

# Clos la Coutale

CAHORS, SW FRANCE • PHILIPPE BERNÈDE (6<sup>TH</sup> GENERATION)

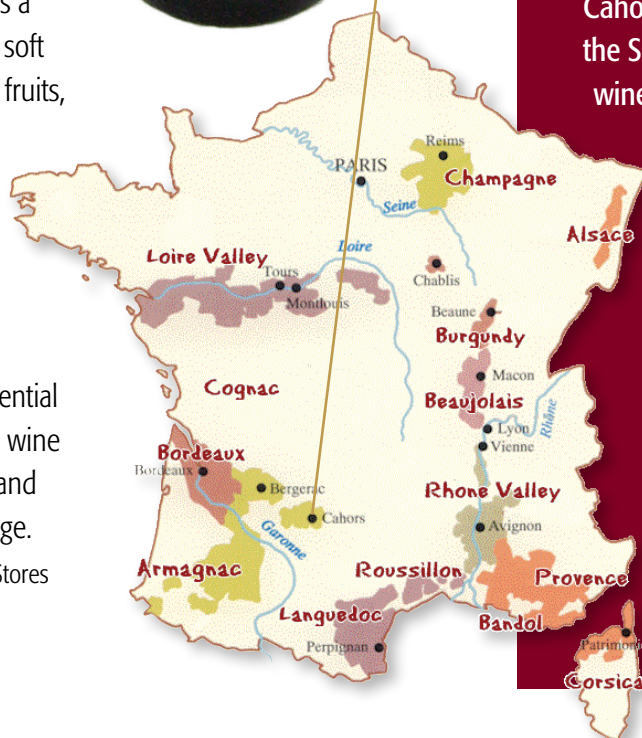


## Clos la Coutale Cahors

- 85% Malbec, 15% Merlot
- 25 years, vine age
- 2.5 tons per acre (40-45 hl/ha)
- 25,000 cs produced
- Grapes are sorted and de-stemmed after the harvest
- Each vineyard parcel is vinified separately
- Wine is fermented in stainless steel with daily punch-downs; 100% of the harvest is fermented at once
- Fermentation lasts anywhere from 15 to 18 days
- Wine is blended in January and aged in foudre and barrel for one year before bottling

One whiff and your nose is smacked with an attractive assortment of rich, ripe, jammy red and black fruit aromas, with hints of licorice and black pepper mixed in. On the palate it has a velvety smooth texture, very soft in the mouth with ripe black fruits, pepper and hints of earth. Acidity is low to medium and tannins are soft to medium. Astonishing elegance, can be drunk young thanks to its good fruit, but has great aging potential between 10 to 20 years. This wine screams for duck, cassoulet and anything with smoked sausage.

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Deep in the southwest of France, amidst dramatic rock formations and cliffs, the Lot River slowly snakes its way along the valley floor, coiling covetously around the charming town of Cahors. The diversity in architecture serves as a proud historical mark left by many previous generations of inhabitants.

Once a former Roman town, Cahors was also as a center of commerce during the Middle Ages that served as an important crossroads for pilgrims on the trail to Santiago de Compostella. The history also includes the massacre of the Cathars, the English domination of Henry II who married Eleanor of Aquitaine, the 100 years war and religious wars of the 15th century.

Among the many specialties that have brought pride to the region, the constant has been its wine. A.O.C. Cahors is known as the “black wine” of the Southwest—the deeply inky, earthy wines that seem to complement the regional fare of duck (and duck fat!) so wonderfully. Cahors is also the birthplace of Cot, the grape more commonly known as Malbec—a fascinating contrast to its South American brother.

The Bernède family is an intricate part of this tradition, watching over one of the region’s oldest domaines that was founded before the French Revolution.

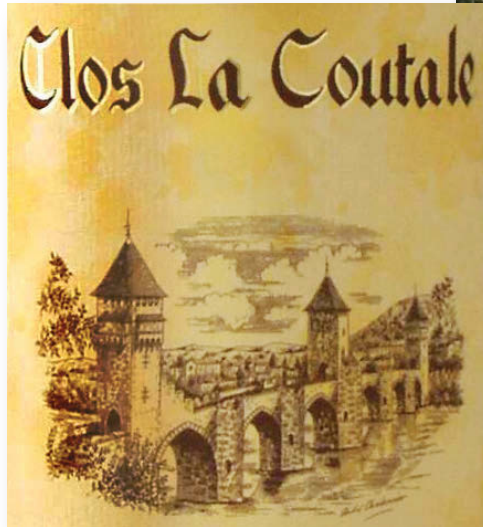
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## On the label of Clos la Coutale is the famous “Pont Valentré.”

The Pont Valentré, which took fifty years to build, was started in 1308 and legend has it that its architect sold his soul to the devil in exchange for help in completing the structure. As the bridge neared completion, the architect, having second thoughts about his future damnation, requested the devil bring him water in a sieve. The devil in revenge caused the topmost stone of the bridge’s central tower to fall off every time it was installed thus rendering the bridge permanently incomplete.



Viticulture around Cahors dates back 2000 years. During the Roman occupation (92 AD), Emperor Domitian ordered the destruction of the vines on the pretext as punishment for a local uprising but it is more likely it was because the wine industry was in competition with that of wheat which was even more precious to Rome.

## VINEYARD NOTES

- Winery established in 1895.
- Jack-of-all-trades and Renaissance man, Philippe Bernède, continues the family tradition with both heart and ingenuity.
- Philippe’s vines rest upon the gentle slopes that rise up from the Lot River.
- He farms sixty hectares of land along the alluvial terraces of the Lot Valley that are rich in siliceous, clay, and limestone soils.
- The microclimate of the vineyards is ideal, with southwest sun exposure and topographic protection against the frost.
- Over the years, Philippe has tinkered with the house blend to achieve a greater equilibrium.
- Today, the blend consists of 80% Malbec and 20% Merlot, creating an intense wine that juggles elegant rusticity with everyday drinkability.
- The region goes from extreme heat during the summer to great cold spells come November/December.

## CONTACT

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