





# THE LUR SALUCES FAMILY AND THE CHÂTEAU DE FARGUES :

A centuries-old story

For over five centuries, the Lur Saluces family have devoted themselves to producing delicious wines that delight the palates of everyone who loves the golden nectar of Sauternes. This passion, passed down since 1472, has inspired the current generation to open the doors of Château de Fargues to wine lovers from around the world. Seen from the top of a turret, the imposing silhouette of the fortress towers over a path lined with umbrella pines, highlighting the determination of the Lur Saluces family to produce outstanding wines, despite the vagaries of time and history. These precious elixirs are acclaimed by wine connoisseurs and leave a lasting impression.

Since the late 18th century, when the first bottles of Sauternes were produced, the Lur Saluces have made every effort to create a wine like no other in the world, where every vintage is a challenge, a gamble on nature.

« We are fascinated by the eminently civilised vineyard management techniques and the brilliance of this wine, which delights the most discerning palates », Alexandre de Lur Saluces explains.



François Amirault, *Production Manager*, Alexandre & Philippe de Lur Saluces, *Co-Managers*

Fargues wine is full of symbolism, much like human life itself : a celebration of life's most important moments, birthdays and other special occasions. This masterpiece, renowned for its freshness and subtle flavours, is suited to any occasion. Contrary to popular belief, the best time to drink Sauternes is whenever its golden hue in the bottle comes to mind.

Its opulence tells a story of man working in harmony with nature to create something special that would otherwise not exist. It is an extremely arduous task, with each vine producing one glass at most of this nectar. An extravagant risk is taken to reach the much-anticipated moment when Botrytis Cinerea, the fungus responsible for noble rot – intrinsic to the production of Sauternes – transforms the grapes into sweet, aromatic gems. This wine – a living creation – provides a marvellous foil for many dishes, as well as a perfect partner for meditating on the wonders of nature brought to fruition by human expertise.









# THE LUR SALUCES FAMILY : 550 YEARS AT FARGUES

« *Very few of the Bordeaux nobility can still boast, like the Lur Saluces family, of a lineage dating back to the first Capetians. Their past belongs both to the history of France and that of the Sauternes vineyards in the South Gironde.* »<sup>1</sup>

Marguerite Figeac, Professor of History at the University of Bordeaux

<sup>1</sup>From *Yquem to Fargues, The Pursuit of Excellence, the story of a family* by Alexandre de Lur Saluces. Gallimard.







# 1472

*When it all began*



The Lur Saluces saga at Fargues began with the wedding of Pierre de Lur and Isabeau de Montferrand. The love story between a family and their land continues to this day. The Saluces name did not come into the family until 1586, when Jean de Lur married Catherine-Charlotte de Saluces, heiress of the powerful Marquis of Piedmont, under the dominion of the French crown.

# 1687

*Fire at the fortress*



The oldest parts of the building date back to the early 14th century, when the fortress was designed as a defensive structure, during the Hundred Years' War, when French and English troops fought in the region. Over the years, the Fargues fortress was expanded to house the Lur Saluces family thanks to a major renovation in the 17th century, featuring the addition of large windows, the construction of a round tower to protect the staircase, and the installation of magnificent stone fireplaces. Unfortunately, during the night of the 24th to the 25th of May 1687, a fire broke out at Château de Fargues. The fire was powerful and difficult to control due to strong winds, despite the collective efforts of local residents to help put it out.

# 1785

*Françoise-Joséphine de Lur Saluces, the visionary*



Françoise-Joséphine de Lur Saluces, born Sauvage d'Yquem, lived a colourful life. This 17-year-old orphan married Louis-Amédée de Lur Saluces, with whom she had two children. By the age of 20, she was already widowed. A woman of character and untameable energy, she was also a visionary and a remarkable estate manager. To satisfy demanding connoisseurs, as owner of Château d'Yquem, she decided, with the support of her steward, Garros, to adopt an even more rigorous selection process during the harvest. This involved selecting only the grapes most affected by noble rot, even if it meant sacrificing a larger share of the crop than that lost by simple late harvesting. This method of picking in several passes is the secret behind Sauternes wine as we know it today.



# 1851

*Romain-Bertrand de Lur Saluces, the unclassifiable*



Romain-Bertrand de Lur Saluces, grandson of Françoise-Joséphine, was fully devoted to managing the family properties, including the prestigious Filhot, Malle, Coutet, Yquem and Fargues estates, where mixed farming was practised at the time. These vast swathes of land represented nearly a third of the Sauternes vineyard. At the time of his death, the Lur Saluces winegrowing empire comprised over 700 hectares of vines concentrated in a single agricultural area and appellation. Romain-Bertrand de Lur Saluces, working initially with his grandmother, undertook major renovations of the estates, including clearing land and uprooting old vines.

# 1922

*Bertrand de Lur Saluces, the obstinate*



At the turn of the 20th century, the Fargues estate experienced a renaissance. Bertrand de Lur Saluces, co-owner of Château d'Yquem, took over management of the family estates after he was injured in the First World War. Following the death of his father in 1922, having appraised the excellent potential of the terroir at Fargues, he decided to stop producing ordinary red wine and plant 9,5 hectares of vines on a gravel plateau with a clay-limestone subsoil south of the fortress.

Bertrand de Lur Saluces planted Sémillon and Sauvignon Blanc, the signature grape varieties of Sauternes, giving the estate the profile, it still has today. It took many years and tremendous effort before the first vintage (1943) was bottled at Fargues in 1947. Following in his father's footsteps, Bertrand de Lur Saluces devoted himself to defending and promoting French wine. In his role as President of the Sauternes and Barsac Wine Syndicate, founded by his father in 1908, he helped to create the appellation and fought valiantly against numerous counterfeits, which tainted the image of Sauternes wine between the First and Second World Wars.

# 1968

*Alexandre de Lur Saluces, the investor*



Succeeding his uncle Bertrand, Alexandre de Lur Saluces managed the Château d'Yquem until 2004, in parallel with Fargues, which he still manages.

He enlarged the Fargues vineyard from 9.5 ha in 1968 to 12.25 ha in 1990 and 15 ha in 2003. The acquisition of quality plots from neighbours and a planting campaign will almost double the surface, to reach, in the next ten years, 27ha.

The estate was ready to go, but it still needed a technical tool adapted to these new constraints. Alexandre had a modern vat room and cellar built around an old barn that housed dairy cows until 1980. Nothing ostentatious but a practical and functional tool, decorated with a monumental door imagined by the Bordeaux artist, François Peltier.

More surprising is the partial restoration of the fortress, which begun in 2009. The round tower has regained its staircase, the kitchens and rooms have regained their ceilings. Nine restored rooms with majestic fireplaces and period furniture, which allow the family to receive friends, wine professionals, students and visitors for meals or concerts.



## 2014

*Philippe de Lur Saluces, the 16th generation*



After spending several years abroad, Philippe de Lur Saluces returned to his father's side, intending to open up new horizons for Fargues. He was closely involved in the renaissance of the family estate and is keen to share the Fargues philosophy with wine enthusiasts. He works with chefs to offer food and Sauternes pairings, which go beyond the traditional foie gras. But above all, he and his wife, Charlotte have decided to open up the fortress to visitors and immerse them in the many centuries of the Lur Saluces family history, either over a meal or via concerts and lectures held inside the fortress. As he explains, "Fargues is a bit like a start-up, a young company located in the oldest estate in the Bordeaux region, which has been in the same family for 550 years, even if the history of Sauternes is much more recent".





# ●●●○○ If we had to translate Fargues into WORDS...



## *Determination*

In the 1930's Bertrand de Lur Saluces decided to stop producing red wine at Château de Fargues and focus entirely on producing a great Sauternes.

What may have seemed like madness was, in fact, a sign of the family's genius. They knew the terroir intimately and intuitively sensed Château de Fargues's true vocation. Today the family maintain the same devotion to quality and rigour, and perpetuate the same philosophy.

Château de Fargues epitomises the vision and determination of the Lur Saluces family. It is no accident that their motto is "Noch" meaning "Again". What it means is: "Always pursue the uncompromising quest for quality and elegance".

## *Unclassifiable*

Although the estate has belonged to the Lur Saluces since 1472, the first vintage of Château de Fargues dates from 1943, that's why the wine is absent from the official 1855 classification, which remains the benchmark for Bordeaux wines. Despite its relatively recent origins, it is widely considered one of the finest wines of Sauternes.

## *Symbiosis*

The magic of Fargues would not be possible without the meticulous work of Man, who imposes about fifty treatments, sometimes minimal, on each vine and on each barrel of wine during its aging. The phenomenon of Botrytisation implies a harvest in several selections - five on average, sometimes twice as many - and the grape-pickers, whose experience has made them as skillful as they are patient, select the grapes destined for the future nectar grain by grain. The care given to the land and the vines, the gestures guided by the concern for quality, this symbiosis between man and nature explain the refinement of this wine.





### *Without concession*

The wine of Fargues is all the more rare because the estate does not tolerate any artifice and refuses to compromise; respect for nature is imperative. For all that, Fargues does not produce a second wine. All the efforts are aimed at the only label that has made the reputation of the estate, which is always decorated with the Lur Saluces count's crown. The estate never produces an imperfect vintage.



### *Extravagance*

The aromatic explosion of a Château de Fargues is the result of a mysterious and miraculous alchemy. When it appears in autumn, Botrytis Cinerea colonizes the ripe grapes. The berry turns brown, dries out, concentrates by evaporation, naturally increasing the density of its juice in aroma and sugar. The fungus then transforms the juice and the aromas resulting in the appearance of candied notes, cooked fruits and spices. A real sacrifice since the botrytis will leave barely a glass of wine per vine, instead of a bottle in a classic harvest.







## *Unique*

Fargues wines have a distinctive character, an identity that makes them incomparable. This wine stands out for its extraordinary freshness. Its sweetness is always counterbalanced by a marked acidity, which ensures an impression of vigor and resilience, with something of a hard-edged quality.

From the brilliance of its robe to the way it inhabits the glass when shaken, then on the palate, everything about a Château de Fargues awakens the senses and encourages curiosity. Worn to the lips, the wine expresses the sweetness of spring flowers, accompanied by subtle aromas of candied fruit, pineapple or figs, some hints of quince paste or apricots bursting with sunshine. The most attentive will perceive the roasted flavors, the vanilla emanations, spicy, saffron, star anise, but also dried fruits. Added to this are enveloping notes of acacia honey, toast, balanced by citrus zest and mineral touches. A wine that challenges and stimulates.

Fargues displays the perfect combination of sugar, acidity, and gentle bitterness, which is the secret of the best Sauternes produced by the Lur Saluces for generations.



## *Audacity*

The wine of Fargues, delicious on its own, goes well with a large number of dishes, on the sole condition that it avoids the confrontation with sugar. It is not a dessert wine; on the contrary, Château de Fargues appreciates contrasts.

Multiple combinations can be explored with oysters, shellfish, fish, white meats, strong or even spicy dishes, blue-veined cheeses or fruits such as apple or rhubarb.

As for the amateurs, they consume it without anything, because the wine of Fargues is sufficient to itself, invites to meditation, before the meal or in digestive, the time to remake the world.







# ●●●●○ THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

By François Amirault- Estate Manager



We contribute to the history of Château de Fargues vintage after vintage. It is the same challenge every year: to produce the best possible wine that faithfully expresses the characteristics of the vintage. We seek excellence, perfect balance, and a whirlwind of olfactory sensations. A wine this good in its youth makes us forget how sumptuous it can be with age. In any event, the ultimate goal is to provide pleasure with an element of mystery that uplifts the spirit. This is the desired outcome of our professionalism and our pride and joy.

“*The time has come to pick.*”

The entire team of pickers is ready for a season of work, but also of great celebration. When the fog burns off, it will be time to concentrate on carefully selecting, picking, eliminating, and filling baskets with lovely grapes affected by noble rot.

Once the sunshine returns, the workers come alive, the wine rows are full of movement, the older pickers make fun of the young ones, and the air is full of jokes and laughter. The series of passes through the vines take on a party atmosphere and the pickers are amused by spectacle of the visitors’ amazement at their skill-or even artistry.



There is great excitement in the air, a rush of adrenaline, and the big moment has finally arrived. Yes! But no ... Picking has started, but it will be necessary to wait a little longer. Making a great Sauternes calls for anticipating, waiting, tasting, reflecting, acting decisively, and setting new limits to capture something truly exceptional, before it is too late... Although noble rot calls for plenty of waiting, it waits for no one. Time waits for no man. Did we make the right decisions ?

The same uncertainties are faced every day for six to eight weeks, for just a few days of action.







..... WINE GLOSSARY



*Microclimate*

Located near the Landes forest, at the top of a hill overlooking the Garonne valley, Château de Fargues benefits from a particular microclimate in autumn. The subtle alternation of humidity, sun and wind favors the appearance of Botrytis Cinerea and brings in particular over-ripeness and sugar to the grapes.

*Soil*

The vine must suffer to produce a great wine. In Fargues, the vineyard is made up of a clay-limestone soil. This forces the vine to plunge its roots into the deep layers of the soil and subsoil to nourish itself and bear witness to this exceptional terroir.

*Grape varieties*

The vineyard is planted with two grape varieties: Semillon (80%), which gives the wine fatness, roundness and ample structure, and Sauvignon Blanc, grown for its aromatic side and its great freshness. The vines are on average 35 years old.



*Appellation*

Château de Fargues produces a Sauternes wine. The magic of this appellation lies in the action of Botrytis Cinerea, a microscopic fungus better known as «noble rot». When it appears in the fall, the grapes are transformed, losing their volume and acquiring candied fruit and floral aromas.

*Ageing*

A bottle of Château de Fargues can be kept for a long time, several decades, even over a century. An average cellar temperature of 14°C and a hygrometry between 65 and 80% are recommended for optimal preservation.

*Service*

It is recommended to serve Fargues wine at around 12°C. It is not necessary to decant the wine; a slight aeration is sufficient. When a red wine accompanies the dish that comes after it, a tip is to serve a hot or warm broth to renew the palate.







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