

Château Brane Cantenac 2010

CSPC# 749539

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

SOLD OUT

Grape Variety

63% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

Margaux

General Info

Château Brane-Cantenac was for many years the home of Lucien Lurton - it is now owned and run by his son Henri. Its vineyards are located west of the village of Cantenac in the Margaux appellation. Brane Cantenac was perceived throughout much of the 70s and 80s as an underperforming property. Since Henri took over, there has been extensive investment in the cuverie and chai, as well as vastly improved vineyard management techniques. Consequently, the wines at Brane Cantenac now show more weight and concentration, although they still possess that haunting bouquet and quintessential elegance that characterise the wines of Margaux. It is classified as a 2ème Cru Classé.

Vintage

An exceptionally rainy fall of 2009 which refilled the water tables and allowed the vines to tolerate an extremely dry summer. A cold winter that delayed bud break. A cool episode during blossoming which resulted in grape shatter (coulture) and shot berries (millerandage) on the early Merlots. A moderately hot but particularly dry summer (30 mm rain between June 20th and September 6th, or 100 mm less than usual). A period favourable to the synthesis of phenolic compounds alternating between hot days and cool nights as maturity was approaching.

Vineyards

Brane-Cantenac's 75 hectares of vineyards are planted with Cabernet Sauvignon (55%), Merlot (40%), Cabernet Franc (4.5%) and Carmenère 0.5%, and lie on fine, gravelly soils.

Harvest

Excellent weather conditions during harvesting. The Merlots were harvested between September 27th (5 days later than in 2009) and October 5th. The berries had very high sugar levels. Optical sorting performed miracles, removing shot and dried berries. Harvesting of Cabernet Sauvignons started on October 6th and ended on October 14th. The level of phenolic compounds in the grapes was greater than in 2009. It is undoubtedly the prized grape in 2010. Exceptionally, the Cabernet Francs had to wait until the end of harvest. They produced wines that were surprisingly rich in aromas. The health status was just as exceptional as in 2009. In spite of a high alcohol level, the wines' acidity made them well balanced and fresh

Maturation

Vinification includes up to 18 months' wood ageing, a third to a half in new barrels.

Tasting Notes

The 2010 vintage is uncannily similar to the previous vintage: a dry year but with water reserves that had been replenished the previous fall. The cool nights of a pleasant summer imparted full aromatic expression and unusually high levels of phenolic compounds. The climate in 2010 corresponded marvelously to Brane's terroir. The plateau's clay-like gravel subsoil can give the vines the humidity the grapes need to mature in conditions of extreme dryness. Aromatic expression also being a major quality of this terroir, it was particularly rich at Brane this year. The severity of the blend may seem surprising, but it was the key to a perfect balance...

Cellaring

Drink 2010-2040

Scores/Awards

93 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2013

90-93 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2011

95+ points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #205 - February 2013

93-96 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #194 - May 2011

94-96 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2011

94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2013

91-92 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2011

94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 1, 2013

92-94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 25, 2011

92-95 points - Stephen Tanzer, ST's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2011

89-92 points - Ian D'Agata, ST's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2010



Scores/Awards **17 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2011
17 points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - November 2012
16.5-17.5 points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - October 2011
15.5-16.5 points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - April 2011
18 points/5 stars - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2011
92 points - Jane Anson, The New Bordeaux - April 2010
95 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2011 (No review)
90-92 points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - April 2011

Reviews *"This is dark and grippy, with charcoal, roasted bay and chestnut leaf notes fronting a muscular core of steeped black currant, loganberry and black cherry flavors. Taut plum pit and iron hints thread the finish, revealing a lingering charcoal note. Very solid and suited for aging. Best from 2015 through 2028"*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"A fresh, floral style, with violet and rose aromas followed by a mix of vibrant red currant and blackberry fruit. The dusty finish has good underlying acidity, keeping it racy. Score range: 90-93"
- JM, Wine Spectator

"With a gorgeously evolved, extremely complex bouquet of forest floor, spring flowers, lead pencil shavings and red and black currants, this full-bodied, dense, ruby/plum/purple-colored wine hits the palate with an opulent, fleshy, full-bodied richness, silky tannins, and a very layered, profoundly concentrated style that is, at the same time, both powerful and sublime. This gorgeous wine from proprietor Andre Lurton will benefit from 3-5 years of cellaring and evolve for 25-30 years."
- RP, Wine Advocate

"After nearly two decades of mediocre performances, Brane Cantenac has been doing impressive work over the last decade. While the 2010 may not eclipse the 2009 or 2005, it is an exceptional wine from proprietor Henri Lurton. A dense purple color is accompanied by a floral-scented bouquet revealing notes of licorice, graphite and red as well as black currants. Layered, rich and concentrated, this impressively constructed, seamless Margaux has plenty of tannin, but it is buried under the extravagant fruit and glycerin. This rich, pure, authoritative 2010 should drink well young yet keep for 25-30+ years."
- RP, Wine Advocate

"Tasted on three occasions... the Brane-Cantenac 2010 has that trademark, very Pauillac style note, the Cabernet Sauvignon defining the nascent aromatics with graphite and cedar aromas. The palate is medium bodied with fully ripe tannins, a little conservative on the entry but fanning out beautifully on the tightly wound mid-palate. Judicious use of the fleshy Merlot to balance out the Cabernet, composed and very harmonious towards the "classic" finish. Tasted April 2011."
- NM, Wine Journal

"Pretty red fruits such as cherries in this wine with chewy tannins and fresh acidity. Toasted oak too. Needs time to come together. Dense and complete for this estate. Better than 2009. Better after 2016."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Balanced and polished, with pretty tannins and an attractive fruit. Very elegant for the vintage. Lovely length to the wine"
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"One of the Lurton properties in Margaux, Brane Cantenac is showing the richness of its finely placed vineyard in this 2010. Smoky wood and ripe blackberry are among the flavors of a wine that is complex, complete and concentrated. It will certainly age well."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"92-94 New, polished wood aromas lead to a wine that has a smooth balance between toast, sweet fruits and a velvet-textured acidity. Delicious."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

Reviews *“Beautifully expressed Cabernet fruit, pure Margaux elegance that combines intensity and finesse, long flavours, excellent balance that shows up Brane's specific style. Drink 2016-30.”*

- SS, Decanter.com

“(a blend of 62% cabernet sauvignon, 30% merlot and 8% cabernet franc; 13.5% alcohol) Purple-ruby. Highly complex aromas of red plum, cassis, violet, graphite, and cedar. Then focused and suave on the palate, with flavors of pure blackberry, blueberry pie and flint. Finishes with broad, polished tannins and impressive length. This excellent Brane-Cantenac is a highly nuanced and structured wine with plenty of life ahead. If it gains in sweetness, it may well eventually rate a score at the high end of my range. Drink 2020-2040.”

- ST, International Wine Cellar

“Very dark and concentrated. Exotic nose with some spice and aromas of old-lady's handbags. Really rather rewarding on the nose but on the palate, it seems a little too sweet and soft. Then becomes a bit green and astringent. Awkward, though there are interesting elements here. Should come right in the end.”

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“The nose here really stands out, with an elegant and expressive character, the dark fruits coming with a very welcome perfume. A confident style indeed. The palate has some dark creamed fruits, concentrated and rich, ripe and like the aromatics with a perfumed edge. Grippy too, as appropriate for the vintage, with fresh acids. A very impressive wine finely honed rather than fat, and a really strong effort for Brane-Cantenac. From my Bordeaux 2010 assessment at two years. 17/20 (November 2012).”

- CK, The Wine Doctor

“A sample drawn on 21st October, tasted 24th October. Cabernet Sauvignon 62%, Merlot 30%, Cabernet Franc 8%. A very elegant and yet polished nose. Very expressive, no shrinking violet, but still an attractive floral perfume over the black fruits. Quite a gentle weight for the vintage, elegant though, quite polished, lightly silky. The tannins here are very soft. There is a feminine style, a regal sense to it which holds great appeal. It is supple but also quite linear, the tannins well integrated, very well hidden in the midpalate, more so than I have found in some other 2010s. In this respect it resembles the 2009 somewhat, with a great fleshy ripeness and cohesion to it. Lovely. Tasted during a visit to Brane-Cantenac. 16.5-17.5/20 (October 2011).”

- CK, The Wine Doctor

“This is 62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 8% Cabernet Franc, and gives us just 13.5%. A lovely, dark, black cherry hue here. The nose has exuberant fruit, smoky and sweet, with a gritty, fruit-skin concentration to it. Nicely polished on the start, with quite plump fruit here, rather juicy, with quite a strong grip coming into it in the middle. There is quite a firm acidity as well. Rather savoury black plum notes coming in at the end of the palate. A touch of chewiness to the tannins here, with a grainy edge. A good if rather substantial effort, with the savoury and tannic grip at the end holding particular appeal. A good structure for Brane-Cantenac with the fruit to match here. And it has that effortless feel to it. 15.5-16.5/20 (April 2011)”

- CK, The Wine Doctor

“A rich, fairly developed nose, less hidden power, less coiled spring, more immediate pleasure. Slightly on the gourmet side, there is a lot to like here. 92/100. Drink 2018-2030.”

- JA, The New Bordeaux

“Deep and saturated colour; some reductive notes; some violets too; cassis; palate quite grippy and backward; little awkward needs to settle and blossom a bit, but not over extracted. 87-89/100 Tasted 5 April 2011. [Second tasting] Deep and saturated; floral and perfumed, fresh blackcurrants and violets, quite seductive; some grip on the palate, blackcurrants again, some coffee; elegance with intensity. Some chew at the back. Much better sample. 90-92/100 [62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc 13.5 alc] Tasted 7 April 2011 UGC”

- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com