

Château La Mission Haut Brion 2009

CSPC# 749571

750mlx6

14.7% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

47% Cabernet Sauvignon, 47% 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

Winegrowers are cautious by nature. However, this year, we are throwing this legendary caution to the wind to announce the birth of a beautiful and very great vintage. The newborn is so magnificent and full of promise that it is difficult to contain our enthusiasm. We will not beat about the bush: 2009 is extraordinary, undoubtedly worthy of a place of honor in the Hall of Fame along with the legendary 1929, 1947, 1949, 1959, 1961, 1982, 1989, 1990, 2000, and 2005 vintages.

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.

Harvest

August 31st – October 6th. The harvest is naturally by hand, with sorting beginning in the vineyard where truck-mounted sorting tables are positioned.

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 colour is very deep and the nose is intense, with plenty of character. This rich and utterly delicious wine spreads out beautifully on the palate. The tannin is smooth and sweet. 2009 La Mission Haut Brion inevitably reminds tasters of one of this estate's finest successes: the 2000 vintage. The concentration, class, and balance between power and freshness are the hallmarks of both 2000 and 2009. However, 2009 has greater concentration, as well as another dimension and even stronger sensations. 2009 Château La Mission Haut-Brion is already mythical.

Production

6,000 cases made

Cellaring

Drink 2016-2035

Scores/Awards

96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2012

94-97 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2010

100 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #199 - February 2012

98-100 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #188- April 2010

94 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 2012

93-95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2010

98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - Web Only 2012

97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 1, 2012

95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - September 8, 2010

97 (+?) points - Ian D'Agata, ST's International Wine Cellar - July 2012

93-96 points - Ian D'Agata, ST's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2010

18 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 20, 2010

19 points/5 stars - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2010

96 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2010



Reviews *"This is forcefully rendered, with dark tar, espresso and chocolate up front, backed by dense layers of fig sauce, currant reduction and smoldering black tea leaves. There's dense flesh and great drive on the finish, which has serious grip. Best from 2016 through 2035. 6,000 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Shows juicy aromas of ripe Cabernet Sauvignon and currant, with hints of forest fruits and sandalwood. Full-bodied, offering chewy, mouthcoating tannins that are fruit-coated and velvety. Dense and powerful. A little subdued. Could be better than I think. Score range: 94-97"
- JS, Wine Spectator

"A candidate for the wine of the vintage, the 2009 La Mission-Haut-Brion stood out as one of the most exceptional young wines I had ever tasted from barrel, and its greatness has been confirmed in the bottle. A remarkable effort from the Dillon family, this is another large-scaled La Mission that tips the scales at 15% alcohol. A blend of equal parts Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot (47% of each) and the rest Cabernet Franc, it exhibits an opaque purple color as well as a magnificent bouquet of truffles, scorched earth, blackberry and blueberry liqueur, subtle smoke and spring flowers. The wine's remarkable concentration offers up an unctuous/viscous texture, a skyscraper-like mouthfeel, sweet, sumptuous, nearly over-the-top flavors and massive density. Perhaps a once-in-a-lifetime La Mission-Haut-Brion, the 2009 will take its place alongside the many great wines made here since the early 1920s. The good news is that there are nearly 6,000 cases of the 2009. It should last for 50-75+ years. Given the wine's unctuousity and sweetness of the tannin, I would have no problem drinking it in about 5-6 years."
- RP, Wine Advocate

"La Mission Haut-Brion has made so many great wines over the last 100 years, it would be stupid to say the 2009 somehow exceeds this estate's great classics, such as 1929, 1945, 1949, 1953, 1955, 1959, 1961, 1982, 1989, 1990, 1998, 2000, or 2005. Certainly, it will take its place in the pantheon of all the great La Mission Haut-Brion's ever made. There are 6,000 cases of it, made from a blend of 47% Cabernet Sauvignon, 47% Merlot, and 6% Cabernet Franc. The natural alcohol hit 14.7%, which far exceeds the perfect wines of 1982, 1989 and 1990. Opaque purple in color, with an extraordinary nose of blueberry liqueur intermixed with camphor, charcoal, hints of burning embers and truffles, and loads of black berry and black currant fruit, the wine has sublime concentration and purity, a finish that goes well past 60 seconds, and not a hard edge to be found in this sumptuous, almost over-the-top, full-bodied wine of enormous power and massive density and richness. An immortal effort, it should drink well for 50-100 years! (Tasted once.) Harvest started around September 9 at La Mission Haut-Brion, and finished almost a month later, on October 6. To get an idea of just how extraordinary all the wines from the Dillon family are in 2009, just consider how phenomenal the second wines are."
- RP, Wine Advocate

"What a gorgeous nose of ripe dark fruits such as bramble berries, blueberries and currants, with hints of orange flowers. This is so tight and focused, with laser-guided tannins. It starts very slowly and then builds and builds and builds on the palate. Currants and blackberries galore, yet a tangy, firm and creamy textured tannin structure. Racy, muscular structure. Try in 2021."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Such a generous and ripe wine, with a dark core of tannins surrounded by opulent fruit. Black fruits, coffee, very concentrated flavors, a powerhouse of structure and richness. The warmth of the wine is palpable, as is the aging potential."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"95-97 Barrel sample. Lovely, velvet textured wine, with acidity and some spicy wood. The texture is so ripe, the tannins voluptuous, smooth and textured, a light touch of chocolate. Magnificent rich wine."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

Reviews *"(47% Merlot, 47% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Cabernet Franc; a selection of 50% of the crop...) Deep ruby. Captivating aromas of strawberry and raspberry complicated by strong mineral and tobacco nuances. Remarkably graceful-almost weightless-in the mouth, with very nice depth to the pure red fruit, cedar and mineral flavors. The perfumed, very long finish features some assertive, youthful tannins that will require at least six or seven years of patience after release. This La Mission is closer in style to the La Chapelle than I recall in recent years (perhaps due to the similar blends), though a noticeable step up in precision and concentration. A great if understated wine, it's also completely different from the '05 La Mission, which contained a whopping 69% merlot"*

- ID, International Wine Cellar

"Bright, deep ruby. Brooding, complex cabernet sauvignon-dominated nose of uncommon depth, offering notes of cassis, cigar box, minerals, cedar and dry herbs. Extremely pure and fresh, with massive but still totally unevolved flavors of blackcurrant, dark plum and minerals. I love this wine's impeccable balance and smooth, tactile finish. A monumental La Mission with outstanding persistence. (ID)"

- ID, International Wine Cellar

"50% of the crop went into this. The alcohol level was 14.2% in 2005 with lots of plump Merlot boosting it but in 2009 the blend is 47% Merlot, 47% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Cabernet Franc and the alcohol level is a record 14.7%. Dark crimson. Scented, pretty, rather haunting aroma. Very rich and caressing – lovely texture. Still very firm and dry. The house signature of those warm bricks even in the super-ripe, super-imposing vintage of 2009! Lovely glow, and quite a bit alcohol on the end, but definitely no sweetness. SO different from the norm on the right bank... Almost inky finish. Seems very Cabernet to me. Fades just a little fast."

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"This is 47% Merlot and 47% Cabernet Sauvignon, with 6% Cabernet Franc. Alcohol 14.7% (2005 was previously the highest at 14.2%). Accounts for 57% of the harvest. A less vibrant hue than La Chapelle, concentrated and a little deeper in colour, and rather like Haut-Brion today it is not being so expressive. But there is a savoury edge to what fruit it presents, and the substance on the palate is just lovely, broad and sweetly fruited, with exotic cherry, plum and damson notes. This is fresh, perfumed too, with floral notes, delicious style backed up by svelte tannins which coat the mouth with a velvety skin, and alongside some delicious acidity. This should be delicious. From my [2009 Bordeaux](#) primeur assessment. 18-19+/20 (March 2010)"

- CK, The Wine Doctor

"Black red, marvelously intense expression of black fruits on the nose, slightly smoky with pure vineyard density and breed, magnificent structure, even slightly lush middle, great definition and length."

- SS, Decanter.com

"The Cabernet Sauvignon achieved the same potential alcohol as the Merlot in 2009 - hence the unheard of 14.7% alcohol level here. Despite the power, this still has levels of acidity that are more reminiscent of Piedmont than Bordeaux. The oak isn't integrated yet, adding a touch of bitterness to the wine, but the freshness and fruit richness point to an exciting future. 20+ years."

- TA, timatkin.com