



Learning from previous generations and developing one's sense of observation

Digging soil pits for a better understanding of terroir

News on our 2020 vintage

Our best wishes for the New Year and our hope to see you again very soon

Dear friends,

The Christmas and New Year period brought to a close a frustrating year, and I very much hope that you were able to enjoy this festive season with your family and loved ones. At Grand Corbin-Despagne, the notion of family is an essential one in our way of life. It's what allows us to pass down from generation to generation the values that we hold dear and that have instilled in us our respect for Mother Nature whom we observe and learn from.

When it was my turn to become the custodian of these magnificent Saint-Emilion terroirs, I immediately began thinking about all the work that had been carried out by the previous generations of my family. By carefully observing the fifty plots that make up the estate, I was able to understand certain things and in particular focus on five of these plots which are planted separately alongside the cellars building. There must have been a reason, I thought to myself, that these plots should be planted there, away from the others...



Digging soil pits for a better understanding of terroirs.

Having studied science, I was keen to launch a soil survey in 1998 and dig a series of soil pits in order to analyse the depth and condition of the soils across the 28 hectares of our vineyards. This work delivered a great deal of information and revealed the characteristic profile of our terroirs with their predominance of "crasse de fer" or iron-pan deposits (our famous blue clay), together with other terroirs made up mostly of sandy-siliceous soils. All of this provided a wealth of information that would enable us to work on enhancing the results of our king grape varieties, Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Since that time, we have continued to dig soil pits on a systematic basis, after vines are pulled up and before replanting, so as to get to know our soils even better and to replant with the most appropriate grape varieties and rootstocks.



What was gleaned from the depth of the subsoils is mirrored in its diversity on the soils' surface. The different plots, identified instinctively by previous generations, are home to a bio-diversity with distinct populations of flowers, herbs, and other types of vegetation, as well as insect life.

The soil pit digs have therefore provided superb indicators that enable us to adjust our work in the vines and to carry out an optimal management of our vineyard soils. Our grapes are thus helped to perform at their highest levels across our cuvées.

Soil pits



[Discover the explanatory map](#)

The different grape varieties



[Discover the explanatory map](#)

News from our cellars...

January is the month of expectation. The wines of our 2020 vintage are undergoing their barrel-ageing and are confirming their quality potential. We'd also like to add that this year we are carrying out trials on ageing wine in terra cotta amphorae.

The teams at the estate, together with the 6th, 7th and 8th generations of the Despagne family, send you their best wishes for the New Year.

May 2021 bring us some exciting tasting moments and provide us with an early opportunity to meet up once again.

François Despagne

Famille Despagne

Ever-present in Saint-Emilion

Owners since 1812

Château Grand Corbin-Despagne

Grand Cru Classé

Organic since 2004, officially certified since 2013

2020 : the 209th vintage of the Despagne family

in the Grand Corbin terroir.

The 25th vintage of François Despagne