



CHÂTEAU GLORIA





Saint-Julien is the smallest of the major appellations of the Médoc, with 910 hectares of vines. It also has the greatest concentration of 1855 classified growths – 11, to be precise. But Henri Martin, born at Château Gruaud-Larose in 1903, believes there is room for one more.

Wine has been running in his family's blood for 300 years, and his insider knowledge, charm and dynamism will soon make him one of the most legendary and best-loved entrepreneurs of the Médoc.





HENRI MARTIN

## A Creation Story



Gloria is a creation story, beginning in the late 1930s with a single hectare of land. It is a rare entrepreneurial triumph that spanned the working lifetime of one man.

Parcel by parcel, Henri Martin would craft a splendid legacy, and reshape the face of the Saint-Julien appellation. By acquiring land primarily from the most revered 1855 Classified Growths, he would guarantee a quality worthy of the name he dreamt of.

Today, Gloria radiates the ambition, devotion and joyful energy that he poured into his vineyards. And while the estate could never re-write the historic classification, Henri Martin would mischievously raise his glass “to the most classified estate in Saint-Julien”.

Henri is not born into wealth, but he knows the terroir of Saint-Julien like the back of his hand. He spends his childhood and young adult years wandering its vineyards and woodlands, learning the intricacies of its deep, gently-sloping gravel. Throughout his life, he always refers to Saint-Julien with admiration, as a land that is “bénédicté des dieux” or “blessed by the gods”.

His father, Alfred Martin, is a cooper with an entrepreneurial streak. His growing barrel making business is housed in the winery of Château Saint-Pierre, in the village of Saint-Julien-Beychevelle.



The cooper's craft combines creativity and meticulous attention to detail, which Henri inherits, along with a deep fondness for the small village in which he is born and raised, in rhythm with the terroir of Saint-Julien.

Henri is intelligent, ambitious and commercially-aware. A true child of the village, he is well-known and liked locally, and builds excellent relations with estate owners and the local community.





## A Magical Chorus



## FROM ONE HECTARE, A KINGDOM

Realising that he could only ever compete with the Grands Crus if he had terroir as great as theirs, he set himself a single rule: whenever possible, to purchase vineyards from classified growths.

And so, in the late 1930s, Henri begins to set his dreams in motion. In spite of a viticulture system still fragile and unsettled after the shock of the Great War, and Europe on the brink of yet another devastating conflict, he makes his first vineyard purchase of a single hectare of vines.

Soon after, in 1942, he brought Château Gloria to light, in reference to the extraordinary choir of diverse vineyard voices he imagines assembling and unifying. He marks this moment by expanding his holdings, with his first major purchase of six hectares from a Grand Cru Classé.

## A MAN, A MISSION

The Gloria project promises to bring festivity, optimism and joy back to Saint-Julien at a period of great uncertainty and post-war gloom.

By 1955, Château Gloria comprises vineyards from eight different classified growths, four of them listed in the second rank in 1855,



just behind those wines many connoisseurs consider to be the four greatest in the world.

As the market for fine wine begins to recover and France benefits from a thirty-year streak of economic growth, known as the Trente Glorieuses, Gloria goes from strength to strength.

Through a combination of shrewd acquisitions and endless re-investment of all profits into his vineyards, Henri earns a reputation as a leader.

His tireless devotion leads to him being elected President of the Inter-professional Committee of Bordeaux Wines in 1956, and appointed to administer the estate of Château Latour when new ownership takes over in 1963.

Gloria creates wine of rare charm and generosity, with a bright red and black-berry fruit core of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Generous and silk-like in texture, it conveys the rich perfume of Saint-Julien with powerful structure and energy. The estate's 50-hectare vineyard is the most expansive in Saint-Julien, connecting this appellation's 11 classified growths.

An uncommon diversity of soils and micro-climates is the secret to Gloria's harmonious and consistent voice, which sings out in every blend, vintage after vintage.

The Gloria vineyard obtains organic certification with the 2024 vintage.

Château Gloria is a charming wine, generous, harmonious, cheerful, lively, fragrant, with red and black berries, silky, spicy, supple and playful.



## A Glorious Song





The Gloria project is a promise of festivity, optimism and joy for Saint-Julien, in a period of great uncertainty and gloom in post-war France.

### AN IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

They say entrepreneurs spot opportunities where others see problems.

In the mid-1930s, even the great classified growths were experiencing serious financial and commercial pressures. Many were looking to make savings or to consolidate their vineyards, and Henri Martin begins to dream that he might one day put his unique combination of knowledge, grit and vision to work.

Believing he would never be able to acquire a classified estate – they rarely passed between different families, let alone beyond the upper classes – he devises an innovative plan to build a new brand by purchasing and assembling exceptional vineyards from classified estates.

And so, the game of persuasion began. Acquiring and assembling these small pieces would be the work of a lifetime, and a dream that Henri did not dare share with anybody – even his closest friends and family.

Henri's goal was not just to produce a great wine, but to build a legacy

that would stand alongside the greatest of Bordeaux, a testament to perseverance and disruptive spirit.

## CONVERTING AMERICA

In the 1960s and 1970s, Henri dares to dream again. This time, he imagines Château Gloria becoming an international superstar at a time when only the First Growths were truly known on the other side of the Atlantic.

As he tours the USA, presiding at press conferences and banquets, and acting as an ambassador for Bordeaux, his disruptive approach, easy-going charm and strong charisma win over the hearts of American wine lovers.

By the time 15 cases of Château Gloria 1961 are donated and served at the annual New York banquet of the Commanderie du Bontemps du Médoc in 1975, the Gloria name is on the lips of every serious wine buyer and collector.

Henri understands the importance of the media, and catches the attention of the editor of the New York Times with his story and his wine, which is bright, floral, and rich at the same time. A long-format article in the NYT Magazine in 1976, entitled 'The Miracle of Château Gloria', generates extraordinary demand for the wines across America.



Henri Martin's achievements are hailed and Gloria's reputation is forever secured, just as its vineyard has grown to span approximately 50 hectares.

Henri's devotion is tireless, and his mission is clear: to shine a light on the potential of Saint-Julien's terroir and to create smooth and expressive wines that bring joy to all who taste them.

#### LEAVING TWO LEGACIES

With his initial dream realised, Henri sees there is only thing left to complete his legacy. In 1982, he makes an offer and acquires Château Saint-Pierre, the 1855-classified estate at the heart of his home village, and the place where his father had built his business.

Gloria would always be known as his creation and his life's work, and would be lovingly continued by his family.

For although Henri Martin would be remembered as a rule-breaker and mischief-maker, he has always known that the finest vineyard land in Bordeaux is – and would forever be – the land of the classified growths.



G

GALILEO





[www.chateau-gloria.com](http://www.chateau-gloria.com)