Chateau Gautoul
Cahors 2010

Chateau Gautoul is a twenty hectare estate in the heart of the Cahors region. The origins of the estate date back to the 17th century. The chateau was restored in 1992 by its then owner, Alain Sendrens, chef of the legendary Paris restaurant, Lucas Carton. Sendrens' vintages brought Gautoul international acclaim. The property was purchased by Eric Swenden in 1998. The chateau is a magnificent 18th century chartreuse in perfect condition to this day. It has a commanding view of the village of Puy l'Eveque and the Lot River valley. The vineyard is planted to 80% Malbec, 16% Merlot and 4% Tannat. It faces due south and is cultivated sustainably with Haute Valeur Environnementale (HVA) certification of the winery and vineyards. The 5 distinct soil types help give Chateau Gautoul its unique, complex character and ensures the perfect maturity of the fruit. Vineyard work is done throughout the year to ensure the highest quality fruit. Strict pruning after harvest, green harvesting and leaf stripping are all carried out as conditions warrant, to get the most out of each parcel and varietal. The goal is to attain concentration and complexity in the vineyard, and not through vinification and aging.

The grapes for Chateau Gautoul 2010 were selected on a sorting table and then fermented in 160 Hectoliter tanks according to their sites of origin. The alcoholic fermentation period lasted 3 weeks. The juice was pumped over the grape skins (remontage) twice daily. In addition, the cap was punched down (piegeage) twice to attain maximum extraction without harsh tannins. Once the wine had fully fermented, it was racked off its gross lees and malolactic fermentation took place. No press wine was used in the final blend. 60% of the young wine was then transferred to oak casks (half new, half one year old) and 40% to stainless steel tanks where the vintage matured for 18 months. The cuvée was assembled and bottled in the winter of 2013 and then given 5 years of bottle aging before release. Chateau Gautoul 2010 is a deeply colored, very complex, intense wine with ripe tannins and ample body.

Spring of 2010 was rainy and hot, and the vintage began rapidly. Flowering took place in early June without problems. Hot and dry July, August and September weather allowed the grapes to attain full maturity. The perfectly ripe fruit was harvested under ideal conditions in the first week of October as each vineyard parcel ripened. The weather during harvest was sunny and dry which reduced the yield and ensured that the fruit was concentrated and in perfect health. Chateau Gautoul 2010's flavors of cassis, blackberry, truffles, dark chocolate and spice and supple texture make it a great expression of the unique and venerable Cahors appellation.

Top: the 17th century chateau and its vineyard, overlooking the Lot River.
Upper right photos: Malbec vines on stony, clay-limestone soil. Few bunches per vine ensures ripening.

Technical Details
HVA CERTIFIED
Location: Commune of Puy l’Eveque
Vineyard size: 20 hectares
Soils: 5 types: silt, clay, limestone, sand and stony according to the respective parcel
Climate: Influenced by the Lot River as well as by the Atlantic and Mediterranean.
Average age of vines: 35 years
Altitude: 100 - 140 meters
Vineyard practice: lutte raisonnée
Harvest dates: October 1 - 6, 2010
Yield: 30 Hectoliters per hectare
Yeasts: indigenous
Vinification: in stainless steel tanks for 3 weeks
Malolactic fermentation: in tanks at the finish of the alcoholic fermentation.
Maturation: 60% barrels (half new, half one year) 40% stainless steel tank.
Bottling: February 18, 2013
Total Production: 3000 cases