



Press Release
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Fête de la Fleur at Château Malartic-Lagravière

The fabulous 2017 Fête de la Fleur at Château Malartic-Lagravière highlighted the extraordinary energy and 20-year dedication of the Bonnie family in producing this Grand Cru Classé de Graves.

This year, the Bonnie family hosted 1,500 guests in the gardens and vineyards famed for their Grand Cru Classé de Graves at the Château Malartic-Lagravière estate in Léognan, to mark the traditional Fête de la Fleur, with its very exclusive guest list. This occasion is organised in partnership with the Commanderie du Bontemps de Médoc, des Graves, de Sauternes et de Barsac.

Wednesday 21 June, the night of the summer solstice, was exquisite and the festivities magnificent. This prestigious evening, held every odd-numbered year, is the most eagerly-awaited on the wine calendar and closes Vinexpo Bordeaux. Selected guests included top buyers, distributors and international figures from the wine industry.

The Bonnie family, celebrating 20 years at the helm of the estate, went to great lengths to welcome guests to their spectacular property, located on one of the region's most beautiful gravel ridges. The pre-dinner reception and Commanderie du Bontemps induction ceremony took place in the Château gardens, where misters had been installed to provide relief from the heat wave. Some forty high-profile figures had the honour of being inducted into the Commanderie as Commandeurs d'Honneur. They included Lionel Zinsou, former prime minister of Benin, Jean-Marc Janailac, CEO of Air France-KLM, Jon Arvid Rosengren, the World's Best Sommelier, and Burgundy's top winemakers.



Guests were then guided along a pathway through the vines to a splendid 2,250-m² marquee atop the famed gravel ridge, in the heart of the historic Malartic-Lagravière estate.



In their speeches, Alfred-Alexandre Bonnie (who owns the estate with his children), Emmanuel Cruse, head of the Commanderie du Bontemps, and Alain Juppé, former prime minister and mayor of Bordeaux, all made reference to three important anniversaries: 20 years since the Bonnies acquired Malartic-Lagravière, 30 years of the Pessac-Léognan appellation, and 50 years of marriage for Alfred and Michèle Bonnie. It added a special touch to a gala evening that was sumptuous yet relaxed, where the guests clearly delighted in sharing the commitment of a family so passionate about wine.

The menu, devised by Chef Yannick Alleno, whose two French restaurants have earned three Michelin stars and who knows the family and their wines very well, was, quite simply, exceptional: the delicate lobster and caviar *gelée*, served with perfect-temperature magnums of 2007 Malartic white was perhaps the dinner's most spectacular food-wine pairing. Next, with impeccable timing, came lamb served three ways, served with stuffing and paired with a 2004 Pichon Comtesse de Lalande and then a 2000 Malartic red – both superb. For the cheese course, a 1996 Château Margaux, with a wonderful tribute to Paul Pontallier, proved a sublime accompaniment. Finally, the lemon and roasted pineapple pavlova was a beautiful match for the 2013 Château d'Yquem. Art at its best, enjoyed by all!

Since the Fête de la Fleur is first and foremost a celebration of wine, the Bonnies made sure that the wines were properly showcased. Each one was brought out to a specially chosen piece of classical music by composers such as Beethoven, Vivaldi and Handel, performed by the Modigliani Quartet. The marquee itself was dressed by world-renowned Chilean artist Federica Matta, whose design featured four stars around the Malartic-Lagravière emblem, the famous schooner owned by the Count of Malartic, an admiral in the service of Louis XV and owner of the estate in the 18th century.

But there was more art to come. After adjourning to the château gardens with a glass of Laurent-Perrier Cuvée Grand Siècle (the Bonnies acquired the Laurent-Perrier estate in 1997), guests were treated to an exclusive concert by French-Israeli singer Yael Naim. Her hit singles, including Older, Toxic and New Soul, preceded a rendition of Happy Birthday, accompanied by the Modigliani Quartet, and fireworks to celebrate the 20 years since the Bonnies acquired the estate. This glorious evening continued into the early hours with dancing under a giant disco ball suspended in the Malartic sky.



It was a truly memorable evening where wine and food were the stars, and guests were treated to a very special Fête de la Fleur experience.



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