
Domaine de Chevalier Blanc 2021

CSPC# 780657

750mlx6

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

75% Sauvignon Blanc, 25% 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's. 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

This 2021 vintage at Domaine de Chevalier will go down in history for two climatically opposed reasons:

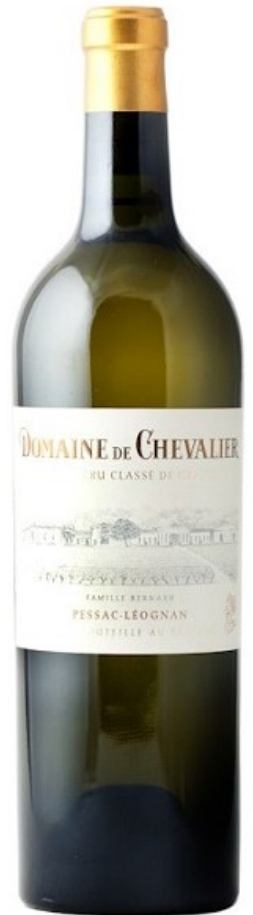
A chaotic climatic and viticultural season, severe frosts and heavy rains favoring mildew:

At the start of spring, 7 waves of frost hit the vineyard between April 3 and May 3 (6-8-12-13-17-19/April and May 3) with temperatures down to -5°C. The damage is significant, particularly in Sauternes and Graves. Then a deluge, 320mm of rain between May and June (including 100mm on the flower in the 2nd decade of June...) and finally mildew on the grapes in July! (particularly noticeable on Merlot).

An extraordinary end to the season, for the maturity and the harvest, under the great anticyclone, allowing two great successes, in White as in Red:

September, the month of whites, lenient and very positive, ensures and completes the maturity of Sauvignon Blancs and Sémillons. They gain in power, in aromatic intensity, in finesse of flavors while keeping the freshness essential to their balance.

October gratifies us with a huge anticyclone, fully sunny, windy, dry and cool.



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 fertilizers are used.

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.

Harvest September 13-23, 2021

Maturation Slow pressing. Settlement (débouillage) and alcoholic fermentation in the barrel. 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 %

Tasting Notes Bright color, pale gold with almond green glints. On the nose, great freshness, very pure, lively, refined and complex. The fruity aromas offer citrus zest as well as fresh, white-fleshed fruits, ripe but not excessively. The vineyard peach is fully expressed. On the white flower side, we find hawthorn, linden, and acacia flowers. This bouquet, racy and seductive, reveals mineral and saline fragrances, quartz, gunflint, signature of our gravelly soils. The palate is juicy, dense, suave, silky, and very delicate. The superb acid tension perfectly structures this wine and gives it great freshness. The purity of the flavors brings out a finish of great elegance. Impeccable balance, classic style.

Serve with 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.

Production 2,000 cases made

Cellaring Drink 2024-2031

Scores/Awards

- 92 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - April 2024
- 94+ points** - Yohan Castaing, Wine Advocate - February 2024
- 94-96 points** - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022
- 94-96+ points** - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - May 2022
- 98 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2024
- 98-99 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022
- 17+ points** - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022
- 95 points** - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022
- 95 points** - Jane Anson, Inside Bordeaux - May 2022
- 98 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022
- 92 points** - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2022
- 94-96 points** - Thomas Parker, Farr Vintners - April 2022
- 95 points** - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2024
- 95-97 points** - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022
- 96 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2024
- 95-97 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022
- 95-97 points** - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022
- 18.5 points** - Matthew Jukes - August 2022
- 95 points** - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022
- 94 points** - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022
- 95-96 points** - Vert de Vin - April 2022

Reviews *"This has a bit of flamboyance, with orange curd and elderflower notes rippling along the edges of a bright yellow apple and honeysuckle core. Shows a salted butter accent on the finish. A delightfully expressive white. Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon. Drink now through 2031. 2,000 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"The 2021 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc ... matured for 18 months in barrels, of which 35% were new. Delivering a deep, complex bouquet that features aromas of spices, white pepper, elderflower, citrus oil, and wet stones, it's full-bodied, round, and generous, with a satiny attack that segues into a fleshy, vibrant palate, concluding with a pure and precise finish."
- YC, Wine Advocate

Reviews *“The 2021 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc is shaping up brilliantly, bursting with aromas of citrus oil, gooseberries, crisp stone fruit, white flowers, and pastry cream. Medium to full-bodied, satiny, and layered, it's a concentrated, textural wine that displays terrific cut and tension, allying racy acidity with chalky, structuring dry extract.”*

- WK, Wine Advocate

“... the 2021 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc bursts from the glass with vivacious notes of fresh lemons, yuzu zest, and lime leaves, plus hints of green apples, dill seed, and sea spray. Medium-bodied, the palate is tightly wound with loads of mineral and citrus layers, delivering amazing tension, finishing very long and minerally.”

- LPB, Wine Independent

“A serious nose with great depth and complexity here. Fine oak spices, chalk, meringue, lanolin, and a twist of praline/pistachio to the intense lemons, honeyed gooseberries, and mineral. Extremely harmonious with a deliciously saline touch to the center palate. Medium- to full-bodied, with a persistent but elegant and subtle finish that lasts almost a minute.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This is always an impressive white, with a lengthy, layered, and compact palate. Lots of dried lemon, clove, fennel, green-apple, and cedar. Flint and toast, too. Medium to full body. Incredibly long.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“Restrained, as it always is, on the nose. Though on the palate there's a certain blossomy opulence. And impressive persistence. Based on how this wine tastes and the track record of the château, this should be a real long-distance runner... Minerals and citrus and a light lanolin character with great undertow and interest. But still pretty youthful and unformed. Drink 2025 – 2045.”

- JL, JancisRobinson.com

“A rich honeyed apple and apricot nose with soft white blossom notes. So lifted and expressive on the palate, creamy lemon, pear, red apple, and apricot. Gently round, this has a nice delicacy but also good weight - a refined palate with a soft creaminess. Easy to drink and enjoy with excellent structure and density for the vintage, you get enough acidity and texture to give a full mouthfeel without anything being too much or over the top but still with enough flavour that it's interesting and compelling. A top buy.”

- GH, Decanter.com

“Impactful from the first moment, reinforcing the success they have had in both colours in the vintage. So much flavour and texture, with lemongrass, gun smoke, orange peel, pineapple, mango, slate, apricot pit, offering grip and length. Tasted several times and it always delivered juice, control, and excitement. One of the wines of the vintage.”

- JA, Inside Bordeaux.com

“White flowers, honeysuckle, lemon rind, pineapple, spice, and vanilla aromatics motivate you to want to know more. On the palate, the wine is perfectly balanced between its lush, creamy character and blazing acidity. The fruit shows a gorgeous purity and the seamless finish builds, expands, and lingers. Clearly, this is a contender for one of the best, if not the best vintage of Domaine de Chevalier Blanc ever produced! Drink this young for its youthful exuberance, or age it for more secondary development. 13.5% ABV. Drink from 2023-2050.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Very pale lemon colour with a green tinge. The nose is zesty, cool, and fresh, showing white flowers, struck flint, a touch of savoury lees, citrus and wet stone. The palate is very tightly wound for now. Cool, tense and driven by its acidity, green and citrus fruits slowly unfurl from the glass with air. This is very serious and fine, but subtle for now. It needs coaxing from the glass but that only serves to confirm the potential here. Most intense at the finish, this is another strong showing for Domaine de Chevalier Blanc.”

- TP, Farr Vintners

Reviews

“The 2021 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc was one of the best wines that I tasted, white or red, during en primeur. Now in bottle, it has a captivating bouquet of mineral-rich citrus fruit that represents one of the most complex I have encountered in any vintage. The palate is well-balanced with a beautiful line of acidity and a slightly resinous texture, very complex and intense on the finish that lingers in the mouth. What a fabulous dry white Bordeaux this will become.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2021 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc ... has a captivating, complex bouquet of yellow flowers, white peach, wet limestone and just a faint hint of elderflower in the background. The taut palate is well-balanced with a superb line of acidity. Conveying tangible energy from start to finish, this builds in the mouth toward a persistent finish that fans out gloriously. One of the best Domaine de Chevalier whites that I have tasted.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2021 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc is a dense, powerful dry white. Readers will have to be patient, as the 2021 is going to need quite a bit of time to be at its best. Today, the wine's textural intensity and some oak are front and center. The 2021 is a Blanc of substance and real character. I can't wait to see how it ages.”

- AG, Vinous

“The 2021 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc dazzles from start to finish. Bright, sculpted and sizzling with saline-infused vibrancy, the Blanc offers a beguiling mix of citrus, floral and mineral notes, delivering tremendous flavor intensity with no excess weight at all. There is a feeling of airiness and precision here that is simply mind-blowing. Readers will find a Blanc of tremendous pedigree that evokes the great vintages at this property. There was some variation in samples, but barrel samples are especially finicky at this stage, especially whites. This is a tremendous showing.”

- AG, Vinous

“I always love the white from this estate, and they've certainly hit a home run in 2021. It offers a vibrant, vivid bouquet of ripe limes, crushed citrus, and chalky minerality, which turns more salty and subtly marine-influenced on the palate. With terrific concentration, medium-bodied richness, and a great finish, it's one of the focused, pure, racy whites that still brings density and depth. Bravo.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“It is a double success for DDC in 2021, following the excellence of the red wine. This white is rich, splendidly long, and keen, and it has all the hallmarks of a long-lived beauty. The fruit is not too rushed or full. Quite the opposite, it is refined, firm and determined. This is a classic, and it will sit near the top of the dry white wine ladder this year. 18.5.”

- Matthew Jukes

“Very pale yellow-green, silver reflections. Inviting bouquet of white flowers with a touch of peach and lime. Juicy, lively, white apple palate with a rich acid arc. Impressive concentration with a mineral edge, lemon hints and a touch of vanilla. showing a good length and ageing potential.”

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“The nose is fresh, elegant and offers energy/dynamism, precision. There are notes of pulpy/acidic apple, yuzu and more slightly lemon combined with delicate touches of tangy nectarine, subtle hints of sense of place, a subtle hint of verbena, a discreet hint of saline and vanilla. The palate is fruity and reveals accuracy, juiciness, precision, smoothness, tension, a fine unctuousness, and a nice energy. On the palate, this wine expresses notes of tart/pulpy vine peach, apple and, more slightly, yuzu, combined with fine touches of zest, lemon, as well as discreet hints of pulpy white fruit, a subtle hint of lychee, passion fruit, a discreet hint of apple blossom and a sense of place. A subtle hint of vanilla, toasted almond, salinity on the finish/persistence.”

- Vert de Vin
