

# Château D'Issan 2017

CSPC# 749550

750mlx12

13.18% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety**

65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot

**Appellation**

Margaux

**Classification**

Grand Cru Classé in 1855

**Website**

[http://www.chateau-issan.com/docs/en/CHATEAU\\_ISSAN\\_2017.pdf](http://www.chateau-issan.com/docs/en/CHATEAU_ISSAN_2017.pdf)

**General Info**

There's evidence the property existed in the Middle Ages - then known as Teobon. The original *château* dated from at least the 15th century, and it has been suggested as the location of the English army's final stand following their defeat at the Battle of Castillon. But d'Issan's timeline really begins in the 17th century when the land was acquired by Bordeaux parliamentarian Chevalier d'Essenault - he christened the estate (later shortened to Issan) and built the splendid *château*. The knight's tenure ended abruptly (the Revolution again) and during the 19th century the Roy family began building an ever-improving reputation. That too ended rudely, as d'Issan was all-but ruined during the economic gloom of the 1930s.

Château d'Issan is a 3<sup>ème</sup> Cru Classé Margaux property that produces richly aromatic and silky-textured clarets that are often amongst the best of the appellation. The beautiful 18th century *château* is surrounded by a moat and is frequently described as the most romantic in the Médoc. D'Issan has been owned by the Cruse family since 1945 and is presently owned and run by Emmanuel Cruse, his wife, and their son, Lionel.

**Winemaker**

Emmanuel Cruse. Consultant Eric Boissenot

**Vintage**

Winter was dry and cold, so the vines hibernated peacefully. A lovely warm spring stimulated early budding. In Bordeaux on April 27th and 28th, there were heavy frosts, but the d'Issan "clos" was fortunately spared. The wall surrounding the estate was built in 1644. Being located close to the Gironde Estuary means that our terroir enjoys outstanding geological features and an unparalleled microclimate. Thanks to these conditions our vines were not affected by the series of cold spells that hit the region.

Also due to the conditions, flowering was seamless and over in less than a week, uniformly and simultaneously in our two varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. At this point, we estimated the vines to be two weeks ahead of their usual growth calendar. The vintage seemed it was going to be an early one! Very hot weather in June kept the vines still ahead of the average. Much-needed rain at the beginning of July led to a gradual, continuous onset of ripening. Mid-veraison was reached on July 25th.

**Harvest**

The Merlot was harvested between September 18th and 27th. The Cabernet Sauvignon were picked between September 25th and October 3rd. Since flowering was so short and homogeneous, harvesting was the earliest since 2003. The grapes that were picked were lovely and fruity, and very ripe with silky, classy tannins.

**Vineyards**

The 44 hectare vineyard of Chateau d'Issan is planted to 60% Cabernet Sauvignon and 40% Merlot. This represents a shift in the vineyard plantings since the 1990's, as today, there is less Cabernet Sauvignon and more Merlot in the vineyard.

This new vineyard size shows a marked increase in the amount of hectares due to a ruling in 2007 by the INAO that allowed Chateau d'Issan to add 10 hectares of vines that were previously classed as Haut-Medoc. Those vines were upgraded and re-classified as part of the Margaux appellation.

**Vineyards**

The vineyard has a terroir of gravel with clay and limestone soils on gentle, rolling, slopes. The vineyards of Chateau d'Issan are planted to a vine density of 9,000 vines per hectare with vines that are on average 35 years of age. They have old vines as well, some of which are close to 65 years of age.

The Cruse family also own 5 hectares of vines close to Margaux in the Haut Medoc appellation as well as in the Bordeaux Supérieur appellation, where they own 10 hectares of vines. The Haut Medoc wines are sold as Chateau de Candale. The vines in Bordeaux Supérieur are used to produce Chateau Moulin d'Issan.

**Maturation**

The grapes are traditionally vinified, and the wine is then matured in oak casks (50% new) for 18 months. The wine is bottled unfiltered.



<b>Tasting Notes</b>	Blending was finished by mid-January with nicely balanced selections. Château d'Issan 2017 is comparable to no other vintage but remains completely loyal to the true expression of its historic terroir – that is the magic of its “Clos”.
<b>Serve with</b>	Chateau d'Issan is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2020-2035
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>92+ points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2020</p> <p><b>90-92 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2018</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2020</p> <p><b>93-94 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2018</p> <p><b>91-93 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - January 2018</p> <p><b>16.5 points</b> - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2018</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - March 2020</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2018</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2018</p> <p><b>88-90 points</b> - Derek Smedley, MW - May 2018</p> <p><b>92 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2020</p> <p><b>90-92 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2018</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2020</p> <p><b>89-92 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2018</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2020</p> <p><b>89-91 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2018</p> <p><b>17 points</b> - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2018</p> <p><b>16.5 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2018</p> <p><b>92 points</b> - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2018</p> <p><b>17 points</b> - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2021</p> <p><b>18 points</b> - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2020</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>“The 2017 D'Issan (a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon and 35% Merlot) is medium to deep garnet-purple in color with a nose of baked plums, warm cassis, and stewed cherries plus earth, balsamic, Sichuan pepper and herbs hints. The palate is medium-bodied and plush with soft acidity and bags of juicy fruit leading to a gratifyingly spicy finish. Drink 2020-2035.”</i> - LPB, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“The deep garnet-purple colored 2017 D'Issan (a tentative blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon and 35% Merlot) opens with crushed blueberries and black plums notes with hints of cassis, licorice, and violets. Medium-bodied with a firm and finely grained frame, it has oodles of freshness lifting the ripe black and blue fruits to a long, perfumed finish.”</i> - LPB, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“The plum and orange-peel character comes through here with subtle focus. Medium body and very fine, polished, and refined tannins. A light, dusty texture to it. Yet, it's always focused and bright. A blend of 65% cabernet sauvignon and 35% merlot. Needs time to soften, but already very pretty. Ethereal. Drink after 2022.”</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>“This sneaks up on you with a pretty density of ripe fruit such as plums and strawberries. Full body, layered and ripe tannins set this young wine up for a tannic and fruity finish.”</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>“91–93. Barrel Sample. Attractively fruity, this wine comes from an estate that lies close to the Gironde estuary. It is full, with layers of crisp and juicy black-currant fruit, with attractive acidity and a light touch of tannins. Drink from 2022.”</i> - RV, Wine Enthusiast</p> <p><i>“Deep cherry red. Sweet lifted red-cherry fruit on the nose. Very inviting. Cherries on the palate, too. Not particularly concentrated but scented with red fruit and the tannins are appropriately light to match the depth of fruit. Fresh and persistent. Silky finish. Not for the very long term, perhaps. Drink 2023-2032.”</i> - JH, JancisRobinson.com</p>

- Reviews** *“Tasted several times, this is showing a confident mix of elegance, Margaux floral aromatics and sculpted fruits, balancing out a more rustic, frank, and charming side to the wine. Clear complexity, and overall, a feeling of being in safe hands. There was very little frost overall at Issan, and the Clos ripened well.”*  
- JA, Decanter.com
- “This is rather lovely this year. It has a real depth to the fruit, with a brush of caramel through it and a highly appealing cigar box twist on the finish. It doesn't quite have the voluptuous ripeness of 2015 and 2016, but there's plenty of Margaux elegance, precision, and touches of florality. They weren't badly affected by frost here, so they had a healthy yield of 43hl/ha. A complete wine with beginning, middle and end. 50% new oak”*  
- JA, Decanter.com
- “A silky style of wine that is medium bodied, forward, polished, and fruity. There is lift, ripe red fruits, forest leaf and tobacco strokes from start to finish. The juicy fruits in the endnote offer melodious, creamy textures. In three to five years this will develop even more intriguing complexities and softer textures. From a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon and 36% Merlot, the wine reached 13.18% alcohol with a pH of 3.68. The Grand Vin was produced from 47% of the harvest. The picking took place September 18 through October 3”*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “The fruit on the nose is sweet the palate has a mix rich fruit underpinned by freshness. The tannins are firm but fine the fruit at the back sweet breadth of flavour the finish has a balance of freshness and sweetness. Drink 2025 - 2038.”*  
- Derek Smedley MW
- “The 2017 d'Issan was bottled in May 2019. The wine has a pretty, floral bouquet, transparent and open, with blackberry leaf mixed with cranberry and hints of lavender. The palate is medium-bodied with fine-grain tannins, crunchy black fruit and a structured, almost Pauillac-like finish that might suggest a higher proportion of Cabernet Sauvignon than there actually is. Good tension and persistence here, though maybe it needs a little more grip on the finish. Very fine, medium-term drinking. Tasted twice with consistent notes.”*  
- NM, Vinous
- “The 2017 d'Issan was picked from 18 September to 3 October, the earliest since 2003. It was cropped at 43hl/ha and matured in 50% new oak. It has an elegant and understated bouquet with blackberry, black truffle, and pencil lead aromas, quite Pauillac in style compared to previous vintages. The palate is medium-bodied with fine definition, quite saline in the mouth with black fruit, tar and minerals towards the lightly spiced finish that lingers in the mouth. It will benefit from several years in bottle, but this continues a purple patch for this historic Margaux.”*  
- NM, Vinous
- “The 2017 d'Issan is pliant, supple, and nuanced. This is an especially rich, voluptuous style, with a real feeling of lushness from the Merlot. Dark plum, tobacco, leather, cedar, licorice, and spice build into a creamy, racy finish wrapped with silky tannins. Creamy and textured, with impeccable balance, the 2017 Issan is a winner from Emmanuel Cruse and his team.”*  
- AG, Vinous
- “The 2017 d'Issan is plump, juicy, and forward. There is lovely depth and texture to the 2017, but without the explosive energy that has characterized some recent vintages, including the 2015 and 2016. Plush fruit, silky and soft tannins all add to the wine's considerable appeal. I expect the 2017 will drink well with minimal cellaring. In 2017, d'Issan is a wine of finesse, persistence, and nuance rather than power. The blend is 65% Cabernet Sauvignon and 35% Merlot. Harvest started on September 18, the earliest since 2003. Quite unusually, there was no break in between the picking of the Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Indeed, some of the younger vine Cabernet came in before all the Merlots were in. Tasted four times”*  
- AG, Vinous

**Reviews**

*"The 2017 Chateau D'Issan offers more of everything, with a deep ruby/plum color and rocking notes of black raspberries, cassis, spring flowers, violets, loamy earth, and dried tobacco. Beautifully textured, elegant, and finesse-oriented, it has excellent tannins, medium to full body, and an outstanding finish. Based on a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon and 35% Merlot representing just 47% of the total production, aged in 50% new oak, give bottles 3-5 years, and enjoy over the following two decades. This estate covers just over 42 hectares of vines planted in deep, gravelly, clay-based soils. The quality here has been on an upward trend over the past decade thanks to the talents of Emmanuel Cruse and consultant Eric Boissenot."*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*"While the 2017 Château d'Issan isn't going to make you forget the 2015, it nevertheless has outstanding potential. Based on 65% Cabernet Sauvignon and 35% Merlot, brought up in 50% new oak and representing roughly 47% of the total production, it offers a medium-bodied, clean, balanced style as well as plenty of black cherries, leafy herbs, and hints of graphite. With moderate concentration, it comes up short on depth and richness, yet does have charm. It should drink well from 2021-2032."*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*"A very fruit-driven and succulent wine augmented with some nice vanillin oak, this is a decent effort from Issan and while the finish is a little dry, this is a balanced wine for short-term drinking."*

- MJ, matthewjukes.com

*"Dark ruby garnet, violet reflections, subtle lightening of the edges, fresh heart cherries, a hint of plums, fresh orange zest, inviting bouquet. Medium-bodied, fine play of acidity, red berry fruit, integrated tannins, mineral and persistent, a food accompaniment rich in finesse."*

- Falstaff Magazine

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