

CHÂTEAU
G A B Y

CANON-FRONSAC



PRESS PACK



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TOM SULLIVAN,

A HINT OF AMERICA IN BORDEAUX WINES

In September 2016, rumors were rife in Bordeaux that Tom Sullivan, a Boston businessman had just acquired four estates on the right bank.

“I bought Château Gaby, because it was the only property whose name I could pronounce», grins Tom. Right at the top of the hill the old post relay station overlooks the vines, while lower down lies the village of Fronsac and the peaceful River Dordogne.

Was it this attractive countryside that appealed to the Boston-born buyer with Irish blood in his veins?

«I came to wine late in life, but I find it fascinating. However, I was never interested in American wineries, because the wines they produce are often very tannic and one vintage is pretty much like the next. I wanted to invest in a Bordeaux estate. I had a look in the Medoc, but it was far too expensive. So, then I was shown the brochure for Château Gaby in the Canon-Fronsac appellation area, and Château Moya, a Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux estate. I liked what I tasted from the different tanks and detected a lot of potential for development.»

He bought Gaby and Moya first. Then last September, he became the owner of Château du Parc with its 5.5 hectares (13.6 acres), a Saint-Emilion Grand Cru property that belonged to the consultant oenologist, Alain Raynaud. Finally, he purchased Château Auguste

with its 32 hectares (79 acres) in Saint-Aubin-de-Branne. No nonsense.

Tom Sullivan, 57, who made his fortune in hardwood flooring and shares his time between Florida and Massachusetts, has invested seriously into winegrowing. He is already considered in the US to be a very shrewd businessman.

“We really fell in love with both the wines and the place.”

While Gaby, Moya and Château du Parc will continue to produce red wine, Tom Sullivan wants to launch an archetypal rosé at Château Auguste.

«I'm going to call my rosé «Dancing Mermaids». I like the image. And Hubert de Boüard, who owns Château Angélu in Saint-Emilion will advise us on growing the rosé and making it.»

Damien Landouar, the technical director, is up for the challenge. Tom Sullivan intends to sell the lion's share of his 400,000-bottle production in the U.S. by setting up his own trading business, while looking out for other estate acquisitions in different appellation areas. To do this, he has proactively branded his properties under the TOM SULLIVAN VINS & PROPRIÉTÉS umbrella with the export alter ego TOM SULLIVAN WINES & PROPERTIES, and has started advertising and promoting the complete range.

“ I prefer
the elegance
of Bordeaux
right bank wines
to the power
of Californian wines.”





“

We're constantly
on the lookout,
we like following leads,
we have a real research
and development
mindset.

”

DAMIEN LANDOUAR

LOVE OF NATURE,

IS BEHIND THE LOGICAL STEP FROM TIMBER TO VINES

Having succeeded massively in the timber flooring sector, Tom Sullivan has become especially appreciative of wood as a natural material. By turning to working with vines, he returns to something he has always loved: trying to craft the raw product of nature.

In 2014, Château Gaby embarked on a process to convert to organic agriculture. Its certification from the 2018 vintage onwards represents a meaningful step in this progression. In fact, at Château Gaby, it has been a priority to take environmental balances into account for many years. In 1997, the vineyard was managed rationally and later organically without any claim for recognition being made. These were well-pondered choices and a personal commitment taken by the owners and the technical director to take care of the environment and protect customers' and of course estate workers' health.

"We only ever use natural, organic products to treat the vines. In the vineyard, we are constantly on the lookout for

any disease or parasite that could cause harm. We carry out treatment depending on the weather. Most of the work in the vines is by hand with a team of three to six people."

Tillage is mainly mechanical, while special attention is paid to protecting good, healthy micro-organic life. A horse plough is used on some plots with the help of an expert partner. Two horses have been acquired, which are currently being trained to plough, which is all part of a more profound respect of the vines and learning the appropriate techniques.

The grapes are picked by hand at Château Gaby. The Gerbebaude harvest celebration is always a very meaningful event that crowns another year of life at the property.

In the winery, the focus is on using the right technology that will pamper the grapes as whole fruit. Dry ice is preferred to using sulphur, which is kept down to a minimum.

Protected from oxidation and harmful bacteria, the grapes are left to develop the aromas specific to their variety.

The first stages in winemaking are considered very important. Before fermentation is allowed to commence, hard work is devoted to extracting supple tannins and obtaining expressive fruit and very elegant wines.

"To make Gaby Cuvée, we do things differently. We use the dry ice to carry out a cold soak with the temperature of the whole tank at zero degrees centigrade. This makes the grapes burst and enables a deeper extraction of tannin, aromas, anthocyanins, polyphenols and color."

"Moving Château Gaby to organic winegrowing is the result of a management style based on environmental principles that we committed to several years ago"

DAMIEN LANDOUAR

CHÂTEAU GABY

THE LOVLIEST ESTATE IN THE FRONSAC APPELLATION

Nestling on its hillside overlooking a gentle meander of the Dordogne, Château Gaby is like a jewel in its setting. There is nothing like Château Gaby. It is like a perfect picture continuously re-painted in the changing light and morning mists, worthy of the best Impressionists. Perched at the top of the hill, the lovely 18th century building that used to be Fronsac's post relay station enjoys a commanding, outstanding view. Its vines unroll their rows from its feet down the slope, embracing every wrinkle and soaking up the sunshine to produce the finest fruit. Lower down, a few winegrowers' houses and woody hedges are dotted about forming a beautiful rural scene. And in the distance like a winding thread, a gentle meander of the River Dordogne draws the eye, inviting meditation.



RENEWAL AND CONTINUITY,

FROM PAST TO PRESENT

The first vines were planted on Gaby's hills around 1660. Vines were already cultivated of course on Fronsac land during the Gallo-Roman period, but winegrowing took off significantly in the Middle Ages. In the beginning, wine sales were mainly directed at England and the local wines were very much liked at the royal court. Today, they are enjoyed all over the world. A long time ago, Château Gaby positioned itself amongst the best Fronsac wines as a result of a quality focus that has remained practically uninterrupted.

The Gaby estate belonged to the De Kermoal family for more than 250 years. After changing hands twice in quick succession, the Curl family took over in 2006. At that time, considerable investment and restoration work was lavished on the estate at all levels. David and Geneviève Curl developed their ambition to make Château Gaby one of the greatest right bank wines and a leader of its appellation.

The Curls left in November 2016 to focus their attention on their Moya Meacker estate in South Africa and sold Château Gaby to Tom Sullivan the American entrepreneur and wine enthusiast.

When Tom began travelling round the Bordeaux area with his wife Britta, he still owned no vineyard, but had decided he wanted to buy a great estate. After visiting about twenty properties, he fell in love with Château Gaby and for several months now, he has invested his limitless energy in pursuing the objectives of quality and precision set by his predecessors. The technical director Damien Landouar, who has been pampering the vines since 1998, is supporting him in this new venture. Damien loves this terroir and oversees the work in the vines and winemaking, carried out by his robust, enthusiastic and creative team.

“
We were looking
for something
authentic
and sincere
with real
personality.”

TOM SULLIVAN

Vintage after vintage, Château Gaby produces exceptional wines, whose uniform quality are recognized internationally.



AN UNPARALLELED TERROIR

WAITING TO BE REVEALED

The clayey limestone hills of the Canon-Fronsac appellation area boast the same characteristics as those of Saint-Emilion. Château Gaby's vines grow mainly at the top of the hill in asteriated limestone and along the combe facing south. Natural drainage combined with perfect exposure to the sun produce very favorable ripening conditions for all the grape varieties, especially the Cabernet Franc, which is used in increasing proportions in the final blend. With 80% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon cultivated on a total of 16 hectares (40 acres), Damien Landouar has a full range of combinations to make well-balanced wines with great uniformity in their quality. His job is clear: bring out the intrinsic qualities of an unparalleled terroir

The Canon-Fronsac appellation area
280 hectares (692 acres)
47 properties
Average size: 5.9 hectares (12.4 acres)

TOM SULLIVAN

Tom Sullivan is the founder and chairman of the board of Lumber Liquidators, the largest hardwood flooring retailer in the U.S. with one of the widest offerings marketed under brands for homebuilding and non-residential solutions, such as Bellawood prefinished hardwood flooring that carries a 50-year guarantee.

Since opening its first outlet in West Roxbury, Mass. in 1996, Lumber Liquidators has enjoyed robust growth. The brand now has over 200 outlets in 46 states and more than 750 employees. Tom moved his company headquarters to Colonial Heights, Virginia in 2000, but his business rapidly outpaced the capacity of this new distribution center. The head office is now in Toano, Virginia with a 27,000-sq.-m (over 290,000-sq.-ft) distribution center. The last chapter of Tom's dream came true, when Lumber Liquidators went public at the New York Stock Exchange on 9th November 2007.

Tom Sullivan is involved in many philanthro-

pic organizations, including Erik Weihenmayer's School Tours (Erik was the first blind climber to conquer Everest). Tom is the administrator of the National Braille Press and sits on the boards of several private businesses.

In 2003, Ernst and Young nominated him as Virginia Entrepreneur of the Year, and Tom received their Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 2008 in the Retail and Consumer Goods category. More recently, he has developed a love of wine and today owns four leading Bordeaux estates: Château Gaby, which was elected Best Bordeaux Wine in 2012, Château Moya, a Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux appellation wine, Château du Parc, a Saint-Emilion Grand Cru and Château Auguste, a Bordeaux.

Tom enjoys water sports, travel and dabbles in real estate. He is actively involved in timber purchasing and marketing for Lumber Liquidators. He modestly puts his success and that of his business down to three basic principles: hard work, devotion and perseverance.



DAMIEN LANDOUAR

Damien Landouar was born in Saintes, an hour and a half's drive due north of Bordeaux, on 1st June 1977. His parents worked on the railways. Damien always loved nature and decided very early to pursue agricultural studies. He earned his school leavers' qualification (baccalaureate) specialising in agronomy in 1994.

Still attracted to leading a life close to nature, he left in 1996 for farming college to study for a higher technical diploma at the Vayres Rural Institute near Bordeaux, while working at the same time with the aim of improving his knowledge of winegrowing, oenology and the wine trade.

He then decided to give himself time off and enlisted in the French army for a spell of military training in La Rochelle.

In 1997, he joined Vignobles Antoine Khayat, which included Château Gaby in Fronsac. At the same time, he gained hands-on experience by carrying out a series of study periods at Château Gazin under the supervision of Jean-Pierre Gasteuil. At Gaby, he was mentored by the owner Antoine Khayat, a financier from UK. After years of practical experience and leaning more and more towards vine

husbandry, Damien has followed modern trends and committed to an environmentally friendly approach by applying organic methods in the Château Moya and Gaby vineyards, where certification should be obtained in 2018.

“The move to organic winegrowing at Château Gaby is the result of environmentally friendly management principles that we committed to several years ago.”

In 2007, for family reasons, Antoine Khayat sold Château Gaby to David Curl, a Canadian, who was also a financier and owner of the Moya Meaker vineyard in South Africa. Following the acquisition, Damien was able to continue his efforts on the estate while observing the effects of its transformation.

In 2016, an American, Tom Sullivan, acquired Château Gaby in the Canon-Fronsac appellation, Château Moya, a Castillon-Côtes-de-Bordeaux property, Château du Parc, a Saint-Emilion Grand Cru and Château Auguste, a Bordeaux. He entrusted the management of all four estates to the man, who knows them better than anyone else, Damien Landouar.



THE WINES

CHÂTEAU GABY

Château Gaby is a blend of three grape varieties - Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon - from a 14.5-hectares (3.8 acres) of old vines grown on clayey limestone hills..

Lovely color, intense red with bright tints.

Pretty red fruit hints on the nose and in some vintages black fruit too. Discreetly woody that highlights the classy nature of this wine. Good, no-nonsense attack, moving attractively to red, then black fruit, very ripe, very elegant tastes with slightly toasted and spicy hints that linger on to the finish. What makes it stand out: complexity and wealth.



CUVÉE GABY

Cuvée Gaby is made with grapes from the best plots of the property, which make up 1.5 hectares (3.7 acres) on the limestone plateau with more complex soil types, made up of 80% of Merlot and 20% of Cabernet Franc.

It is made in open-topped wooden vats and the cap is regularly punched. This technique was first used in Burgundy and enables the gentle extraction of tannins making subtle, perfectly elegant wines. The maturation occurs in French oak barrels during 18 to 24 months. It has a lovely deep color with bright tints. The bouquet is very elegant and multilayered with hints of spice and black and red fruit that delicately intermingle. On the palate, this wine is delicious and complex with round, silky tannins. Throughout the tasting Gaby Cuvée displays multiple layers and is a very subtle, elegant wine.



TECHNICAL SHEET

2016

OWNER	Tom Sullivan
VINEYARD AREA	16 hectares (39.5 acres)
SOIL TYPES	clayey limestone and siliceous clay
PLANTING DENSITY	6,600 vines per hectare
AVERAGE AGE OF THE VINES	36 years
CULTIVATION	Conversion to organic agriculture - mixed Guyot pruning method
SOIL MANAGEMENT	tillage, mechanical weed removal
GRAPE VARIETIES	80% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc, 10 % Cabernet Sauvignon
YIELD	35-40 hectoliters per hectare
HARVEST	By hand using crates. The fruit is sorted in the vineyard and in the winery.
WINEMAKING TECHNIQUES	The fruit is vinified plot-by-plot. Cold soak before fermentation. Fermentation in concrete tanks and wooden vats, the cap is punched down.
SOAK AFTER FERMENTATION	2 to 5 days
MALOLACTIC TRANSFORMATION	40% in new oak barrels.
AGED IN WOOD	For 18 to 24 months in French oak barrels
ANNUAL PRODUCTION	80,000 bottles



CHÂTEAU GABY

2016

James Suckling: **91-92/100**

«Very linear and focused with dark fruit and blackberry and licorice character. Medium to full body, firm tannins and a beautiful finish. So long and bright».

Jeff Leve: **86-88/100**

«Medium bodied, approachable, with a bit too much oak, that overwhelms the fruit in the finish».

Marcus del Monego: **90/100**

«Dark purple red with violet hue. Succulent fruit and hints of dark chocolate, vanilla and slight toasting aroma. On the palate well structured with ripe fruit, excellent mouthfeel, firm but mature tannins and convincing length».

Jean-Marc Quarin: **15.5/20**

«Best wine ever made».

2015

Bettane et Desseauve: **93/100**

Wine Cellar Insider: **88-90/100**

Jancis Robinson: **17(+)/20**

Markus Desl Monego: **87/100**

B My Bordeaux: **85-87/100**

2012

Wine Spectator James Molesworth: **88-91/100**

Jancis Robinson: **16/20**

Decanter: **15/20**

2011

Robert Parker: **90 -92/100**

Decanter: **14.5/20**

Jancis Robinson: **14.5/20**

Silver Medal @ 3rd challenge to the best french wines for USA, 2013

2010

Wine Spectator James Molesworth: **90-93/100**

Robert Parker: **87-89/100**

René Gabriel: **17/20**

France Art de Vivre Guide 2013: **93/100**

2009

Wine Spectator James Molesworth: **91/100**

Decanter: **16/20**

Izak Litwar: **90/100**

Jane Anson: **89-92/100**

Gold Medal @ 2nd challenge to the best french wines for USA, 2012

2008

Wine Spectator James Molesworth: **90/100**

Decanter: **16/20**

Le Point: **16/20**

Silver Medal @ 2nd challenge to the best french wines for USA, 2012

2007

Wine Spectator James Molesworth: **89/100**

Decanter: **** **16.5/20**

Le Point: **15/20**

2006

Wine Spectator James Molesworth: **88/100**

Decanter: ****(*)



CHATEAU
GABY
2012
GRAND VIN DE BORDEAUX

CUVÉE GABY

2016

James Suckling: **92 - 93/100**

«A little more depth of fruit than the first wine. Lovely polished tannins that are ever so velvety. Medium to full body. Texture is here. This comes from slopes with limestones soil».

2009

No. 7 out of 671 wines

Judged by the Grand International Wine Jury in the Great Bordeaux Wine Classification.

2008

No. 1 out of 596 wines

Judged by THE GRAND INTERNATIONAL WINE JURY in the Great Bordeaux

2007

No. 76 out of 760 wines

Judged by the Grand International Wine Jury in the Great Bordeaux Wine Classification





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