



# Château COUHINS - LURTON

**Cru Classé de Graves**

**Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée Pessac-Léognan**

## Background



### **A family of rich Bordeaux lawyers, owners of Bourdieu de La Gravette from 1700 to 1805**

**Known in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century** under the name "Bourdieu de La Gravette", the Couhins estate belonged to Maître Alphonse Banchereau, a famous Bordeaux lawyer. The size of the estate was virtually identical to what it is today: ten hectares of farmland and vineyards on the finest gravelly rises in the parish of Villenave d'Ornon.

When Alphonse Banchereau died in 1730, and after several inheritance disputes were settled, Couhins passed into the hands of his eldest son, Jean-Baptiste Banchereau, a Bordeaux lawyer like his father.

**Until 1805**, Couhins benefited from a long period of stability thanks to ownership by the same family, who gave the estate its present-day appearance, including the manor house. They made this a calm, pleasant place. Jean-Baptiste Banchereau loved Couhins, located just a few leagues from Bordeaux, but unspeakably serene. The lawyer frequently went there to oversee work in the vines and promoted his wines to numerous clients, "négociants" and important persons. He died during a visit to the property he so loved.



### **A period of strong instability (1805 - 1855)...**

After the death of Jean-Baptiste Banchereau's widow in 1805, the estate went through a turbulent period and changed hands many times. Owners included: Dame Bonhomme-Lapointe in 1822, Constant Mallet, a linen bleacher, in 1832, Charles Mougenot in 1844, Antoine Pestré in 1847, and Antoine Lair, a wood merchant, in 1855.

Starting from this date, Couhins achieved a certain stability and continuity.





## **Arrival of the Hanappier family: 80 years of prosperity and a well-deserved classification (1883 –1967)...**

**In 1883**, Catherine Sérès, granddaughter of Antoine Lair and wife of Victor Hanappier, inherited Château Couhins.

**In 1902**, Henri and Georges Hanappier, their two sons, jointly inherited the estate. The Hanappier family, originally from the Orléans region of France, first came to settle in Bordeaux in 1817. They founded a major wine and spirits firm, Hanappier & Cie, in the Chartrons district.

The Hannapiers and then the Gasquetons (who married into the family in the 20<sup>th</sup> century), used Couhins as their country residence. Meanwhile, the estate acquired a fine reputation for its outstanding red and white wines.

These have long been appreciated by connoisseurs and won a silver medal at the 1895 Bordeaux Exhibition. The estate also received a distinction in 1896 for the impeccable state of its vineyards.

Its qualities were officially recognized in 1959 by the I.N.A.O, which classified the white wine of Couhins a Graves great growth. Although red wine varieties predominated at Couhins from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century until 1910, they accounted for less than a hectare at this time.



## **1967 - The arrival of André Lurton**

**In 1967**, Madame Gasqueton decided to grub up the vines at Couhins. Informed about this by one of his friends, André Lurton offered to look after the vines and preserve the château's winegrowing vocation.

Three years later, the Gasqueton family sold the vineyard to the SAFER (Société d'Aménagement Foncier et d'Établissement Rural), which undertook to divide and sell it.

Gilbert Conte and his wife, pharmacists in Villenave d'Ornon, bought the château building and abandoned cellars, whereas some forty hectares of vines were sold to I.N.R.A. (Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique). The leasehold agreement concluded a few years earlier with André Lurton was renewed until 1978, when INRA took back the vines at Couhins to manage on their own.

In the meanwhile, in 1972, André Lurton had acquired a beautiful section of the vineyard from INRA, effectively dividing the great growth in two.

**In 1992**, André Lurton purchased the château, the cellars, the outbuildings and the beautiful grounds from Monsieur and Madame Conte, thereby completing the creation of Château Couhins Lurton.

**In 1998**, he undertook the total reconstruction and renovation of the cellars and the château.

The grounds and gardens were designed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the famous landscape artist Lebreton. These have now recovered their former splendour thanks to the Bordeaux architect Anouck Debarre.

**In September 2002**, the first red wine grapes, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, from a beautiful plot with gravel soil, were brought to be crushed in Couhins-Lurton's brand new cellar. A tradition going back more than a century was thus reborn.

In fact, Couhins produced 90% red wine until 1910!

Recently-produced red wines from Château Couhins have received good scores from critics, and their production represents a true renaissance.



## **Wines produced by the château**

Château Couhins-Lurton White | Château Couhins-Lurton Red

