

PRESS KIT 2013



Commanderie du Bontemps

MEDOC · GRAVES · SAUTERNES · BARSAC

Emmanuelle Ponsan Dantin

Mob. +33 (0)6 76 25 93 61

emmanuellecommanderie@orange.fr

La Commanderie du Bontemps

38 rue Ferrère · 33000 Bordeaux · France

Tel. +33 (0)5 56 30 38 38

Fax. +33 (0)5 56 52 64 21

www.commanderiedubontemps.com

commanderiedubontemps@orange.fr

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INTRODUCTION



Commanderie du Bontemps

MEDOC · GRAVES · SAUTERNES · BARSAC

"Along the left bank of the Garonne River and Gironde Estuary, from Langon to the Pointe de Grave, **stretches a region blessed by the gods.**

In the Médoc, Graves de Bordeaux, Sauternes and Barsac, over the course of centuries, **in a gently undulating landscape,** a marvellous and extensive winegrowing area gradually became established.

Some of the world's finest wines are now produced here.

Their names, dispersed along our "chateaux road", are an absolute delight for visitors.

The history of wine has coexisted with that of humanity for more than 7 000 years; it is a vital element of our culture and art of living. **Each wine is in itself a real universe.**

Every detail is held within a bottle: geography and history, cultivated fruit, climate, soil type, tradition, skill, as well as **friendship and the pleasure of sharing.**

The goal of **the Commanderie du Bontemps** is to open up this universe and keep it alive. For more than half a century, it has striven to present and promote its land, its wines, and **reveal the true spirit of the people behind the scenes here."**

PRESENTATION



The **Commanderie du Bontemps** de Médoc et des Graves, de Sauternes et Barsac is one of France's oldest and largest wine brotherhoods. It **regroups 315 members** from the most acclaimed domains and chateaux of Bordeaux's Left Bank, as well as from key businesses in the Bordeaux wine industry, which are the region's Wine Trade Companies and Brokerage Firms.

With a forward-looking approach and openness to the rest of the world, the Commanderie organises throughout the year numerous meetings, receptions, investiture ceremonies and Extraordinary Chapters held in the winegrowing area or far beyond the frontiers of our region, and annual prestige events, such as **the Fête de la Fleur, the Ban du Millésime, the Fête des Vendanges...**

During these events or at the occasion of extraordinary chapters, every year the Commanderie du Bontemps welcomes into its Brotherhood several dozens of new Honorary Commandeurs. Whether famous or unknown, they all have a passion for these wines to which they swear loyalty. They must be sponsored by one or several full-members of the Brotherhood and after the investiture ceremony become true ambassadors for our Médoc, Graves, Sauternes and Barsac wines, as the appointment decree clearly states. **Since its revival in 1949**, the Commanderie de Bontemps has inducted several tens of thousand Honorary Commandeurs all over the world.

"Anywhere and in presence of whomever", as the investiture ritual states, the Brotherhood represents, celebrates and defends, not only wine but also the same values with which it is closely linked: friendship, cheerfulness and loyalty to our land.

The activities of the Commanderie du Bontemps de Médoc et Graves – Sauternes et Barsac do not stop at France's own frontiers. Via the "**Grand Conseil du Vin de Bordeaux**", established at its own initiative to federate all wine brotherhoods of the region, it is in contact with "Commanderies de Bordeaux" throughout the world. At present, there are **70 Commanderies worldwide**: in the USA, Canada, Japan, Senegal, Great Britain, Belgium, Switzerland, Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Brazil... where they bring together numerous important figures who all share a passion for our wines.

HISTORY

The Commanderie du Bontemps is now the custodian of several centuries-old traditions.

But first some history... During the Middle Ages, a group of monks established a church at Benon, near Saint-Laurent Médoc and then some time later a second in Arcins.

Vine growing, winemaking, maturation and wine sales would provide the main source of revenue for this group of soldier-monks and peasants. Not satisfied with dealing solely with their own affairs, they advised, assisted and defended winegrowers in the neighbouring villages of Margaux, Soussans, Avensan, Moulis... and played an essential role in the life of the region.

The current organisation of the Commanderie only dates from just after the Second World War, but this association has retained the same outlook as its predecessors who founded this brotherhood initially. In 1959, the Graves brotherhood decided to merge with that of the Médoc to form a single "Commanderie". In the same year, the Commanderie du Bontemps de Sauternes et Barsac was inaugurated with our support. 24th June 2000 is the date when the Commanderie du Bontemps de Médoc et des Graves and the Commanderie du Bontemps de Sauternes et Barsac merged to form one single and united association representing winegrowers based along the entire the Left Bank of the Garonne River and Gironde Estuary.

We mention with caution the name of our great ancestor, Jean-Odule Paulin d'Esquet, because unfortunately all we really know about him has been passed down over the centuries by word of mouth. It is said that towards the ninth century he invented the special, small wooden bowl, named of course in Gascon the "desquet" after the inventor himself, and in French the "Bontemps", in which cellar masters beat egg whites to be used for fining and clarifying wine.



THE SYMBOLS



The ornamental clasp

It is the symbol of the Bontemps. It bears the initials of the Commanderie encircling the "desquet".
It embellishes the robe worn by all members of the Brotherhood.
It is presented to all Honorary Commandeurs at the end of the investiture ceremony.

The Bontemps

The "Bontemps", written as one word of course... was an essential piece of equipment for the winemaker, small and simple to use, it is now the emblem of the Commanderie du Bontemps. Our headdress is inspired by this small bowl: a Bordeaux-coloured velvet cap for the Médoc and Graves, golden-yellow coloured velvet for Sauternes and Barsac, to recall the wood tinged by new wine and the touch of white organdie represents the snowy whiteness of beaten egg whites.

Our robe is a simplified version of the ceremonial garment worn by the monks in medieval times. Full pleats of Bordeaux-coloured velvet are embellished by an epaulette, which is green for members from the Médoc and Sauternes, green and gold for members from the Graves. The ornamental clasp that holds the epaulette in place shows the Brotherhood's emblem, the "Bontemps", and bears the insignia of the Order around it.



ANNUAL EVENTS

Saint Vincent's Day

Deacon and martyr who lived during the 4th century, Vincent of Zaragoza is the patron saint of winegrowers and commemorated on 22nd January. Saint-Vincent's Day is one of the three major annual gatherings of the Commanderie. The location varies from year to year, either in the Médoc, Graves, Sauternes, or Barsac, or even in Bordeaux, the regional capital of the Left Bank Appellations. Always a convivial and welcoming celebration, Saint Vincent's Day brings together the people who work all year long in vineyards, wine storehouses, fermenting rooms, in various parts of wine estates, in wine trade companies and brokerage firms. First of all, mass is celebrated by the Archbishop of Bordeaux, Grand Chaplain of the Commanderie and is followed by an investiture ceremony to honour some well-known figures. A lunch reception brings together between 600 and 1 000 people in a most festive atmosphere! The Saint Vincent's Day will be held in Bordeaux Sunday, January 13, 2013.

The Ban du Millésime

First held in 2000, this celebration is our "newest". An occasion not to be missed, it is now one of the Commanderie's keynote events. Initiated by and for wine merchants who are members of the Commanderie and organised in collaboration with the Union des Grands Crus, the Ban du Millésime, held during the Primeurs tasting week, is an opportunity for leading Bordeaux Wine Trade companies to invite their customers and friends. Several estate owners join them to present the new vintage to French and international journalists during a dinner, which is always held in a prestigious setting in Bordeaux. The Ban du Millésime will be held Wednesday April 10, 2013 at the CAPC Museum of Modern Art in Bordeaux.

ANNUAL EVENTS

Vinexpo Asia-Pacific

As an opening event to Vinexpo Asia Pacific, held in Hong Kong every two years, the Commanderie now organises its customary and prestigious inauguration Gala dinner at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Hong Kong. In 2010, the Commanderie du Bontemps' Gala dinner took place on Tuesday May 29. More than 600 guests from all over the world came to taste the fine wines of the Médoc, Graves, Sauternes and Barsac in a cheerful, relaxed atmosphere, where everyone was delighted to meet again. The menu concocted by the chef of the Grand Hyatt Hotel was comprised of french dishes, finely balanced to match the qualities of these Left Bank wines.

Fête de la Fleur

In 1950, the Commanderie was still in its early stages and created a springtime festival. The traditional wine-related events, Saint Vincent's Day and the Ban des Vendanges, already existed but just needed to be consolidated. This springtime festival rapidly became the flower festival and in 1959, when the Graves brotherhood joined together with that of the Médoc, the Fête de la Fleur was established with the support of the Commanderie du Bontemps de Sauternes et Barsac. But why dedicate a festival to a flower and to which flower? It could only be for the abundant, but discreet vine flower! Winegrowers anxiously wait for these flowers to appear and watch over them closely, because the quality of flowering brings hope for the future harvest, both in terms of quality and quantity. These tiny white flowers blossom after those of the acacia tree, with its large, loose bunches. The wood of the acacia tree is used for making vine stakes. Winegrowers also observe the date when white lilies bloom, using an empirical indicator to set the harvest date. Modern technology has enabled us to check the verity of this ancient custom of harvesting 100 days after the mid-stage of the vine flowering and 90 days after the flowering of the white lily. These days analysis to check the ripeness of various grape varieties allows these dates to be modified slightly. This is why winegrowers, wine merchants and brokers from the Médoc, Graves, Sauternes and Barsac are delighted to meet with their wine-loving friends at the end of the month of June, whilst the vine is in the process of flowering, to celebrate this tiny, sweet-smelling white blossom on which they pin all their hopes for the future harvest. These days, with more than 1 500 guests, the Fête de la Fleur has become a keynote event for wine enthusiasts from all corners of the world who, for a prestige evening, share their passion for the fine wines of the Médoc and Graves, Sauternes and Barsac. Many Michelin-starred chefs, film and pop stars, as well as international VIPs have already honoured this world-renowned festival with their presence. Fête de la Fleur will be held at Château Lagrange, in Saint Estephe, on Thursday June 23, as an occasion to conclude Vinexpo.

ANNUAL EVENTS

The Médoc Marathon

Co-founder and leading partner of the Médoc Marathon in terms of time and importance of means invested, the Commanderie du Bontemps provides its backing and assistance for this major Médoc event, which every year welcomes 8 500 runners and involves the efforts of 2 300 volunteers. Initially launched in 1984 by a group of marathon enthusiasts, the "Médoc", as it is nicknamed, has become a key event on the marathon runners'calendar. For the organisers, this race is based upon four fundamental and inseparable elements: Health, Sport, Conviviality, Fun. Even though it is a fun event, the "Médoc" is a real marathon consisting of 42.195 officially-measured kilometres. Its excellent organisation and the beauty of its course give it the merit of featuring each year in the top group of international marathons, with an increasing number of foreigners present. In one single course, this Marathon winds around a loop on a circuit of stunning beauty taking runners through more than 50 wine estates. The Marathon du Médoc will be held on Saturday September 7.

The Fête des Vendanges

Previously named the "Ban des Vendanges", the Fête des Vendanges takes place every year in the month of September. The origin of the "Ban des Vendanges" (Harvest date Declaration) is principally a feudal custom. It was a right applied by Lords who, by this measure, protected a modest financial income. During the three main centuries of the Middle Ages (13th, 14th and 15th) the vine belonged to the winegrowers, more precisely to the "vine worker". The land owners gave up in "quasi-ownership" their vine growing land to a technically developed workforce, retaining for themselves a maximum of a quarter or fifth of the harvest. Originally, the aim of the "Ban des Vendanges" was to assist and verify the distribution of the harvest. A date was stringently set for the start of the harvests, which is no longer current practice today. Without the existence of the harvest date declaration, the grapes would have been gathered before reaching a point of ideal ripeness, in order to cash in as early as possible the value of the harvest and the prestige of Bordeaux wines would have rapidly disappeared. From this part of our history which stretches from the Middle Ages to the storming of the Bastille, we can find two extremely differing dates for the beginning of harvests in the Gironde: 9th September and 20th October. Such differences in date show the vigilance of this winegrowing governing body with regards to the various stages of ripeness for the grapes. These days, the prefectural authority no longer sets the date for harvests to begin, but the Commanderie du Bontemps is keen to honour this initial stage in the life of a vintage by holding its own Harvest Festival. In 2013, the Fête des Vendanges will held at Domaine de Chevalier, on Saturday, September 14.



THE LEFT BANK BORDEAUX CUP

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The "20 sur Vin" (first name) wine tasting competition for wine-appreciation clubs of leading business schools and universities was first launched in 2002. Multiple-choice questionnaires, presentations and blind-tasting tests decide between the contestants. The Ecole Centrale, ENA, ENGREF, ENS, ESCP-EAP, ESSEC, HEC, INA, the Ecole des Mines, Polytechnique, Sciences-Po and the University of Paris Dauphine, as well as Oxford and Cambridge Universities have already taken part in this competition, which has become a key event for top students who are also wine lovers. In 2011 the competition took on even greater international status by opening up the contest to universities from other European countries, North America and Asia and become The Left Bank Bordeaux Cup. The competition carry out using the well-known concept of the America's Cup: challengers from North America, Asia and Europe come to pit their skills against contestants from the best wine-appreciation clubs of leading, French universities and business schools at a final which will take place at Château Lafite Rothschild on Friday June 14th, as a preliminary event of VINEXPO Bordeaux.

ANNUAL EVENTS 2013



SUNDAY 13TH JANUARY

Saint Vincent's Day in Bordeaux, with the presence of the Archbishop of Bordeaux and Grand Chaplain of the Commanderie du Bontemps, His Grace Jean-Pierre Ricard.

TUESDAY 22TH JANUARY

The Left Bank Bordeaux Cup.
Selection of the American team. French Consulate in New York.

SATURDAY 23RD FEBRUARY

The Left Bank Bordeaux Cup.
Selection of the Hong Kong team. Grand Hyatt Hotel Hong Kong.

TUESDAY 26TH FEBRUARY

Selection of the Chinese team Park Hyatt hotel Shanghai.

WEDNESDAY 10TH APRIL

Ban du Millésime. An evening reception
for the Primeurs week, at the CAPC Museum of Modern Art in Bordeaux.

FRIDAY 14TH JUNE

The Left Bank Bordeaux Cup. The final, held at Château Lafite Rothschild.

THURSDAY 20TH JUNE

Fête de la Fleur at Château Lagrange in Saint-Estèphe.

CHAPTER



FRANÇOIS-XAVIER BORIE

Château Grand Puy Lacoste

PATRICK MAROTEAUX

Château Branaire-Ducru

PAUL-HENRY DE BOURNAZEL

Château de Malle

JULIE GONET MEDEVILLE

Château Respide-Médeville

PHILIPPE CASTEJA

Maison Borie-Manoux

GEORGES PAULI

Sogevignes

ROBERT COTTIN

Maison Dubos Frères

PHILIBERT PERRIN

Château Carbonnieux

THIERRY GARDINIER

Château Phélan-Ségur

JEAN-GUILLAUME PRATS

Château Cos d'Estournel

BERNARD HARAMBOURE

Bureau de Courtage

Bernard Haramboure

VERONIQUE SANDERS VAN BEEK

Château Haut-Bailly

PHILIPPE TAPIE

Haut-Médoc Sélection

FREDERIC DE LUZE

LD Vins

CELINE VILLARS FOUBET

Château Chasse Spleen



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Château Haut-Lagrange

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Château Le Tuquet

JEAN-LOUIS TRIAUD

Héraut
Château Gloria

XAVIER DE PONTAC

Vinothécaire Adjoint (Sauternes)
Château de Myrat