

Château D'Issan 2021

CSPC# 102898

7500mlx6

13.18% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 2% Malbec, 1% Petit Verdot
Appellation	Margaux
Classification	Grand Cru Classé in 1855
Website	http://www.chateau-issan.com/en/vin_chateau_d_issan.html
Sustainability	Four original zones of nature on the estate play a major role in contributing to the health of its vines: water, polyculture, trees, and the clos. Respecting this ecosystem and its biodiversity ensures the future quality and balance of the château's wines. Château d'Issan's location on the 45th parallel north (a latitude equidistant between the North Pole and the Equator) awards it natural balance and unique geographical advantages, namely stable weather conditions, with temperate winters and long, warm summers. This positioning combined with the estate's nature reserve provides the perfect recipe for biological balance, and thus optimal vine growth.
Analysis	Total Acidity: 3.6 g/L pH: 3.60 ITP: 66
General Info	<p>There's evidence the property existed in the Middle Ages - then known as Teobon. The original <i>château</i> 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 <i>château</i>. 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.</p> <p>Château d'Issan is a 3^{ème} 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 <i>château</i> 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.</p>
Winemaker	Consultant Eric Boissenot
Vintage	Winter was once again marked by alternating cool and mild periods. The arrival of March saw reduced levels of rainfall (17.2 mm) and warm temperatures of around 26°C. These mild conditions awoke nature from its rest 10 days earlier than anticipated, with bud break occurring on 25th March. Vines were swiftly met by spring frost that struck the region on 7th April. However, owing to our privileged geography - 600m from the Gironde estuary - our plots were protected entirely from any damage. April proved to be exceptionally dry, having been recorded as the 11th driest year since 1959. Fortunately, the vines did not suffer any impact, thanks to sufficient water reserves amassed over winter in our clay subsoils. Optimal conditions encourage flowering from 31st May, followed by rising temperatures at the start of June, marking the start of summer. After patches of rain at the beginning of July, good weather soon resumed in time for the start of veraison on 21st July, with ideal temperatures in line with seasonal norms.
Vineyards	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>



Vineyards	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.
Harvest	The 2021 harvest saw perfect conditions throughout, having started with the first Merlot parcels picked on 27th September, Malbec and Petit Verdot on 30th September, and the Cabernet Franc plots on 2nd October. During the second week of harvest, morning temperatures of around 4°C helped to preserve the freshness of the grapes. We were lucky to have a beautiful late autumn, with average afternoon temperatures of 24°C. The largest proportion of the grand vin, the harvest of Cabernet Sauvignon took place between 4th to 9th October under a radiant sun, yielding grapes with optimal maturity.
Winemaking	The wholly parcel-based vinification took place within our gravity-fed vat room, with the first fermentations finishing in mid-October. We began the process of running off of our Merlot on 18th October and finished on 9th November with the Cabernet Sauvignon. Blending took place on 18th January with consultant oenologist Eric Boissenot and our technical team. A sign of an excellent Cabernet vintage, the first tastings revealed a true balance between the density and elegance of the tannins. Full of surprises, the profile of the 2021 vintage so far shows similarities with 2014. Aged in new French barrels 50%.
Tasting Notes	Intense and aromatic, with pure, soft black fruits, and exotic spice, wild herbs and mineral notes adding complexity. The tannins are firm and structured ready for long ageing in bottle, and the finish is fresh and mineral.
Serve with	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.
Production	Approx. 100,000 bottles annually.
Cellaring	Drink 2025-2055
Scores/Awards	<p>92 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - February 2024</p> <p>90-93 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p>90-92 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - May 2022</p> <p>95-96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022</p> <p>16.5 points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022</p> <p>94 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022</p> <p>94 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p>93 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2024</p> <p>92-94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022</p> <p>92 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2022</p> <p>90 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2024</p> <p>90-92 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p>90-92 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p>91-93 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022</p> <p>94 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022</p> <p>92 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022</p> <p>95 points - Vert de Vin - July 2022</p> <p>93-94 points - Bettane & Desselauve (score only) - May 2022</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"The 2021 D'Issan offers up attractive aromas of wild berries, violets, fresh mint, and pencil shavings, followed by a medium to full-bodied, polished, and seamless palate that's layered and suave, with a pretty core of fruit framed by sweet, powdery tannins. This elegant, sensual wine will offer a broad drinking window."</i> - WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The 2021 D'Issan is performing well, exhibiting aromas of rich berries, licorice, violets, sweet soil tones and pipe tobacco. Medium to full-bodied, layered, and lively, with powdery tannins and a saline finish, it will flesh out with élevage to deliver a supple, perfumed D'Issan that will offer a broad drinking window. It's a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot."</i> - WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The 2021 d'Issan is a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 2% Malbec, and 1% Petit Verdot, aging in 50% new oak. Deep garnet-purple in color, it rolls effortlessly out of the glass with notes of ripe blackcurrants, violets, boysenberries, and tilled soil, plus hints of cardamom, dried mint, tobacco, and iron ore. Light to medium-bodied, the palate has a firm structure of ripe, grainy tannins and great tension framing the tightly wound black fruits, finishing long and minerally."</i> - LPB, Wine Independent</p>

Reviews

"A very fine yet structured d'Issan with blackcurrant and plum, as well as spice and walnuts. The palate is full and structured with wonderful tannins and length. It really grows on the palate. Serious balance of ripe and fine tannins with pretty fruit and a citrusy undertone. This could move up a notch. 65% cabernet sauvignon, 30% merlot, 2% cabernet franc, 2% malbec and 1% petit verdot."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 2% Malbec, 1% Petit Verdot. Cask sample. Discreet but fresh with a faint floral nuance. Medium-bodied with a certain density of tannin but delicate and poised. Margaux elegance if slightly reserved. 12.8%. Drink 2028 – 2040."

- JL, JancisRobinson.com

"Dark and deep on the nose, seductive, that beautiful Margaux glamour and elegance - it's completely captivating with hints of violet and rose too after a few minutes. So succulent and juicy on the palate, the tannins are silky, barely present in terms of overt texture, but they do give support, so you get a great mouthfeel here. The definition is excellent, a real precision of fruit with richness and energy, beautiful redcurrant, raspberry, blackcurrant, and black cherry flavours. It's bright and almost lightly framed, gliding across the palate giving bright fruit with some soft perfume. It grows on the palate, at first being quite light and pleasant then deepening and becoming more refined with different elements coming on show. Well extracted with the aromatics taking centre stage instead of overt power or tannic interference. A joy to drink! 2% Malbec and 1% Petit Verdot complete the blend. 3.60pH. Slightly more Cabernet in the blend this year. 45% grand vin, 55% second wine."

- GH, Decanter.com

"Rich aromatics, fresh acidities, careful extraction showcasing black tea and saffron spice notes, balanced and elegant, building in momentum through the palate. Skillful winemaking with plenty of grip. Has austerity through the mid palate, but no dip, and the tannins elongate towards the finish, giving salinity and a mouthwatering kick. You can clearly imagine this ageing well, in the slightly sombre but classic style of 2002 or 2006. 50% new oak. Second year with all five of the major black grape varieties of the Médoc, and the Malbec and Petit Verdot make their presence felt."

- JA, janeanson.com

"Medium-bodied, elegant, refined and already focused on displaying its floral character, accompanied by its core of black raspberries, cherries, tobacco, cedar, and spice. Forward, soft, and vibrant, the wine serves up its sweet, energetic red berries with accents of spice, mint and just a touch of espresso on the backend. Produced from a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot and 1% Malbec. This is only the second vintage to include 5 Bordeaux varietals in the blend. Drink from 2024-2047."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Deep ruby in color, the wine kicks off with assorted red pit fruits, lilacs, cedar and forest leaves. Medium-bodied, elegant, soft, and vibrant, the fruit is focused on its freshness, balance and elegance, leaving you with the essence of purity in the red cherries and plums that linger in the finish. Produced from a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot and 1% Malbec. This is the second vintage to include 5 Bordeaux varietals in the blend. 13.18% ABV, pH 3.6. Picking took place September 27 - October 9. Drink from 2024-2047."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Deep ruby colour. Red and black fruit both come through on the nose, which is floral and fine. The palate is more chunky and rich thanks to grippy, fully extracted tannins. The block of structure slightly hides the fruit at this stage, with toasted spices coming through from the wood. Clear cassis tones start to show more on the finish, but it will need time to settle and for the flesh to hopefully find balance with the structure."

- TP, Farr Vintners

Reviews *“The 2021 d'Issan was matured in 50% new oak and bottled in June. This displays admirable vivacity on the nose, mainly red-fruited, with clove, a touch of mocha and hints of pencil shavings surfacing with time in the glass - well defined and "correct". The palate is pliant on the entry with a slight creaminess to the texture. Showing red berry fruit, allspice and hints of cinnamon and white pepper, this exerts a gentle grip with quite a persistent aftertaste. Just a bit short and light on the finish, it doesn't have the finesse of the 2019 and 2020, but it has plenty of character and will drink after six or seven years.”*
- NM, Vinous

“According to Emmanuel Cruse, the 2021 d'Issan is the second vintage to utilize all five permitted grape varieties, picked from September 27 to October 9 and matured in 50% new oak. Quite intense on the nose, it offers layers of raspberry, wild strawberry, iodine, and incense aromas. The palate is structured on the entry with a judicious touch of white pepper and clove, building nicely without fully letting go. Linear and detailed on the finish, this is a fine Margaux that should give 20 years of drinking pleasure.”
- NM, Vinous

“The 2021 d'Issan is supple, easygoing, and quite attractive. It will be interesting to see if it develops more complexity and nuance with élevage. Today, Issan comes across as straightforward and lacking both in depth and nuance, while the aromatics are muted. Tasted two times.”
- AG, Vinous

“The deep purple-hued 2021 Château d'Issan is another terrific Margaux, which is an appellation that did well in the vintage. Black raspberries, cassis, spring flowers, and some herbal notes all emerge on the nose, and it's medium-bodied, with a charming, mid-weight style on the palate, good balance, and ripe tannins. It's going to drink nicely right out of the gate. The blend is 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 2% each of Cabernet Franc and Malbec, and the rest Petit Verdot.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“Deep ruby, purple reflections on the narrow rim. Inviting nuances of cassis and cherries, a hint of tangerine zest. Complex, juicy red berry fruit, textural, fine, ripe tannins, mineral and fresh; a lively food companion, good development, and ageing potential.”
- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“(65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 2% Malbec, 1% Petit Verdot) The nose is fruity, elegant, racy and shows nice finesse of grain and some racy power. There are notes of ripe boysenberry, fresh blackcurrant and more lightly juicy/fresh red berries combined with hints of peony, pepper, as well as hints of bright cherry, mocha, toast, a discreet hint of graphite, and a delicate hint of incense (in the background). The palate is fruity and reveals nice crunchy fruit, smoothness, freshness, a certain richness of fruit flesh. On the palate this wine expresses notes of pulpy/juicy raspberry, fleshy/juicy blackberry and more lightly fleshy cherry combined with hints of lily, peony, plum blossom as well as hints of racy, steely minerality, gunflint, chocolate/cocoa, fine hints of toasted almond/fresh vanilla. Good length. A little chewiness on the finish/persistence. The tannins are precise and mellow. Good mid-palate and suppleness on the finish.”
- Vert de Vin
