

Janvier 2022

FIRST CLASS RETURN

PRESSAC

The reproduction of the Pressac label that Jean-François Quenin presents is nearly a hundred years old. It states 'Premier Cru Saint-Émilion'. This was unofficial, but well deserved.





«I am of course applying for the title of Premier Cru in the new classification that was launched recently, even if my chances are slim.»

Jean-François Quenin

As Jean-François Quenin says with a smile and a wink: 'I am of course applying for the title of Premier Cru in the new classification that was launched recently, even if my chances are slim.' In fact, there is no need. In our hearts (and on our palates), Pressac has long been a Premier Cru. Pressac was named as such on its label a hundred years ago, long before Saint-Émilion had its own official classification (which was not created until 1955).

The fact that Pressac is now at least unofficially part of the cream of Saint-Émilion's crop is primarily due to its industrious owner. Jean-François Quenin took over Pressac in 1997, and transformed and generally overhauled virtually everything. 90% of the vines were replaced, the chateau dating from the second half of the 19th century was renovated in line with old plans, new winery facilities were built, and much more. However, Pressac is also a wine estate with top-quality soils in an exceptional location, a true chateau overlooking a hill bedecked with vines, an estate with an incredibly long history.

'We have looked through and studied files dating back as far as the 15th century. Winegrowing was going on here even then', the chateau owner explains. The English army's surrender was signed here in 1453 after the Battle of Castillon, bringing an end to the Hundred Years' War between England and France. In 1730, Pressac was taken over by nobleman Vassal de Montviel, originally from Cahors. He planted a grape variety from his native land – Auxerrois (now known as Malbec), which enjoyed a career as 'Noir de Pressac' and was the most widespread high-quality variety on the right bank up until the phylloxera crisis.

Pressac is a very special wine: powerful, full-bodied and well structured, yet always juicy and crisp. It is extremely precisely made, matures for a very long time and then develops huge aromatic complexity, as currently being illustrated by the 2001 and 2002 vintages, which are a long



way from passing their peak. As previously explained, this is firstly due to the exceptional hillside soils, which lay fallow until Jean-François took over the estate due to the difficulty of cultivating them. To enable the steepest plots to be planted, five hectares had to be laboriously terraced. But Pressac is becoming even better and more precise. The two recently finished fermenting rooms with twelve smaller tanks will enable harvests to be macerated separately by plot in future.