

# Les Hauts de Smith Blanc 2011

CSPC#763532

750mlx12

13.0% Alc./Vol.

## Grape Variety

100% Sauvignon Blanc

## Appellation

Pessac-Léognan

## Website

<http://www.smith-haut-lafitte.com/en/smith-haut-lafitte-vins-haut-de-smith.html>

## General Info

Château Smith-Haut-Lafite has been transformed during the last decade from being a perennial underachiever to being one of the leading estates in the Graves region. For many years it was owned by the Bordeaux négociant Eschenauer - in 1990 it was bought by former Olympic skiing champion, Daniel Cathiard. He cut down on the amount of chemicals and herbicides used in the vineyards, and fully modernised the winemaking facilities. The proportion of new oak barrels used in the maturation process was increased and a trio of eminent oenologists (including the ubiquitous Michel Rolland) were hired as consultants.

In July 2011, Chateau Smith Haut Lafitte purchased a majority of the vineyard property belonging to the neighboring estate, Chateau Le Thil. Out of the 42.5 acres of vines, 28.7 acres, the chateau and 20 acres of parkland went to Smith Haut Lafitte. Much of that land is located next to Smith Haut Lafitte and was actually part of the original estate that was owned by Lodi Duffour Dubergier. In essence, this reunited the original vineyards. Le Thil belonged to his nephew, from whom the de Laitre family is descended. The remaining vineyard land was sold to Les Carmes Haut Brion.

## Vintage

The vintage 2011 can be analyzed dividing the year into two opposite weather phases that were determinant for the white grape's characteristics:

- First period: in advance compared to regular Bordeaux standards, the warm and dry weather induced an early vintage with harvest starting on the 18th of August.
- Second period: a summer with a quite low temperature average that allowed a slow maturation of the grapes preserving their natural acidity. These two phases were the key to the vintage for vine-growers and winemakers who took great care of the grapes in the first period and waited for perfect slow maturation in the second period.

## Vineyards

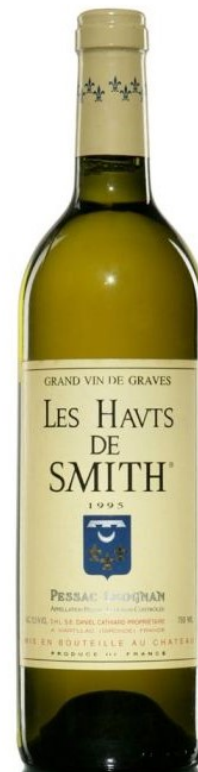
78 hectares (67 producing red wine and 11 producing white wine) Gravelly soil from the Gunzian (or Nebraskan glacial) period Cru Classé de Graves 35% Merlot / 55% Cabernet Sauvignon / 9% Cabernet Franc / 1% Petit Verdot / 90% Sauvignon Blanc / 5% Sauvignon Gris / 5% Sémillon.

## Harvest

Harvests of the whites started very early on the 18th of August, with beautiful sunny days and went on for 3 weeks. We waited patiently for the perfect balance of the grapes, hand-picking in the cool mornings, batch by batch within plots, according to the maturity. We then cooled down the grapes to gently press them under neutral atmosphere (without oxygen contact) to preserve their freshness. Our focus is on respecting the grapes in every step of the vinification.

## Vinification/ Maturation

Les Hauts de Smith white 2011 is created during the blending process of the Grand Vin Château Smith Haut Lafitte white 2011. The different lots of white wines used to produce Les Hauts de Smith white 2011 were treated with just as much care as the lots of white wines that went into the Grand Vin. Therefore, the winemaking techniques used were identical from the harvest to the vinification and ageing. 30 hectolitres per hectare before the production is divided into 2 wines: Château Smith Haut Lafitte and Les Hauts de Smith. Grapes are hand-picked into small crates and pressed in a pneumatic winepress (to treat the fruit as gently as possible) with cold static settling and fermentation in French oak barrels (50% new oak). The wine is aged on its lees in barrels with bâtonnage (stirring of the lees) for 10 months.



**Tasting Notes** Les Hauts de Smith white 2011 is a bright clear yellow pale wine. The first nose is already expressive, strengthened by the freshness of aromas of citrus fruits, lemon and white grapefruit. While oxygenating, more flowery notes of jasmine and acacia, as well as spicy notes and hints of French brioche reveal a delightful aromatic complexity. The mouth is dynamic thanks to a vibrant acidity. The ripeness of the matter balances that mouth that appears smooth with a beautiful roundness of gras. The mouth develops its length on this well-shaped balance with notes of citrus fruits, vine peach, pear, flowers and spices. Les Haut de Smith white 2011 is to be enjoyed from 2013 on with grilled fish for instance.

**Scores/Awards** **91 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2013  
**90-93 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2012  
**90-92 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2012  
**91-92 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2013 (score only)

**Reviews** *"Lovely, with lemon curd, white peach, creamed yellow apple and fennel frond notes backed by a twinge of green almond. The long, plump, juicy finish hangs on nicely. Drink now through 2014."*  
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"Very crackling, this white exhibits lots of fleur de sel and brisk citrus notes leading the way, with plenty of verbena, honeysuckle, straw and quinine in reserve. There's richness as well, but it's buried behind the brisk facade today. Score range: 90-93"*  
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"This pure Sauvignon Blanc is aged on the full lees for 12 months. It has an attractive bouquet of lime, a touch of honeysuckle and freshly cut pineapple, with fine lift and delineation. The palate is fresh and crisp on the entry with white peach, tinned apricot and a touch of fruit salad. The acidity is crisp and citric, lending the finish fine poise and length. Bon vin."*  
- NM, Wine Journal

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