

Château Haut Bailly 2018

CSPC# 831123

750mlx6

14.4% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, 5% Cabernet Franc
Appellation	Pessac-Léognan
Classification	Grand Cru Classé de Graves
Website	https://www.haut-bailly.com/en/wines.html
General Info	<p>For the past four centuries, Château Haut Bailly has overlooked 28 hectares of vines in a single block. These grow on soil consisting of sand and gravel from the Tertiary period with a fossil stone subsoil. Haut Bailly's reputation as one of the very finest wines of Bordeaux was established in the 19th century. Haut-Bailly was bought by the Sanders family in 1955 and was run by Jean Sanders until 1998 when Robert G. Wilmers, an American banker, purchased it. Robert G. Wilmers continues to emphasize quality in all aspects of production, combining a blend of tradition and modernity with respect for the environment. Château Haut-Bailly's unique terroir produces wines that are outstandingly reliable, and whose prestige is due to an inimitable style marked by finesse and elegance.</p> <p>Bob Wilmers passed away in December 2017 at age 83. The estate is now managed by Chris Wilmers the son of Bob Wilmers.</p> <p>Today, the estate is directed by Veronique Sanders, the fourth generation of her family associated with Haut-Bailly.</p>
Winemaker	Gabriel Vialard
Vintage	<p>2018 was a year of extremes: the excessive rainfall of winter and spring was followed by drought with a long sunny summer for more than four consecutive months ... rare and ideal! From December 2017 to May 2018, Bordeaux had 800 mm of rain, the equivalent of an entire year of rainfall. Spring was cold and the vintage started late. June was hot and humid! A virulent mildew threatened the entire French vineyard. This pressure extended until early August. Unfortunately, our vineyard was not spared. Mid-July, the same day that France won the football World Cup, the trend of the vintage was reversed. Summer was dry and hot (the hottest since 2003 and 1947). The speed of the vine growth was rapid, and the water sufficiency stimulated the enlargement of the berries. These conditions made it possible to make up the vegetative delay of spring. the vintage was earlier than initially expected. The hot summer followed by a beautiful late season was favorable to maturation, and the high temperatures, close to those of 2016 and 2010, were particularly useful for the colouring and aromatic potential of the grapes and to promote the synthesis of anthocyanins.</p>
Vineyards	<p>The Haut-Bailly estate accounts for 33 hectares of the Médoc, of which 30 hectares are vineyard, largely in a single block on a gravel <i>croupe</i>. The soils are a mixture of sand and Tertiary gravel over <i>Faluns de Léognan</i>, a subsoil rich in sandstone and ancient fossilised shells. The vines themselves are mainly Cabernet Sauvignon (64%), which are planted on the upper parts of the <i>croupe</i> and slopes where the drainage is best, with 30% Merlot, which are planted on those plots where the soils are richer in clay. The remaining 6% is Cabernet Franc, and overall, the planting density is an admirable 10000 vines/ha.</p>
Harvest	<p>The summer, fine, warm and sunny, continued advantageously in September and October, and provided us with exceptional conditions to achieve a "made to measure" harvest: fifteen days of picking over four weeks. The harvest began quietly with the Merlots on September 17th. Petit Verdot's, Cabernets Francs and Cabernets Sauvignons were picked from October 1st to 9th. Paradise after a hellish spring! Careful and meticulous sorting was carried out by an incredibly international and dedicated team of pickers... and efficiently completed by a destemming process (Cube and Viticlean) and a high-performance vibrating sorting</p>



Harvest	table. Given the high alcoholic degrees, the fermentations were longer than usual. If the quantity is small, the quality is remarkable.
Maturation	In small oak barriques (55% new) for 16 months and is bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.
Tasting Notes	2018 was a year of extremes. The excessive rainfall of winter and spring was followed by drought with a long sunny summer for more than four consecutive months ... rare and ideal! The resulting wines are full of color, dense, structured, and expressive. Opulence and exceptional quality for a solar vintage.
Serve with	Chateau Haut Bailly is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. The wine of Chateau Haut Bailly is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
Production	5,000 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2023-2038
Scores/Awards	<p>95 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2021</p> <p>96 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2021</p> <p>96-98 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019</p> <p>99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2021</p> <p>97-98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019</p> <p>95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2019</p> <p>17.5 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2019</p> <p>98 points - Decanter.com - July 2020</p> <p>98 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2019</p> <p>96-98 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019</p> <p>94-96 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - November 2019</p> <p>94-97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2019</p> <p>97-100 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2019</p> <p>19+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2019</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Packed with steeped plum, blackberry and cassis flavors, this also sports licorice root, applewood and tar notes. Dense and shows a chewy edge, but it's seriously long, energetic and vibrant, so just cellar to let it unfurl. (JM)"</i> - JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"The 2018 Haut-Bailly is blended of 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 5% Cabernet Franc, and it has 14.4% alcohol. Deep garnet-purple colored, it needs a little coaxing to unlock a powerhouse of black fruit preserves, offering notes of blackberry pie, crème de cassis and black cherry compote, giving way to nuances of Chinese five spice, camphor, chocolate box and licorice with a touch of crushed rocks. The medium to full-bodied palate is jam-packed with plush textured, rich black fruits, supported by a lively backbone and finishing long and spicy. It is decadently tempting to drink now, but give it 5 years in bottle to begin to see its full glory, while it should continue to transform for a further 20 years or more in cellar."</i> - LPB, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The 2018 Haut-Bailly is blended of 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 5% Cabernet Franc. Grapes were harvested September 17 to October 9, and the wine has 14.4% alcohol. Deep purple-black in color, it opens slowly with profound notions of Black Forest cake, crème de cassis, roasted nuts and black olives, unfurling to reveal notions of menthol, crushed rocks, molten licorice and chargrilled meat plus a hint of lilacs. Full-bodied, rich and densely laden with layer upon layer of vibrant black fruits and mineral nuances, it has a solid backbone of firm, velvety tannins and seamless freshness, finishing very long with compelling restraint and exciting energy. (LPB) 96-98+"</i></p> <p><i>"Château Haut-Bailly is among the ranks of great estates with lamentably small yields in 2018. "We averaged around 21 hectoliters per hectare," Véronique Sanders informed me. "It was a heavy price to pay for our no-toxic-chemicals philosophy, but we stuck to it." Apart from mildew struggles, Haut-Bailly's vineyard also suffered from coulure (poor flowering/fruit set) of the Merlot. And, thirdly, they lost 10% to 15% of potential volume due to the dry spell and ensuing concentration of very small berries it yielded. Their sister estate, Le Pape, furthermore, got whacked with hail on May 26, making the crop there about half of average. Now for the good news: quality is sky high! "The Cabernet Sauvignon crops were of a very high standard," Véronique smiled at last. "We struggled to find some to put into the second wine. The Merlot looked like the Cabernet—very small berries this year." Also noteworthy is the quantity and quality of the tannins this year. "These are</i></p>

Reviews *the biggest tannins we have ever had—even bigger than 2010!” Véronique exclaimed. Meanwhile, acids are lower than 2010 or 2016, but not to the detriment of balance in my view.”*

- LPB, Wine Advocate

“Complex and expressive nose, offering red and dark fruit, spices and pepper with wood and mushroom undertones. Fresh mussel shell and a hint of ink, too. Full-bodied with a fine texture and great balance between the acidity and the controlled, tannic structure. Very long finish. Goes on and on.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“Incredible depth of fruit to this with a center palate that shows superb character and texture. I love the hazelnut and coffee-bean undertones to the beautiful fruit, which shows great finesse. Full-bodied yet compact and tight, giving a sense of agility and flight to the wine. Extremely tight and polished tannins.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This wine initially seems easy and just packed with fruit. As you delve behind the black fruits, the tannins come into play. The considerable structure shows concentration with a dense side that has power and a lighter side that has fresh fruit. The wine should age impressively. (RV)”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot. 5% each of Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. 86 IPT – higher than in 2010. pH 3.87, similar to 2009, and TA 3.4 g/l (expressed as sulphuric). Barrel sample.

Black core. Intense black fruit, less open than Haut-Bailly II, as you might expect, but just as intense in fruit. Deep, more chewy than velvety but the layers of tannin are very fine, there are just a lot of them. A more savoury quality on the palate than in the Haut-Bailly II. Packed with fruit but all coiled up on itself. Big but nothing sticks out. Clean, dry, dark-chocolate finish. Very ripe Cabernet cassis but with the freshness of the Merlot (they always pick the Cabernet late and the Merlot early). Juicy at the core. Big, harmonious and smooth. Embryonically elegant in its power and concentration. (JH)”

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“A brilliant Haut-Bailly, living up to its En Primeur promise, packed with ripe rippling black and red berry fruit and a wonderful velvety texture. Still extremely young, more closed than it was during En Primeur but packed with layers of brilliance, saline quality on the finish, with a tight slate grip slowing everything down. 5% Cabernet Franc completes the blend, co-fermented with Petit Verdot.”

- Decanter.com

“This is a serious 2018, structured, layered and full of Haut-Bailly signature. The texture is striking, with the silkiness emphasised by a pH of 3.87 and a relatively high alcohol that is effortlessly integrated into the body of the wine. The complexity builds slowly through the palate, but the persisting feeling is of menthol, a lifting off and peeling back of the intensity, revealing the fresher more nuanced notes underneath. There's a lot of the 2015 character here, in terms of its enjoyable structure and generous fruit, but it's more like 2016 in its serious finish, and there's no question that this will age well.

The IPT is 86, more than the 84 measured in the 2010, but you don't feel it in the same way here. 5% Cabernet Franc completes the blend, co-fermented with Petit Verdot because they like the balance that it gives. 21hl/ha yield. Drinking Window 2027 – 2042”

- JA, Decanter.com

“With a gorgeous, deep ruby hue, the wine pops from the glass with floral, tobacco and a mélange of fresh fruits. The wine is full-bodied, concentrated, powerful and refined but what's more important here is the elegance in the mouth, the sweetness in the fruit and the balanced levels of acidity, giving you simultaneous weight, lift, length and purity in a classic, restrained style. The wine was made from 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 5% Cabernet Franc, reaching 14.4% alcohol with a pH of 3.87. The Grand Vin was produced from 50% of the harvest, which took place from September 17 to October 9. 2018 was produced from some of the lowest yields in the history of the estate at 21 hectoliters per hectare.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews

“The 2018 Haut-Bailly was picked from 17 September and 9 October. It has a very pure bouquet with perfumed black cherry and raspberry fruit laced with violet and iris petals. This is very impressive: very focused and demonstrating exquisite delineation. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannins that mask the structure underneath. It is velvety in texture with a complex truffle and iodine-tinged finish that according to Véronique Sanders has a softness that has manifested in recent months after en primeur. This is a very promising Haut-Bailly, one from the top drawer.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2018 Haut-Bailly speaks with real authority and class. Deeply spiced notes lead into a core of red/purplish berry fruit, lavender, licorice, new leather, menthol and tobacco. Vivid and dramatic in bearing, the 2018 possesses striking resonance from start to finish. There is plenty of tannin as well, but it is pretty much buried by the sheer luxuriousness of the fruit, while the mid-palate and saline-infused finish show terrific freshness as well as purity. (AG) “

- AG, Vinous

“A wine that's going to flirt with perfection, the 2018 Château Haut-Bailly is a blend of 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, and 5% Each of Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc, brought up in 60% new French oak. Hitting 14.5% alcohol, its deep purple color is followed by a fabulous bouquet of pure crème de cassis, crushed violets, white flowers, graphite, and damp earth. An incredibly powerful, opulent wine, it nevertheless has sensational purity as well as the freshness and elegance that's the hallmark of this terrific estate.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“(55 Cabernet Sauvignon, 35 Merlot, 5 Petit Verdot, 5 Cabernet Franc) | 50% new oak | 14.4% alc | 86 IPT – the highest ever at this Château This is a superb Haut-Bailly, and the nose alone is worth a standing ovation. A big wine and somewhat of an anomaly for Haut-Bailly, the oak is perfectly balanced, and the skin tannins are so well-judged – some of the finest in the region – that there is little astringency but massive quantities of energy and verve. The tempo of the flavour as it expands on the palate is staggering. The length is great, too, but this is not a big wine in spite of the IPT. It is simply sensational, and it will live to fifty years.”

- MJ, matthewjukes.com
