



Chateau *Ampelia*

### **Castillon-Cotes de Bordeaux 2015**

The Despagne family has owned Chateau Grand Corbin Despagne since 1812. In 1996 François Despagne inherited the estate from his family, making him the seventh generation at the helm of this Saint-Emilion property.

François then eagerly sought a new challenge and created a new vineyard –this time, not in Saint-Emilion, but in Castillon – Côtes de Bordeaux, the bordering appellation.

In 1999 Francois and his wife Murielle Acquired 4.75 hectares of vines overlooking the plateau of Saint-Philippe d’Aiguilhe. At 110 metres altitude, the vineyard is at the highest point in the whole of the Bordeaux area. They named it Ampélia, from the Greek Ampelos (the vine), a nod to their passion –ampelology. The result was a Grand Vin made from a blend of plots of old vines. “It’s not a cuvee”, insists François, “it’s simply the optimal quality we can get from this terroir”.

Practicing Organic since 2010, everything at Ampélia is done by hand, from the vineyard where the grapes are sorted after being tasted and laboratory analyzed to ensure maximum ripeness, and at the winery where they are further sorted before being destemmed and vinified in separate lots. A first assemblage is performed, and then each lot is aged separately in barrel (1/3 new, 1/3 second use, 1/3 third use) for between 12 and 18 months prior to the final assemblage. The wines are bottled 21 months after harvest.

### **90-92 Points**

The Wine Advocate - Neal Martin

The 2015 Ampelia is a blend of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc from the same team at Grand-Corbin Despagne. This has a lovely nose, very pure and generous, well defined with floral-tinged blackberry, raspberry and cold stony scents. The palate is well balanced with fine, grainy tannin, a little foursquare on the entry, but plenty of fruit backs this up. Plenty of freshness with a pencil lead finish, this should be a delicious Côte de Castillon once bottled.

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