

Château Haut Brion 2010

CSPC# 744971

750mlx6

14.6% alc./vol.

Grape Variety
Appellation
General Info

57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc
Pessac-Leognan

1st classified growth in 1855. Haut Brion was founded in 1525 by Jean de Pontac and since then, many illustrious personalities succeeded each other as owners. The last among them was Clarence Douglas Dillon, American financial minister under the Kennedy government. Today, the continuity and presence of the Dillon family are ensured by Prince Robert of Luxembourg who watches over the destiny of Domaine Clarence Dillon S.A.S., having joined the management of the Company in June of 1997 and succeeding his mother Princess Joan de Mouchy as President at the end of July 2008. Haut Brion is the sole 1st classified growth from the 1855 classification which is outside of the Medoc appellation. Its terroir may be compared to the one of Latour. Even if it is not the more concentrated wine, Haut Brion is the noblest wine of Pessac Leognan, and its longevity is incomparable. The silky structure of the tannins is always exceptional. Classed Premier Cru of the Gironde in 1855, and Cru de Graves in 1953, Château Haut-Brion was also classed thus in 1973, and although this latest classification only concerned the Médoc whilst Haut-Brion is located in the Graves appellation, the minutes of the 1973 classification meeting state: The jury, considering the situation of Château Haut-Brion and its long traditional connections with the Médoc Premiers Crus, and taking into account this tradition, the customs and practices on the one hand, together with its very eminent virtues on the other, has deemed it to be worthy of featuring alongside the Médoc's Premiers Crus Classés

Vintage

A dry year with an arid summer. The weather during the growing season, from early April to September, was the driest since 1949. Total rainfall was just over half the average for the past 60 years: 225mm compared to the usual 400mm. The water deficit caused dehydration in the vines, concentrating the grape juice and producing the highest values ever measured, particularly in terms of sugar content. The very cool nights promoted the accumulation of anthocyanins, so the 2010 red wines are the deepest-coloured in recent years.

Vineyards

Vines have been cultivated here for at least six centuries, in a vineyard once surrounded by pasture and parkland, now by suburban houses. Despite the encroaching reality of the 21st century, within the walls of the Haut-Brion there lies an excellent *terroir*, typical of Bordeaux in that it revolves around two gravel *croupes* - the same can be said for many of the leading estates of the Médoc. These gravelly mounds rise to the heady altitude of 15 metres, a lofty summit compared to much of the surrounding land, providing two south-east facing slopes perfect for the vine. The soils include ancient stones washed down from the Pyrenees over many millennia, Gunzian gravel peppered with quartz and related minerals, hardened conglomerates of stone and flint. All in all there are just over 51 hectares of vines which are cared for by vineyard manager Pascal Baratié, who also looks after the vineyard of neighbouring La Mission Haut-Brion.

Harvest

September 9th - October 9th

Maturation

78% in new barrels during 20 month/s

Tasting Notes

The wine is a superb ruby-red colour with purplish highlights. The initial closed-in bouquet opens up nicely on aeration. The wonderfully subtle aromas follow-through in quick succession, starting with oaky overtones, followed by red-berry fruit, leading into terroir character: cocoa powder, roasted coffee and Havana cigars. The initial softness on the palate gradually evolves to reveal the tannic backbone. Despite their dense structure, the tannins are amazingly silky. The overall freshness carries the flavours through into an aftertaste that goes on and on. This wine has the depth and smoothness of the 1989, the density of the 2000,



Tasting Notes	the freshness of the 2005, and the richness of the 2009. The 2010 Chateau Haut Brion is so ideally well-balanced, it verges on perfection. This vintage we are celebrating the 75 th anniversary of Mr. Clarence Dillon's acquisition of Chateau Haut Brion in 1935. This outstanding wine is the best tribute we could possibly pay him.
Production	7,800 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2020-2035
Scores/Awards	<p>99 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2013</p> <p>96-99 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2011</p> <p>100 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #205 - February 2013</p> <p>98-100 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #194 - May 2011</p> <p>96 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - March 2013</p> <p>96-98 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2011</p> <p>97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2013</p> <p>97-98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2011</p> <p>97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 1, 2013</p> <p>95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 25, 2011</p> <p>96-99 points - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2011</p> <p>18+ points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2011</p> <p>19.5 points/5 stars - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2011</p> <p>98-99 points - Jane Anson, The New Bordeaux - April 2012</p> <p>98 points - Jean Marc Quarin - March 2011 (no review)</p> <p>99 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - May 2011</p> <p>92 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - February 8, 2013</p> <p>98 points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - April 2011</p> <p>95-99 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2011</p> <p>19.5+ points - Farr Vintner - April 2011</p> <p>18.5 points - Nick Pegna, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants - April 2011</p> <p>Review only - Chris Gowan, JJBuckley Wines - April 2011</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Sappy, tongue-coating pastis, blackberry coulis and loganberry fruit start this huge wine off, followed by a parade of licorice snap, violet, tar, black tea, roasted alder, wood spice and steeped black cherry fruit notes. A beam of pure cassis drives through this, and the finish pulls everything together with a mouthwatering brambly edge that should soften slowly over time. A riveting display of brawny power, unbridled energy and high-level terroir. Best from 2020 through 2040"</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Sappy, dense and packed, with layers of kirsch, melted licorice snap, anise and black tea. Just as dense, if not more so, on the finish, with extra tar, violet and blackberry confiture. There's massive grip on the back end, but this is velvety and caressing. Easily the most backward of the first growths at this stage. Tasted non-blind. Score range: 96-99"</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"As for the 2010 Haut-Brion, it does not have the power of Latour's 2010 or the intense lead pencil shavings and chocolaty component of Lafite-Rothschild, but it is extraordinary, perfect wine. It has a slightly lower pH than the 2009 (3.7 versus the 2009's 3.8), and even higher alcohol than the 2009 (14.6%). The wine is ethereal. From its dense purple color to its incredibly subtle but striking aromatics that build incrementally, offering up a spectacular smorgasbord of aromas ranging from charcoal and camphor to black currant and blueberry liqueur and spring flowers, this wine's finesse, elegant yet noble power and authority come through in a compelling fashion. It is full-bodied, but that's only apparent in the aftertaste, as the wine seems to float across the palate with remarkable sweetness, harmony, and the integration of all its component parts – alcohol, tannin, acidity, wood, etc. This prodigious Haut-Brion is hard to compare to another vintage, at least right now, but it should have 50 to 75 years of aging potential. Anticipated maturity: 2022-2065+."</i></p> <p>- RP, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"Following a harvest that finished on October 10, Haut-Brion produced a 2010 that should turn out to be one of its all-time greats ... an amazing feat given what they have accomplished over recent vintages. A blend of 57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc that came in at 14.6% alcohol, the 2010 boasts an opaque purple color as well as a gorgeous perfume of scorched earth/burning embers, blueberries, black currant</i></p>

Reviews *liqueur and crushed rocks. Full and opulent with nobility, finesse, purity and elegance, this amazing effort possesses extraordinary levels of extract as well as formidable, but sweet, well-integrated tannins. It requires 8-10 years of cellaring and should drink well for 50+ years."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

"Tasted at Chateau Haut-Brion. The first impression is that the aromatics upon the Haut-Brion almost cover compared directly against the ebullient, vivacious La Mission. It is probably an unfair comparison. Over time in the glass, it unfurls a little to reveal understated mineral-rich black fruit, tar and cigar box aromas. After 30 minutes and interchanging with an empty glass, it really opens up with hints of black olive and sea foam. The palate is very refined: a real class act. The tannins are fine but firm, initially a little austere and bashful but opening to reveal a sensual Haut Brion with just a touch of leafiness, allied with sublime freshness and delineation. It is keeping its secrets close to its chest at the moment, although the finish is very persistent and focused. It will require a decade cellaring. Tasted November 2012."

- NM, Wine Journal

"A blend of 23% Merlot, 47% Cabernet Sauvignon and 20% Cabernet Franc, this has a quintessential Haut-Brion nose with that trait of fresh black olives defining the nose straight out of the blocks. It is a little less opulent than La Mission but with slightly better clarity at this stage. The palate displays very fine, succulent tannins and like the La Mission there is a Pauillac-like personality thanks to the graphite imparted by the ripe Cabernet Sauvignon. Wonderful definition towards the finish. This is a superb Haut-Brion. Tasted March 2011."

- NM, Wine Journal

"This is very spicy with dried mushroom aromas with dark fruits and plum undertones. Sweet tobacco as well. This is full-bodied, with lots of tannins that are chewy and firm. This is muscular for HB and flexing it. Try in 2020."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Wonderful aromas of dark fruits with sweet tobacco and lilac character. Blackberries too. Amazing nose. This is tight and powerful with beautiful tannins and a racy structure. It lasts for minutes. Super refined yet muscular style of Haut-Brion due to a much lower percentage of Merlot in the blend. I like the 2009 better. Its more typical. This is 57 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 23 percent Merlot and 20 percent Cabernet Franc."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"A beautifully dense, ripe wine, its intense acidity balanced by an opulent structure and gorgeous fruits. The texture is smooth and velvety, while never losing sight of the powerful structure. This elegant and powerful wine will age for many years."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"95-97 Very firm, dry tannic, structured. The wine is full of acidity very tough and dry. A concentration of flavors in a dark, brooding framework."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"(a blend of 57% cabernet sauvignon, 23% merlot and 20% cabernet franc; 14.6% alcohol) Deep ruby-purple. Brooding, closed nose hints at strawberry, ripe red cherry, white pepper, minerals and violet; showing its cabernet franc element today. Rich and full on entry, displaying lovely depth to its ripe red fruit, underbrush and tobacco flavors. Harmonious acidity keeps this concentrated, dense wine dancing on the palate. Finishes smooth and very long, and still youthfully tight. Another great Haut-Brion, atypically dominated by the cabernet franc presence. I'd venture to say that Haut-Brion is remarkably Lafleur-like this year. One of the stars of the vintage."

- ST, International Wine Cellar

Reviews

“Full, opulent nose in which the classic Haut-Brion wine aroma is well masked by lots of slightly austere fruit. Very fine tannins – very drying finish. An extremely slow burner. Much drier than La Mission, and at the moment not desperately expressive. Its lips are pursed at the moment, and so are mine tasting it. Unusual to come across such a long-term wine even here. This may not make a massive impact en primeur because it is keeping so much in reserve. I think it will eventually make a great wine but it’s surly at the moment. 23% Merlot, 57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Cabernet Franc. 7,800 cases, not 10,000+ as in 2009. 42% grand vin (comp to 57% in 2009).”
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“Chateau Haut-Brion, offers stunning aromas of beautifully concentrated red fruits, already expressive, even exuberant, a taffeta-like finesse hides great strength for the long term.”
- SS, Decanter.com

“Production was down 30% on last year, with an expected 7300 cases, because of smaller berry size, some coulure on the merlot and more declassified wine. The reds were picked from 9 September to 9th October, one day later than last year They selected 42% of the overall production into the grand vin this year, with alcohol slightly lower than La Mission at 14.6% abv. This is a stunning, gorgeous, richly layered and textured wine. It manages to be generous and insistent, but very elegant. Long lasting, so light on the palate yet rich and full. Blend is 27% merlot, 57% cabernet sauvignon, 20% cabernet franc. The tunnel of acidity comes in to play here, but it is of a less fair-ride experience, it is effortless. Gorgeous, just so generous. 98-99/100. Drink 2018-2045.”
- JA, The New Bordeaux

“The driest summer at Haut-Brion since 1949 made life difficult for the young Merlot vines, but helped the Cabernet to achieve unprecedented ripeness. According to Jean-Philippe Delmas, the grand vin has the highest levels of tannin, alcohol and colour ever recorded. The result is brilliant: powerful, dense and voluptuous with plenty of plum, cassis and black cherry fruit to wrap around the wine’s core of tannin and acidity. A mere whisker away from perfection and a legendary Haut-Brion in embryo.”
- TA, timatkin.com

“There is a black fruited power to the nose rich deep flavours. Minty blackcurrant is backed by black cherry and firmer sloe layers of flavour that give complexity. The mid palate is profound and deep intense structured yet with an attractive suppleness towards the back.”
- Derek Smedley MW

“Without doubt one of the world's greatest and most individual wine estates. The family traditions continue here with Jean-Philippe Delmas running the winemaking as his father and grandfather did before him and Clarence Dillon's great-grandson Robert de Luxembourg in overall charge of this wonderful property. Haut Brion - unlike the other First Growths - has never had a bad period and, for our money, is the most consistent great wine of Bordeaux. This year was the driest here since 1949 and that has resulted in a yield of 40 hl/ha (down from 46 hl/ha last year). A further difference is that 20% of the fruit was relegated to a 3rd label (only 3% last year), meaning that only 42% of the crop made it into the grand vin. Consequently, there are only 7800 cases for the world. This is the darkest coloured Haut Brion ever and also (at 14.6 degrees) the highest alcohol level ever! However, this is barely noticeable thanks to the strong acidity and tannins. It is a wine of awesome balance. There is incredible richness and concentration here and thanks to the low Merlot constituent (only 23% compared to the normal 50%) it has much more of a Cabernet Sauvignon style to it with mint, spice and eucalyptus notes. There is lots of Havana cigar, barbecue and roasted meat character and a waft of freshly laid road tar. The wine is massive but controlled. It seems like the ultimate Haut Brion to us. This wine should develop into something like the 1989 but with even more of everything. Simply sensational.”
- Farr Vintners

“This monolithic Haut-Brion has a higher percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon (57%) and yet retains a wonderful elegance. A cigar-box nose leads into such complexity on the palate where balance is the key. Despite the enormous indices of tannins and acidity, it has a glorious freshness. It was more closed than La Mission, as Haut-Brion often is, and promises to be truly great. (23% Merlot, 57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Cabernet Franc)”
- NP, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants

Reviews *“Saturated and tight to the edge; very dense; some blue-ish tinge; very deep and layered nose; wonderful layers; some smoke too; very intense and sublimated feel on the nose; richer and seemingly even plusher than La Mission; velvet palate; real ripeness and some liquorice and tar; but very polished indeed. Lots of tannin here, very ripe, but bathed in ripe fruit. Great length overall. Didn’t notice the high alcohol in fact unlike La Mission. Balanced by the acidity. Terrific. [57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc, alcohol 14.6% IPT 80 pH 3] 98-100/100. Tasted 4 April at the chateau.”*
- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

“57% cabernet sauvignon, 23% merlot, and 20% cabernet franc. An interesting aside - 2010 is the first vintage in history where the larger bottles (anything above a magnum) - will also come in Haut-Brion's trademark sloping bottle. Tiny production this year of only around 8,000 cases, representing 42% of total wine made and a decrease of 30% from 2009. A very tight and elegant nose of black cherry, strawberry and black tea emerges from within. On the palate, it is rich and refreshing with a tamed ripeness that lasts for countless minutes. This is a stacked, deep wine that will take some time to come out of its shell but will cellar well for 50+ years.”
- CG, JJ Buckley Wines
