



“In 2007, the Cahors vineyard collectively opted for a communication approach entitled ‘Cahors Malbec,’ which is still implemented today. The objective was clear: To become the capital of terroir Malbec. But beyond that objective, which could be described as intermediary, the genuine ambition of the Cahors vineyard for the past 20 years has been to be recognized as one of the leading terroir wines in the world, taking all varieties into account. To achieve that, winemakers invested in scientific analysis of their terroirs during the 1990s. They wanted to understand their great diversity and know their genuine potential. Of the 21,700 hectares listed as AOC Cahors in 1971, several thousand hectares were considered by the study as a possible basis for first-growth classification or even grand cru classification. This is exceptional.”

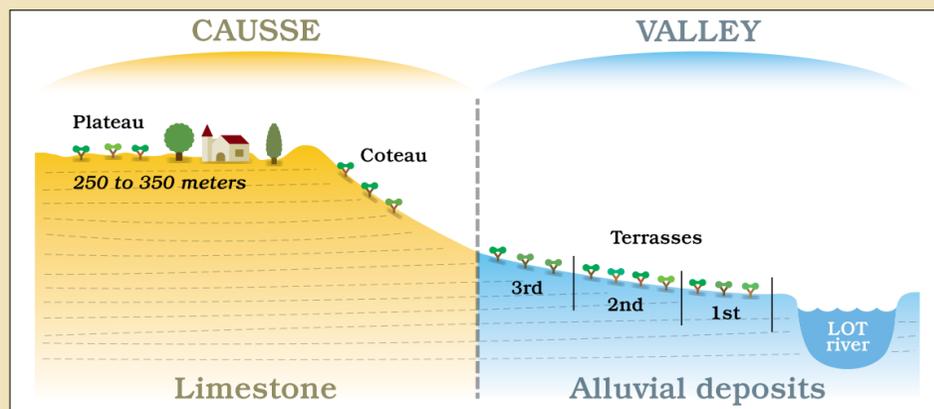
—Maurin Bérenger
President of the Cahors AOC



CAHORS *The Terroir Malbec*

“New Energy, New Inspiration and Great Wines”

—Eric Asimov, *The New York Times*



“When we first arrived in Cahors, we were surprised by the quality of the terroirs. Immediately, we said to ourselves, ‘This region has gold under its feet.’ Soils play an important role in lending typical features and complexity to wine. The Cahors vineyard in fact consists of two major types of terroirs, with opposed geological origins, which is quite unusual. On the one hand, on the limestone Causse, i.e., at an altitude of 250 to 350 meters, you have cracked limestone terroirs dating to the Jurassic period, like in Chablis, and on the other hand, in the valley, there are alluvial terroirs linked to siliceous pebble deposits brought from the mountains of the center of France and left by the river in the form of Terrasses. This is limestone and we should bear in mind that such rock represents only 7% of the rock on our planet, corresponding to places where some of the very best red wines

in the world are crafted. Like in Burgundy, the Cahors vineyard is very rich in limestone, on the ‘plateau’ and ‘coteau,’ but also in the valley, with a third Terrasse that in some places benefits from limestone screes from the Causse.”

—Lydia and Claude Bourguignon
French soil scientist & soil microbiologist



“Since the second half of the 1990s, Cahors winemakers and merchants focused on changing their product line by making wines that were not only more luscious but also finer, more complex. This ‘Cahors (R)evolution’ in terms of quality and style accelerated some 10 years ago with the arrival of a new generation of winemakers. This explains why Cahors was the vineyard of 2016 in France, today attracts prestigious bodegas from Argentina and, a few years from now, will not necessarily need to indicate the Malbec varietal on its labels, as the word Cahors itself will be synonymous with a great Malbec-based terroir wine, like a Barolo with a Nebbiolo base or a Burgundy with a Pinot Noir base.”

—Pascal Verhaeghe
President of the Union
Interprofessionnelle du Vin de Cahors



“The more popular Malbec becomes, the more stories we hear about it.

This is only natural, but sometimes you have to be careful what you believe. Such imagination and, in some cases, such bad faith sometimes come as a great surprise. An example? The theory which is quite widespread in Argentina, according to which Malbec means “bad mouth” or bad taste in the French region where the varietal was born, seemingly a sign of the inability of the locals to assess all the aptitudes of the grape. In fact, the origin of the name has nothing to do with that. It comes from the surname of an owner, Mr. Malbeck. We don’t know much about him except that he brought the varietal to the Bordeaux region at the end of the 18th century. And that he was so convinced and convincing that Malbec ended up covering a good part of the Bordeaux vineyard in the 19th century, in particular among the growths classified in 1855. So it would be a very popular bad taste. Another example? It is said that Malbec has been present since antiquity. This claim is certainly excessive.

The duty of historians like myself is to convey what the sources tell us, but also what they don’t tell us. For the time being, what we know is that the varietal has been significantly present in Cahors since the 16th century at least. François Roaldès (1519–1589), Professor of Law at the University of Cahors, wrote one of the few treatises on vineyards of the time and tells us that the varietal named Auxerrois was the main varietal in the vineyards around the town. Are we sure that both names, Auxerrois and Malbec, refer to the same plant? Absolutely, as genetics enlightened historians and dispelled doubt.”

—Léonard Laborie
French historian at The Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS)