

## Château Branaire Ducru 2009

CSPC# 814406

750mlx3

14.8% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety** 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot  
**Appellation** St Julien  
**Classification** Fourth Growth. Quatrieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.  
**Website** <http://www.branaire.com/>

**General Info** Château Branaire-Ducru is situated on the opposite side of the road from Château Beychevelle in the south of the St-Julien appellation. The Château has its origins in the 17th century, when it formed part of the estate of Château Beychevelle. After the latter's owner died in debt, the land was parceled up and sold off, with Jean-Baptiste Braneyre acquiring the Branaire hectares in 1680 (the name has metamorphosed across the centuries). Braneyre's daughter married Pierre de Luc and the estate passed down through the De Luc family and later the related Ducru family for over 140 years. The last family members to own it were three noble nephews who are represented by the crowns on today's Branaire label. In 1919, Branaire-Ducru was sold to the Tapie family, but its modern renaissance had to wait until 1988 and the influences of the Maroteaux family, under whose direction the wine's quality has surged. Patrick Maroteaux has invested heavily in new plantings as well as installing a spanking new cuvier and an ultra-modern chai.

**Winemaker** Jean-Dominique Videau  
**Vineyards** Château Branaire-Ducru is tucked away in the south-eastern most part of the St Julien appellation, close neighbours being Beychevelle, which lies between Branaire-Ducru and the *Gironde*, and Château Saint-Pierre. The vineyards run west-east in several plots close to the *château*, over typical Médoc terroir of Quaternary alluvial gravels. There are 52 hectares in all, planted with 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot and just 5% Cabernet franc and 3% Petit Verdot, with an average age approaching 40 years, although there are many vines approaching a century.

**Harvest** Hand harvested

**Maturation** Aging in oak barrels for 16 to 20 months with 60 to 65% of new oak. Woods selected in various French forests according to their flavours and tannins quality. Light toasting respecting the wines fruit and aromatic purity

**Tasting Notes** This Branaire has a very deep colour and an intense cassis nose. On the palate, there is lots of black fruit, structure and tannin. Very classic and built for the long haul. Long and balanced. A real contrast in style to the wine of neighbours Talbot and Beychevelle.

**Production** 12,000 cases made

**Cellaring** Drink 2017-2035

**Scores/Awards** **93 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2012  
**92-95 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2010  
**96 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #199 - February 2012  
**92-95 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #188- April 2010  
**92 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 2012  
**90-92 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2010  
**95 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - Web Only 2012  
**95 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 1, 2012  
**92-94 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - September 8, 2010  
**93(+?) points** - Stephen Tanzer, ST's International Wine Cellar - July 2012  
**92-95 points** - Ian D'Agata, ST's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2010  
**16.5 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 20, 2010  
**18 points** - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - October 2011  
**17-18+ points** - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - March 2010  
**17.5 points/4 stars** - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2010  
**93 points** - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2010



## Reviews

*"A ripe, chewy, muscular style, with good cut despite the hefty tar, blackberry, roasted fig and singed apple wood notes. The long, anise-stained finish lets the tarry edge play out, though this shows a touch more finesse than some of its colleagues. Best from 2015 through 2025. 12,000 cases made."*

- JM, Wine Spectator

*"Aromas of blueberry, dried citrus fruit and currant. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and a long, long finish. Structured and tannic, but sweet fruit behind. Score range: 92-95"*

- JS, Wine Spectator

*"Haut couture becomes a wine! This dense purple wine has the tell-tale notes of flowers and pencil shavings, and its broad aromatics are intense and totally captivating. Powerful, rich, and full, but less tannic than the 2005 and more opulent, this is a dazzling Branaire to drink between 2017-2035."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*"Only time will tell whether the 2009, another great effort from Branaire, will eclipse the 2005 and 2003. Certainly at 13.6% alcohol it is the most powerful Branaire ever made, and the final blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot showcases what a great vintage 2009 is for Cabernet Sauvignon. An inky/blue/purple color is followed by raspberry, boysenberry, crushed rock, graphite, and floral notes, and an opaque, broad, dense, substantial, impressively structured wine without any hardness. It requires 4-5 years of cellaring and should last four decades or more. (Tasted two times.)"*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*"Tasted at the chateau and at the UGC. A blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, some of the Merlot (28%) plots reached 14.8%, the overall alcohol is 13.55% and pH 3.53. The Petit Verdot (4%) had very high-quality tannins with good finesse, and 3% from old Cabernet Franc. A bright garnet core. The nose is well defined, quite elegant, but perhaps showing a little tighter than other Saint Juliens. Blackberry, a touch of cedar, like at Ducru, just a faint scent of the Gironde estuary and then with time, just a faint hint of griottes. The palate is full-bodied, nice grippy tannins, a little edgier than Ducru, a touch my sharpness and the acidity is racier. Good structure, a touch more rigid at this stage but that will melt by the time of bottling. A saline touch towards the finish interwoven with a citric thread. Good length. This is a Saint Julien standing to attention on parade. Hopefully it will stand at ease by bottling. Tasted March 2010."*

- NM, Wine Journal

*"Gorgeous aromas of dark berries and wet earth, with hints of graphite. Full body, with juicy, chewy tannins and a long rich, fruity, and succulent finish. Best ever from here. Try in 2019."*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"Very supple wine, with great richness and density. It is all so complete, a pleasure, powerful yet also with sweet opulent fruits layered with dark tannins. For long-term aging"*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"92-94 Barrel sample. Wood dominant, smooth tannins and an open, generous texture. This is ripe and full in the mouth."*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"Bright, deep ruby. Super ripe, brooding aromas of black cherry, bitter chocolate and licorice. Sweet, concentrated and fine-grained, with terrific depth to the plush cassis and coffee liqueur flavors. Serious dusty, fine tannins will not stand in the way of early approachability, but this wine has the structure for a 20+-year life in bottle."*

- ST, International Wine Cellar

*"Inky purple. Grapey, floral nose offers the full Branaire spectrum of sexy ripe black cherry, Oriental spice, dark chocolate and coconut aromas. Enters very bright, with rich, dense flavors of red cherry and pomegranate juice, then finishes impressively long and pure, with a lovely hint of fresh blackberry. The wine's lively acids give it great precision and extend its flavors on the aromatic aftertaste. The wine's youthfully aggressive tannins will greatly repay cellaring, and I expect this wine to age effortlessly for the next few decades. I recently had the amazing 1928 Branaire, and though I don't think this '09 will ever reach the heights of that wine, it may be pretty close."*

- ID, International Wine Cellar

**Reviews** *“Dark crimson with a pale rim. Very light nose with a rather unwelcome note of coconut. Sweet start and very fondue. Just a little simple but lusciously so. I am perhaps looking a gift horse in the mouth here – though the tannins on the finish are pretty rustic. If this were sold at an attractive price it would please many. Some real succulence.”*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*“Highly perfumed black fruits here, full of blackcurrants and rose petals, a nose suggestive of a bright, crystalline intensity of fruit. Aromatically an impressive wine, and quite distinctive within the context of the vintage, at this tasting at least. This comes through on the palate too, which shows a perfumed layer first of all, then a more solid frame, which isn't quite as well filled out by the fruit character as I hoped. On returning to it though it does show an admirable weight of fruit with a defined texture, gritty and tangible, which leads into a more tannic finish. This has delightful appeal and could well be brilliant. From a tasting of 2009 Bordeaux at two years of age. 18/20 (October 2011)”*

- CK, The Wine Doctor

*“This wine has a lovely concentration on inspection, with a vibrant cherry red. The nose has a cherry aroma, with a confit edge to it, but certainly very rich and pure in terms of fruit definition. The palate is lovely in terms of fruit definition, with good grip around the edges, Fresh acids, rather soft but building tannins with the usual rich and velvety feel of the vintage. Supple and quite juicy fruit, and a sappy finish. Really good character here, and plenty of potential. From my 2009 Bordeaux primeur assessment. 17-18+/20 (March 2010)”*

- CK, The Wine Doctor

*“Deep purple red, fragrant and precisely expressed Cabernet cassis, lovely depth of natural ripeness, a finely textured wine, already elegant and will age well.”*

- SS, Decanter.com

*“Often over-shadowed by other St Juliens, Branaire-Ducru generally makes wines that are supremely drinkable. Don't interpret this as faint praise, because this four-way blend is packed with fruit, has silky tannins and carries its oak lightly. Yet another enjoyable St Julien. 10+ years.”*

- TA, timatkin.com

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