

Château De La Dauphine 2017

CSPC# 814269

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

85% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

Fronsac

Website

<http://www.chateau-dauphine.com/en/our-wines/>

General Info

Once owned by the Moueix family, they sold in 2001 to Jean Halley, wanting to concentrate on their Pomerol and Saint Emilion holdings. I wonder sometimes if they regret this decision, as the Halley's have shown just what exceptional *terroir* this estate has, teased out by a major investment in the vineyard and cellars. Investments of over 10 million euros have resulted in a complete restoration of the chateau and chais, replanting and restructuring of the vineyard and vineyard processes, careful lowering of yields to increase concentration in the berries, new equipment to ensure minimal disturbance of the grapes, the installation of a gravity-based system with a rotating walkway to ensure gentle and consistent filling of the tanks, and the introduction of a second wine. Denis Dubourdiou has worked with the chateau as consultant oenologist for the past five years, alongside 32-year-old Guillaume Halley – Jean Halley's son and now La Dauphine's owner and director. Jean Halley died accidentally April 28th, 2011.

Winemaker

Julien Viaud. Michel Rolland consults.

Vintage

Undoubtedly the frost on the night of April 26 to 27 will be the great marker of this vintage. However, this brutal event will have hit unevenly in La Dauphine, only 20% of the surface will be impacted (vines of our second Delphis) all the hillsides and the plateau are spared. Leaving aside the frost, the course of the vegetative cycle is rather favorable.

A cold and dry winter (2 times less precipitation than in 2016) will clean up the environment throughout the season, thus containing cryptogamic diseases and other pests. The hot and dry spring favors an early bud burst, with 15 days in advance, this precocity always auspicious for good maturity at the end of the cycle, will be fatal for the sectors sensitive to frost (this is the downside). However, the unaffected plots will continue their cycle with a rather hot month of May, flowering at the end of May will be rapid and complete, in June a heatstroke will give up an early stripping, we want to keep a lot of freshness in our wines; the soils will be worked every other row to prevent drought on the not very vigorous plots, and it is with happiness that we welcomed the rain at the end of June at the beginning of July. In July and August the weather will alternate hot with cold and humidity; veraison will be done in the first week of August in a homogeneous manner and confirms the precocity of the vintage.

The first week of September makes us fear the worst on the verge of maturity, but the biodynamic care given to the vineyard throughout the season and more particularly two applications of silica at three weeks and one month of the harvest, correlated to a work of reasoned soil means that the vine is in a vegetative stop and no longer pumps water to the grapes which resist botrytis well. We will start the harvest on September 14.

At the winery we opted for indigenous yeasts for the whole harvest, in parallel an experiment on eight barrels will be carried out, to compare the indigenous yeasts and we are also experimenting with our new "tulip" vats whose shape can influence extraction and fermentation. Halfway through the first harvested vats are surprisingly colorful, analytically very balanced, full of freshness as we wish, nature has done its job now to respect what it has brought us and not to compromise anything by our actions.

We can remember two words for this year 2017: precocity and precision.



Vineyards	The 31-hectare Bordeaux wine vineyard of Chateau de La Dauphine is located in the Fronsac appellation. The terroir is clay and limestone soils. The vineyards are planted with 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc. The vineyard is planted to a vine density of 6,300 vines per hectare. On average, the vines are 33 years of age. To increase the quantity of Chateau de La Dauphine, Halley was able to merge Chateau Canon de Brem into La Dauphine. That was quite a feat considering that Canon de Brem was located in the Canon Fronsac appellation.
Soil	Soil types- clayey-limestone, Fronsac "mollasse".
Harvest	Manual harvesting plot by plot from September 14th to September 30th 2017
Vinification/ Maturation	The wine of Chateau de La Dauphine is made in a completely modern, state of the art facility in the Fronsac appellation. In fact, it currently offers the most advanced wine making facilities in the entire commune as well as in much of the Right Bank! The semi underground, circular vat room has 26 concrete vats around the sides along with 8 central stainless-steel vats for vinification. This allows the parcels to be vinified on a plot by plot basis. A gravity-based system with a rotating walkway was installed to ensure gentle and consistent filling of the tanks. On average, the wine of Chateau de La Dauphine is aged in 30% new, French barrels oak for 12 months.
Tasting Notes	Deep and dark colour with garnet. The nose is open and complex, presenting notes of red and black fruits like cherry, blueberry or raspberry. In the glass appear also aromas of flowers, forest floor and menthol with chalky notes. The wine is soft and smooth even creamy. The freshness gives length and charm to the wine.
Serve with	Chateau La Dauphine is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Chateau La Dauphine is best paired with lamb with a honey sauce, sliced beef with morels. Veal Marengo, pecorino cheese with truffle, red tuna Rossini.
Production	130,000 bottles
Cellaring	Drink 2020-2030. Peak 2027.
Scores/Awards	<p>90 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2020</p> <p>88-90 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate #236 - April 2018</p> <p>87-88 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2018</p> <p>90-92 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2018</p> <p>16 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2018</p> <p>91 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2018</p> <p>89-91 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2018</p> <p>88-90 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2018</p> <p>87-89 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2018</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Deep garnet-purple colored., the 2017 de la Dauphine prances out of the glass with pretty kirsch, baked raspberries and preserved plums scents with hints of stewed tea and potpourri. Medium-bodied, the palate has a plush texture and a great intensity of perfumed fruit, finishing fragrant."</i> - LPB, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The deep garnet-purple colored 2017 de la Dauphine opens with black cherries and warm blackberries notes with wafts of Indian spices and dusty soil. The palate is medium-bodied, firm and chewy with a lively line and long earthy finish."</i> - LPB, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"Shows some depth and character with a medium body, firm and silky tannins and a medium to short finish."</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>"90-92. Barrel Sample. This is a ripe wine, neatly balanced by intense tannins and spice flavors. Fine acidity adds a layer of crisp black currant to the dry core of tannins. Drink from 2023."</i> - RV, Wine Enthusiast</p>

Reviews *"90% Merlot. 10% Cabernet Franc. Deep purplish crimson. Ripe and lifted black cherry and cassis fruit with a hint of coffee. Firm, chewy and quite oaky on the palate but I hope it will all come around with more time in bottle. (JH)"*

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

"With deep color, this fruity wine is on the dark berry side with plenty of fresh, juicy blackberries and plums adding to the fun. Lushly textured, sweet and fleshy, the wine has a ripe, plump personality."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"The 2017 La Dauphine has a well-defined, focused, well-mannered bouquet with concentrated blackberry, raspberry preserve and graphite aromas. The palate is well balanced with grippy tannin, not as sensual as the nascent Dalem and with more expressive, peppery Cabernet Franc driving the finish. It will be fascinating to see how this ages."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2017 La Dauphine is a bold, distinctive wine. Super-ripe dark cherry, raspberry and wildflowers are all beautifully delineated in this potent, vibrant Fronsac. The 2017 has quite a bit of character for such a rich, potent wine. Interestingly, the 2017 put in quite a bit of weight over the course of the two weeks I followed it. In 2017, La Dauphine is all class. Tasted three times."

- AG, Vinous

"The deep inky colored 2017 Château De La Dauphine offers a medium-bodied, rounded, textured style. Sweet black cherries, plums, violets, and spice characteristics all emerge from the glass, and it offers more texture and hedonistic pleasure than most in the vintage."

- Jeb Dunnuck
