



# Cuvée Madame de Château Coutet

## 1989

### HISTORY

The origin of Cuvée Madame goes back to Madame Rolland-Guy, owner of Château COUTET between 1922 and 1977. The vineyard workers were in the habit of working without pay for one day while picking the remaining grapes from one of the property's two oldest parcels, whose berries were super-concentrated. A sweet wine of incomparable richness and flavor was thus obtained.

This very small and exceptional cuvée was dedicated to Madame, the proprietor's wife. The Baly family carries on this tradition for their finest harvests. The superb Cuvée Madame was made in 1981, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1995, 1997, 2001, 2003 following the memorable 1943, 1947, 1959, 1971 and 1975 vintages)

### VITICULTURE

The Cuvée Madame originates from the property's two oldest parcels of Sémillon. The average age of the vines on these plots is 55 years.

### WINEMAKING

The selection process is painstaking as each grape is picked one-by-one by hand. Further sorting takes place at the wine press and damaged grapes are eliminated immediately. The unfermented grape juice is quite rich, with 22 to 26 degrees of potential alcohol. A single, light pressing (at less than 180 kg/cm<sup>2</sup>) produces a clear, limpid juice. Alcohol fermentation takes place in new French oak barrels. The large amount of natural sugar forces the yeast to work slowly and develop secondary aromas that will contribute to the wine's complexity. Once this hard work is done, the wine is aged in barrels for three years before bottling.

### WEATHER CONDITIONS

As during the last thirty years, the winter in Barsac was sunny, dry and cold. These conditions were favorable to ensure the good dormancy of the vine. The vegetation cycle began eight days in advance and bud break was observed on April 5th. April was cold and rainy but May brought temperatures well over 30°C, between the 17th and 25th of the month. This resulted in early flowering, amongst the earliest of the century. Fifteen days ahead of schedule, semi-flowering occurred on May 30th. July, June and August were hot and sunny with, fortunately, some precipitations in the form of thunderstorms that ensured a good water supply. Semi-ripening was reached on August 4th, 16 days ahead of schedule. September was comparable to the three previous months. The number of sunny days during the summer was only slightly lower than the record year of 1961.

BLEND	100% Sémillon
FERMENTATION	In barrel
ELEVAGE	3 years in 100% French oak barrels
ESTATE BOTTLED	June 1992

### TASTING NOTES

The 1989 Cuvée Madame is deep, bright gold in color.

This blockbuster sweet wine offers up aromas of coffee, custard, pain grillé, honeyed tropical fruits, and a note of coconut. Unctuously-textured, and oozing glycerin extract and richness, this full-bodied, yet extraordinarily well-delineated wine offers the rare combination of power and complexity.

It is an amazingly thick Cuvée Madame that suffers only in comparison with its surrounding siblings. Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate, September 1994, 96/100.