

# Château La Mission Haut Brion 2008

CSPC# 749571

750mlx6

12.5% alc./vol.

## Grape Variety

51% Cabernet Sauvignon, 43% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc

## Appellation

Pessac-Léognan

## 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.

## Vintage

In years when Bordeaux winegrowers face adverse weather conditions, they usually speak of a millésime de vigneron, meaning that only the most perspicacious, courageous and committed professionals will be able to produce quality wine. This was the case in 2008, where a rainy and cool spring impeded vine growth and meant a late start for blossoms. In addition, a relatively cold and slightly moist August slowed the ripening of grapes. With the harvest period beginning about 10 days after the date selected the previous year, 2008 was therefore a rather late vintage.

In such a case, the behavior of the vine depends on the quality of the soil in which it is planted, but also to a great extent on the winegrower's expertise and the hours of labour expended by personnel in the vineyard, before the harvest.

After these 2 conditions for success were present at both properties, 2008 proved a very good year for our red wines, similar to the 1998 vintage in style and to the 2004 vintage in structure.

## Vineyards

La Mission-Haut-Brion's 26 acres of 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.

## Harvest

September 8<sup>th</sup> – October 7<sup>th</sup>.

## 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

The 2008 Château La Mission Haut Brion is deeply colored with purple accents. Ripe black and blue fruits are easy to note in the perfume. The wine has a good concentration of suave, opulent fruit. The refined tannins, structure, and acidity give the wine body and a long, round, rich, fruit filled finish.

## Production

5,300 cases made

## Cellaring

Drink 2015-2030

## Scores/Awards

**94 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #194 - May 2011

**94-96+ points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #182 - April 2009

**90 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - April 30, 2011

**95 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 2011

**92-94+ points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2009

**95 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2011

**95-97 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - December 31, 2009

**18 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - May 10, 2009

**17.5-18.5 points** - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - April 2009

**92+ points** - Ian D'Agata, Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2009



- Reviews** *“Tangy and lightly firm, with cherry pit, pomegranate and blackberry notes, followed by sage and tobacco. There’s nice focus, with a tarry hint for added length on the finish. Rather tight now, with the edgy feel holding sway, but this should settle into itself nicely enough. Best from 2013 through 2018. 5,300 cases made.”*  
- JM, Wine Spectator
- “This glorious offering possesses sweet tobacco leaf, black currant, mocha, white chocolate, scorched earth and burning ember-like characteristics. Full-bodied, stunningly rich and exceptionally well-endowed, this blend of 51% Cabernet Sauvignon, 43% Merlot and 6% Cabernet Franc demands 2-3 years of additional bottle age. It should age gracefully for 35-40 years.”*  
- RP, Wine Advocate
- “Dark and concentrated, this is a powerhouse of flavors and dense tannins. It’s a wonderful combination of velvety texture and dry structure. Layered, complex, wood and spice already showing signs of integration, but certainly set for the long haul.”*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast
- “Dark crimson. Lightly fragrant with a hint of tea leaves. Now this is elegant! But it’s rather different from old La Missions. Much more polished and suaver. Once this puts on weight it should come into better balance. At the moment it’s perhaps just a little too light but is certainly marvelously pure and has a wonderful line along the palate. Drink 2015-2029.”*  
- JR, JancisRobinson.com
- “Tasted at Chateau La Mission Haut-Brion. The La Mission has a complex nose: smoky at first with touches of sous-bois, thyme, a little sage and earth. Quite austere and masculine compared to other vintages with just a hint of mulberry developing in the glass that becomes more lifted after 10 minutes, more graphite aromas coming through and crushed pebble. The palate is medium bodied with firm, stoic tannins on the entry. A stately La Mission, foursquare and relatively conservative, just a little hardness at the moment but that will mellow with time. Dry and slightly leafy on the finish with sous-bois, a touch of thyme and pencil shavings: classic La Mission. Drink 2016-2040.”*  
- NM, Wine Journal
- “This is 43% Merlot, 51% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Cabernet Franc. Just 5300 cases, with just 40% making the grade for the grand vin, the rest either going into La Chapelle or, in the case of 20%, being sold off. Chalky fruit on the nose, with a fine and perfumed character. There is a fairly dense composition on the palate, with a fine linear grip. Quite full, firm, with powerful tannins, but also with lots of texture and substance too. It shows huge tannins at the finish, but also a fine perfume. A true vin de garde.”*  
- CK, The Wine Doctor
- “Deep ruby-purple. Expressive aromas of blackcurrant, blackberry, underbrush, smoke and minerals. Juicy, spicy and on the lean side, but with excellent firmness and lift to the dark berry, tar and tobacco flavors. This gained considerable mid-palate sweetness and pliancy with air. But almost austere today on the minerally finish, which features ripe tannins and impressively long, juicy fruit. “*  
- ID, International Wine Cellar
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