

Chateau Gazin Rocquencourt

Owned by the Bonnie family of Chateau Malartic Lagraviere fame, Chateau Gazin Rocquencourt is also in the appellation of Pessac Leognan, almost directly opposite Olivier Bernard's Domaine de Chevalier.

The Bonnie family bought the chateau in 2006, and have since done extensive work replanting vines, draining the soils, changing the directions of the rows of vines, increasing density up to 10,000 vines per hectare (maximum allowable in Bordeaux) - and also renovating the chateau itself (particularly impressive is the newly installed indoor heated swimming pool!).

Before the Bonnies, the chateau was first built in the 17th century, and was originally known as 'Chateau Gazen et Bourbon', then just Chateau Gazin until 1995 when it took on its current name (I guess Chateau Gazin in Pomerol wasn't too happy with the potential confusion, although not sure why the 'e' ever became an 'i').

In February 2006, the Bonnie family bought it with, in their words, the intention to 'bring out once again the excellent gravel terroir of Gazin Rocquencourt, whose enormous potential had long been recognised by the experts' (They meant here that *Feret*, perhaps the most long-standing chateaux book in the region, wrote about its wines in the 17th century). Once they had bought it, the first thing they did was a soil profile - leading to the changes mentioned above, and the gradual replanting of grape varieties to match the right terroir. At the same time, they have built a new winery (and those who have visited the winery at Malartic Lagraviere will not be surprised to learn that this one is very high tech, using the same gravity-led system, but with the latest-generation stainless steel vats that are double-lined (*double parois* in French) to give the same kind of 'inert temperature control' as you get from cement.

And the family itself, Jean Jacques and Severine, have moved in with their young twins (the parents get the place at Malartic Lagraviere, although they spend eight months of the year in Paris and elsewhere, with around four months at Malartic).

Château Gazin Rocquencourt, is 28 hectares, with 22 hectares of vines (reds: 55% cabernet sauvignon 45% merlot. No whites). They also have 53 ha (46 in red and 7 in white) at Château Malartic-Lagravière, Grand Cru Classé de Graves - bringing a total of 70 hectares in the Pessac Leognan appellation.

Without a doubt a family to watch.

Contacts: 74 Avenue de Cestas, 33850 Léognan (Gazin) 43, avenue de mont de marsan, 33850 Léognan (Malartic)

Tel : +33 (0)5 56 64 77 89 Fax : +33 (0)5 56 64 77 89
www.malartic-lagraviere.com/ (currently no Gazin site)