



**CORNEY &  
BARROW**  
INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS - 1780

CHÂTEAU  
ROCHEYRON

# CHÂTEAU ROCHEYRON

FROM PETER SISSECK

2016 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR

*Exclusive to Corney & Barrow in the UK and Hong Kong*

*“Creating a vineyard, it’s a humbling experience,  
and that’s probably why I love it.”*

**PETER SISSECK, APRIL 2017**

## THE SISSECK STORY, CHAPTER 1

The Peter Sisseck Story is now rather well-known but it’s a good one.

The young Dane who travels to deepest darkest Ribera del Duero and, on the doorstep of Vega Sicilia, creates a legend to rival his venerable neighbour.

Robert Parker, having tasted the inaugural 1995 vintage *chez C&B*, calls it “one of the greatest and most exciting young red wines I have ever tasted”, bestowing it with a potentially perfect score.

Of the 325 cases produced of 1995 Pingus, the US-bound allocation of a third of the crop then sinks in the Atlantic, sending collectors scurrying to buy what they can.

## THE SISSECK STORY, CHAPTER 2

Château Rocheyron fits nicely into the above story. Peter Sisseck learnt his trade in Bordeaux, with his uncle Peter Vinding-Diers, the renowned winemaker (and instigator of Peter’s childhood nickname, Pingus).

In 2011, along with his friend and business partner Silvio Denz, Peter Sisseck created Château Rocheyron from four plots in Saint-Émilion. It is named Château Rocheyron after its central *lieu-dit*, which is where the château itself is located.

In a sense, this is therefore a completing of the circle, a return to where it all started.

Château Rocheyron lies in the hamlet of Saint-Christophe-des-Bardes. The château sits 3.6 kilometres from the centre of Saint-Émilion, on the edge of the limestone plateau. The vineyard is comprised of four plots of land (see below).

Conveniently, Saint-Émilion is ‘only’ a six-hour drive from Ribera del Duero, although as the journey takes in San Sebastian and Biarritz, it must be tempting to stop en route. In any case, Peter does the trip regularly, shuttling between the two Sisseck embassies.

## THE VINEYARD

The vineyard area is 8.45 hectares, planted with 70% Merlot and 30% Cabernet Franc. The average vine age is over 45 years, with some of the Cabernet Franc vines being over 80 years old. The soil consists of half a metre of topsoil over limestone rock. There are 6,000 vines per hectare.

Traditional Bordelais double guyot pruning is employed, with cultivation of the soil and grass cover crops. Debudding, leaf thinning and picking is all done by hand, as is grape sorting (with the assistance of one optical sorter).

Three vineyard passes are required to harvest young Merlot, old Merlot and finally Cabernet Franc, all of which are vinified separately. Only the very best cuvées make it into Château Rocheyron and Fleur de Rocheyron, the rest being sold off elsewhere.

The estate is currently organic, the intention being to convert to biodynamics, which is how Peter works in Spain and in which he is a firm believer. Yields are low, the 2016 vintage coming in at 33 hectolitres per hectare.

## TASTING PARCEL BY PARCEL

It is always fascinating to discover a wine this way, as you can build up a picture from the component parts. Other wines we taste in this fashion include Château Rouget in Pomerol and Clos de Tart in Burgundy. The four plots at Rocheyron are 'Boutisse', 'Echeres', 'Rocheyron' (rather confusingly) and 'Cabernet'.

### **Boutisse**

Two hectares, mainly planted with Merlot vines, 90% of which are old. Boutisse usually ripens one week later than others. Ripe red berries, firm grippy tannins upfront on the palate, with seams of darker fruit. The tannic power persists on the finish but there is a great density and focus of fruit.

### **Echeres**

This is a one hectare plot, closer to the plateau, planted with 100% Merlot. This produces wines of bright red fruit, with lovely suppleness and tenderness of fruit. The tannins are finer and less overtly grippy than those of Boutisse.

### **Rocheyron (name of the plot, not the overall blend)**

A four hectare parcel, located on the limestone plateau. As the name suggests, this is the heart of the estate. The resulting wine is saltier, longer and somehow 'drier', with a marked sense of stony minerality. Taut and tense, with masses of ageing potential. Hugely impressive, although it would perhaps be a little stern and serious without the softening influence of the other component parts.

### **Cabernet**

This name refers to the Cabernet Franc which is planted in this one hectare plot of 80 year old vines. The wine from here is dark and rocky, with black pepper and a herbaceous aspect and fine, grippy tannins.

## THE CELLAR

The *chai* was completely refurbished in 2011 and is efficient and functional. Peter and Silvio Denz have invested in new cement tanks, as well as a large barrel cellar for ageing. Peter is an arch-traditionalist in the cellar, seeking minimal intervention. The fermentation temperature of 22°C is cool by Bordeaux standards and follows Peter's philosophy of gentle extraction.

## THE 2016 VINTAGE IN PETER SISSECK'S WORDS

"We launched in 2010 with one clear idea: using biodynamics to produce a wine like the great wines of the 1940s and 1950s.

This idea guided us as we renovated the winery facilities and applied the precepts of Rudolf Steiner to the vineyard. The results have proven spectacular, allowing each of the estate's different terroirs to be very precisely expressed.

Everything was in place, and we expected nothing short of an excellent vintage! And 2016 saw this come to fruition... A harsh winter, a wet spring, perfect flowering in the sunny weather of early June, then a dry and very hot summer characterised the contrast between the first and second halves of the year.

The Rocheyron soils on the famous Saint-Émilion limestone plateau meant that the heavy spring rain was absorbed and stored, providing the grapes with a regular stress-free supply of water. The wide variation in temperatures between day and night during the month of September enabled a slow ripening period that produced very well-balanced grapes.

All ripening criteria were thus very uniform (alcohol, acidity, polyphenols, perfect health) when the harvests were begun with Merlot on 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October, continuing with Cabernet on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

Tannin ripeness is very important for a slow aging process, and I am sure that well-managed maturation will help to retain the desired aromatic freshness.”

**PETER SISSECK**

MAY, 2017

## 2016 TASTING NOTE

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### CHÂTEAU ROCHEYRON, SAINT-ÉMILION GRAND CRU

A beautiful, soaring nose of crushed rose petals above a dark, bitter cherry core of astonishing purity. The palate is textured and juicy, with a crystalline blueberry and blackcurrant immediacy to match the nose. Finely gradated and, above all, poised, it hangs in a perfect surface tension of fruit, tannin and acidity. In his typically understated way, Peter acknowledged “a mid-palate that I really like”... The old vine character is obvious in this wine’s nuanced profundity. Peter thinks the 2016 is “racier” than the 2015... and he is absolutely right. This is without a doubt the best Rocheyron yet, since its beginning in 2010. Cropped at 33 hectolitres per hectare, it will spend 15 months ageing, a third in new French oak barrels, a third in old oak barrels and a third in concrete tanks. An equivalent of 16,000 bottles has been produced.

70% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc. Cropped at 33 hectolitres per hectare (hl/ha), compared to 40 hl/ha in 2015. This will spend 15 months in 30% new French oak barrels. An equivalent of 16,000 bottles has been produced.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE**  
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2025 - 2040)

**17.5 - 18**

**£425/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**  
**£145/CASE OF 1 MAGNUM, IN BOND UK**  
**£295/CASE OF 1 DOUBLE MAGNUM, IN BOND UK**  
**£600/CASE OF 1 IMPERIAL, IN BOND UK**

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**GUY SEDDON**

JUNE, 2017

## **TASTING GUIDE**

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection.

For the benefit of simplicity, wines are scored out of 20. We will often use a range of scores (e.g. 16.5 to 17) to indicate the potential to achieve a higher mark. When a '+' is shown it adds further to that potential. Wines from lesser vintages will, inevitably, show a lower overall score.

Wines are judged, in a very broad sense, against their peers. Why? Well, you cannot easily compare a Ford with an Aston Martin, other than they are both cars and have wheels. It is not that different with wine.

A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes and, as always, speak to our sales team.

## **TO ORDER**

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