

# Château Haut Bailly 1990

CSPC# 749557

750mlx12

12.5% alc./vol.

## Grape Variety

64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc

## Appellation

Pessac-Léognan

## General Info

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 emphasise 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.

## Vineyards

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 *croupe*. The soils are a mixture of sand and Tertiary gravel over *Faluns de Léognan*, 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 *croupe* 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.

## Harvest

The harvest is entirely picked by hand, the "saignée" method is used and spraying is carefully limited, with a true respect for the environment.

## Maturation

In small oak barriques (65% new) for 16 months and is bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

## Tasting Notes

Generally considered one of the top five Château of Graves, Haut-Bailly makes only red wine and one-quarter of the vineyard is a mixed plantation of very old vines. The tannins are extremely smooth, it is an elegant wine - soft but with structure and a complexity of aromas. Great ageing potential.

## Production

11,000 cases made

## Cellaring

Drink 2004-2019

**93 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - August 31, 2000

**88 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - March 31, 1993

**90 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #183 - June 2009

**92 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #109 - February 1997

**91 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #85 - February 1993

**87-90 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #81 - June 1992

**89 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - September 2009

**82-84 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - September 2000

**17.5 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com

**18 points/4 stars** - Decanter.com

**90 points** - Jean Marc Quarin

**90 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - July 3, 2010

## Reviews

*"Serious wine. Dark ruby color, with blackberry, earth and truffle character. Full-bodied and very polished, with fine tannins and a long, rich, fruity finish. I underrated this years ago. --1990 Bordeaux retrospective. Best after 2004. 11,000 cases made."*  
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"A solid Cabernet-based wine, with plenty of herbal and cassis aromas and flavors, silky tannins and a smoky finish. Best after 1996. 11,000 cases made."*  
- JS, Wine Spectator



**Reviews**

*“While excellent, nearly outstanding, the 1990 Haut Bailly is not up to the quality level of recent vintages produced under the new ownership of American Robert Wilmers and his winemaker, Veronique Sanders. The complex 1990 offers up subtle yet persistent aromas of red currants, tobacco leaf, spice box, and smoke. This medium-bodied, fully mature wine exhibits sweetness as well as lushness, and is capable of lasting another decade.”*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*“Haut-Bailly is often such a restrained, gentle, subtle wine that it can get lost in a blind tasting, particularly when served side by side with more powerful Bordeaux. That was not the case in my recent tasting, as both the 1989 and 1990 vintages performed well. The 1990 Haut-Bailly, which I have always preferred slightly to the 1989, was once again the stronger vintage. It displays a richer, more saturated dark ruby color, followed by a textbook, smoky tobacco, blackberry, and cassis-scented bouquet. Ripe, supple-textured, and generous, with no hard edges, this is a stylish, well-crafted wine with all the component parts in balance. Drink this medium-bodied effort over the next 15 years.”*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*“Impressively deep ruby in color, with a big, authoritative nose of super-ripe fruit and subtle new oak, the medium-bodied, stylish 1990 offers plenty of glycerin and ripeness, as well as a sense of balance and finesse. It looks to be another classy Haut-Bailly that will surpass their fine 1983 and 1989. Anticipated maturity: 1995-2005.”*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*“Impressively deep ruby in color, with a big, forceful nose of super-ripe fruit and subtle new oak, this medium-bodied, graceful wine offers plenty of glycerin and ripeness, as well as a sense of balance and finesse. It looks to be another classy Haut-Bailly that should rival their fine 1983 and 1989. Anticipated maturity: 1995-2005.”*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*“Tasted at the Fine Wine Experience vertical in London. Much more representative than the bottle encountered nine years ago! The 1990 displays a more traditional Bordeaux nose: smoky black fruits, oxblood, leather, a touch of bay leaf – nice definition with a leaning towards the Right Bank. Certainly, more open-knit than the 1989. The palate is medium-bodied, more languid compared to the 1989, smoky and truffly, good acidity and a vibrant spicy finish. For a 1990 this has retained a commendable degree of freshness and vitality. Very fine. Drink now-2015. Tasted March 2009.”*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“Not as good as expected. Nose seems a little volatile. A developed palate but still quite acidic. Lacks a little harmony between rich fruits and structure. Soft mulberries. Need to re-taste. Tasted November 2000.”*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“Intense, rich, reserved nose of ripe fruit aromas. Attractive, plummy with lots of fruit flavours and a fine ripe finish.”*

- Decanter.com

*“Ruby with bricking. in color, this truffle, tobacco, coffee, smoky, cassis and earthy scented wine, is fully mature. With soft textures showing the patina of age the wine ends in an elegant dark, cherry finish.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

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