

# Château Cantemerle 2021

CSPC# 102691

750mlx12

13.0% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety** 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 21% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc, 5% Petit Verdot  
**Appellation** Haut-Médoc  
**Classification** 5ème Cru Classé  
**Website** <http://www.cantemerle.com>

**Sustainability** HVE Certification

**General Info** Chateau Cantemerle is one of the first well known Bordeaux estates you see as start the drive along the D2, as you head towards the Medoc. Chateau Cantemerle is also one of the oldest properties in the Bordeaux wine region. Historical documents listing the Lords of Cantemerle of La Sauve Majeur Abbey, can be dated all the way back to the 12th century. The documents exist thanks to the monks who recorded any business that transpired in the monastic community.

In 1855, when the classification of the Medoc took place, Chateau Cantemerle was accidentally left off the list of classed chateaux. It was at the insistence of Madame Villeneuve-Durfort that her property be reinstated in the classification. That re-addition became the first of only two changes in the classification.

In 1852, Fleuret-Jean-Baptiste, Count of Lavergne, was a pioneer in the fight against mildew. The first attempts to control it were done by dusting the vines with sulphur at Cantemerle. He was rewarded for his efforts with several medals and a prize from the Academy of Bordeaux.

Until the late 1800's, the fortunes of Cantemerle could not have been any better. What happened next devastated the property. Cantemerle was not only the worst hit of the Medoc classified growths during the phylloxera crisis, but the vines were also attacked by downy mildew between 1879 and 1887. Consequently, the annual production of Chateau Cantemerle was slashed by 50%.

In 1892, the descendants of the last of the Villeneuve family, Jeanne Armande, Baroness Charles d'Abbadie, sold Chateau Cantemerle to the Dubos family after owning the estate for over three hundred years. The last family owner, Bertrand Clauzel sold Chateau Cantemerle in 1981 to the SMABTP group. At the time of the purchase, Chateau Cantemerle was in serious need of restoration. 40 hectares of vines, close to 50% of the estate needed replanting. In 1999, the new owners purchased 20 hectares of vines from Domaine du Moines Nexon, increasing the size of the Chateau Cantemerle. Other improvements were made in the cellars and the wine making facilities. The SMABTP Group has continued increasing their holdings in Bordeaux with purchases in the Right Bank. They recently added Chateau Haut Corbin, Chateau Grand Corbin and Le Jurat which are all located in St. Emilion appellation

**Winemaker** Consultant oenologist: Eric Boissenot

**Vintage** 2021 is different from the sun-drenched trilogy of vintages of 2018, 2019 and 2020. It is a vintage of terroir, in a more classic style, produced from a growing season made complicated by the vagaries of the climate and high vine disease pressure. It was also marked by the freezing nights of 7th and 8th April, during which temperatures plunged to below minus 5°C, which impacted the crop size. The tireless work put in by the whole team, the meticulous knowledge of the vineyard, and the estate's warmish sandy-gravel soils enabled, despite challenging conditions, the harvesting of grapes that were phenolically fully ripe and in very good health.

The structure of this vintage favours the freshness and intensity of fruit flavour, which provides the wine, despite its young age, with great drinkability. Judicious ageing in barrel will enable a refining of the tannins which are already smooth and round. The palate, which is balanced and dense, reveals a superbly elegant finish.

**Vineyards** 96 ha under production. Silica and gravel soils of the quaternary era. 68% Cabernet Sauvignon - 23% Merlot - 5% Cabernet Franc - 4% Petit Verdot

Average age of vines: 38 years

Vine density: 7 800 plants per hectare

**Harvest** Handpicked harvest with selective sorting in the vineyard. September 22 to October 3



<b>Maturation</b>	Total destemming. The grapes are hand-sorted before crushing. Fermentation: 6-8 days at 24 -28°C. Maceration: 20 -25 days. Ageing for 12 months in french oak barrels (medium toast) which 40% are new, 40% one-fill barrels, and 20% two-fill barrels. An ultra-light fining is done prior to bottling.
<b>Winemaker's Notes</b>	Cantemerle is very comfortable with this type of vintage. The estate's Cabernet Sauvignon shows great breed and soul and brings excellent tension to the wine. It provides the wine's backbone. Both digestible and complex, 2021 is balanced and full of energy and characterised by its length of flavour.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	Adorned with a magnificent purplish color, Cantemerle 2021 offers a very seductive, airy nose. Fragrances of jammy strawberry, raspberry fruit paste and peony blend subtly. A hint of licorice enhances the whole, adding depth. All is pleasure and greed. The palate, fresh from the start, evolves into a juicy, crisp body with fresh fruit flavors. The tannins are soft and long-lasting on the finish
<b>Serve with</b>	The wine of Chateau Cantemerle is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Cantemerle is a perfect match with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta as well as cheese.
<b>Production</b>	25,000 cases made.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2024-2035
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>88 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - December 2023</p> <p><b>89 points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - February 2024</p> <p><b>90-91 points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p><b>80-82 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - May 2022</p> <p><b>90-91 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022</p> <p><b>93-95 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2022</p> <p><b>15.5 points</b> - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022</p> <p><b>91 points</b> - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022</p> <p><b>87 points</b> - Jane Anson, Inside Bordeaux - May 2022</p> <p><b>91 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2024</p> <p><b>90-92 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022</p> <p><b>90 points</b> - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2022</p> <p><b>87-90 points</b> - Thomas Parker, Farr Vintners - April 2022</p> <p><b>86 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2024</p> <p><b>88-90 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p><b>89-91 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p><b>87-89 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022</p> <p><b>16.5 points</b> - Matthew Jukes - August 2022</p> <p><b>87 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022</p> <p><b>89 points</b> - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022</p> <p><b>91-92 points</b> - Vert de Vin - July 2022</p> <p><b>91-92 points</b> - Bettane &amp; Desseauve (score only) - May 2022</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>"An old-school version, with a cedary thread that runs from start to finish, along with savory tobacco leaf and dried currant fruit accents. A touch austere on the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2033. 25,000 cases made."</i> - JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"The 2021 Cantemerle opens in the glass with notes of cassis, dark berries, mint, and baking chocolate. This is medium-bodied, with supple, powdery tannins, lively acids, and a delicate core of fruit, concluding with a minty, somewhat herbaceous finish."</i> - WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"Medium to deep garnet-purple in color, the 2021 Cantemerle has pronounced herbal notes with rubber and tobacco over a core of stewed red and black plums. Light to medium-bodied, the palate is a little thin with a chewy texture and a tart, abrupt finish."</i> Château Cantemerle saw substantial investments in the 1980s and since then has cruised along very happily—until now, with a new winery and cellar about to enter the construction phase. There are 98 hectares under vine, some 68% of which are planted to Cabernet Sauvignon, at a density of 8,500 vines per hectare. Occupying a crescent around the château, the vineyards sit on Mindel gravels, and the terroir is rather homogenous, such that any given parcel has the potential to make it into the grand vin (the second wine is mostly derived from young-vine parcels). Farming is thoughtful, with minimal chemicals and cover-crops employed to limit vigor in</p>

**Reviews** *parcels planted with Merlot. In the last few years, almost one kilometer of hedges has been added, to enhance biodiversity. The air-pulse system was prototyped here, so that's the order of the day during vinification, and élevage employs moderate percentages of new oak."*

- WK, Wine Advocate

*"Savory, with mushrooms, bark, and dried leaves. Some cocoa and walnut notes, too. Medium body with lightly chewy tannins."*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"93–95. Barrel Sample. With its 68% Cabernet Sauvignon giving structure, this is an impressive, balanced wine. Firm tannins are integrated with the dark black fruits. The wine has ripe fruits, giving concentration and fine density for the vintage."*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 21% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc, 5% Petit Verdot. Cask sample. Pleasantly aromatic with cassis and dark-fruit notes. Juicy and fresh, if a little lean, the tannins well-handled. The oak, though, is rather present and drying (prise de bois?). If it settles, this could improve. Drink 2025 – 2035."*

- JL, JancisRobinson.com

*"Allspice, cedar, juniper, and blackcurrants - a heady, appealing perfume. Lightly framed with gentle but mouthwatering and succulent red berry fruits mingling with firm tannins that coat the mouth in a fine layer of chalky, fruity saltiness. Attractive balance, if a little light on the mid-palate at this point, but this has a long finish and a motion of flavour from beginning to end. It feels well worked with concentration and direction. Structured and confident."*

- GH, Decanter.com

*"Bright dark fruit, well-constructed with fresh acidities and a leafy, rose stem aspect emphasizes the Cabernet. There is juice on the finish here, but hard tannins also, and it needs further softening over ageing."*

- JA, janeanson.com

*"Light, bright, crisp, classic, and racy, this medium-bodied, edgy, firm, red cherry, and raspberry wine is packed with herbs, flowers, peppery spices, cedar, and tobacco. This is a firm, crunchy, old-school wine that blends 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 21% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc, and 5% Petit Verdot. Drink from 2026-2041."*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"Bright, crisp, fresh, juicy, and focused on its red currant nose. Medium-bodied, savory, with soft, minty edge to the bright, red fruits on the palate, you can drink this on the young side. The wine is a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 21% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc and 5% Petit Verdot. Drink from 2024-2042."*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"The 2021 is 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 21% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc, 5% Petit Verdot with maturation in 40% new oak. Mid ruby colour. This is crunchy, cool, and fresh with blackcurrant leaf, red berries, and cedar. The palate is leafy and cool, full of savoury tones and bell pepper. There is a hint of toast, cedar, and dried tobacco together with green tea. The fresh red fruit lingers with chalky tannins on the finish in this compact, cool wine that will appeal to classic claret lovers."*

- TP, Farr Vintners

*"The 2021 Cantemerle typifies your "classic" Bordeaux. It has a light, but delineated nose of black fruit laced with cedar and freshly rolled tobacco. The palate is balanced with a little chewiness on the entry. There's some mid-palate weight in the, but then it dramatically tapers away and leaves you wondering if it could have given more. There's also a slightly herbaceous aftertaste."*

- NM, Vinous

**Reviews**

*“The 2021 Cantemerle has a pleasant, cedar-inspired bouquet, the light black fruit gaining intensity with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with grainy tannins and quite structured, revealing classic tobacco notes toward a finish of decent length. This will do fine as an early-drinking claret.”*

- NM, Vinous

*“The 2021 Cantemerle is a powerful, classically built wine. Pipe tobacco, cedar, blood orange and exotic spices all run through its mid-weight frame. The Cabernets are especially evident in this year's blend. There's good depth and plenty of character. All the 2021 needs is élevage to pull it all together.”*

- AG, Vinous

*“The 2021 Château Cantemerle is good, and certainly an impressive Haut-Medoc. Offering ample red and black fruits, tobacco-laced herbs, and cedar, it's medium-bodied, forward, has ripe yet crunchy tannins, and a good finish.”*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*“Rather forceful and strident with some sourness and astringency on the finish but, having said this, the fruit seems accurate and pure, and the perfume is enjoyable. There is more to come here as this wine evolves, so cross your fingers, but this might work out rather nicely given five years. 16.5.”*

- Matthew Jukes

*“Dark ruby core, purple reflections, subtle brightening on the rim. Delicate floral aromas of fresh red cherries, a hint of cranberries, and subtle wood spices. Juicy, red berries on the palate, freshly structured with discreet tannins and a salty finish. An enjoyable wine, drinking well now.”*

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

*“The nose is fresh, racy and shows a fine delicate power. There are notes of blueberry, lily and, to a lesser extent, pulpy strawberry, combined with fine touches of blueberry, bright redcurrant, and a subtle hint of pepper (in the background). The palate is mineral, balanced and reveals a juicy/mineral structure, good definition, a certain delicacy, roundness, a beautiful minerality, freshness and a fine tension. On the palate, this wine expresses notes of pulpy/fresh cherry, raspberry and slightly fresh blackcurrant combined with a touch of crisp purple plum as well as fine hints of fresh flowers, cardamom, a subtle touch of nutmeg and vanilla (in the background). The tannins are precise and mellow.”*

- Vert de Vin

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