

## Château Branaire Ducru 2010

CSPC# 749538

750mlx12

13.8% alc./vol.

<b>Grape Variety</b>	70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23.5% Merlot, 2.5% Cabernet Franc, 4% Petit Verdot
<b>Appellation</b>	St Julien
<b>Classification</b>	Fourth growth.
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.branair.com/">http://www.branair.com/</a>
<b>General Info</b>	<p>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.</p>
<b>Vintage</b>	<p>Ideal weather conditions allowed the production of a high quality 2010 vintage, in the same spirit as 2009. The budburst was relatively late because of cooler than average Springtime temperatures. The 2010 temperatures were very close to 2009; the summer was warm, but not scorching. A noticeable drought, that continued into August and September, resulted in berries that were 20% smaller than last year. The yield was consequently limited, slightly below 40 hl on most of the vineyard. From July to September the rainfall reached 54 mm in total. 2010 was the driest year since 1949. Hours of sunlight in September and October were much higher than average, which helped the ripening of the grapes. At the same time the cool temperature of the autumn season allowed a better definition of the aromas, keeping the acidity level and lead to a slow but deep maturity of the tannins.</p>
<b>Vineyards</b>	<p>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 <i>Gironde</i>, and Château Saint-Pierre. The vineyards run west-east in several plots close to the <i>château</i>, 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.</p>
<b>Harvest</b>	<p>The grapes were selectively picked from September 27<sup>th</sup> until October 14<sup>th</sup> in perfect weather conditions. The blend for this vintage is 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23.5% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot and 2.5% Cabernet Franc.</p>
<b>Maturation</b>	<p>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</p>
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	<p>On the palate the 2010 vintage shows a great aromatic richness and a beautiful freshness. The ripe fruit is dense and brilliant, with concentrated tannins and a long length. 2010 will definitely compete with the 2009 vintage. For the Chateau, it should be the leader of the very high quality 2005, 2003 and 2000 vintages.</p>
<b>Cellaring</b>	<p>Drink 2017-2035</p>



**Scores/Awards** **94 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2013  
**92-95 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2011  
**94 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #205 - February 2013  
**93-95 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #194 - May 2011  
**91-93 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2011  
**93-94 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2013  
**95 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 1, 2013  
**93-95 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 25, 2011  
**90-93 points** - Stephen Tanzer, ST's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2011  
**17 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2011 (no review)  
**17.5 points** - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - November 2012  
**17-18 points** - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - May 2012  
**16.5-17.5 points** - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - April 2011  
**17.5 points/4 stars** - Decanter.com - April 2011  
**94 points** - Jean Marc Quarin - March 2011  
**94 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - February 8, 2013  
**95 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 1, 2012  
**94-95 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - July 10, 2011  
**94 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 20, 2011  
**93-94 points** - Jane Anson, newbordeaux.com - April 2011  
**88-90 points** - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - April 2011

*"Very polished and stylish, with a velvety feel to the layers of crushed plum, currant and blackberry, while bittersweet cocoa and black licorice glide in on the gorgeous, black tea-infused finish. Features a lovely allure rather than raw power, making this possibly the prettiest St.-Julien of the vintage. There's plenty in the tank for cellaring as well. Best from 2014 through 2030."*

- JM, Wine Spectator

*"This has guts, offering dark fig, plum and cocoa notes carried by velvety but substantial tannins, with a very long, smoke- and plum sauce-filled finish that has well-embedded acidity. Score range: 92-95."*

- JS, Wine Spectator

*"This wine is more backward than I would have normally expected, but nevertheless, it is very impressive. The 2010 Branaire-Ducru displays an inky bluish-purple color and loads of mulberry, raspberry, black currant, graphite and floral notes in its intense aromatics. Medium to full-bodied, with sensational ripeness, purity, texture and length, the tannins are slightly more prominent than I remember from barrel, but they are sweet and ripe (as opposed to astringent and bitter). This beautiful wine needs 4-6 years of cellaring and should keep 25-30 years."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*"Proprietor Patrick Maroteaux has completed a decade of brilliant performances at this chateau across the Medoc's Route de Vin from Beychevelle and a stone's throw from Ducru Beaucaillou, St.-Pierre and Gloria. A fabulous effort, the 2010's notes of raspberry jam, black currants, crushed rocks and spring flowers are followed by a wine of impeccable purity, medium to full-bodied power, sweet tannin and stunning texture and length. With superb richness and beautiful overall equilibrium, it will benefit from 4-5 years of cellaring and keep for 25 or more years."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*"Tasted at the chateau and the UGC, the Branaire Ducru is a blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23.5% Merlot, 4.5% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot including 10% of the vin de presse. It has 13.8% alcohol with a pH of 3.53. The nose is very primal compared to other samples with high-toned dark cherries, dark plum and cassis. The palate is medium bodied with fine tensile tannins, very good acidity and precision; not a wine of dimension like Ducru Beaucaillou but I like the subtle touch of spiciness interlacing the finish. Very fine. Drink 2014- Tasted March 2011."*

- NM, Wine Journal

*"A layered young red with lots of black olives and berries on the nose. Full body, with velvety and chewy tannins. It all comes together at the end with a lovely sweet fruit. Try after 2017."*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

## Reviews

*"This rich, full wine shows the chateau to be at the top of its form. It's finely balanced, pushing both its fruit and acidity, with the tannins taking the supporting role. With its power leashed, this shows the stylish side of Saint-Julien, although it will certainly age for many years."*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"93-95 This has a very fresh character, its acidity a tonic of black currants and berries. The tannins are underneath all this delicious freshness."*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"(70% cabernet sauvignon, 23.5% merlot, 4.5% cabernet franc, and 2% petit Verdot; 3.53 pH; 13.8% alcohol) Bright ruby-red. Floral aromas of fresh red cherry, redcurrant, violet, gunflint and minerals. Suave on entry, then pliant and sweet, with a plush texture and a smoky quality to the redcurrant, blackberry and floral flavors. The spicy, aromatic, persistent finish is marked by ripe tannins. This struck me as a less opulent Branaire-Ducru than usual, but I liked its overall balance and light touch."*

- ST, International Wine Cellar

*"Very dark purple. Nice freshness on the nose. Very round and supple and polished. Opulent without being sweet. All assembled by end Feb with about 9% vin de presse. More approachable than most of the 2010s I have tasted so far. Fresh and the fruit almost disguises the marked tannins on the finish. Stricter selection than usual. Dry very dry summer. 41 hl/ha compared to 47 hl/ha in 2009. Small berries. Tasted blind 8 Apr: Very sweet, almost Marmite aromas. Great freshness but no great intensity on the palate. A little angular with some green notes on the finish but a competent wine. Relaxed and comfortable. Not forced. 17 out of 20."*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*"A really open and expressive nose here, full of bright, perfumed and precise fruit. It has suggestions of smoke, but more than anything it is precision and purity that comes to mind. The palate is fine, very composed, relaxed and gently fleshy, with an elegant style. The structure within the wine is nicely hidden although the grainy tannins can be sensed through the middle. An impressive composition which fills me with confidence. Very good indeed. From my Bordeaux 2010 assessment at two years. 17.5/20 (November 2012)."*

- CK, The Wine Doctor

*"Lots of dark fruits here, the oak showing a nuttier tone. The fruit seems well honed from the start through into the middle of the wine, with well polished tannins giving some bite and substance to the wine, nicely matched by the lightly perfumed fruit and appropriate acidity. An attractive wine with all the components nicely put together here, showing very well now, and destined to do really good things in the cellar. From a Grand Cru Classé Tasting. 17-18/20 (May 2012)."*

- CK, The Wine Doctor

*"The blend here is 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23.5% Merlot, 4.5% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, the alcohol 13.8% and the pH 3.53. A glossy-looking wine here. Quite vibrant and crunchy fruit on the nose. The palate is quite soft and broad though, and shows some lovely sweet fruit, and it is quite structured beneath, the different elements sitting together quite harmoniously. Good acidity too. Overall it ends up with quite a fresh and juicy feel, but with some nice vigour to it as well. Some appealing fruit complexities here. Good potential. From my Bordeaux 2010 primeurs assessment. 16.5-17.5/20 (April 2011)"*

- CK, The Wine Doctor

*"Lots of depth and already showing fragrance and complexity, perfect concentration and refreshing, harmonious length, another great wine from the chateau on top of its form. Drink 2018-30. (17.5 points)"*

- Decanter.com

*"Floral, coffee, tobacco, mocha and blackberry notes lead to a powerful vintage for Branaire, with a beautiful sense of purity to the fruit, freshness and the structure to age and develop well. Patrick Maroteaux feels this blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23.5% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot and 2.5% Cabernet Franc is the best vintage yet for his chateaux, he could be right."*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider

**Reviews** *"Flowers, bitter chocolate, smoke, blackberry and wet earth aromas open to a concentrated, tannic, fresh, sweet, ripe, concentrated, fresh, mocha and black cherry, supple textured finish."*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider

*"Sporting a deep ruby color, the smoke, boysenberry, blackberry, truffle, mocha scents form an enticing perfume. Polished, elegant, fresh and filled with deep, ripe, pure fruits. The wine is expansive and mouth filling, finishing with a long, boysenberry, cocoa and black cherry finish. This wine has improved since last tasted in April. This is the best vintage of Chateau Branaire Ducru that Patrick Maroteaux has made at the property. 94-95 Pts"*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider

*"Branaire Ducru from an assemblage of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23.5% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot and 2.5% Cabernet Franc, (Similar to the 2009) the wine sports a deep ruby tint. Jammy black raspberry, spice and hints of toasty oak start off the perfume. In the mouth, fresh cassis, mocha, olives and spice combine with strong, ripe tannins, ending in a blackberry filled finish. The wine reached 13.8% alcohol, which is higher than they recorded in 2009. Due to the high level of acidity, there is no sensation of heat. According to the owner, Patrick Maroteaux, one of the keys to the success in 2010 is due to their new method of handling the press wine. This includes ageing the press wine in one-year old barrels and utilizing more selection in the press wine. 40% of the press wine was allocated to the Grand Vin. The remainder was included in the second wine. 93-94 Pts"*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider

*"Plum, damsons spiced with vanilla and cardamom pods. Slightly gentler on the attack, and again the alcohol gives a slight sourness to the tannins on mid palate. This has clear breeding, plenty to enjoy. Again, just love the persistence on the finish, and eventually (a good minute or more in), you are led upwards towards a soft fruit finish. 93-94/100. Drink 2019-2035."*  
- JA, thenewbordeaux.com

*"Deep, saturated; fresh feel here, blackcurrants; grip and acid on the palate with tannin and not overtly flattering to taste. Will settle. Goodish 88? /100 Tasted 5 April 2011. [Second tasting] Mid depth, purple at edge; quite velvety, ripe notes, cream; cherry and blackcurrant too; ripe and chewy with density; quite fresh and grippy. Will settle. All bones and elbows here now. 88-90/100 Tasted 7 April 2011 UGC. "*  
- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

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