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## Domaine de Chevalier 2006

CSPC# 765467

750mlx12

12.5% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety**  
**Appellation**  
**Website**  
**General Info**

60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Petit Verdot  
Pessac-Léognan

<http://www.domainedechevalier.com/>

The owners of Domaine de Chevalier, the Bernard family, have a long history dating all the way back to the 1155! Documents are available stating that the Count of Angoulême awarded the Bordeaux wine property to Chateau-Bernard for his for his valour in battle against the English.

Domaine de Chevalier in the Graves/Pessac Leognan, appellation, was purchased in 1865 by Arnaud Ricard and his son Jean the Bernard family for 33,000 francs. At the time, the Ricards family were familiar with the Bordeaux wine trade as they worked as coopers, producing some of the best barrels used by many of the best chateau. In 1865, the estate began selling their wine under the Gascon name of "Chivaley". In those days, the 44-hectare property was used for mostly food crops and breeding animals. While there was a tiny Bordeaux wine making operation at the estate, it was not the main interest of the property.

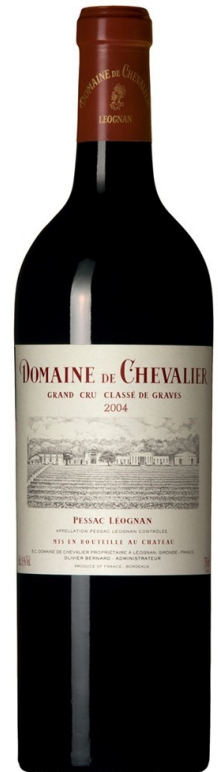
Shortly after the elder Ricard passed away, the son discovered the outstanding potential of the terroir and soil at Domaine de Chevalier and transformed it into a full-time vineyard. The name was changed from "Chivaley" to the French "Chevalier". When Jean Ricard died, his son-in-law, Gabriel Beaumartin, took over and managed Domaine de Chevalier for the next 4 decades. At various times the Ricard family owned other top estates in the Graves appellation including Chateau Malartic Lagraviere and Chateau de Fieuzal.

When Gabriel Beaumartin died in 1940, no one was interested in managing the estate. After a few years, Claude Ricard, Jean's son, started at Domaine de Chevalier in 1948. He was only 21 years old. Under Claude Ricard, Domaine de Chevalier was included in the 1959 Graves Classification. When Domaine de Chevalier was purchased 1983, Olivier Bernard was not much older at 23 years of age. By the time Olivier Bernard arrived, Claude Ricard had already managed the estate for over thirty years.

Domaine de Chevalier is fortunate to have such a fine team to run its affairs. Olivier, whose family business owns the estate, is the outgoing but canny administrator whilst Rémi Edange is hands-on, knowing every vine and every barrel. Whilst their white wines have always been amongst the very finest, the reds were simpler affairs. But from the 1995 vintage onwards greater flair and concentration was in evidence. The quality curve is now further accentuated by the team's bold move to appoint Stéphane Derenoncourt, of La Mondotte fame, as consultant winemaker. Domaine De Chevalier is classified as a Graves Cru Classé.

**Vintage** We had to wait until the first blending tastings in February to be able to assess 2006, a vintage that was influenced by such variable weather conditions. It was a good year characterized by a most unusual alteration of strong heat (in July & September) and cool temperatures (in August); it was also affected by a stormy spell in mid-September, which was quite violent in some areas and caused winegrowers to dread the onset of rot. Crops were gathered hastily, so is 2006 a disappointing vintage or on the contrary very good? We should take into account the fact that the weather in springtime and summer was generally warm and dry, so the grapes were very ripe nevertheless.

**Vineyards** The 80-hectoliter vineyard of Domaine de Chevalier has 42 hectares under vine. The vines are relatively young due to replanting and the fact that the vineyard has frequently been hit by frost. The vineyard of Domaine de Chevalier is used to produce both red and white Bordeaux wine. For the white Bordeaux wine, 5 hectares are planted to 70% Sauvignon Blanc and 30% Semillon. For the red wine, 37 hectares are



**Vineyards** planted to 64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 3% Petit Verdot. The vineyard is planted to a vine density of 10,000 vines per hectare. On average, the vines are close to 30 years of age. The vineyard management techniques used are sustainable farming methods. Only organic Fertilizers are used and this is on a parcel by parcel basis. Approx 40-60% of annual crop goes into the grand vin. Domaine de Chevalier has a complex terroir and soil that starts with the forest that surrounds the vineyards three sides. The forest enhances the extremes of temperature and increase the risk of frost. The terroir is also gravelly black sand soils that are on average 60-90 cm deep. The rich sub-soil consists of a clay-gravel base mixed with hardpan. The vineyard drainage system, built in 1962, important as it drains excess water. At Domaine de Chevalier, it makes a big difference because the sub-soil is prone to retaining humidity. A wind machine and even helicopters are also used to keep the vines dry on occasion. This works because the helicopter blades stir and blend the lower layers of cold air with warmer air and helps avoid damage from frost.

**Harvest** Merlot – 12 September  
Cabernet sauvignon started 22 September – 7 October

**Maturation** The wine is fermented in temperature-controlled, stainless steel vats and then matured in oak barriques (50% new) for 18 months

**Tasting Notes** A splendid Bordeaux with hedonistic aromas of blackberries and cassis, wrapped in a comforting smoky blanket. Elegance, finesse, structure: everything is here. The perfect wine to impress your boss or the man you want to marry, and not just date.

**Cellaring** Drink 2011-2031

**Scores/Awards**

- 91 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2009
- 89-91 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2007
- 92 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #181 - February 2009
- 90-92 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #170 - April 2007
- 91 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 2010
- 91 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - March 2009
- 91-93 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2008
- 89-91 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - April 2007
- 89-91 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2007
- 92 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - November 14, 2011
- 90-92 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - December 31, 2009
- 88? points** - Stephen Tanzer, ST's International Wine Cellar - February 2013
- 93 points** - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)
- 17+ points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2007
- 17.5 points** - Decanter.com - February 10, 2010
- 92 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - July 1, 2008
- 15.5+ points** - Farr Vintner - April 2012
- 89-92 points** - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2007
- 16.5 points** - Simon Staples, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants - June 2007
- 16.5 points** - Joss Fowler, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants - October 2008
- 94 points** - Gilbert & Gaillard - October 19,, 2008
- 88 points** - Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wine (score only)
- 17 points** - Gault & Millau (score only)
- 17 points** - La Revue du Vin France (score only)
- 16 points** - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)
- 1 star** - Le Guide Hachette des Vins - 2010

**Reviews** *"There's attractive blackberry and light vanilla, with a hint of licorice. Full-bodied, with a caressing texture, very pretty fruit and notes of chocolate and licorice. Best from 2014 through 2018."*  
- JS, Wine Spectator

*"Another wine from this estate that's in harmony and balanced, especially for the vintage, with lots of currant and raspberry character and just a hint of dark chocolate. Full, medium tannins and a fresh finish. All together. Score range: 89-91"*  
- JS, Wine Spectator

## Reviews

*"The brilliant St.-Emilion-based consultant, Stephane Derenoncourt, is working his magic at this great vineyard in Leognan. The 2006, a blend of 63% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc, is a revelation of sweet, lush, black raspberry and black currant fruit intermixed with subtle notes of scorched earth and barbecue spices. Round, luscious, sexy, and exceptionally complex, the wine is dominated by that smoky minerality that comes from this area. It is the quintessentially elegant yet substantial Pessac-Leognan with class, complexity, and potential. Despite wanting to drink most of the bottle when I was tasting it, I know it will be even better with 2-4 years of bottle age and should keep for two decades."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*"Major progress is being made at Domaine de Chevalier as the wines are revealing less overt oak as well as better integration of all the wines' structural components. The 2006 possesses a savory, subtle nose of lead pencil shavings, sweet black cherries, currants, and earth. Pure, medium-bodied, and elegant with supple tannin, and substantial flavor interest and length, it should drink beautifully in 3-4 years, and last for 15-20."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*"Tasted blind at Southwold '06 Bordeaux tasting. Initially this Domaine de Chevalier seems a little muddled on the nose, the fruit rather taciturn. But it unfurls nicely with attractive aromas of crushed stone, pine, smoke and truffle developing with aeration. Understated entry, fleshy blackberry fruit interlaced with liquorice and bilberry that leads to a modern, oaky, succulent finish that demonstrates good depth and persistency. Tasted January 2010."*

- NM, Wine Journal

*"The 2006 is very closed on the nose, showing just a little under-ripeness and grassiness that may dissipate with bottle age. It is quite understated on the entry, supple tannins, lacking a little definition at the moment with chewy, blackberry and cedar fruit on the finish. It is very primal and surly, not playing ball at the moment but there's potential is there and just needs time to unlock it. Drink 2016-2025 Tasted September 2008."*

- NM, Wine Journal

*"Another wine that has improved over the last 12 months in barrel (although I suggested out of barrel that it - needs time to show its true potential)-. Introverted nose, touch of smoke, cigar box, blackberry and pine needles. Good definition with touches of black olive developing in the glass. A great wine: medium-bodied, lovely balance, caressing mouthfeel yet great structure and harmony. Good acidity throughout, pert, tense finish with touches of red cherry, raspberry leaf and tobacco. Great potential. Tasted February 2008."*

- NM, Wine Journal

*"Tasted at a négociant. Lucid ruby/purple hue. An intriguing nose, a lot of new oak at the moment. Perhaps lacking some delineation and vigour: tight and a little sullen. The palate is full-bodied, quite tannic but balanced with good fruit concentration. Blackberry, cassis, black olives. Rather linear at this stage, but there is an attractive grainy, Morello and crushed violet tinged finish. Needs time to show its true potential. Tasted April 2007."*

- NM, Wine Journal

*"Another wine from this estate that's in harmony and balanced, especially for the vintage, with lots of currant and raspberry character and just a hint of dark chocolate. Full, medium tannins and a fresh finish. All together."*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"While it doesn't have huge power, this wine does have many great attributes. It is smoothly ripe, its open structure a fine reflection of the elegant style, edged with minerality. The acidity is pure, not too dominant, but lifting the generous fruit and final dry character."*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"90—92 Barrel sample. A wine with good wood and ripe blackcurrant flavors. It is dense, and the tannins are dry, but the fruit is bright, vibrant and fresh."*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

## Reviews

*"(a blend of 60% cabernet sauvignon, 30% merlot, 5% petit verdot and 5% cabernet franc; 13% alcohol): Deep ruby. Blackcurrant, camphor and a peppery note on the nose, plus a hint of a green streak. Suave in texture but peppery and simple in the mouth, with a leafy, herbal quality and a general lack of fruit suggesting only moderate ripeness. Turns a bit dry on the back. Some might like this wine's autumnal, herbal personality more than I did; perhaps I caught it at an awkward stage. In fairness, the vast majority of critics have scored this wine highly."*

- ST, International Wine Cellar

*"Sweet oaky notes weigh the nose of this wine down. A little angular but very fresh. Definitely not a heavyweight but sweet and racy and quite sinewy. Longer term than most red Graves but very dry tannins on the finish. Very angular for the moment - made ambitiously with no holds barred for the very long term."*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*"Dark purple-red. Mineral, cherry-scented, not very pronounced. Fresh, understated and stylish. Mineral-charged flavour and good ripeness. Elegant, savoury wine. Very good. 2014-2034"*

- Decanter.com

*"With the help of Stephane Derenoncourt, this wine was produced in a lush style for the vintage. Lots of ripe black fruit, cassis, smoke and chocolate in the nose. Full bodied with a long, soft, dark berry finish. This is another 06 I think will be better than the 05 when both wines mature."*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"This much respected property in Léognan is run with great care by Olivier Bernard whose family took it over from Claude Ricard in 1983. During the 1980's and 1990's there was a massive programme of replanting and it is only in the last few years, with the vines reaching maturity, that the quality here has returned to that of the great vintages of the 1960's and before. Without doubt, the best three vintages of Chevalier in the last 40 years have been the last three vintages. Domaine de Chevalier was the recent winner of a blind 2003 Graves tasting. Prices, however, have remained reasonable. Monsieur Bernard has recently engaged the talented winemaker Stéphane Derenoncourt (of La Mondotte, Canon la Gaffelière, Pavie Macquin fame) and the wine has benefited greatly from his input. With lots of plump, black fruit on the nose, there is a hint of the modern to this Domaine de Chevalier that is true to its terroir with a touch of classic, tarry Graves character. The palate offers a rich and creamy texture, with juicy black fruits and plenty of minerals. Well structured, with toasty oak and slightly firm tannins lingering on the finish. GOOD VALUE."*

- Farr Vintners

*"Black fruit dominates the nose, but underneath are some red fruits and a smoky mineral character. An attractive weight of fruit given an added lushness by the roundness of the tannins; lighter more mineral driven on the finish"*

- Derek Smedley MW

*"Owner Olivier Bernard's attitude to nature and wine, working the soil naturally and respecting the terroir and the style of the vintage, makes him a Burgundian at heart according to Jasper Morris MW, which is praise indeed. 2006 was a Cabernet vintage in Pessac, according to Olivier, and the extra Cabernet in his blend (67% CS and 4% CF) has made his 2006 more structured than usual. It has an exotic, creamy blackberry nose, a wonderful harmony and structure, and a lovely concentration of pure, minerally cassis fruit with coffee hints. This is another tour de force of outstanding quality."*

- SS, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants

*"Domaine de Chevalier is a property on form, and one that remains under the radar; it offers exceptional value for money. This beautifully pure 2006 has the charm and fresh acidity that the best 2006s show, underpinned with a firm and unforced tannic structure. This is very well made indeed."*

- JF, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants

*"Elegant, medium-bodied Margaux with lovely violet and cedar notes. Still young but just opening up now. Restrained and still tight on the palate with silky tannins. Best after a few more years in bottle."*

- JCL, asianpalate.com

**Reviews** *“Delicate nose of ripe, red fruit, discreet oak. Mature, full, generous palate with attractive delicate texture. Superb as usual. Very fine Pessac.”*  
- en.gilbertgaillard.com

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