

# CHÂTEAU FERRIÈRE

3<sup>ÈME</sup> GRAND CRU CLASSÉ DE 1855, MARGAUX





*Classé*  
CHATEAU  
FERRIERE

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FERRIERE  
GRAND CRU CLASSE  
MARGAUX  
CLAIRE VILLARS LURTON



- **OWNER : CLAIRE VILLARS-LURTON (2<sup>ND</sup> GENERATION OF WOMAN AS THE OWNER OF THE CHÂTEAU FERRIÈRE)**
- **3RD CLASSIFIED GROWTH OF 1855 IN MARGAUX**
- **3 TIMES ORGANICALLY & BIODYNAMICALLY CERTIFIED : AB, DEMETER & BIODYVIN**







- **SIZE OF VINEYARD : 24 HECTARES**
- **SOIL : DEEP GRAVELS ON LIMESTONE SUBSTRATE**
- **GRAPE VARIETALS : 61% CABERNET SAUVIGNON, 26% MERLOT, 2% CABERNET FRANC, 11% PETIT VERDOT**
- **WINES : CHÂTEAU FERRIÈRE, LES REMPARTS DE FERRIÈRE**





## CHÂTEAU'S HISTORY

For a better understanding of the property's origins, we have to go back to the eve of the French Revolution in Bordeaux, when the "aristocrats of the cork" were at the height of their power.

At that time, Bordeaux was the third largest city in the Kingdom of France and its main port. The city was known as the Porte de l'Occident (the Gateway to the West). Thanks to speculation by the vineyard owners and the massive colonial trade, the streets of the Port of the Moon seemed paved with gold. Taking advantage of this golden age, the Ferrière family took up residence at 70 Quai des Chartrons and became a major player in the ship-broker trade. The descendants of this family enjoyed considerable influence in many areas: King's Counsel, First Consul, Member of the Academy of Fine Arts, Director of the Chamber of Commerce, Mayor of Bordeaux...

Moving ever higher in these elite circles, at the end of the 17th century, the Ferrière family acquired a wine estate in the heart of the Margaux vineyards and gave it the family name. The qualitative classification of the châteaux in 1855, under Emperor Napoleon III, for the Universal Exhibition in Paris, accentuated this phenomenon. Château Ferrière's owners were proud to see the property ranked as a third growth.

Gradually, the Ferrière family, like most of the great Bordeaux families, saw their social prestige diminish. It was not until the end of the 1980s, with the arrival of new owners, the Merlaut family, that Château Ferrière was restored to its former splendour. "Remain a family business for as long as possible" could then have been Château Ferrière's motto.







**CLAIRE, CHÂTEAU FERRIÈRE CURRENT OWNER, USED TO RUN AROUND HER VINEYARD, UNTIL SHE REALIZED THE AIR SHE WAS BREATHING WAS UNHEALTHY.**

**THIS WAS A REAL TRIGGER TO CONVERT THE CHÂTEAU FERRIÈRE VINEYARD TO ECOLOGICAL VITICULTURE.**





Endowed with determination and tenacity, Claire is a fighter. To make your way in the world of wine requires a strong personality. Following in the footsteps of her mother, Bernadette, Claire imposes her feminine style as a winegrower in the Bordeaux region.

Always ready for a challenge, she has devoted herself to restoring Château Ferrière's prestige.

Despite being born into a family of winegrowers, Claire did not see herself destined to manage a wine property. She was living in Paris preparing a doctorate in physics applied to archaeology, but after the accidental death of her parents in 1992, Claire abandoned her studies and joined her grandfather Jacques Merlaut to continue her mother's work. She also enrolled at the Faculty of Oenology in Bordeaux. She immersed herself in the Bordeaux world of wine, while at the same time managing her family's various properties.

Some, such as Château Chasse-Spleen already had well-established reputations, and Claire was always ready to take on a challenge!

When in 2000, the Merlaut group's properties were divided up between the family members, Claire inherited Châteaux Ferrière, Haut-Bages Libéral and La Gurgue. Just 32 years-old, the new owner devoted herself wholeheartedly to restoring Château Ferrière's reputation and performance. She redesigned the entire production chain, returning to a form of virtuous viticulture, reintegrating biodiversity and banishing the use of chemicals. This naturally led her to a conversion process and the obtaining of biodynamic certification for Château Ferrière's vineyard and wines. The property became the second 1855 classified growth to have organic certification in 2015 and then biodynamic certification from Biodyvin in 2018.

Thanks to her hard work, Claire has restored Château Ferrière to its rightful place as a Médoc third growth. Following in the footsteps of the great wine figures in the Merlaut family, there can be no doubt that Claire has risen to the challenge.





HAVING TAKEN UP THE TORCH FROM HER MOTHER  
BERNADETTE,

**CLAIRE IS THE RESULT OF THE 2ND  
GENERATION OF WOMAN OWNER**

OF CLASSIFIED GROWTH OF 1855.



## GERARD FENOUILLET, CHÂTEAU FERRIÈRE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

At the age of 20, Gérard never imagined when he joined Château Chasse-Spleen as a cellar worker, that he would devote his entire career to its owners, the Merlaut family. In 1978, Jacques Merlaut acquired Château La Gurgue and handed the reins to his only daughter Bernadette. Gérard took the opportunity to join the new technical team for the 10-hectare property, ideally located in the heart of Margaux's vineyards. Resourceful and determined, the young man gained experience and gradually climbed the ladder...

Having come to be considered a member of the family, Gérard continued his rise, this time alongside Claire, Bernadette's daughter. The new young owner was only 32 when she took over management of Château Ferrière, a Margaux third growth. She was able to rely on Gérard's knowledge and technical experience. Together, they made an excellent team: Claire brought boundless energy, and Gérard a devotion to constantly improving the wine.

Becoming Director of Production in 1995, Gérard naturally established himself as the guardian of Château Ferrière's style. Claire wanted to revolutionize work in the vineyard and the winery by introducing biodynamic practices. Being of a pragmatic nature, the Director needed to experiment before committing to the new project. The transition to organic and then biodynamic winegrowing was a real challenge for him. The network proved to be a powerful ally and enabled him to learn quickly.

A few months after the start of Château Ferrière's conversion to biodynamic methods, Gérard decided to reinforce the technical team by recruiting a biodynamic manager. It was only natural that he chose one of his fellows: Alexandre Beaumont. Working in a very complementary fashion, Alexandre focused on reawakening life in the vineyard while Gérard enhanced the quality of the wine.

Between them, they obtained organic certification for Château Ferrière in 2015 and then biodynamic certification in 2018. Together, they even went as far as bringing together and helping wine-producing properties aware of to these practices by becoming the Aquitaine branch for the Biodynamic Agriculture Movement.





## BIODYNAMIC PRACTICES

Claire will pass on a healthy vineyard to her children. That is her goal. "You can't talk about the terroir all the time without doing something to protect it". Having become aware of Château Ferrière's exceptional terroir, Claire wants to preserve it and make it sustainable, using biodynamic and agroecological methods.

This way of cultivating the vines and making wine at Château Ferrière is, however, more complex than it might seem at first sight. Because of its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, the Bordeaux region has a maritime climate and so tends to be very humid. Every year, we have to be ever more ingenious in the fight against mildew: this vine disease is the main cause of reduced yields on wine estates. Training the teams in the vineyard and the winery in a new way of thinking and working, uniting them in this ambitious project, considered esoteric by some, and getting them to accept a new lunar, planetary rhythm dictated by Mother Nature... was a major challenge for both Claire and Gérard, Director of Production at Château Ferrière.

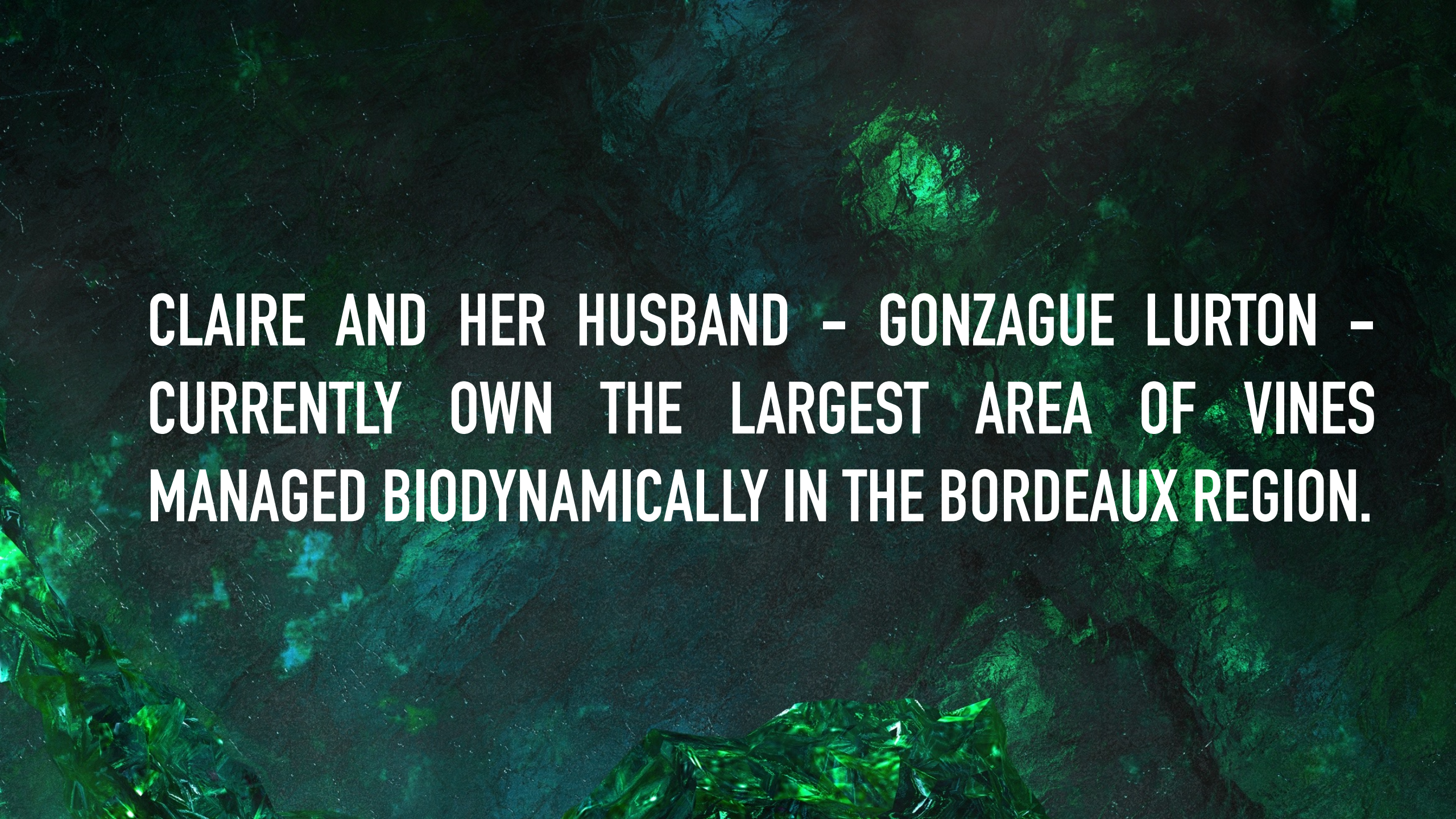
Only 5% of Bordeaux's agricultural land is organic, and yet Claire and Gérard accomplished the feat of converting the entire vineyard to organic and then biodynamic farming. They obtained organic certification in 2015, then biodynamic certification in 2018. Château Ferrière then became the second property in the 1855 classification to be certified organic by Agrocert and biodynamic by Biodyvin.

The technical team has gradually risen to the challenge of constantly seeking balance. They have even gone as far as making the property completely independent in terms of its biodynamic preparations.

Inevitably, this method of biodynamic cultivation and winemaking aroused interest among the other properties in the area. In response, Château Ferrière became the Médoc branch of the Mouvement de l'Agriculture BioDynamique (MABD) and hosts meetings at the property six times a year.







**CLAIRE AND HER HUSBAND – GONZAGUE LURTON –  
CURRENTLY OWN THE LARGEST AREA OF VINES  
MANAGED BIODYNAMICALLY IN THE BORDEAUX REGION.**



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## CHÂTEAU FERRIÈRE KEY POINTS

- The Château Ferrière is the 2<sup>nd</sup> classified growth of 1855 certified in bio by agrocert and in biodynamic farming by Biodyvin and Demeter.
- Having taken up the torch from her mother Bernadette, Claire is the result of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of woman owner of classified growth of 1855.
- Château Ferrière is the Medoc branch of the Aquitaine BioDynamic Movement (MABD). Gérard and Alexandre from the technical team thus support the wine properties in organic conversion by federating them and preparing for biodynamic methods.
- The property is in complete autonomy over its biodynamic preparations.
- Unique heritage of mass diversity: 7 hectares of the vineyard, comprising the 4 varieties of cabernet-sauvignon, merlot, cabernet franc and petit verdot, date from 1954, i.e. one third of the property's vines.