

Château La Mission Haut Brion 2006

CSPC# 749571

750mlx6

13.7% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

59% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 1% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

Pessac-Léognan

Classification

Cru Classe de Graves in 1959

Website

<http://www.mission-haut-brion.com/#/home>

General Info

Château La Mission-Haut-Brion is the greatest Graves wine after Haut-Brion and in some vintages, is considered the superior wine of the two. La Mission-Haut-Brion is situated just across the road from Haut-Brion in the commune of Talence in the southern suburbs of Bordeaux.

Once a rival of adjacent Haut-Brion, La Mission has actually shared ownership with its neighbor since 1983. While just a narrow suburban street divides the two properties, La Mission's wines maintain their distinctive wilder identity: more powerful and more tannic, often displaying a meaty, truffley character with extended time in bottle. The newly constructed tasting room and cellars here, which opened in 2007, are quite impressive.

La Mission-Haut-Brion has a long and illustrious history in Graves and in some eyes is the greatest estate in Bordeaux. The estate has an unbelievable record of great wines stretching back over the past century and today has a reputation for pure excellence. Robert Parker believes the quality is that of a First Growth. The vines are planted to 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. Since 1983 the Clarence Dillon family, owners of Chateau Haut Brion have owned and managed La Mission now under the expert guidance of Jean-Philippe Delmas, the third generation in his family to manage the properties of the Dillon Family.

Winemaker

Jean-Philippe Delmas

Vintage

The 2006 vintage is the fruit of a very contrasted climate. During the year, the environmental conditions were changing in a very unusual manner, passing from one extreme to another, throughout the entire year. Fortunately, spring and summer were both in general hot and dry. One hundred seasonal workers laboring day after day for three full months allowed the winemaker to wait patiently for the absolute peak of each variety of grape.

Vineyards

La Mission-Haut-Brion's vineyards (Cabernet Sauvignon 48%, Merlot 45%, Cabernet Franc 7%) lie on a large (up to 18 metres deep in places) gravel bank interspersed with clay. Average vine age is 27 years.

Harvest

Maturation

The wine is fermented in temperature-controlled, stainless-steel vats and then matured in oak barriques (100% new) for 18 months. The wines of La Mission Haut Brion are rich, oaky, and powerful and need at least 10 years of bottle ageing before they should be broached.

Tasting Notes

Exuberant describes it best. Its intense color stems from purplish violet. Right from the first swirl one experiences an explosion of diverse aromas with an impressive complexity. One finds raspberries, blackberries, cigars, cedar, coffee, and licorice - so many bewitching scents. The mouth starts with an enveloping feeling of softness. Then the wine expands and invades the senses. From that moment on, the extremely mature tannins take over illustrating the enormous concentration of this wine. An amazing freshness carries this tannic mass, as a railroad train would - chugging along the tracks, carrying it a long, long way to a finish of immeasurable length on the palate. No stopping, no rest, the wine simply evolves with every stage superbly managed from start to finish. Rarely has La Mission Haut-Brion achieved such plenitude. Let us say: 2006 is one of the greatest vintages of La Mission Haut-Brion.



Serve with Chateau La Mission Haut Brion is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Chateau La Mission Haut Brion is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau La Mission Haut Brion is also good with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, salmon, mushrooms, and pasta.

Production 6,000 cases made

Cellaring Drink 2022-2054

Scores/Awards **95 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - March 2009
95-98 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - June 2007
94 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #202 - August 2012
95 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #181 - February 2009
96 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #170 - April 2007
94 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate - May 2016
92-94 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate - April 2007
95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 2010
94-96 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - February 2008
92-94 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - April 2007
95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2007
96 points/Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 2009
94-96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - July 2011
19 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2016
17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2007
97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - June 2016
89-92 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2007
96 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2016
92-94 points - Falstaff Magazine - May 2007
93 points - Tom Cannavan, wine-pages.com - January 2007
18 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2010
18 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - April 2007
17 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - June 2007

Reviews *"Almost jammy, with vanilla bean and coffee undertones. Full-bodied and very powerful, with big, juicy tannins and a long finish. Very big and generous for the vintage, showing exceptional quality. Best after 2015. 6,000 cases made."*

- JM, Wine Spectator

"This is so perfumed and pretty. Classy and elegant on the nose, with currant, light vanilla, and a hint of lilac. Full-bodied, with ultrafine tannins and a long, long finish. All in finesse. Very impressive for the vintage; could be the wine of the vintage. Score Range: 95-98"

- JM, Wine Spectator

"A somewhat under-the-radar La Mission, the 2006 was generally overlooked following the brilliance of the 2005. A young, dense purple-hued wine that is developing beautifully, it exhibits notes of Asian plum sauce, charcoal, barbecue smoke, roasted meats, graphite, and background oak. Full-bodied with good acidity, moderate tannin, and a vigorous, powerful youthfulness, the 2006 will age more quickly than the 2005, but it still requires another 5-8 years of cellaring. Anticipated Maturity: 2014-2035."

- RP, Wine Advocate

"One of the vintage-s top wines is the 2006 La Mission-Haut-Brion. From bottle, it reminds me of the 1998, given its structure and backward style. Dense ruby/purple-colored, it possesses a boatload of tannin, but with coaxing, tobacco leaf, sweet black currant, burning ember, and blue fruit characteristics emerge. While thick and full-bodied, the tannins seem more elevated than I remember from barrel. It is going to be a beauty, but like many of the top 2006s, considerable patience is required. Only 55% of the production made it into the grand vin as Jean-Philippe Delmas made a severe selection. The final blend was 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, and the 2006 has one of the highest natural alcohols ever achieved at La Mission, averaging around 14.3%, which is astonishingly high for a Graves. Anticipated maturity: 2018-2035."

- RP, Wine Advocate

Reviews

"This superb effort rivals La Mission's 2005. There are 6,000 cases of the 2006, and general manager Jean-Philippe Delmas told me that the Merlot came in at a natural alcohol that exceeded 15%. The final alcohol is a whopping 14.3%, the pH is 3.8, and the blend is 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Sauvignon. This utterly profound, exceptionally rich, full-bodied, thick La Mission is undeniably one of the candidates for the "wine of the vintage." It possesses a dense ruby/purple color followed by sweet blue and black fruit notes intertwined with notions of burning embers and flowers. Unctuous, massively fruity, and thick, this is a great La Mission! Anticipated maturity: 2012-2035+."

- RP, Wine Advocate

"The 2006 Château La Mission Haut-Brion has a very attractive, captivating bouquet: red berry fruit, warm gravel, Hoisin and a pinch of truffle all beautifully conveyed. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannin that lend this La Mission such symmetry and detail. It is not a powerful wine, never pressing its foot down hard on the accelerator, but that is one of its strengths, and those black truffle and mineral notes surfacing towards the poised finish are entrancing. Classic from start to finish, the only facet that is missing is that peacock's tail on the finish."

- NM, Wine Advocate

"Tasted at Haut Brion. Picked at 43hl/ha (44ha/hl for the 2005). Deep black/purple colour. The nose has good intensity with blueberry, raspberry, a touch of sea salt. Good definition, no greenness. Good lift. Full-bodied, grippy tannins, very solid and cohesive. Fine acidity, a real mass of black fruits, infused with black olives. Very tight, very focused, this is not a flamboyant La Mission, it does not have the persistency of a truly great vintage like the 1989 or indeed 2005, but there is a wonderful purity and beguiling reserve. Very harmonious, mineral finish. It needs a year in bottle for its true pedigree to show. Tasted April 2007."

- NM, Wine Advocate

"Tasted blind at Southwold '06 Bordeaux tasting. This is rich and decadent on the nose with blackberry, damson, fruitcake and Asian spices: complex and well defined, very generous at the moment. Violets developing with further aeration in the glass. The palate has great weight and density, firm, sturdy tannins, good definition, assertive and perhaps even brash with confidence, leading to a chewy, reticent finish that shuts up shop and says come back later...in about 10-15 years. Almost Pauillac-like in style at this early juncture, but the La Mission has the upper hand over Haut-Brion at the moment. Tasted January 2010"

- NM, Wine Journal

"This has a great nose of blackberry, sandalwood, raspberry and red cherry - very harmonious with great delineation. The palate is very harmonious, brilliant definition and tension, lovely poise with bright black fruits, minerals, limestone, hints of violets and bilberry towards the finish. This is much better than I recall at en primeur and shows great potential. Tasted February 2008."

- NM, Wine Journal

Tasted at Haut Brion. Picked at 43hl/ha (44ha/hl for the 2005). Deep black/purple colour. The nose has good intensity with blueberry, raspberry, a touch of sea salt. Good definition, no greenness. Good lift. Full-bodied, grippy tannins, very solid and cohesive. Fine acidity, a real mass of black fruits, infused with black olives. Very tight, very focused, this is not a flamboyant La Mission, it does not have the persistency of a truly great vintage like the 1989 or indeed 2005, but there is a wonderful purity and beguiling reserve. Very harmonious, mineral finish. It needs a year in bottle for its true pedigree to show. Tasted April 2007."

- NM, Wine Journal

"This is so perfumed and pretty. Classy and elegant on the nose, with currant, light vanilla and a hint of lilac. Full-bodied, with ultrafine tannins and a long, long finish. All in finesse. Very impressive for the vintage; could be the wine of the vintage."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

Reviews

*"Wonderful, sweet fruit, velvet in texture, with concentrated ripe fruits and red berries. This is a wine that rolls sumptuously around the mouth, the tannins certainly dense but full of the same sweetness as the fruit. The final flavor is perfumed and fresh. Deceptively attractive, it will profit from many years' aging. *Cellar Selection*"*
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"94—96 Barrel sample. A smooth rich wine, with delicious, opulent soft fruit. Spice and tobacco along with acidity and great freshness. It is dense and concentrated, but like velvet."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Tasted blind. Rich, savoury beef-extract nose. Racy and thick. Massively flattering and concentrated. Rich but not too sweet. Sinewy. 19/20 points."
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"59% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 1% Cabernet Franc. 55% of total production. Deep crimson with strong purple notes. Fairly mild nose and rather voluptuous palate entry. Very fine tannins but with pretty rigid backbone. A certain velvetiness. Round and fine. But muted. Certainly, refreshing but there is a little green streak on the finish. Seems weaker than I would have expected. Too much Tour in here? Opened up in the glass - more aromatic and playful than the Haut-Brion. But lighter and therefore apparently skinnier."
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Colour still tight and inky at 10 years old. Smooth, silky, very expressive; this is so powerful it almost lulls you into a false sense of security with the tannin integration on the first attack. Deceptively concentrated, this has persistency and freshness, plus layers of crushed black fruits, tar, cigar smoke and saffron. Right up there with the best wines of the tasting."
- JA, Decanter.com

"There is a leaner but elegant feel to the nose; concentrated fruit does come through on the palate with a fleshy ripeness at the start. The mineral streak lightens the flavours and gives a fresh feel to the finish"
- Derek Smedley MW

"Deep dark ruby garnet, youthful reflections, violet rim. Concentrated dark berry fruit on the nose, delicately smoky, mineral notes, fine hints of tobacco. Very substantial on the palate, extract-sweet cherry fruit, perfect, silky tannins, salty extracts in the finish, fine touch of dark chocolate, very elegant, lingers for a long time, great potential, almost matches the predecessor. Certainly, one of the best of the year. Conveys great charm"
- Falstaff

"Really poised, composed nose of vivid black fruits and a rounded cedary warmth. The palate has a lovely silkiness, with very pure, glossy fruit and a firm backbone of minerality. The tannins are very firm, but there is a silkiness and plum and cherry skin bittersweet chocolaty finesse. Good length, and a very fine wine."
- TC, wine-pages.com
