

# FRANCS – COTES DE BORDEAUX

## Main presentation:

Between the Dordogne and the Isle valleys, at about fifty kilometres northeast of Bordeaux, adjoining Saint-Emilion and Castillon La Bataille, the appellation *Francs Côtes de Bordeaux*, covering 500 hectares (1250 acres), gathers 3 areas: Francs, Saint-Cibard and Tayac.

The appellation is one of the smallest and the most east of Bordeaux appellations. Its recognition, with its current delimitations, by the Institute of the Appellations of Controlled Origins, goes back to 1967.

The 80 wine-growers of the appellation produce an average of 30 000 hl a year.

Starting with the vintage 2009, the appellations *Côtes de Francs*, *Côtes de Castillon*, *1ères Côtes de Blaye*, and *1ères Côtes de Bordeaux*, which adopted common specifications, are gathered by the appellation « Côtes de Bordeaux », with a geographical denomination that promotes the character of each area.

This is how, in a new dynamic, is born the appellation « Francs Côtes de Bordeaux » in replacement for « Bordeaux Côtes de Francs ».

## History:

The name of « Côtes de Francs » comes from the beginning of the 6th century. After the battle of Vouillé in 507, Clovis, 1<sup>st</sup> king of the Francs, defeated Alaric II, king of the Visigoths and took over the Aquitaine. The place where settled a detachment from the Franc army was called, in Latin, “Ad francos”, in French «aux francs» which later became Francs.

## Climatology:

Its location implies a continental climate, with more severe winters and warmer summers than in the rest of the department. The hillsides of the appellation, which are among the highest of the Gironde, are mainly facing the east and receive sunshine as soon as the sun is up, which allows the grapes to reach a perfect maturity.

Surrounded by the valleys of the Isle and the Dordogne, where the prevailing winds coming from the west strengthen, the appellation *Francs Côtes de Bordeaux* receives less water than its neighbours.

## Soils:

In the southern-half of the appellation, there is a calcareous soil, coming from rivers, lakes and seas. Those calcareous soils with sandstone and starfish are covered by calcareous molasse called «de l'agenais»; they are warm soils which allow vines to root correctly. In the northern part, the appellation presents calcareous molasse soils called « du fronsadais» with more silt, silica and shales.

## Grapes variety :

There is a majority of merlot grapes (90%), like everywhere else in the Libournais; the vines of the appellation tend to reach maturity a bit late, that is why the cabernet-sauvignon grapes can only ripen correctly on specific plots, the high and sloppy ones with less clay. There is only 5% of this grape variety. The remaining grapes varieties are cabernet franc and malbec. For the white wine, the sémillon grapes are used at 60%, the muscadelle and sauvignon grapes represent 20% each.

## Characteristics of the wines:

The red wines are rich in color, full-bodied and generous. They have a remarkable harmony and fine and delicate tannins.

The nose of young wines has touches of red-fruit which evolve with time into plum and leather aromas. The wines are very pleasant young, but they can also be stored for ageing.

The white wines, vinified in barrels, develop honey, pineapple and citrus fruit aromas. Intense initially, they evolve with volume and elegance.