

Domaine de Chevalier Blanc 2020

CSPC# 866101

750mlx6

13.7% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

70% Sauvignon Blanc, 30% Sémillon

Appellation

Pessac-Léognan

Classification

Cru Classe de Graves in 1959

Website

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

Sustainability

Fruit is grown with a focus on sustainability and, in many parcels, biodynamic practices.

General Info

The owners of Domaine de Chevalier, the Bernard family, have a long history dating all the way back to 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.

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.

Winemaker

Rémi Edange. Stéphane Derenoncourt consults.

Vintage

The earliest vintage in the past ten years, 2020 began with a mild and rainy winter, favouring bud break three weeks early and an accelerated growth of the vegetation in the spring. The frost of March 27 damaged the buds and impacted the yields of the whites. While heavy rainfall marked the period between late May and early June, the particularly hot month of July was followed by a very dry month of August. The deep rooting of the vines, which are 40 years old on average, coupled with regular ploughing, have made it possible to fight against severe water stress. The lenient weather conditions at the end of August and the beginning of September allowed for the harvest of perfectly ripe grapes in good sanitary condition.

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.

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



Vineyards	<p>Fertilizers are used, and this is on a parcel-by-parcel basis. Approx 40-60% of annual crop goes into the grand vin.</p> <p>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 increases 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, is 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 help avoid damage from frost.</p>
Harvest	<p>Frosts in the area can be problematic for the vineyard, and Olivier often uses wind machines and sometimes helicopters to protect the plantings of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc, Sauvignon Blanc, and Semillon from extreme weather. Picking is often done in the vineyard, and for their white wine, Domaine de Chevalier Blanc, the grapes are then taken to a special room that is kept very cold to preserve the freshness of the delicate white varieties. The only other property that implements this practice in Bordeaux for their white wine is Château Margaux.</p>
Maturation	<p>Slow pressing. Settlement (débourbage) and alcoholic fermentation in the barrel.</p> <p>Ageing on the lees in the barrel with stirring, for 18 months. This makes it the longest aged dry white of Bordeaux. New barrels: 35 %</p>
Tasting Notes	<p>Pale gold color with some vivid glimmers. Intense and exotic floral nose of yellow peach, mangoes, and citrus fruits. Dense, generous, greedy but lively palate, without heaviness. Refines, ripe, and very delicate flesh. Long, elegant finish with great finesse. The acidity is present, without weakness, relative to the level of concentration of this wine. Excellent balance, high class wine.</p>
Serve with	<p>Domaine de Chevalier Blanc is a perfect wine to serve with all types of seafood, fish, shellfish, crab, lobster, chicken, veal, port and of course cheese.</p>
Production	<p>Approx. 2,000 cases made annually.</p>
Cellaring	<p>Drink 2024-2029.</p>
Scores/Awards	<p>95 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2023 95 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023 94-96 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021 98 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent (score only) - March 2023 96-97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021 96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021 16.5+ points - Lames Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021 16.5+ points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021 95 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2023 95 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021 95 points - Jane Anson, Insidebordeaux.com - January 2023 96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023 96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021 91 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021 91-93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021 95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2023 94-96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021 95 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023 18 points - Matthew Jukes - April 2021 93 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2021 92-94 points - Yves Beck (score only) - June 2021 95 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021 97 points - Terres de Vins (score only) - May 2021 96 points - Andreas Larsson, Tasted - May 2021 93-94 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - May 2021 17.5 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2021</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"A very young, powerful, coiled-up white, with verbena, Mirabelle plum, quinine, gooseberry gelée and fleur de sel notes weaving together. The long finish has a flash of bitter almond but keeps a nice nervy feel, with an underlying mineral hint. One to cellar a bit and let unwind. Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon. Best from 2024 through 2029."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p>

Reviews *“Another terrific vintage for this wine, the 2020 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc unwinds in the glass with aromas of nectarine, pear, nutmeg, passionflower, and hazelnuts. Medium to full-bodied, fleshy, and seamless, with racy acids and a bright, pure profile, it nips at the heels of the brilliant and somewhat racier, more refined 2019.”*

- WK, Wine Advocate

“The 2020 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc bursts with notions of ripe yellow apples, juicy pears, and lime blossoms, plus hints of blanched almonds, yuzu zest and wet pebbles. The medium to full-bodied palate delivers impactful apple and citrus flavors with a racy backbone and seductive oiliness to the texture, finishing long and minerally.”

- LPB, Wine Advocate

“A dense, creamy DC white with lots of rich cooked-apple, mineral, cream, and praline character. It’s full and very layered with chewy intensity and a long, bitter-lemon and almost honey finish. Pretty phenolic tension, too.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This is a phenomenal white with big density and energy. Full bodied, yet incredibly agile and intense. Fabulous character of salt, minerals, and shells. Just a hint of tannins. Dried white peaches. Pears and apples. Super subtle character. 70% sauvignon Blanc and 30% semillon. Great wine. A wine for the future but so great now.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This classic white wine reveals impressive potential as it unfolds. Along with its enveloping white fruits and crisp citrus it also has a wrought texture that will push it forward for the long term. Barrel Sample: 96-98.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Unusually open and aromatic with citrus, guava, and passion-fruit notes. Palate round and full but with a refreshing bite of acidity and again those expressive fruit notes. More immediate pleasure than long term? (JL) Drink 2024 – 2030.”

- JL, JancisRobinson.com

“Subtle, salivatory, mineral nose. Quite rich and dense on the palate – lots more depth here than in most dry white Pessac-Léognans. Seems weightier and richer than most previous vintages. Builds towards the finish. On past form, I’ll give it the benefit of the doubt regarding ageability. 13.5% Drink 2023 – 2030.”

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“Round with a soft medicinal, herbal element and toasted spice framing the lemon, lime, elderflower, pear, and peach fruit with a core of salty, wet stones. Bitter, sweet, and acidic - all the elements melding together harmoniously with an appealing weight. I like the overall sleek and crisp expression, feels well worked and well structured. A great buy.”

- GH, Decanter.com

“An excellent white with precision, flesh, and confidence, sure to age well. A ton of white pear and some soft pepper spice keeps up the pace and lifts from beginning to end, and the intensity continues to build after the wine has left the palate - a sure sign of something special happening. A yield of 43hl/ha. Tasted twice. Unusual for me to score the red and white Chevalier at the same level, but both are extremely successful in this vintage.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“Domaine de Chevalier, under the careful ownership of Oliver Bernard, provides such consistent quality in red and white, and proves it again in 2020. Has a confident, sculpted feel, majoring on waves of white pear, citrus, elderflower, touches of saffron, lovely quality and real grip. A yield of 43hl/ha, with ageing potential, and weight through the mid palate. Diam cork closure.”

- JA, Inside Bordeaux

Reviews

“Ripe, lush, and opulent, the wine opens to a wealth of fragrances, flowers, spice, honey, vanilla, green apples, lemon rind, mango, and pink grapefruit aromatics are easy to find. On the palate the wine is silky, lush, and fresh, finishing with yellow citrus and creamy green apples. You can enjoy this beauty on release, but it has the ability to age as well. Drink from 2023-2036.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Straw yellow in color, the wine shows off its Meyer lemons, spice, mango, pink grapefruit, lemon oil and flowers on the nose. On the palate the wine is silky, lush, creamy, juicy, and fresh, finishing with sweet lemons and green apple nuances that easily display their purity, silky textures, and racy acidity. The wine blends 75% Sauvignon Blanc and 25% Semillon 13.7% ABV.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The 2020 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc was cropped at 43hl/ha and will spend 18 months in barrel. It has a very composed bouquet of green apple, kiwi fruit, crushed rock, and dried white flower aromas. There is nothing extravagant on the nose, but it is beautifully defined. The palate is medium-bodied with a fine bead of acidity, displaying light honeyed notes on the entry mixed with chamomile and almond and hints of marzipan. Very harmonious from start to finish, this is a refined and classy Domaine de Chevalier Blanc.”

- NM, [Vinous](http://Vinous.com)

“The 2020 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc marries power and tension so well. Lemon confit marzipan, chamomile, dried orchard fruit and crushed flowers all build effortlessly into the expansive, beautifully resonant finish. Above all else, the Blanc is a wine of savory/mineral complexity and structure. I wouldn't dream of touching a bottle anytime soon. Tasted two times”

- AG, [Vinous](http://Vinous.com)

“The 2020 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc is fabulous. Bright and airy in the glass, 2020 bristles with energy. Lemon confit, crushed rocks, mint, and white pepper all pulse with tons of vibrancy. This finely-cut, chiseled white is going to need a number of years to be at its best, but it is so impressive and so full of potential. Bright saline notes punctuate the dazzling finish. Time in the glass brings out the wine's texture and layers. The Blanc is one of the world's great wines, hands down.”

- AG, [Vinous](http://Vinous.com)

“Ripe melon, honeyed mint, and dried herb notes all emerge from the 2020 Domaine De Chevalier Blanc, a medium-bodied, rich, concentrated, yet tight and backward white built for the cellar. Mostly Sauvignon yet with a good chunk of Semillon, this balanced, focused, incredibly impressive dry white needs 3-5 years of bottle age and, I suspect, will evolve for 15+ years.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Sheer heaven on the nose, this is one of the most balanced and perfumed wines of the vintage and it shows stunningly tender lime blossom and honeysuckle fruit against a backdrop of ‘blonde’ oak and creamy, blanched almond tones. The acidity is thrilling, making this an electrifying treat and it will drink well in its youth as well as develop nicely, too, such is the innate balance here.”

- Matthew Jukes

“Medium golden yellow, silver reflections. Yellow tropical fruit underlaid with candied orange zest, fresh mango, ripe peach, a hint of verbena, ginger, white flower, mineral aspect. Juicy, complex, and elegant, fruity texture, a touch of herbal savouriness and mint, integrated acidity, already very harmonious and long lasting. Certainly, has future potential.”

- PM, [Falstaff Magazine](http://FalstaffMagazine.com)

“Very flinty and stony, almost Riesling like in some way with unctuous yellow fruit, confit de citron, lemongrass, and ripe aromatic herbs. Textured and profound, layered and nuanced with a rounded acidity yet a good sense of freshness with excellent length.”

- AL, Tasted.com
