

# Château d'Yquem 1999

CSPC# 742355

375mlx3

13.9% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety**  
**Appellation**  
**General Info**

80% *Sémillon*, 20% *Sauvignon Blanc*  
Sauternes

1er Cru Supérieur. Admired in the whole world since the 18th Century, Château d'Yquem remains the greatest of the great sweet Bordeaux wines. Centuries after centuries, the Château has always kept faithful to an ideal of perfection, even at the darkest hours of the 20th century when people came to a disaffection for this kind of wine. In 1999, people feared that this constant solidity would collapse due to divisions in the Lur Saluces' family and the sale of the Alexandre de Lur Saluces's shares to the luxury group LVMH, but it did not. Today, the tandem Alexandre de Lur Saluces - Bernard Arnault seems to work wonderfully and the working methods have not been called into question. Yquem remains the Bordeaux symbol of perfection and tradition. Exceptional fact in Bordeaux, the wine stays in general three years and a half in new wood barrels for maturing, before being proposed on the market. Its refinement, the exquisite perfection of its balance and its power do not have an equivalent. The great vintages (1937, 1950, 1995...) offer the plenitude whose any wine amateur dreams of.

The great sweet wines of Bordeaux, Sauternes, are among the most decadent, complex and simply enjoyable wines. Based on a blend of Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc that has been infected with the "noble rot", *Botrytis Cinerea*, Sauternes are rich, honied wines bursting with notes of vanilla, coconut, dried apricots and subtle spice tones. They are usually very sweet and rich with a soft quality to them that makes them appealing in their youth, yet they can age and improve for decades. The neighboring village of Barsac frequently makes wines comparable to those of Sauternes.

**Vintage** Temperatures were above average throughout the growing season. This, combined with average rainfall, provided excellent growing conditions for vine development. The major storms in late July which hit other vineyards in Bordeaux, causing premature and very detrimental rot, bypassed Yquem entirely.

**Vineyards** This property is beautifully placed at hilltop in Sauternes commune, with its 103-ha big vineyard (clay and gravel on the surface and lime stones in the subsoil), planted with 80% Semillon and 20% Sauvignon Blanc. The average age of vines is 27 years and the yield does not exceed 10 hl/ha. The wine matures for 3.5 years in new barrels. Neither chaptalisation nor other techniques, which increase sugar content in grape must, are allowed. D'Yquem is one of the very few properties in the district, to use both semi-botrytised and fully botrytised grapes for the wine, in order to have enough acidity to balance sweetness.

**Tasting Notes** Superb, brilliant golden colour. The bouquet is already intense and very expressive, to an extent rarely seen in a wine this young. Tremendously pure, complex aromas: yellow fruit, dried fruit, spices, aromatic plants, and elegant oak. Starts out beautifully on the palate. The roundness is backed up by great acidity and a vivacious quality. Beautifully smooth and soft aftertaste. This elegant wine has a remarkably long finish.

**Cellaring** Drink 2014-2030

**Scores/Awards** **94 points** - James Suckling, *Wine Spectator* - September 2004  
**92 points** - Robert Parker, *Wine Advocate* #158 - April 2005  
**89 points** - Neal Martin, *Wine Journal* - November 2006  
**17.5 points** - Jancis Robinson, *JancisRobinson.com* - January 23, 2008  
**14.5+ points** - Chris Kissack, *The Wine Doctor* - October 2004  
**93 points** - Jean Marc Quarin  
**88 points** - Jeff Leve, *thewinecellarinsider.com* - December 12, 2004  
**88 points** - Joe Belmaati, *winemega.com*



**Reviews** *“The 1999 was particularly impressive for the vintage. It was superbly focused and beautiful on the nose, with sugared lemons, tropical fruit and maple syrup character. Full-bodied and thick, yet very fine, it was extremely sweet and long. 94 points.”*

- JS, Wine Spectator

*“A golden, straw hue. The nose is just a little predictable and linear compared to the other Yquem's that I have tasted. White flowers, acacia, rather like a sweet Auslese! The palate is lively, rich, moderate acidity and just rather linear. For me, an Yquem treading water. Drink now-2020.”*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“And finally, a particularly forward vintage of this superlative wine which showed all the richness and concentration that Yquem can muster even if not much nerve or tension. It stood up beautifully to the Roquefort served with it, cleverly and successfully sandwiched in sweet apple slices. Drink 2006-2035.”*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*“Above average temperatures. Storms in July. Harvest began September 24th with intermittent rain. A moderately pale lemon-gold. A simple nose; just some candied fruit. Somebody overlooked the need for botrytis in this vintage. Sweet palate, moderate concentration, but no great depth. Lacks botrytis character and the complexity that would ensue. Good finish and length though. Now it is apparent why this vintage was released at such a low price, but perhaps it will develop in bottle.”*

- CK, Wine Doctor

*“Other than the label, there is no reason to own or buy this wine. An abundance of better choices at half the price are available from the 01 vintage. Light honeyed yellow fruit without much concentration of botrytis make this an easy pass.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“Light to medium straw yellow color. This wine was very closed on the nose and never seemed to wrangle its way out of captivity. This is probably a wine that should be tucked away in the darkest corner of the cellar. In the mouth the wine was somewhat bitter and thin. Definitely on the light side. The wine did possess a delicate and elegant sweetness and roundness of flavor with good balance and harmony, yet a bit more flesh and meat would have been desirable. Medium to short on the aftertaste. 88 points. “*

- JB, winemega.com

*“This has a heady sweet nose of honeyed tropical fruits and a noticeable hint of fresh apricots. Subtle oak is well-integrated on the palate with layers of very ripe white peaches, melon, spice and orange marmalade, with a pure and lingering finish. What is also remarkable is that it's going to be an early drinker too and is available at a fantastic price.”*

- Berry & Rudd Wine Merchants

*“Tasted in April 2005. Light golden. Tasted quite light and reserved and showed some bitter orange peel and evident acidity. This wine hasn't found itself yet, so give it time.”*

- I Litwar – Greatbordeauxwines.com

---