



PESSAC-LEOGNAN

GRAND VIN DE GRAVES



2019: STILL MAKING

history

2019 represents my fifteenth vintage at Château Brown!

For fifteen years I have been breathing, living, sweating, worrying about and resonating with this magnificent vineyard. I have learned, heard, felt and resonated with great things, and gone through every emotion known to man except for one: doubt.

In 2005, my first vintage, I was delighted and proud to be embarking on this wonderful adventure.

In 2009, I was driven by excitement as the harvests approached.

In 2010, I was overexcited from the moment the first bunches of grapes were cut.

Then came 2013 and June rains, where modesty was essential.

I was delighted to see the arrival of 2015 (magical in Pessac-Léognan), and what can I say about 2016, a euphoric vintage.

However, nature always has the upper hand, and turned my life upside down in 2017 with the morning frosts on 27 April. And if that were not enough, 13 months later I was left feeling saddened and resigned on 26 May 2018 when my vineyards were bruised by a violent hailstorm. Summer passed and healed the wounds, and in September my grapes once again had smiles on their faces.

*If I had to sum up my fifteen years of work at Brown, I would choose the word "humility", as nature is generous, fickle, savage, sometimes stubborn, but always reigning supreme. **Working with nature provides wisdom.***

Here at Brown I make wines in my own image, wines that respect biodiversity and offer the flavours of their terroir, and above all wines that I like to share.

Jean-Christophe MAU

John-Lewis BROWN

Château Barrière was renamed by its new owner, John-Lewis Brown, a rich merchant originally from Scotland.

This epicurean had two passions, for wine and for painting. He was determined to transform his Léognan estate into somewhere as beautiful as it was productive. He built Château Brown's iconic chartreuse house.

During this period the estate spanned 150 hectares, 25 of which were vineyards occupying a single stretch of land between Villenave d'Ornon and Léognan.



Four owners followed in turn from the late 19th century through to the mid-20th century, and production volumes steadily grew.

*1881 - Mr. Jean BLANC
(40 barrels)*

*End 19th century - notary SESBOUÉ
(80 barrels)*

1908 - Amédée CARBONNEL

*1922 - Maurice GARDÈRE
(100 barrels)*

Mr. CHASSAING

The 1841 edition of renowned wine journal Le Producteur named the Brown estate as one of Léognan's top five crus, a list that also included 'Bailly', which subsequently became Haut-Bailly.

Middle Ages

The first traces of vines on the lands of the northern Graves, the oldest part of the Bordeaux wine region.

1750

1831

1876

1841

1881

Antoine BARRIÈRE

Until the French Revolution, estates bore the names of the families that owned them.

Until the late 18th century, Château Barrière (named after Bordeaux bailiff Antoine Barrière) covered 65 hectares of wood and vines, although the latter only occupied a small area.

Brown's dovecote dates from this era.

Jean-Baptiste Edouard ROUX

John Lewis Brown parted with the estate, selling it to a wealthy lawyer called Jean-Baptiste Edouard Roux.

Mr. CHASSAING & the Countess of SERRES

A merging of two family crus expanded the estate to the size of 200 hectares, although with barely 10 hectares of vines in 1870 as a result of phylloxera attacks.

Brown's vineyards managed to avoid total destruction by the disease, making it an exception in Bordeaux and offering remarkable evidence of the quality of its terroir.



The name « BROWN »

is associated with 19th-century art



John Lewis BROWN 1829 - 1890

The grandson of Château Brown's founder, also called John-Lewis Brown, was born in Bordeaux in **1829**.

This celebrated animal painter enjoyed fame across Europe. He spent part of his childhood at Château Brown, in the fashionable equestrian and art circles where his family moved. A childhood that would shape his work...

CLASSIFICATION

as a Graves Premier Cru

In 1922, Charles Cocks and Edouard Ferret's volume :
"Bordeaux and its Wines Classified in Order of Merit", stated that :

"Brown-Léognan's wines are remarkable by their finesse and very distinctive nose. They are classified as Graves Premiers Crus and their reputation grows every day. They keep and improve in bottle for a very long time."

50 hectares of vines were cultivated carefully and "the recently constructed vat houses and cellars are some of the most beautiful in the land."

At the time, Château Brown was one of the region's three largest estates, alongside Olivier and La Louvière.



In 1884, at the Amsterdam International Exhibition, Château Brown won a gold medal alongside prestigious Bordeaux Grands Crus Classés: Château Mouton, Château Leoville-Poyferré, Cantenac-Brown, Pontet Canet... Other gold medals followed at the universal and international exhibitions in Liège in 1905 and Bordeaux in 1907.

An early 20th-century label mentions the classification of Premier Cru, and the three gold medals won are proudly displayed beneath a picture of the estate.

In 1938, André Bonnel bought the estate of 200 hectares. It was to remain in his family for three generations. After the Second World War, the estate, and the vineyard especially, lost ground to urban planning. It was reduced in size to around forty hectares, before disappearing completely in the 1950s (frost disaster in 1956 and government subsidies for uprooting). Brown's vineyards then fell into decline, and were not included in the 1953 or 1959 Graves Crus Classés classifications.



The label changed radically in the 1940s, when it was reduced and refined. A red and gold shield replaced the picture of the estate, and the phrase 'bottled at the chateau' was written across the bottle



In 1974, his son Jean Claude Bonnel replanted some fifteen hectares of vines followed by another eight, and ran them alongside several hectares of apple orchards.

A picture of the estate reappeared on the label during this period. This image of the estate would be further simplified from the 1982 vintage onwards and used for nearly 20 years, up until the 2000 vintage.

Following the 1950s classification, all mention of Graves Premier Cru had to be removed from the bottle, leaving just the Graves appellation.



It was not until the creation of the Pessac-Léognan appellation in 1987 that the wording Pessac-Léognan and Grand Vin de Graves would appear on the label, from the 1986 vintage onwards.







RENAISSANCE OF THE ESTATE

Bernard BARTHE

In 1994, Bernard Barthe, a businessman in the grain industry, bought Château Brown to focus his efforts entirely on vines, and immediately began key work, including a replanting programme. The apple trees and 75% of the vineyard were uprooted, then every plot was drained and replanted. These decisions would have a considerable impact on the future of the vineyard and the quality of its wines.

Brown's wines were gradually restored to their former glory.

Bernard Barthe made very few changes to Jean Claude Bonnel's label, except for the addition of a golden border around the entire design.

It was not until the 2001 vintage that a new, modernised and stylised illustration would appear, which was retained until the 2015 vintage.

Jean Christophe MAU

In 2004, Bernard Barthe sold Château Brown to the Mau and Dirkzwager family. Jean Christophe Mau took over the reins of the estate and continued the vineyard expansion and reconstruction work.

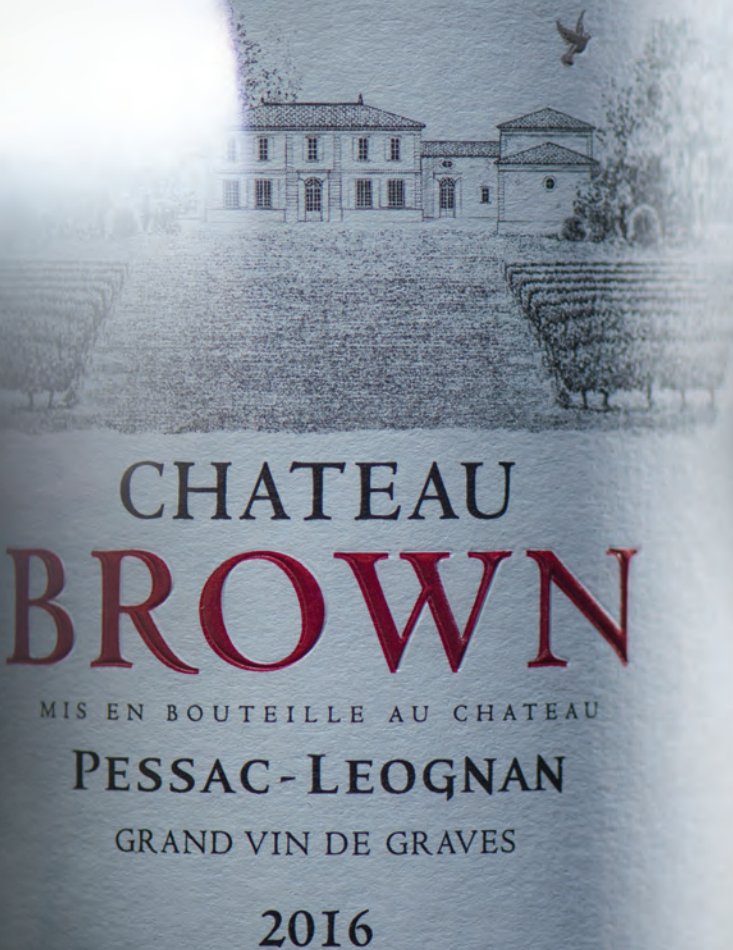
The focus is on producing grapes of high quality. He is present at every stage in the winemaking process, runs his vineyards to exacting standards, and is committed to producing precise, generous, consistent wines.

2005 was Jean-Christophe Mau's first vintage. The label was refined to make the brand easier to read. The gold border was replaced with a red frame and the word 'CHATEAU' was written in black. All mandatory information was moved to a back label.

An attractive red curve was added above the name "BROWN" in 2006. Other changes were also made: the label size was reduced, glossy paper was used, and the red border was removed.

From 2009 onwards, the reference to Pessac-Léognan was printed in black, leaving only the name of the chateau in red.





2016, is an exceptional cuvée. It was only natural that the setting where this great wine was produced and aged should evolve. All the elements of the packaging changed but the most important things remained.

« Brown » logo stays as the most distinctive element of the packaging. The label is larger in height; it enables the picture of the estate to be enlarged, with the chateau surrounded by the property's grapevines, woods and gardens. To testify of the estate's rich history, it still appears the Chartreuse and the Dovecote on the packaging and the capsule has been modified and now crimped with a logo with the following inscription: "Chateau Brown since 1795".



A discreet dove on the label reminds that the biodiversity present on the estate is preserved in every action taken on the vineyard. The fauna and flora are perfectly integrated in this ecosystem where 45% of the 60-hectare estate is not cultivated.



It is also from this 2016 vintage that will be on the back-label the mention of HEV (High Environmental Value) certification, which has been obtained in January 2018. To obtain it, we had to adhere to very strict specifications regulated by the French State, relating to biodiversity preservation, plant protection strategy and fertilisation management.

A "reward" for all that has been undertaken by Jean-Christophe Mau, by leading a sustainable viticulture, with greater respect for the environment.



Photo credit: Jean-Bernard NADEAU

CHATEAU
BROWN

PESSAC-LEOGNAN

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