



**CHÂTEAU BEYCHEVELLE**

*Cru Classé*



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**”THE VERSAILLES OF THE MEDOC”**



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**Château Beychevelle**, the "Versailles of the Médoc", could only be expected to produce excellent wine. This outstanding 90-hectare vineyard, planted on deep, Garonne-gravel soil, has a winegrowing tradition dating from the Middle Ages. More modern selection, winemaking, and ageing techniques also contribute towards the finished wine's perfection.

Château Beychevelle is a Saint-Julien Great Growth, combining elegance with character and finesse with balance. Its lovely, ruby-red colour, fine structure, and subtle bouquet have earned this wine a high reputation all over the world. Château Beychevelle has been granted the double accreditation of "Terra Vitis" and "Sustainable Viticulture".

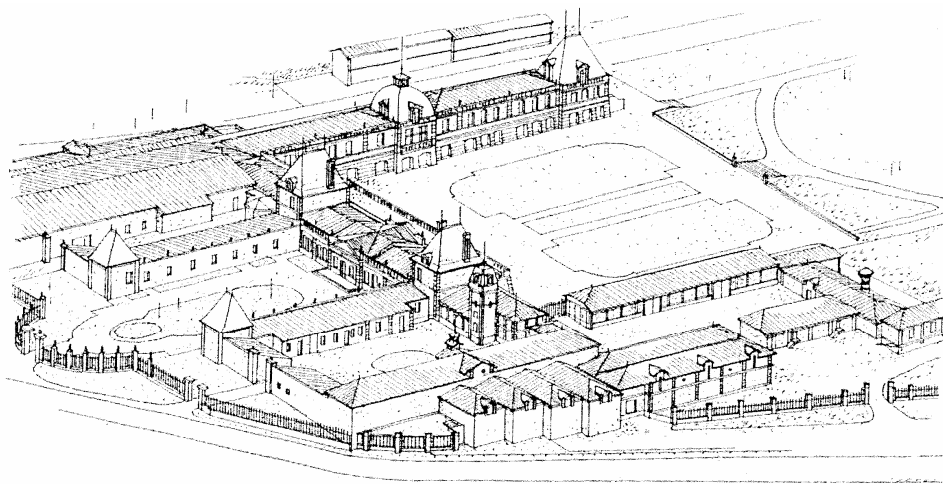
**Beychevelle** is called the "Versailles of the Médoc" as a tribute to the château's elegant classical architecture and French gardens.

The château's character has been tempered by three centuries of history in the hands of several powerful families, influential in the economic, political, and cultural life of the Bordeaux area, and even further afield.

In the reign of the French King Henri III, Beychevelle belonged to the Dukes of Epernon, starting with the first duke, Jean-Louis Nogaret de la Valette, Grand-Admiral of France and Governor of Provence, then of Guyenne. We can appreciate how powerful he was from the fact that ships sailing in front of his estate had to lower their sails as a sign of respect. This is the origin of the name "Beychevelle", which means « Baisse Voile » (lower the sails).

**Château Beychevelle's** emblem, a ship with a griffon figurehead and a lowered sail, was sculpted in bronze in 1989 by Roberto Gnozzi, Professor at the Rome Academy of Fine Arts. The figurehead is especially appropriate as, according to Greek mythology, a griffon was the guardian of Dionysos' wine goblet.

**Château Beychevelle** is now owned by **Grands Millésimes de France**, a subsidiary of the **AZUR/GMF**, **SUNTORY** and **ETHIAS** groups.





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## **I - THE GRANDS MILLESIMES DE FRANCE COMPANY**

The French mutual insurance company **GMF**, the **SUNTORY** company, one of the most important players in today's international wine and spirits market and the Belgian mutual insurance company **ETHIAS**, are the three shareholders of **GRANDS MILLESIMES DE FRANCE** (respectively 53 %, 37 % and 10 % of the shares), a joint stock company with a capital of 89 128 338 € established in 1988.

**GRANDS MILLESIMES DE FRANCE's** function is to co-ordinate the running of several prestigious wine businesses (winegrowing estates and/or wine merchant firms) located in the area of production. Their philosophy is to strive for ever-increasing quality despite the prevailing context of looking for increased yields and bigger turnover. Each subsidiary is managed autonomously by a person who is from the region and whose technical skill is above reproach.

The role of **GRANDS MILLESIMES DE FRANCE** is to mobilize and co-ordinate the human, technical and commercial resources of the various companies. It has been managed from the very beginning by **Aymar de BAILLENX**.

**GRANDS MILLESIMES DE FRANCE** own and manage :

\* **Château BEYCHEVELLE**, a great growth Saint-Julien (90 hectares of vines), run by **Philippe BLANC**, agricultural engineer.

\* **Château BEAUMONT**, a cru bourgeois Supérieur Haut-Médoc (114 hectares of vines), managed by **Etienne PRIOU**, who has 15 years' experience in the wine-growing business.

\* **BARRIERE FRERES**, a Bordeaux négociant firm located in Ludon-Médoc, run by **Aymar de BAILLENX**, President and **Laurent EHRMANN**, Managing Director.

\* **VINS-FINS.COM**, one of the largest mail order wine companies in France.

\* **The IMPERIAL HETSZŐLŐ ESTATE** in Tokaj, Hungary (47 hectares), directed by Dr. **Tibor KOVACS**, agricultural engineer.



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## II - AN ESTATE BELONGING TO POWERFUL MEN

Beychevelle's history is a long, rich one. It has always been an estate owned by powerful men.

### THE FEUDAL PERIOD

As far back as the Middle Ages, when the land belonged to the **Counts de Foix-Candale**, the wine of Beychevelle was shipped to England, Flanders and the Germanic countries from the port at the bottom of the gardens.

The Bishop **François de Foix-Candale** had the château built in 1565. His niece, wife of **Jean-Louis de Nogaret de la Valette**, first **Duke d'Epéron**, *mignon* of King Henri III and governor of the province of Guyenne, inherited the château.

Their son, **Bernard de Nogaret de la Valette**, built the château's central part in 1644 and consolidated the vineyard.

In 1661, **Henri de Foix-Candale**, Duke of Randan, took over. He was the happy owner until 1701.

### THE BIRTH OF A GREAT GROWTH

The estate then came into the hands of **Jean-Baptiste d'Abadie**, Baron of Lamarque and Beychevelle and President of the Bordeaux Parliament. He replanted the vineyard after the terrible 1709 frost.

His nephew, **Etienne-François de Brassier**, also Baron of Lamarque and Beychevelle and Parliamentary Councillor, inherited the domain in 1717. A lover of wine, he brought the vineyard up to top form and made maximum use of the château's location along the estuary. He is responsible for building the port at Beychevelle.



Jean-Louis Nogaret de la Valette  
First Duke d'Epéron



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The new Baron de Beychevelle, **François-Armand de Brassier**, son of Etienne-François, owned the estate for nearly 40 years. He was responsible for partially rebuilding the château, giving it the appearance which can be admired to this day. In 1787, the château came into the possession of François-Armand's sister, **Delphine-Catherine de Brassier**, Baroness of Budos and Beychevelle. She somehow managed to maintain the estate in good condition throughout the French Revolution.

Her daughter, **Marguerite de Budos**, Marquise of Saint-Hérem, inherited the estate in 1792. She fought to keep hold of Beychevelle but had to sell in 1801 to shipowner **Jacques Conte**.

### RENEWED QUALITY AND INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

More concerned with his ships than his wine château, Monsieur Conte was not actively involved with running the estate. He sold it in 1825 to **Pierre-François Guestier**, a Bordeaux wine merchant, French peer and mayor of Saint-Julien. Guestier undertook to give Beychevelle back the fine reputation it had at the beginning of the century. His efforts were rewarded with a gold medal in 1866.

In 1875, his heirs sold the estate to a rich Paris banker, **Armand Heine**, cousin of the famous German poet, **Heinrich Heine**. **Heine** built the château's north wing and continued his predecessor's efforts to improve quality and replanted the vineyard after phylloxera struck.

Armand Heine died in 1883. His wife, **Marie-Amélie Kohn**, from Louisiana, went on to look after Beychevelle. An excellent manager, she took admirable care of the vineyard. Madame Kohn was also a philanthropist and built the Marie-Amélie clinic. She also restored the chapel at Château Beychevelle. In 1890, her daughter, **Marie-Louise**, married **Charles Achille-Fould**, a member of the French parliament, who took over managing the château. Despite the many financial difficulties of the early 20th century, he further enhanced Beychevelle's reputation and took advantage of strong demand and high prices after the First World War.

After Charles' death, his son **Armand** gradually became director of the estate while his mother devoted her time to social activities. As a French minister in the early thirties, **Armand Achille-Fould** was well-placed to cope with the world crisis. After the war, and helped by his second wife, Elisabeth de Foucaud, Armand selected a dynamic team of workers and received precious advice from **Professor Emile Peynaud**.



François de Foix  
Candale



6  
Pierre-François Guestier



Armand Heine



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Armand's son, **Aymar Achille-Fould**, took over in 1970. French Postmaster General and member of Parliament, he moved the phone book printing facility from the Paris area to Saint-Laurent-Médoc, thus creating 300 jobs. Following Professor Peynaud's advice, he decided to create a second wine in 1974 : **Amiral de Beychevelle**.

The huge cost of running the estate prompted him to look for a business partner to invest in Beychevelle. In 1984, the **GMF group** took a minority shareholding in the château and bought 89 % of the estate when **Aymar Achille-Fould** died in 1986. The remaining 11 % belong to the pension fund of the **SOCIETE GENERALE** bank.

In 1988, the **GMF group** joined forces with the Japanese **SUNTORY** company to create **GRANDS MILLESIMES DE FRANCE**.



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### III - “Terra Vitis” and “Sustainable Viticulture”

#### **Château Beychevelle has been granted the double accreditation of “Terra Vitis” and “Sustainable Viticulture”**

Careful monitoring, observation and care of the environment are mottos which particularly concern Château Beychevelle. The ownership together with the château’s dynamic management team have implemented new working methods to respect the principles of “Terra Vitis”.

Today this double accreditation, proudly gained at the end of 2005, reinforces our château principles to make all possible efforts towards quality and environmental-friendly production methods.

#### **“Terra Vitis” and “Sustainable Viticulture” guaranties :**

- to provide high quality grapes produced with environmental-friendly methods, reducing as much as possible the use of chemicals in order to be harm-free for the environment and human health.
- **to justify various treatments which take into account natural factors and the use of biological methods every time possible.**
- to keep a track-record in the vineyard and the cellar to respect the Terra Vitis chart and to be able to answer any technical enquiry by our customers.

#### **Examples of actions made by Château Beychevelle :**

- all waste disposals are collected in official receptacles with traceability,
- dramatic reduction of use of chemical herbicides replaced by mechanical weed control and permanent grass between the rows,
- plantation of new hedges to favour natural fauna harbours,
- treatment of all effluents (from vineyard or from cellar activities) with no disposal in the environment

*Terra Vitis*  
Observer, respecter pour produire



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## IV - TECHNICAL INFORMATION

### CHÂTEAU BEYCHEVELLE Cru Classé - Appellation Saint-Julien

**Vineyard area :** 90 ha.

**Soil :** deep Garonne gravel

**Grape varieties :**

62% Cabernet Sauvignon

31% Merlot

5% Cabernet Franc

2% Petit Verdot



**Vinification :** traditional

**Ageing :** 18 months in oak barrels, of which half are renewed each year

**Total production :**  
40 000 to 50 000 cases

**Distribution :**  
Through the Bordeaux shippers



Saint-Julien  
**Amiral de Beychevelle**  
Second wine from selected vats

**Other labels**

**Distribution :** Barrière Frères

Haut-Médoc  
**Brulières de Beychevelle**



Château Beychevelle is member of the « Académie du Vin de Bordeaux » and the « Union des Grands Crus ». The cellars of the château are visited each year by nearly 30 000 people, 30% of whom are foreigners.

*Terra Vitis*

Observer, respecter pour produire



*Château Beychevelle has been granted the accreditation of « Sustainable Viticulture »*

Cellars can be visited all the year with or without appointment from Monday to Friday.

Wine tasting with appointment only.

Open on Saturday from May to September

Tél. (33) (0)5 56 73 38 01 - e-mail : mdv@beychevelle.com