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Francs-Côtes de Bordeaux: a new chapter in french wine

How a historic wine region is charting a new course in the world of french viticulture

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Nestled in the heart of wine country, the Francs-Côtes de Bordeaux region, a gem within the broader Côtes de Bordeaux appellation, is making waves with its latest endeavor. Spearheaded by the visionary viticulturist Jan Thienpont, also the president of the Francs-Côtes de Bordeaux group, the local winegrowers have set their sights on a bold new horizon: establishing a standalone appellation. This move, inspired by the

recent ambitions of their neighbors in Castillon, has stirred excitement and anticipation among wine aficionados and industry insiders alike.

But what does this mean, exactly? At its core, the pursuit of an independent appellation status is a testament to the region's unique terroir and its winegrowers' commitment to expressing the distinct character of their vines. By proposing the name "Francs" for their new designation, Thienpont and his colleagues aim to capture the essence of their homeland, offering a nod to the rich history and the trio of communes—Francs, Saint-Cibard, and Tayac—that comprise their cherished wine-producing area.

The journey toward appellation autonomy is not merely a quest for recognition; it's a strategic move to grant winemakers the freedom to innovate and adapt to the evolving demands of climate and environmental stewardship. Under the watchful eye of France's appellations body, the INAO, the Francs-Côtes de Bordeaux region hopes to tailor its wine production requirements to better reflect its specific needs, setting it apart from the other subregional titles within the Côtes de Bordeaux appellation.

The roots of this ambitious endeavor trace back to 1967 when the region first embraced the Bordeaux-Côtes de Francs title, a moniker that stood until 2008 when it was folded into the Côtes de Bordeaux umbrella. This historical context underscores the area's longstanding commitment to viticultural excellence and its continuous evolution in the face of the wine industry's shifting landscapes.

As the Francs-Côtes de Bordeaux winegrowers forge ahead with their proposal, they do so with the understanding that their journey is about more than gaining a new label; it's about carving out a space where their wines can truly flourish, reflecting the unique character of their terroir. It's a bold step forward that promises to enrich the tapestry of French wine, offering enthusiasts and connoisseurs alike a fresh perspective on a region steeped in tradition yet brimming with innovation.