

Château La Mission Haut Brion 2011

CSPC# 749571

750mlx6

14.7% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33.7% Merlot and 11.3% Cabernet Franc

Website

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

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.

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.

Vintage

One of the characteristics of 2011 was an extremely dry spring. Based on the measured rainfall in April, May & June this was the driest spring since 1949. Happily, summer brought some rain which allowed the vine to continue its growth. With a dry September, we were able to harvest in optimal conditions.

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

August 29-September 27. 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

Very deep, dark red colour with mauve highlights. The intense nose has opened up to reveal hints of black cherry and blackberry as well as spice. The bouquet is very "La Mission". The wine starts out broad-based, soft and tasty. It then spreads out seamlessly with a show of powerful tannin and creamy middle palate. The tight tannic structure on the finish is supported by a very fine aromatic persistence. Once again, La Mission Haut-Brion is very open at this stage, very expressive, and quite obviously a great wine.

Production

4,100 cases made

Cellaring

Drink 2015-2040



Scores/Awards **93 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2014
93-96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - April 2012
95 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #212 - April 2014
93-95 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #200 - April 2012
93-95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2012
94-95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2012
93-95 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 11, 2012
91-94 points - Stephen Tanzer, ST's International Wine Cellar - April 2012
17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 20, 2012
17.5 points - Decanter.com - April 18, 2012
92 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)
97 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2012 (score only)
94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 25, 2012
94-95 points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - April 2012
18 points - Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants - April 2012
93 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - April 2012
93 points - Gilbert & Gaillard - May 10, 2012
18.5 points - Vinum Wine Magazine - April 2012 (score only)

Reviews *"This sports a pleasantly grippy edge of briar and cassis bush notes, with a densely layered core of dark fig, blackberry and black currant fruit that should move to the fore soon enough. The long, mesquite-tinged finish has solid grip. Best from 2016 through 2030."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Tightly wound, with a good chalky vibrancy and taut red currant, damson plum and bitter cherry notes that show ample length. Tasted non-blind."
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"The small production (4,150 cases) of 2011 La Mission-Haut-Brion displays the nobility and complexity of this great terroir. Burning embers, scorched earth, blueberry, black currant, licorice and spice aromas jump from the glass of this dense ruby/purple-colored wine. With full body (atypical for a 2011), but no hard edges, this opulent, multidimensional, fleshy, rich, stunningly long, well-balanced La Mission is another great achievement in what a century of has been nearly producing remarkable wines from this hallowed vineyard. The long 2011 should be reasonably mature in another 4-6 years, and last for two decades. It will always be a revelation in a vintage that is unlikely to receive a lot of exciting press. The final blend was 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot, and 11% Cabernet Franc.
Jean-Philippe Delmas continues to quietly and authoritatively turn out one great wine after another at La Mission-Haut-Brion and Haut-Brion."*
- RP, Wine Advocate

"The production of the 2011 La Mission-Haut-Brion (55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot and 11% Cabernet Franc) was a tiny 4,100 cases, compared to 6,000 cases in 2009 and 5,100 cases in 2010. The 2011 is a big, sexy, smoky, classic La Mission displaying lots of road tar, graphite, barbecue, meats, mulberry, black currant and blueberry notes. It is full-bodied with sweet tannin as well as an expansive, fleshy style. The harvest was late in 2011 despite the fact that this micro-climate is one of the warmest and most precocious in all of Bordeaux since it is essentially in the city of Bordeaux. This brilliant wine, one of the vintage's superstars, should drink reasonably well in 3-4 years and keep for 25 or more."
- RP, Wine Advocate

"The La Mission is a blend of 33.7% Merlot, 11.3% Cabernet Franc and 55% Cabernet Sauvignon. The nose takes time to coalesce very classic with ripe blackberry and briary fruit, fine minerality, a hint of black olive and crushed stone. The palate is medium bodied with tensile tannins. This is an edgy La Mission with crisp acidity, a silver citric thread, dark broody brambly fruit and an almost angular, but very fresh, focused finish. I like the classicism of the 2011. Excellent. Tasted April 2012."
- NM, Wine Journal

- Reviews** *"What a beautiful nose of Cabernet Sauvignon with currants, berries and hints of dark chocolate. Full and super silky with fine tannins and a very firm and long finish. Very long."*
- JS, JamesSuckling.com
- "An impressive wood- and tannin-laden wine, with intense, solid fruit. It's powerful, very dry and complex."*
- RV, Wine Enthusiast
- "(55% cabernet sauvignon, 34% merlot and 11% cabernet franc; 3.67 pH): Bright, dark ruby-red. Enticing aromas of strawberry, blackcurrant and white pepper, with a strong mineral overlay. Dense and rich but also juicy, with pure mineral and dark berry flavors and a delicately peppery element. The finish is pure and long. This La Mission seems almost too open today, but there's plenty of structure to support its fruit and acidity. Another classic vintage for this property."*
- ST, International Wine Cellar
- "Deep dark crimson and elderberry core. Initially a little dusty on the nose, a touch of vanilla. Quite reticent but opens up to spicy dark cherry. Lovely enveloping texture, deep and smooth, so fine you can't feel any grain. Some of that smoky warm brick. Rich and open-armed. 17.5/20 points"*
- JR, JancisRobinson.com
- "Earthy, even smoky nose, lots of grippy vigour now, richness and depth to come through. Drink 2018-2035."*
- Decanter.com
- "Produced from a blend of 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33.7% Merlot and 11.3% Cabernet Franc, the wine reached 13.5% Alcohol - Deep ruby in color, the wine offers tobacco, earth, smoke, cassis and coffee with ripe tannins and a classic, bright, fresh and pure crème de cassis finish. This classic styled Pessac Leognan lacks the concentration of the more recent 2009 and 2010 vintages. 93-95 Pts"*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- "Deep and healthy saturated colour; some purple at the meniscus; spicy, briary notes, earth and tobacco; very mannered too; creamy; some black cherry and dark chocolate notes on the nose too; opens up with aeration – clearly lots of depth and layers; lots of oak too – but fruit also opens up; deep, concentrated palate; quite a bit of tannin, grip and lots of blackcurrant fruit, earth; quite measured. Very nice palate quite a bit of oak present. Toast and espresso notes on the finish. Good length. Oaky finish. 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33.7% Merlot, 11.3% Cabernet Franc. Tasted at La Mission 5/4/12. 94-95+"*
- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com
- "Gorgeous aromas of ripe black fruit are immediately evident, while on the palate there is finesse, delicacy of tannins and superb balance. Oak is more prominent at this stage than with Haut-Brion but there is ample weight of fruit to absorb this in time. Will add texture and flesh in barrel and to the framework of lovely finesse. The blend is 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot, 11% Cabernet Franc."*
- JB, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants
- "Tasted alongside Haut Brion, La Mission stole the stage with its exuberance and expressiveness. La Mission's aromatics are complex and enticing with cedar, spices and black tea notes; more subtle than La Mission. The wine has cashmere-like tannins and fine texture. All of its elements are finely knit, gorgeously layered and built for long-term ageing. This excellent wine is among my favourites from this challenging vintage. Tasted in: Bordeaux, France. Maturity: Young."*
- JCL, asianpalate.com
- "EN PRIMEUR - Profound nose of ripe red fruit (raspberry) with delicate, brioche-like oak. Full, warm attack framing refined yet evident tannins with predominant oak. A hint of toast on the finish."*
- en.gilbertgaillard.com
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