

LE RIVAL

CHÂTEAU CROIX DU RIVAL





## THE ORIGIN

- In 2005, friendship and passion for wine growing brought a group of wine lovers around Didier Miqueu and Stephan von Neipperg. The aim was to purchase Bordeaux vineyards with truly great terroirs and to devote the necessary time and means to produce outstanding wines there.
- They took time to study and to find the best Bordeaux vineyards and it is finally in the Saint-Emilion area that they discovered the best opportunities: soil and vines worthy of the best classified growths, whose tremendous potential is waiting to be revealed.
- Chateau Soleil was acquired in 2005, a renowned property located on the best terroirs of Puisseguin : the property of about twenty hectares has always been considered as one of the best of the appellation. They decided on a major investment program in the vineyards and winery, in order to magnify the magnificent potential of this terroir.
- In 2007, the Rival vineyards were bought in the neighboring commune of Lussac: a set of about 20 hectares on the clay-limestone plateau that dominates the appellation. Old vines for the most part than 50 years showed in some plots the promise of exceptional wines. This vineyard with no winery had never produced its own wines before and the ambition of the new owners is to give birth to the greatest wines.

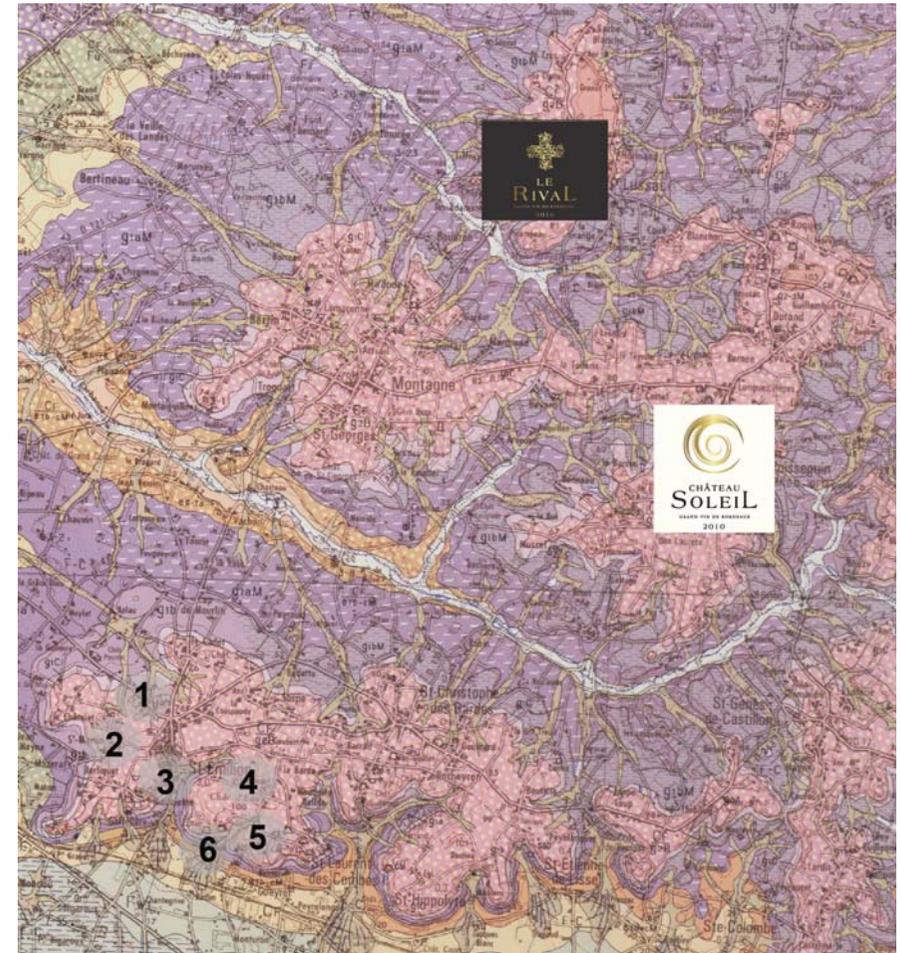






## THE AMBITION

- The objective is to establish the reputation of these two domaines at the level of the region's finest growths. Their exceptional location on plots on the best soils of Saint-Emilion justifies this ambition.
- The properties have been carefully chosen on specific criteria related to land: the plots are located on a clay-limestone plateau composed of "calcaires à astéries". A thin layer of gravel and clay covers a very thick limestone base, which facilitates the infiltration of rain, and by capillary action allows a redistribution of water during drought periods. This promotes optimal water regulation for the vine and grape maturity : around Saint-Emilion, nearly two-thirds of Premier Grand Cru Classé, including Ausone, Canon, Clos Fourtet, Pavie, Troplong Mondot, ... have the same geology.





## THE AMBITION

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- Under the direction of Stephan von Neipperg, the objective is to produce wines that reflect the character of their terroir, and achieve excellent quality :
  - The vineyards are replanted,
  - A modern winery was built,
  - The winery is completely renovated;
  - The work in the vineyard, the winemaking, aging and blending are worthy of a classified growth, since it is the same philosophy, the same care, the same approach and the same techniques that are used in Chateau Canon La Gaffelière.
- Château Croix du Rival and Le Rival have the ambition to become strong brands recognized for their quality, their terroirs and the technical expertise they receive.



## AN ENVIRONNEMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

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Respect for the terroir and the vineyard is the base of our cultural practices : Herbicides and chemical fertilizers are prohibited :

- The vineyards benefit from a complete upgrade: replanting with rootstocks adapted to soil quality (Riparia Gloire, Fercal).
- The use of herbicides and chemical products is forbidden;
- “Grassing down”, mechanically tilled soils;
- The number of bunches per vine is limited to about ten, to allow the grapes to reach maturity in the best possible way;
- The harvest is manual, the grapes are placed in small crates and carefully selected three times : at harvest, before staking and at the end of the sorting table.



## THE WINEMAKING

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- Led by Stephan von Neipperg, Chateau Soleil has a professional and dynamic team that makes the wine at both domains with great care and finesse.
- It combines tradition and modernity in the winery :
  - Gentle winemaking : grapes reach the tank without crushing or pumps, fermentation, indigenous yeast, winemaking and extraction decisions are conducted on the basis of repeated tastings;
  - Plot by plot vinification in concrete vats of small sizes with thermo -regulation, ...
  - Malolactic fermentation in new French Oak barrels, ragising from 18 to 24 months on fine lees ...

- Everything is done to let the terroir express itself and to respect the original quality of the fruit: the technique is at the service of
- tradition, providing precision control and consistency to each vintage in the process of vinification and aging of the wines.

*Small cubic tanks offer an optimal relationship between volume and surface area to facilitate exchanges between the skins, seeds and juice. Unlined concrete was chosen mainly for its qualities of thermal inertia, important for the control of alcoholic fermentation. The tanks have large openings on top that facilitate punching down: solids (skins, seeds) are immersed in the juice to enhance extraction of color and tannins, this technique from Burgundy is more precise and more gentle than the pumping over usually done in Bordeaux.*



## EXPRESS THE TERROIR

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- In the RIVAL vineyards, two small parcels of very old Merlot give birth to exceptional wine. This Burgundian approach produces a rare cuvée whose power and elegance can compete with the finest wines of the region.
- The rest of the vineyard produces a generous and powerful wine, Château CROIX DU RIVAL, marked by its dominant Merlot, typical of the great terroirs of Saint-Emilion.



## BRAND VALUE OF RIVAL

| BRAND VALUES              | ATTRIBUTES  |
|---------------------------|---|
| Quality                   | Terroirs - Plantings - Small yields<br>Vinification practices and methods worthy of the best crus classés   |
| Authenticity / Engagement | Know-how - Tradition<br>Respect for the vines and the soil<br>Quality winemaking to bring out the best expression of terroir  |
| Ambition                  | To be the equivalent of a grand cru classé<br>Experience and knowledge of the terroirs by Stephan von Neipperg.<br>The finest technical and human resources throughout the entire production chain. |
| Rarity                    | Confidence in the ability to do well each vintage<br>Limited production<br>Distribution through selected partners<br>Parcel selection of old vines for "Le Rival"                                   |
| Historical                | The cross at RIVAL marks the route to Santiago de Compostela in Saint-Emilion   |



## LE RIVAL



- LE RIVAL is a rare wine, the unique expression of an exceptional terroir !
- The vineyard is located on the archaeological area of the Gallo-Roman villa Lucciacus which gave its name to the present village of Lussac: the excavations in the area show that vineyards were planted here in antiquity and the land is heir to a long and rich history.
- In the RIVAL vineyard, Stephan von Neipperg has identified two exceptional plots : a light clay and gravel surface with limestone rock outcropping in places, the varietals are old Merlot vines (the oldest planted in 1951 and 1962) grafted onto Riparia Gloire rootstock well suited to these limestone soils.
- In 2009 these two parcels, hardly four hectares in size, produced grapes of exceptional quality. The resulting wine made confirmed these grapes' incredible potential: power and length, great structure and velvety tannins still in their youth, with a complex, aromatic finish.
- The wine is composed of 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. It is a great wine for aging, with a potential of more than 20 years.
- *"...one of the finest Lussacs I've tasted, the equal of a great Saint-Emilion... dense ruby/purple color, notes of kirsch and cassis, earthy and spicy with a good minerality; the wood is well-incorporated; freshness, precision, power and richness..." (Robert Parker)*
- The Rival is an exceptional wine, rare and only produced in exceptional vintages; the magnified expression of very old Merlot planted on the its preferred terroir.



## LE RIVAL : MEDALS & PRESS



### Le Rival 2009



### Concours des Meilleurs Vins Français aux USA - MIAMI 2011

OR / GOLD

### AWC VIENNA Int'l Wine Challenge - 2011

OR / GOLD

«C'est le premier vrai millésime de Didier Miqueu et Stephan von Neipperg sur ce plateau du Rival, et la réussite est au rendez-vous pour ce vin bien structuré, avec ses tanins élégants et séveux, de belle dimension.» (16/20) Bettane & Desseauve 2010

«The 2009 Soleil Le Rival, which comes from neighboring Lussac St.-Emilion, is composed of 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc grown in the vineyard's finest parcels. An outstanding effort, it is one of the finest Lussac St.-Emilions I have tasted, having more in common with a top St.-Emilion. A dense ruby/purple color is accompanied by notes of kirsch, black currants, earth, spice, and a liquid minerality. Its oak component is well-concealed by the wine's good freshness, precision, power, and richness. It should drink well for 5-7 years.» (Tasted once.) (91) Robert Parker 2010

«Two new wines for me, Stefan von Neipperg is the force behind both of these estates.» Robert Parker 2010

### Le Rival 2010

«A beam of cherry, red currant and raspberry has superfresh acidity and a mouthwatering mineral edge that focuses the finish. More pure than dense.» (88-91) James Molesworth 2011

«Pendant à Lussac de SOLEIL, le cru s'affirme avec un certain éclat : volume intense et puissant, grande structure, longueur.» (16/20) Bettane & Desseauve - TAST n°70 2011

«Grande Réussite !» RVF Juin 2011



## CHÂTEAU CROIX DU RIVAL



- On entering the vineyards, the cross at RIVAL formerly marked the Saint-Emilion portion of the road to Santiago de Compostella.
- The rest of the vineyard will produce a great wine, Château CROIX DU RIVAL, dominated by Merlot, and typical of this great terroir: the uncontested equal of the best Grand Cru Saint-Emilion.
- The classic expression of a great terroir, made like the best “grand crus” of Saint-Emilion.
- A classic Right Bank assemblage composed of 80% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon.
- Château Croix du Rival is a delicious wine with powerful aromas of red fruits, soft tannins and well balanced structure.
- It has a capacity for long cellaring, with a decade’s aging potential.



## CHÂTEAU CROIX DU RIVAL : MEDALS & PRESS

### Château Croix du Rival 2008



**Concours de BORDEAUX - 2011**

ARGENT / SILVER

**IWC International Wine Challenge CANADA - 2011**

COMMENDED

**AWC VIENNA Int'l Wine Challenge - 2010**

ARGENT / SILVER

«Shows whiffs of chestnut and tobacco, backed by fig paste and mulled black currant fruit, with a nice fleshy finish. This has solid guts for the vintage.» (89) James Molesworth Février 2011

### Château Croix du Rival 2009



**Concours des Vins de LYON - 2011**

OR / GOLD

**Sélection Mondiale des Vins CANADA - 2011**

ARGENT / SILVER

**Concours de BORDEAUX - 2011**

ARGENT / SILVER

*Coup de cœur dégustation Wuhan*

**Concours des Meilleurs Vins Français aux USA - MIAMI 2011**

ARGENT / SILVER

**AWC VIENNA Int'l Wine Challenge - 2011**

OR / GOLD