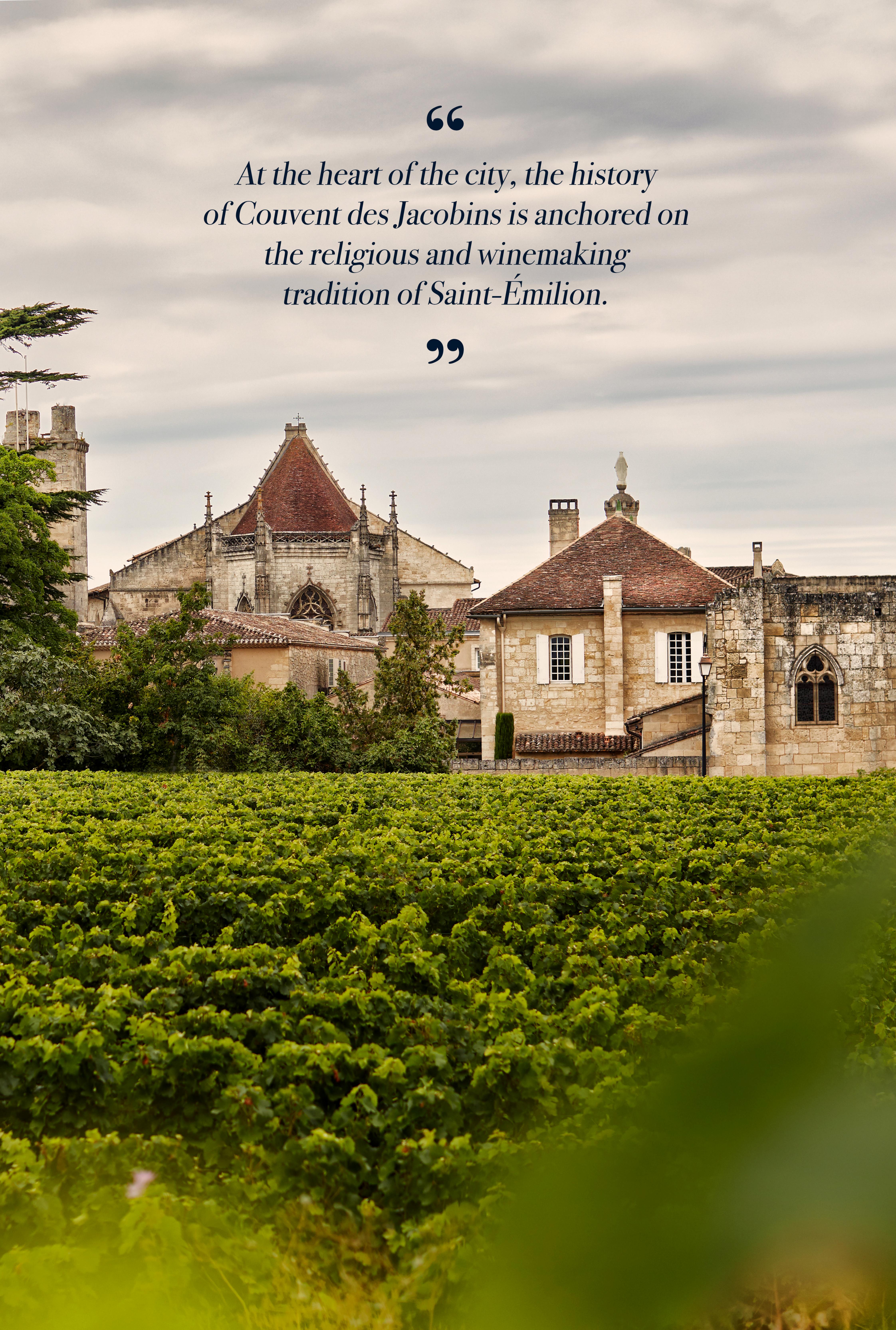
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# A WINE ESTATE CREATED BY THE DOMINICAN FRIARS IN THE 14<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY



Couvent des Jacobins was founded on one of the highest points of Saint-Émilion, following a land bequest in 1389 to the Dominican brotherhood, whose members were known as Jacobin Brothers. Dominicans in the region at that time were offering shelter to pilgrims making the Way of Saint-James down to Spain.

For almost four centuries, the friars were also growing vines and making wine, tending a well-exposed vineyard located outside the city moats. Back in the days, Couvent des Jacobins already exported its wines, in particular to the royal courts of England and France. And over that period, the wines of the estate became among the most representative of Saint-Émilion.

The Dominican brotherhood was dissolved shortly before the French Revolution and the friars left the Couvent des Jacobins around 1780. The French State confiscated the Couvent during the French Revolution and then sold it as a national estate ('bien national').

In 1790, the family of a famous Member of Parliament of the time, the GUADET family, acquired the Couvent and took care of it for three generations. The estate was then purchased in 1899 by Émile VAUTHIER, a bell maker in Saint-Émilion.







# Whose 700-year history is perpetuated by the JEAN family



In 1902, Jean JEAN, a farmer from a small village next to Saint-Émilion, purchased the Couvent des Jacobins. He revived the estate and resumed winemaking.

In 1926, he donated Couvent des Jacobins to his daughter, Berthe JEAN. Berthe continued making changes to the estate. She renovated the cement cellar between 1957 and 1965 and acquired new vine plots, including those on the limestone plateau of Saint-Émilion.

In 1969, the national syndicate I.N.A.O. awarded Couvent des Jacobins the rank of Grand Cru Classé, recognizing the consistency of the wines and the family efforts to preserve this remarkable site.

Rose-Noëlle BORDE, Berthe's daughter, and her husband Alain BORDE perpetuated the family tradition: they rehabilitated the former bakery of the friars, rebuilt the former cloister, transformed the underground cellars to enable gravity-based bottling and wine storage, and developed the brand name and the distribution of Couvent across Europe.

Xavier JEAN, the great-great grandson of Jean JEAN, now represents the fourth generation at Couvent des Jacobins. He perpetuates over a century of family tradition and nearly 700 years of winemaking at the estate.

The fourth generation of the family, represented by Xavier JEAN, now perpetuates nearly 700 years of winemaking history at Couvent des Jacobins.

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### THE TEAM OF COUVENT DES JACOBINS





### Xavier JEAN

Born in Saint-Émilion, Xavier represents the fourth generation of the family at Couvent des Jacobins. Xavier graduated from McGill University in Canada, and has worked in financial institutions in London before moving to Asia in 2008. Xavier looks after the strategy and CALICEM, the recently-created cuvée, with Denis POMARÈDE, the estate manager, at his side. Xavier also represents Couvent abroad.



### Rose-Noëlle BORDE

Rose-Noëlle BORDE represents the third generation of the family. Rose-Noëlle took over from her mother Berthe, and for nearly 60 years, restructured the vineyard and created the identity of Couvent alongside her husband.



### Denis POMARÈDE

Denis POMARÈDE is the general manager and winemaker of Couvent des Jacobins since 2012. Denis joined Couvent in 1996. Before joining Couvent, he worked in Médoc in the early 90s, most notably with the team of Jean-Michel CAZES (then at AXA Millésimes) and abroad for nearly 4 years in Hungary (Tokay), Portugal and Australia. Denis was awarded a professional certification in viticulture and oenology and went on graduating from the D.U.A.D. at the Bordeaux Faculty of Oenology.



### Thomas DUCLOS

Thomas DUCLOS joined as our oenologist for Couvent des Jacobins and CALICEM in 2018. Thomas is a partner at Oenoteam, an oenologist and consultancy lab in Libourne which advises numerous wineries in France and abroad.



### The Team of Couvent des Jacobins

A dedicated team accompanies the creation of Couvent, from vine to bottle. Our team has been dedicated to the estate, whether tending the vineyard or assisting with the winemaking, for more than 15 years on average.



# XAVIER JEAN, AND HOW THE $4^{\text{TH}}$ GENERATION IS ACCOMPANYING COUVENT INTO THE $21^{\text{ST}}$ CENTURY



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You are entrusted with a gift. If you respect yourself, you will gift-it away better than you received it.

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Gradually involved at Couvent des Jacobins since 2010, Xavier JEAN represents the fourth generation of the family at the estate.

What are the main adjustments you brought to Couvent des Jacobins since you started your involvement?

Our first priority has been to revisit the vineyard, to consolidate the basis that will help create Couvent des Jacobins for the next 50 years. We commissioned an extensive study of the soils and the terroir to understand what works well and what could be adjusted, either in terms of grape varieties or soil health, an aspect we felt we needed to understand better. We have replanted nearly 30% of the surface over the past decade or so, including a plot of petit-verdot, a grape variety that is not often used in Saint-Émilion, but which adds personality and identity to the wines of Couvent des Jacobins since the 2014 vintage, without changing our style too much.

The adjustments we brought in the vineyard led us to also revisit our plot selection by designing small size, custom-made stainless steel vats. They allow us to vinify separately specific areas within a given plot, depending on their soils, vine type and vine age. Finally, we are seeking to raise the profile of the unique history and location of Couvent, at the heart of Saint-Émilion, by developing wine tourism, and welcoming concerts or cultural events.



### What are your projects for the next decade at Couvent des Jacobins?

My objective is to bring Couvent des Jacobins in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by small touches while respecting the identity and the work that my family did over the past century. After rethinking the vineyard, there are four areas I would like to prioritize.

Anchoring the identity of the wines we make at Couvent des Jacobins is the first priority. That means making the wines recognizable among our peers and across vintages, through innovative choices at the vineyard, during the harvest, winemaking and ageing and with the advice of Thomas DUCLOS, our oenologist.

The environment is next. I belong to a generation that is sensitive to the need for environment-friendly practices. We have been gradually preparing for an organic management of the estate since 2010. We are now officially in the conversion process to organic farming. But our goal is to go beyond the requirements of organic certification, including doing more for biodiversity.

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My priorities
for the next decade
include anchoring the
identity of the wines of
Couvent des Jacobins,
the environment,
strengthening our wine
tourism initiatives and the
development of the cuvée
CALICEM.

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Developing our wine tourism offering is the third priority, with the opening of a guesthouse on the estate in 2020.

Finally, the last stone I hope to bring to the estate is CALICEM, our new cuvée. Vintage 2015 is the first one, and we are creating the history of this new label.

### How would you describe the winemaking philosophy of Couvent?

Our aim is to emphasize balance in our wines but never at the expense of complexity or freshness. It is important for us to anchor the « Couvent identity » so that wine amateurs recognize Couvent in each vintage. Our philosophy is also to create wines that have both a long ageing potential and can be enjoyed a few years after bottling. That is a big challenge but one I believe is worth undertaking. That ageing potential is a strength Bordeaux has, and that I believe us winemakers should emphasize more.



We enjoy tasting back vintages of Couvent des Jacobins from our family library because they remain fresh, dense, and full of life. My goal is to be sufficiently innovative every year at the vineyard and in the cellar to make sure that one can appreciate each vintage as much after a decade or after 30 years.

### Talk to us about the new label that you created in 2015, CALICEM.

This new label comes from a small plot of vines of about one hectare adjacent to the classified plots of Couvent, which we acquired in 2014. Vintage 2015 was our first. This plot is unique because it is a homogeneous plot of old vines, planted in 1961. Berries are tiny and concentrated, with a real dense fruity personality. Our goal is to magnify this fruit. We tend this plot like a garden, a little like the estates in Burgundy.

We only produce the equivalent of 6 to 7 barrels of CALICEM a year. This small quantity means that we can devote complete attention and thinking to each barrel individually, vinifying barrel per barrel, varying ageing duration and so on.

We are also creating a unique identity, distinct from that of Couvent des Jacobins, with a different bottle shape and a white label designed by Indonesian sculptor Nyoman NUARTA. But the name we chose, 'CALICEM', which means 'bringing the Chalice' in Latin, is a bridge to the history of Couvent des Jacobins.

My goal for CALICEM in the next few years is to deepen the personality and identity of the wines, develop the brand and a distribution that will complement that of Couvent des Jacobins and le Menut des Jacobins, our second wine.

Balance is our aim in winemaking,
but more importantly, we wish to create wines
that can age, regardless of the vintage, like the
ones our ancestors used to make.







# Couvent A place where time stops



### AT THE HEART OF SAINT-ÉMILION



Couvent des Jacobins is among the most iconic monuments in Saint-Émilion, located at the heart of the city. It is tucked between the GUADET street on the West, and the village moats and the limestone plateau on the East. Thanks to this unique location, Couvent des Jacobins is one of the rare estates in Saint-Émilion where wines are vinified and aged at the heart of the village.

The utmost objective of the JEAN family over the past century has been to preserve this rare estate by magnifying not only its historical significance as a city monument, but also the winemaking tradition started by the Jacobins friars in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

The former bakery of the friars, built in 1389 and located close to the East moats, is used nowadays as a tasting room. The garden of prayer, where a group of a dozen dominicans used to walk, centuries ago, and their former cloister, were rehabilitated in the 1980s.

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Couvent des Jacobins is one of the rare estates in Saint-Émilion where wines are still created and aged at the heart of the medieval city.

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The history of Couvent des Jacobins continues over 10 meters below the house, in the underground cellar of the estate. These underground caves were used as quarries in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century and the quality limestone employed to build houses in Bordeaux and Saint-Émilion. The caves were renovated in the 1970s and they are used for wine bottling and wine storage, thanks to their high natural hygrometry and a constant temperature of 15°C all year around. In those perfect conditions, the wines of Couvent, once bottled, commence their ageing.

#### ARTS AT COUVENT

Given the common destiny it shares with the history of Saint-Émilion and thanks to its unique location, Couvent des Jacobins has always been keen to involve itself in the life of the city by welcoming culture festivals, including the philosophy festival Philosophia and music festivals 'les Grands Crus Musicaux' and 'les Grandes Heures de Saint-Émilion' during summer each year.





### A NAME, A PHILOSOPHY, A LABEL



Couvent des Jacobins is first and foremost a name – not a 'Château', nor a 'Clos', but a 'Couvent', the only one among the Grands Crus Classés of Saint-Émilion and a reference to the history of an estate where the Jacobin friars were already making wines in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

Our winemaking philosophy emphasizes finesse, balance, as well as freshness. This requires discipline to obtain high quality berries, but also skill and innovative thinking to harvest, vinify, age and blend berries from the main soils of the estate (the limestone plateau and the sandy-clay soil of the Southwest slope foot of the Saint-Émilion hill).

The winemaking philosophy also seeks ageing potential and we create the wines so that they maintain this life and energy that characterizes them during vertical tasting of back vintages. As a result, it is important for us to leave our wines time so they can blossom at their own pace, without rushing. This may take a few years.

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Finesse, balance, freshness: the pillars of winemaking at Couvent des Jacobins.

Power and concentration are important attributes, but which we only seek when we feel the berries are well-balanced to start with, so that the underlying personality of the soils and the vineyard works can appear. We generally practice smooth extractions and moderate the use of new oaks from vintage to vintage.

Petit-verdot was planted on a 0.4 hectares plot with heavier soils in the Northeast plateau in 2010/2011. Petit-verdot represents about 5% of the blend of Couvent on average since 2014, the first year in which it was blended in the Grand Vin. Along with merlot and cabernet franc, petit-verdot anchors the identity of Couvent.





### ALABEL

Night blue and gold: these colors are the foundation of the label of Couvent des Jacobins, a rare combination in Saint-Émilion. Barring a few minor adjustments of tones and font, this color identity has been preserved for nearly 75 years. Thomas Aquinas, one of the most famous Jacobin friars in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, adorns the label. And contrary to the other estates in Bordeaux, each vintage of Couvent des Jacobins is « bottled at the Convent », an indication that has been on the label and on the cork for more than 20 years and a cheeky reference to the winemaking tradition of the Jacobin friars.



### A UNIQUE LIBRARY OF BACK VINTAGES

Nearly a century of presence of the JEAN family is felt throughout the underground cellar of the estate. Each year, we keep a portion of the wines produced in the family cellar, alongside older vintages, some dating back from the 40s and forming a living memory of winemaking at Couvent des Jacobins. Beyond the historical importance of the library, it is very important for us to understand how our wines age, and be able to share the specificities of each vintage, whatever its age, during our vertical tastings.





# Couvent Enters A New Era



### VINEYARD, ENVIRONMENT, PRECISION PILLARS OF THE NEW TECHNICAL ERA



The gradual involvement of the fourth generation at Couvent des Jacobins, and the desire to deepen plot-specific winemaking and our wine identity has led to a new technical era at the estate. Denis POMARÈDE, the estate manager, and Thomas DUCLOS, our oenologist, both accompany this new page of Couvent des Jacobins' history along three main themes.

### Rethinking the vineyard

We have rethought the vineyard of We calibrate planting density to the Couvent des Jacobins over the past 15 energy of the soil. It varies between years, including replanting the ageing 6,500 and 7,000 vines per hectare, plots, working through the optimal leading to yields of about 35 to 40 combination of soils and grape variety, hectoliters per year. and adjusting our cultivation methods to prepare the estate for organic certifi- Numerous drainage works have also cation. That process accelerated in 2010 been undertaken over the past decade following a comprehensive study of our soils.

About 30% of the vineyard of Couvent des Jacobins has been replanted over the past 15 years. The vineyard is now about 30 years old, which allows us to balance old vines (45 years and above, about 35% of the surface), younger vines (10 to 25 years old, about 35% of the surface), and those which are just starting to produce today and will create the Couvent des Jacobins of tomorrow.

to reduce unwanted water accumulation in the vineyard.

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The petit-verdot brings this additional unique personality to Couvent des Jacobins.



Merlot remains the dominant grape variety in the vineyard. It accounts for nearly 85% of the planted surface, mostly on the clay and sandy-clay soils of the Southwest slope.

The cabernet franc is planted on the warmer, limestone soils of the estate, bringing alongside the backbone structure, spicy notes to Couvent. It represents about 10% of the surface. The proportion of cabernet franc is likely to increase by about 5% in the next decade following forthcoming replanting.

The petit-verdot, with about 4% of planted surface, completes the whole. Couvent des Jacobins is one of the few Grands Crus Classés in Saint-Émilion that incorporates petit-verdot in the blend of its Grand Vin. Petit-verdot, alongside merlot and cabernet franc, brings depth, density, and aromatic complexity to the blend.

Soil works during winter are delicate and made only if strictly necessary so soils can breathe. Vine works are also calibrated to each vine, whether during pruning or during the greening tasks (leafing and green harvesting). The latter are only made if necessary and always moderately to maintain an optimal balance between the ripeness, concentration, acidity and freshness of the berries. We harvest manually in small buckets, between mid-September and mid-October.





### Rediscovering the environment

The environment has always been at the heart of the philosophy of Couvent des Jacobins. No herbicides have ever been used in the estate, soft mechanical soil works being the preferred way to tend the vineyard. Our thinking around organic farming started nearly 20 years ago, but we quickly understood it would take time for the vines to regain control over their environment.

We first reduced significantly the quantity of crop-protection products used. Then we adopted a near surgical vineyard protection mindset, by intervening only if strictly necessary, without templates across plots. Over time, the vineyard seemed to strengthen.

We decided in 2015 that 2016 would be our first year of fully organic vineyard management, and Couvent pursued the organic conversion process in 2017. We consider, however, the organic certification more like a milestone, not the end of our environmental responsibilities.

We aim to go beyond the standards the certification requires. This includes further reducing copper usage, augmenting the biodiversity of our vineyard, and reducing our carbon footprint. We are also experimenting with techniques from biodynamy, including the use of the 500 and 501 formulations, which stimulate the life of the soil.



### Precision in winemaking, ageing, and blending

The replanting and transformation of the vineyard into smaller plots has also led us to rethink the winemaking tools used at Couvent. We initially reduced the size of the cement vats to cater one hectare of vines per vat. In 2017, we designed four small inverted stainless steel vats. These vats allow us to do in-plot selection, helping us take into account differences in berry density, ripeness and structure within a given plot.

The petit-verdot is vinified and aged separately to maintain its personality until blending. Gravity-based works have been undertaken at Couvent des Jacobins since the beginning of the decade during harvest, vatting, rackings and bottling.

The conversion to organic farming has also led to adjustments to our ageing approach. We use 5 to 7 barrel makers each year, generally with soft to moderate toast so that barrels complement, rather than structure, the wine. The proportion of new oak averages 40% and rarely goes beyond 50% to maintain the balance and harmony of Couvent des Jacobins. We age our second wine, le Menut des Jacobins, with a maximum of 20% new oak and the rest in barrels of one wine, as we emphasize the fruit over complexity.

Thomas DUCLOS, a partner at the Oenoteam laboratory in Libourne, joined as our oenologist for Couvent des Jacobins and CALICEM in 2018. He is bringing his winemaking ideas, and experience to further anchor identity and personality in our wines.





## Technical Notes



### The Vineyard

Size

10.7 hectares

Soils

Clay and limestone on the Plateau, sandy-clay on

the Southwest slope, molasse du Fronsadais

Grape variety

Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit-Verdot

Planting density

6,500 to 7,000 vines per hectare

Vine works

Four-way ploughing, grassing and green vine works

if needed, currently in organic conversion

Average vine age

About 30 years

Yield

35 to 40 hectoliters per hectare

Harvests

Manual in small, 10-kilogram buckets

double sorting vine and table

gravity-based vatting



### Couvent des Jacovins

Vats Cement and stainless steel,

temperature controlled

Winemaking Cold pre-fermentation

macerations, moderate

extractions

Ageing 35% to 50% of new oak,

the rest oaks of one wine, sustainable French forests

Racking 2 to 3 if needed

and fining Light fining if needed

Blend The blend varies from

vintage to vintage, but is generally 85% merlot, 11% cabernet franc, and

4% petit-verdot

Bottling By gravity in the under-

ground cellar, no filtration

Production About 2,500 cases

Alcohol Between 13.5% et 14.5%

Oenologist Thomas DUCLOS

(Oenoteam)





### Le Menut des Jacobins

Vats Cement and stainless steel,

temperature controlled

Winemaking Cold pre-fermentation

macerations, moderate

extractions

Ageing 100% oak barrels, generally

at least 85% of oaks of one

wine, sustainable French

forests

Racking 2 to 3 rackings if needed

and fining Light fining if needed

Blend The blend varies from

vintage to vintage, but is generally 85% merlot and

15% cabernet franc

Bottling By gravity in the under-

ground cellar, no filtration

Production About 600 cases

Alcohol Between 13.5% et 14.5%

Oenologist Thomas DUCLOS

(Oenoteam)

# A Walk Through Seven Decades of Couvent des Jacobins



### Vintage 2016

Very dark purple color. A powerful wine, energy and race on the nose through its complexity (black fruits, fresh spices, floral). Ample and opulent body. Fresh and dense but silky tannins. Long black fruit and expressive finale.

M: 82% • CF: 11% • PV: 7%

James Suckling (94) • Jeff Leve (90) •

Wine Advocate (88-90)

### Vintage 2015

Dense purple color with a nose of black fruits (blackberry, black cherry). Racy in the mouth, complex and expressive body sustained by masculine but round and silky tannins. Powerful finale. Ageing potential well beyond 2040.

M: 85%; CF: 11%; PV: 4%

James Suckling (93) • Neal Martin (92) •

Wine Advocate (90-92) • Jeb Dunnuck (91)

### Vintage 2014

Shiny, dense purple color. Complex nose of black fruits, fresh almonds and clove, delicate toasting. Balance between freshness, density and length with silky and fresh tannins. First vintage in which petit-verdot was part of the blend.

M: 85% • CF: 11% • PV: 4%

Neal Martin (91) • Wine Advocate (90) •

Le Figaro (16) • Guide Hachette (2\*)

#### Vintage 2012

Dense and shiny ruby/purple robe. Open nose of spices, vanilla, black fruits upon oxygenation. Expressive mouth with racy tannins that are enveloped by a light bread toast. Long finale over black fruit compote. A late vintage with a great complexity.

M: 85% • CF: 15%
René Gabriel (17) • Jancis Robinson (15.5)

### Vintage 2010

Beautiful fresh purple and shiny robe. Open, charming and great nose complexity of toast, spices, black fruit jam. Ample and generous mouth, with notes of cedar, ripe fruits and liquorice. Creamy, long finale over silky tannins. Ageing potential beyond 2035.

M: 85% • CF: 15%

Decanter (17.75) • Wine Spectator (90) •

Bettane & Desseauve (16-17)

### Vintage 2009

Intense, deep, shiny color. Complex nose of spices (clove, pepper), vanilla and ripe fruits. Generous and racy, the mouth opens up over fresh, energetic and powerful tannins with complex notes of toast (brioche, zan, toffees). Long and rich, ageing potential beyond 2035.

M: 85% • CF: 15%

### Vintage 2008

Fresh shiny, still deep purple color. Broad nose of fresh black fruits (blackcurrant, blackberry), balsamic. Rich body but balance achieved with softening oaky tannins. The 2008 vintage took a few years to open-up but after nearly a decade in the bottle, the oak and fruit tannins are well integrated. Ageing through 2022.

M: 85% • CF: 15%

#### Vintage 2005

Intense purple color. Complex character on the nose, racy spices, black fruits. High energy and freshness in the mouth, great acidity contained by round, silky, vanilla tannins. Creamy and long finale. Affirmed personality.

M: 75% • CF: 25%



### Vintage 2001

Still shiny ruby/purple robe, light notes of evolution. Charming nose tending toward black truffle, red cherry, blackcurrant. Broad but balanced and fresh. Long and flattering finale with an interesting salivating aftertaste. A bottle representative of the quality terroirs of Classified Growths in Saint-Émilion.

 $M: 80\% \cdot CF: 20\%$ 

### Vintage 2000

Intense and deep purple color. Racy notes of fresh spices (pepper), black fruits (burlat cherry, blackcurrant). The bouquet gradually becomes more complex upon oxygenation with fresh notes of vanilla. A great balance between tannins, acidity and freshness, structure and a well-tamed power.

M: 75% • CF: 25%

### Vintage 1995

Intense and shiny purple color. Nose of black truffle, vanilla, leather, anise. Supple body, opening up after oxygenation on notes of black fruits, balsamic. The tannins have soften to become creamier and more silky and fresh over time. A classic Couvent in a warm vintage.

M: 75% • CF: 25%

### Vintage 1982

Robe evolving from purple to ruby with slightly more color evolution than other vintages of Couvent in the 80s. Very cabernet nose, open and spicy, lightly red fruits, vanilla. Opulent, rich body with affirmed tannins over fresh leather, cigar box, cedar and vanilla notes. Long and saline finale. Overall balance despite a warm vintage.

M: 75% • CF: 25%

### Vintage 1975

Still intense, shiny robe, evolution towards red cherry. Nose discrete at first, fresh, mostly macerated red fruits, showing a spicier, peppery bouquet upon oxygenation. Supple, tender in the mouth, silky and well-blended tannins and well-integrated oak. A touch of acidity energizes the whole at the end of a long finale.

M: 75% • CF: 25%

### Vintage 1961

Shiny and deep crimson color. Complex nose of old cigars, liquorice, strawberry jam, wild berries. Structured and racy, great energy left. Vanilla, nutmeg notes still present in the oaky bouquet. Still energetic even after more than half a century. Will benefit from a short decant for maximum expression.

M: 75% • CF: 25%

### Vintage 1955

Fairly intense, light purple turning to ruby on the rim. Dense and complex nose typical of older vintages, black truffle, black fruit liquor, mint and nutmeg. The wine still has legs and energy, tannins are soft, the finale is long, silky with remaining acidity. Great youth and another few years before reaching its peak.

M: 75% • CF: 25%

### Vintage 1947

Ruby, red cherry color, still shiny and dense. A peppery first nose (Sichuan pepper), anise, kernel fruits, turning to tertiary notes, cigar box and white truffle. Supple yet refined and charming mouth, residual acidity, aromas of blueberries, cooked strawberry, blond tobacco. Still long finale and tannins despite the age. A delicate wine.

M: 75% • CF: 25%



