
Domaine de Chevalier Blanc 2014

CSPC# 790380

750mlx12

13.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

75% *Sauvignon Blanc*, 25% *Semillon*

Appellation

Pessac-Léognan

Classification

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 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 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 Hand-picked, into small crates from September 10 to 26, 2014. Grapes are picked in 3 to 5 waves for optimum ripeness. Traditional cold settling in barrels.

Maturation Fermentation in barrels. Age in barrels for 18 months (35% new oak) with bâtonnage (stirring the lees with a stick)

Tasting Notes Pale gold bright color with green glints. Explosive nose of citrus fragrances mixed of white peach and exotic fruit. Fresh and mineral aromas. Outstanding tension and freshness on the palate with intense and amazing flavors. This wine is built for aging and it will provide its complex and tasty flavors for a long time.

Production 1,665 cases made

Cellaring Drink 2018-2030.

Scores/Awards **94 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2017
92-95 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2015
93-95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #218 - April 29, 2015
98 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - February 2017
95-96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2015
97 points / Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2017
94-96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2015
18.5 (95) points - Decanter.com - April 2015
96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - February 2017
92-94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2015
91-93+ points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - March 2015
93 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2015
16.5 points - Farr Vintner - March 2015
86-89 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2015
93 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - March 2015
94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2017
91-94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2015 (score only)
18 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only)
19.5 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)
17.5 points - Gault & Millau (score only)
17 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only)

Reviews *"Gorgeous, with lemon chiffon, white peach, yellow plum and yellow apple fruit that has weight and cut, underscored with a long honeysuckle note and a streak of quinine. The finish sports some serious depth; this will be fun to cellar. Best from 2018 through 2026. 1,665 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Very pure, with a long makrut lime note holding the upper hand, while white peach, Chartreuse and tar fruit accents fill in behind. Offers a kiss of brioche on the finish. There's lots to like here. Score range: 92-95"
- JM, Wine Spectator

Reviews

"The Domaine de Chevalier Blanc is a blend of 75% Sauvignon Blanc and 25% Sémillon matured in around 40% new oak, with a low pH, Olivier Bernard remarking that it was close to 3.0. It has an almost clinical nose, extremely well defined, Zen-like at first with scents of flint and cold granite, stone rather than fruit. The palate is fresh on the entry with crisp acidity, though it is not shrill. It is very focused, "minimalist" Domaine de Chevalier that Olivier remarked is perhaps the best he has ever made. Perhaps he is right. There is a Burgundy like sense of terroir coming through here, a wine that perhaps does not wish to conform to the Bordeaux stereotype of what a white Pessac-Léognan should be. So, it's a bit of a sui generis, a one-off, and you'll love it. (NM)"

- NM, Wine Advocate

"This is so solid and structured. It's bigger and better than most 2014s! What a wine. Full body with flavors of stones, dried apples and pears. Goes on for minutes. Yes man!"

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"A solid and muscular Domaine de Chevalier with layers of fruit. Very dense, loads of flavor. Full body, bright acidity and a long, long finish. Tangy acidity. It lasts for minutes."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"*Cellar Selection* This is a structured wine with its tight acidity and concentrated white and citrus fruits. Produced from a small parcel on the Chevalier estate, it is complex with its mineral texture, its touch of pepper and its fine herbal acidity. It is a wine for long-term aging. Drink from 2023. (RV)"*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"94–96. Barrel Sample. This is a deliciously fruity wine that has fine poise between richness and ripe peach and red apple flavors. The tangy texture gives the wine extra complexity. It should age well, although it will also be attractive soon."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"The twist of clean minerality from the first attack brings a smile. You are in the hands of experts here, citrus dusting, controlled sappy acidity that just keeps on coming drip by drip, lovely persistency. A great wine – both colours highly successful this year, this estate is really hitting it out of the park. 70% Sauvignon Blanc, 30% Semillon, harvesting September 10 to 26 with a good yield of 40hl/h."

- SS, Decanter.com

"This doesn't quite scale the same heights as the very best vintages of this delicious white blend, but it's still impressive, showing attractive, lees-derived creaminess, notes of pear, candlewax and lemon zest, some struck match and plenty of acidity. It just needs a little more concentration."

- TA, timatkin.com

"WOW! Now we're talking. This attention seeking wine grabs you with all its crisp, fresh, polished, yellow citrus, flowers, lime and honeydew fruits. The blazing acidity cuts perfectly, leaving with a sensation of crushed rocks, lemon peel and grapefruit, that could not be any fresher."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Created from a blend of 75% Sauvignon Blanc and 25% Semillon, this wine is bright with a pomelo, lemon wax and lime character. Rich, vibrant yet breezy and sweet, this concentrated, mineral driven wine feels lush on the palate and is packed with crisp, citrus notes in the finish. 94-96 Pts."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"2014 Silver; apple and pear drop notes; vinous; mineral and some spice; piercing; taut and elegant on the palate; apple freshness with mineral, zippy finish. Should fill out further. [75% Sauvignon Blanc, 25% Sémillon]. Drink 2019-2028. Tasted UGCB 1 April 2015. 91-93+"

- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

Reviews *“One of the truly great names of dry White Bordeaux. Chevalier Blanc has a loyal following and is a wine with an amazing ability to age despite being attractive in its youth. Pale lemon in colour. Green apple, lemon zest and a little grapefruit on the nose. The palate is very fresh and zingy with high levels of zesty acidity. Lots of citrus fruit and a cool mineral edge, this is very youthful and sharp, and will need a little time to flesh out. Hints of sweet spice and light wood smoke add layers to the lemon zest, steely green apples and grapefruit. Very fresh and long.”*

- Farr Vintners

“The nose is fresh the start of the palate bright with high acidity. There seems to be a lack of sweetness in the middle with lemon very much in evidence at the back firm and quite hard. 2016-22”

- Derek Smedley MW

“Delicate, nuanced flavors that range from white flowers to citrus and stone fruits. This vintage is restrained and quite focused with wonderful freshness. Mid-palate is quite substantial and shows promise for evolution and aging. Linear and pure with detail and precision.”

- JCL, asianpalate.com

“The 2014 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc comes across as very young and in need of cellaring. Then again, that's the way it is in most vintages with the Blanc. White flowers, mint and orchard fruit are some of the signatures. In 2014, the Blanc is a wine of power, texture and depth, some of which is found in place of the brighter, more citrus-driven character found in other vintages. In 2014, the blend is 70 % Sauvignon Blanc and 30 % Sémillon. (AG)”

- AG, Vinous

“Powerful and intense, the 2014 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc is very tightly wound today. Lemon peel, white flowers, slate and crushed rocks are all beautifully delineated. Blocked malolactic fermentations keep the flavors bright and the textures focused. The intensely mineral, salivating finish is a thing of pure beauty. There is little doubt the Chevalier Blanc is one of the wines of the vintage. Readers can look forward to several decades of exceptional drinking. In 2014, the blend is 70% Sauvignon Blanc and 30% Sémillon.”

- AG, Vinous
