

# Bartales

## Best of

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SUPPLEMENT OF BARTALES



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# ARTISANS OF TIME

Domaine de la Pouyade and the search for quality. When art and philosophy converge into excellence

BY VITTORIO BRAMBILLA

**M**ost of the Cognac *maisons* have fascinating histories: stories about men who dedicated their lives to their products, special people who were energised by their obsessive search for quality. Maison Jean Fillioux is one of those small family businesses that for decades



have been successfully defending their Grande Champagne Cognac known for its unique properties: freshness, complexity, elegance, strength, persistence on the palate, as well as floral and fruity aromas.

In Juillac-le-Coq, at the heart of the most beautiful and characteristic areas of the region, is Domaine de la Pouyade, owned by the Fillioux family since 1894. Here Cognac is not just a product but a way of life, an art where tradition and passion blend to meet the needs of an ever-more demanding clientèle.

The company was founded in 1880 by Honoré Fillioux, the shareholder of a distillery close to Gémozac.

In 1884, Honoré married and as her dowry his wife brought a vineyard and a distillery into the marriage in Ange-

ac-Champagne, 3km from Juillac-le-Coq. In the early years the spirits were sold in casks and small demijohns with the name “H.Fillioux” on them. To Honoré Fillioux we also owe the patent for a system designed to keep the distillation refrigerants at a constant temperature (the H. Fillioux temperature regulator).

In 1894 Honoré acquired Domaine de la Pouyade, the current cradle of the *maison*. It was Jean Fillioux, the son of Honoré, who developed the brand in France, Europe and the United States. Jean extended the size of the vineyard and increased stock of the spirits so that his son Michel could later sell the first old vintages (1893, 1906, 1910, etc.). Thanks to this, Michel Fillioux and his wife grew a renowned client base who recognised in the





Fillioux brand the best that Grande Champagne had to offer. From 1880 until today, five generations of “nez” (noses) have succeeded each other at the Domaine de

la Pouyade, currently led by Christophe Fillioux, the son of Pascal. Influenced by his time spent in the United States at the famous “Beaulieu Vineyard” during the

*The Art of blending*



**CELLARS**  
ABOVE,  
CHRISTOPHE  
AND PASCAL  
FILLIOUX.

1970s, Pascal Fillioux experimented with the frequent use of new casks in aging. Modest and conscientious, together with his wife Monique, he elevated the brand to

the heights that we know today, producing exceptional vintages.

In 2015, this exceptional legacy was passed on to Christophe Fillioux from his



father Pascal who remains involved in the business. Christophe's first challenge was to extend the property to continue increasing the stock of distillates. In 2025, he

is planning to open a new cellar and to create a major tourism centre with accommodation on the estate.

Christophe also focuses on environ-



**MAISON**  
THE FILLIOUX  
FAMILY (CREDIT:  
VINOPURO.COM).  
LEFT, FILLIOUX  
CHARENTAIS  
ALEMBIC  
STILLS.



mental sustainability and much work has already been done in this regard, most recently with the re-planting of a fruit orchard at the entrance of the estate in 2021.

From caring for the vineyard to bottling,

distillation and finally ageing, the Fillioux family oversees all stages of its Cognac production. Its aim always remains the search for exceptional quality both in the vineyard and cellar.

The Fillioux Reserve Familiale Cognac



**MAISON**  
THE DOMAINE  
DE LA POUYADE  
ESTATE.

starts with Ugni Blanc grapes from which the must is obtained, which is then double distilled in a Charentais still. The first distillation, the *brouillis*, has an alcohol content of around 28% - 30%, while with the second, the *bonne chauffe*, the distillate reaches 70.5%. This is followed by a period of ageing in French oak casks, 90% of which come from Limousin, selected by the *maîtres de chais*, Christophe and Pascal Fillioux. This liquid treasure ages in casks for at least 50 years and is then bottled at 40%. It is a bright amber colour. On the nose are hints of dried and candied fruit, leather, chocolate, tobacco, toasted aromas, liquorice and toffee, honeyed and peppery spices. On the palate, a richness and incredible complexity burst through that are hard to forget.

Another major company is the Maison A.E. Dor created in 1858 by Amédée







**MAISON**  
THE A.E. DOR  
ESTATE  
(CREDIT:  
COGNACEPERT.  
COM)



Edouard Dor. The story of A.E. Dor Cognac is also one built on passion and quality.

The eldest son of a wealthy family from Jarnac, Amédée Edouard was obsessed

with an idea: to own the absolute best Cognac. We can only imagine how difficult this task must have been. Amédée Edouard Dor was a true innovator, going



against the trend of the time that looked to the Cognacs of the major houses as a benchmark. He visited all the producers in the area, including the smaller ones, many of which no longer exist today or have been bought out by large producers.

Amédée Edouard Dor can be considered a selector of his time. As his work became more and more well known, his reputation as a Cognac expert grew, as well as the opportunity to access an ever-increasing number of spirits. This included some spirits that were unknown and had never been tasted before. His mission was not only to age these Cognacs to their optimal maturity, but also to preserve them so that they could be enjoyed by future generations.



Today, many of these treasures lay unopened in the A.E. Dor cellar. As a result, this artisanal house of Cognac has one of the most surprising collections of pre-phylloxera spirits that exist in the world. These venerable spirits that come solely from Grande Champagne, are preserved in demijohns that are sealed with wax. In addition, this prestigious *maison* from Jarnac known for its sumptuous nineteenth-century Grande Champagnes also preserves spirits with an ABV below 40% due to the *part des anges*. This peculiarity contributes to the uniqueness of the Maison A.E. Dor that in 1951 was the only one to receive authorisation to sell Co-



gnacs below 40%, some of which, among the oldest, were produced even before the Maison Dor was founded.

The oldest Cognac conserved in the A.E. Dor paradise is the Soleil d'Austerlitz from 1805 (31% vol.).

Some of the oldest also include:

1811 - Roi de Rome 31 % vol.

1834 - Prince Albert 30 % vol.

1840 - Louis Philippe 34 % vol.

1858 - Napoléon III Empereur 37 % vol.

1875 - Prince Impérial 36 % vol.

1889 - Excellence 35 % vol.

1893 - Âge d'or ou "Sign of times" 30 % vol.

Today A.E. Dor produces and ages Cognac in oak casks from Limousin for more than 70 years, without cutting or additions. Natural evaporation, the part des anges, influences the alcohol content significantly, but helps to refine the quintessence of the more refined fragrances.

The ancient story of the Maison A.E. Dor and its art of Cognac is preciously preserved in old registers and old correspondence that date back as far as the beginning of the 19th century. With its exceptional and prestigious vintage Cognacs from 1805 to 1893, today A.E. Dor has one of the most complete ranges of high-quality Cognac. With rigour, experience and intuition, A.E. Dor creates fine assemblages to obtain a Cognac of character that is balanced and elegant.

Today the *maison* is managed by Pierre Antoine Rivière, who took over from his father, Jacques Rivière 15 years ago and continues the mission of creating a wonderful range of high-quality Cognacs for a wider and international market. In other words, it wants its delicious Cognacs to be enjoyed by enthusiasts from all over the world.



A.E. Dor Cognac Albane Grande Champagne (40% ABV) is made in Jarnac, from a Grande Champagne cru. The base wine is from Ugni Blanc, Folle Blanche and Colombarde grapes. After Charentaise distillation, the spirit rests for a minimum of 5 years in French oak casks from Limousin, with capacities that vary from 300 to 500 litres. Amber in colour, this wine distillate gives off intriguing fruity notes; on the palate it is smooth, generous and well balanced. The fruity notes detected on the nose return during tasting together with a pleasant persistence.

The Jean Fillioux and A.E. Dor *maisons* are a treasure trove of unique and rare quality distillates.