
Domaine de Chevalier 2014

CSPC# 790379

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

CSPC# 765467

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot

Appellation

Pessac-Léognan

Classification

Grand Cru Classe de Graves in 1959

Website

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

General Info

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 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.

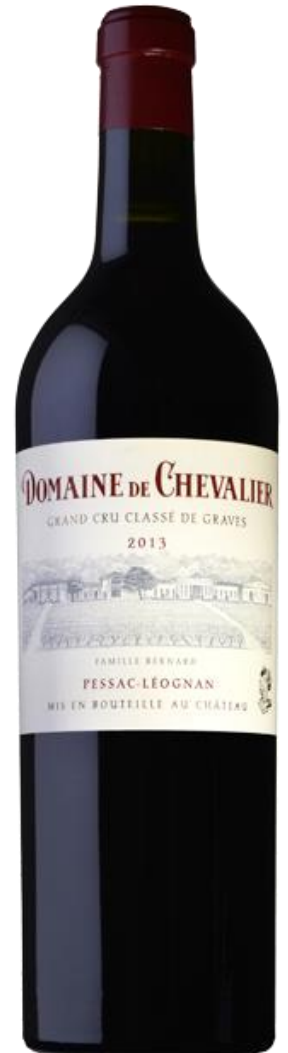
Domaine de Chevalier is fortunate to have such a fine team to run its affairs. Olivier, whose family business owns the estate, is the outgoing but canny administrator whilst Rémi Edange is hands-on, knowing every vine and every barrel. Whilst their white wines have always been amongst the very finest, 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

The growing season was cold and wet for most of the summer, and the region was bracing for another weak vintage like 2013. But warm and sunny weather in September and October (a magnificent Indian summer) gave the grapes just the right amount of ripeness. Cabernet sauvignon, in particular, thrived thanks to its later picking times.

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 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



Vineyards 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 harvested between October 10-17, 2014.

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

Tasting Notes The yield was 40 hectoliters per hectare this year: that doesn't represent a great yield, but it is much better than recent years, in particular 2013. I always buy this wine for my own cellar and will be doing so again. Soft and really approachable, this is a gentle wine. Shy, but pretty on the nose, it is decadent and could be enjoyed very early; but that's not to say it won't age well, all the component parts are singing in harmony: ripe, fleshy fruit, freshness, attractive acidity, and silky, fine tannins. The finish is soft too.

Production 10,000 cases made

Cellaring Drink 2022-2040

Scores/Awards **92 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2017
90-93 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2015
93 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate Interim - March 31, 2017
92-94 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #218 - April 29, 2015
94 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - February 2017
93-94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2015
95 points / Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2017
92-94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2015
17.5+ points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2015
18.25 (94) points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - June 2015
94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - February 2017
92-94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2015
92-94 points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - March 2015
90 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)
93 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2015
17+ points - Farr Vintner - March 2015
89-92 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2015
17-18 points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - April 2015
92+ points - Richard Jennings, rjonwine.com - January 2017
92 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - March 2015
96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2017
92-95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2015
95 points - Wilfred Wong, Wine.com - January 2017
92-94 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only)
17.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only)
18 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)
17.5 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only)
17.5 points - Gault & Millau (score only)

Reviews *"Focused, with a graphite edge that runs from start to finish alongside the dark plum and blackberry purée flavors. Reveals a pretty echo of anise through the finish, which has latent depth. Solid. Best from 2018 through 2026. 10,000 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

Reviews *“Tightly focused, with red currant, bergamot, Campari and sandalwood notes woven together and carrying through the well-polished finish. Has a noticeable twinge of singed wood and sweet earth at the end. A touch more backward than most of the Pessac pack right now. Score range: 90-93”*

- JM, Wine Spectator

“The wine has a wonderful bouquet with pure blackberry, raspberry coulis and iodine-tinged aromas that seem to envelop the senses. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannin, superb acidity and a sense of symmetry that is uncommon in the 2014 vintage. This is a sophisticated, precise wine from Olivier Bernard that could be one of top wines of the vintage. There is an approachability to this Domaine de Chevalier, which you do not always find, however I would be inclined to give this 3-4 years in bottle.”

- NM, Wine Advocate

“The Domaine de Chevalier 2014 is a blend of 64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Petit Verdot and 30% Merlot. It has a fragrant bouquet with blackberry, black plum, cigar ash and woodland scents, complex though not as intense as its white counterpart. The palate is medium-bodied with grainy, quite firm tannin that underpin a classic Domaine de Chevalier that has just the right amount of austerity at this stage. Reserved perhaps, but it is beautifully knitted together with a lovely bay leaf tinged finish. Quintessential Domaine de Chevalier...which is what we all want.”

- NM, Wine Advocate

“Anyone who says that the 2014s aren’t elegant needs to taste this beautifully balanced wine. Ripe redcurrant and delicate herbal aromas with just a hint of spicy oak on the nose precede a fresh, medium-bodied palate with underplayed power and a lot of subtle nuances on the long finish.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“Very dense and beautiful with chocolate, currants and spices. Walnut and hazelnut character too. Full body, silky tannins and a long finish. Balanced and fine.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“The wine is powered both by its tannins and by its great fruit. Dark and dense both in the structure and the black-plum flavors, it is very fine wine—juicy and ripe. This is a serious wine with a great future. Drink from 2.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“92–94. Barrel Sample. There is an initial sense of bitter extraction in this wine, with dark coffee flavors. It is tough and the fruit is hard to discern. Acidity at the end could bring balance.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Particularly dark crimson. Intense nose. Quite thick and dense. Then soft and beguiling on the palate. Unusually low in acidity! Quite luscious. And a cool finish. Complete.”

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“Rich and silky in texture and great sense of controlled power on the attack. Love the balance here, they have extracted more than some, but with great control and this gives very promising hints of how it will develop over the next decade. The restraint that comes with the tannins is apparent, this is an excellent wine. Harvested up to October 17 and only started on October 1, so really made the most of the fine late autumn weather.”

- SS, Decanter.com

“Whatever the vintage, Domaine de Chevalier is a wine that rarely disappoints. This is typically fresh and well balanced, with poise and concentration, well-handled oak and the backbone and perfume you’d expect from such a high percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon. Has the structure to age.”

- TA, timatkin.com

“Elegance and purity is the best way to describe this young, fresh, vibrant, smoke filled wine. The refined, finish, lingers and feels great, with all its juicy, sweet, pure, black cherries.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews *A sexy vintage with chocolate, plums, earth and freshly rolled cigars on the nose. This wine is medium-bodied, soft, and silky and did I mention sexy? There is a distinctly forward, polished, blackberry and chocolate finish. The wine was produced from a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 5% Petit Verdot and reached 13.5% alcohol. 92-94 Pts"*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Deep and saturated colour; dark at centre; nice ripe fruit; nicely judged; blackcurrant, some cassis and black cherry; quite voluptuous; little oak; dark chocolate and black cherry notes on the palate; lots of matter; currently some oak to be soaked up on the back palate; grip too; lots of matter; quite big; this will work very well. The comparison here is with 2010 but with more flesh. [65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot]. Drink 2020-2035. Tasted 1 April 2015. 92-94+"

- JW, winewordsandvideotape.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 1980s and 1990s there was a programme of replanting and it is only since the early 2000's, with the vines reaching maturity, that the quality here has returned to that of the great vintages of the 1960s and before. Without doubt, the best vintages of Chevalier are the most recent ones. Domaine de Chevalier performed an amazing treble at our annual Southwold blind tasting, winning the Graves flight in 2003, 2004 and 2005. It continues to perform brilliantly every year. Prices, however, have remained reasonable. Not only is Domaine de Chevalier the best value wine in Pessac-Léognan these days, it is now becoming one of the best of all. A property on the rise - one to watch. Hugely popular with the team at Farr Vintners. Deep ruby with a purple rim. Sweet black plum and cherries on the nose, which has excellent aromatics. There are hints of wood smoke and tobacco. Soft entry, smooth Graves tannins with refreshing acidity and a lovely bright fruit palate. Crunchy fruits with a real vibrancy and intensity through the mid-palate. The smooth finish has more hints of toasted spices that round off a delicious wine."

- Farr Vintners

"Fresh and floral there is a lot happening on the nose the palate starts light and bright. Under the fresh black fruits there is sweetness rich flavours a mid-suppleness fine tannins. The sweetness is well balanced by freshness at the back the finish bright and long. 2023-30"

- Derek Smedley MW

"A very impressive, inky-dark core here, with a deep crimson rim. The nose is beautifully expressive, dripping with bright black cherry fruit, black plums too, with a perfumed, vanilla flower freshness to it. The palate is polished, showing a lovely texture from the start, with exuberant fruit substance like the nose, super confidence in both the ripeness and integration of the tannins, and there is super balance to it as well. This is a superb result, brimming with structure but it is ripe and well composed. It is so captivating I think I came back to this sample three times during the course of my tasting. Impressive, and candidate for top wine of the appellation in this vintage. 17-18/20"

- CK, The Wine Doctor

"(Domaine de Chevalier) Saturated, very dark ruby color; aromatic, toast, cedar, red currant nose; tasty, tight, toast, cedar, red currant palate with good balancing acidity; needs 6+ years; long finish (65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot) 92+ points"

- RJ, rjonwine.com

"The Domaine de Chevalier 2014 is a blend of 64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Petit Verdot and 30% Merlot. It has a fragrant bouquet with blackberry, black plum, cigar ash and woodland scents, complex though not as intense as its white counterpart. The palate is medium-bodied with grainy, quite firm tannin that underpin a classic Domaine de Chevalier that has just the right amount of austerity at this stage. Reserved perhaps, but it is beautifully knitted together with a lovely bay leaf tinged finish. Quintessential Domaine de Chevalier...which is what we all want."

- JCL, asianpalate.com

Reviews *"The 2014 Domaine de Chevalier is a total knockout. Precise, brilliant and finely sculpted, the 2014 possesses superb intensity. Freshly cut flowers, mint and sweet red berries, along with finessed but persistent tannins, give the wine its regal personality. The 2014 needs a number of years to shed some baby fat and develop the full breadth of its aromatics, but it is a fabulous wine by any measure. The 2014 is 65 % Cabernet Sauvignon, 30 % Merlot and 5 % Petit Verdot that spent approximately 35 days on the skins. Olivier Bernard noted that the Merlots were brought in between October 10 and 17, which is quite late by the domaine's standards. Tasted two times. Drink 2022-2044."*

- AG, Vinous

"I was deeply impressed with these wines from Domaine de Chevalier. The red has a slight upper hand in 2014, but both wines are distinctive and full of character. Olivier Bernard owns one of the crown jewels of Bordeaux, as these wines clearly make evident. The 2014 Domaine de Chevalier is a total knockout. Precise, brilliant and finely sculpted, the 2014 possesses superb intensity. Freshly cut flowers, mint and sweet red berries, along with finessed but persistent tannins, give the wine its regal personality. The 2014 needs a number of years to shed some baby fat and develop the full breadth of its aromatics, but it is a fabulous wine by any measure. The 2014 is 65 % Cabernet Sauvignon, 30 % Merlot and 5 % Petit Verdot that spent approximately 35 days on the skins. Olivier Bernard noted that the Merlots were brought in between October 10 and 17, which is quite late by the domaine's standards. (AG)"

- AG, Vinous

"One of my favorite producers in Bordeaux, Domaine de Chevalier, has produced an outstanding wine. The wine begins with a beautiful aroma of ripe berry fruits—raspberries, blueberries, and blackberries—and adds nuances of cocoa powder, sweet oak, and savory spices. For those unfamiliar with Pessac-Léognan, Domaine de Chevalier would be a grand way to begin the exploration. (Tasted: January 27, 2017, San Francisco, CA) "

- WW, wine.com
