

# Château Branaire Ducru 2019

CSPC# 814405

750mlx6

13.7% alc./vol.

<b>Grape Variety</b>	56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, 4% Cabernet Franc.
<b>Appellation</b>	St Julien
<b>Classification</b>	Fourth Growth. Quatrieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.branair.com/">http://www.branair.com/</a>
<b>General Info</b>	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.
<b>Winemaker</b>	Cellar Master: Mr. CAMPADIEU
<b>Vintage</b>	Following a mild Winter, an early and uniform budburst appeared across the vines. In Spring, the weather was cool and damp and the vine growth slow. Conditions were not optimal for flowering: some plots showed slight coulure. From the beginning of the Summer, the situation changed completely. With above-average temperatures, the vines made up for the delay in Spring, and the synthesis of the tannins in the grapes began to accelerate. Throughout the Summer, significant hydric stress set in, which intensified all the way up to the harvest, producing perfect ripening of the phenolic compounds in the berries. The total level of hydric stress is comparable to that seen in 2009 and only slightly lower than in 2010, 2016 or 2018. The harvest began on September 19th with the very early Merlot, rich and concentrated, with good acidity. Around September 22nd, rainfall aided the refinement of the tannins and limited the potential danger of excessive sugar concentration. The harvest ended on October 9th following several breaks, to ensure ripening across all the plots before rainfall set in for a long period. The late ripening grapes were harvested in perfect condition.
<b>Vineyards</b>	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.
<b>Harvest</b>	The 2018 Branaire-Ducru was picked from Harvesting took place September 19 to October 9. Average yield of 43hl/ha, caused by a small amount of coulure and the particularly small size of the Cabernet Sauvignon.
<b>Maturation</b>	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 wine's fruit and aromatic purity
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	Rich, intense color. An expressive nose, a sophisticated combination of pure black and red fruits. The palate is wonderfully smooth with powerful intensity, maintaining its fineness and elegance. A beautiful acidity, propelling the wine on a long finish.
<b>Serve with</b>	Chateau Branaire Ducru is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Young vintages can be decanted for 2-3 hours. This allows the wine to soften and open its perfume. Older vintages might need very little decanting, just enough to remove the sediment. Chateau Branaire Ducru is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb,



<b>Serve with</b>	duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, stewed, and grilled dishes. Branaire Ducru is also good when served with Asian dishes, hearty seafood or fish like tuna, mushrooms, pasta, and cheese.
<b>Production</b>	13,000 cases made.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2025-2038
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>94 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2022</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p><b>93-95+ points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - June 2020</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2022</p> <p><b>95-96 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2020</p> <p><b>#5</b> - James Suckling's 10 Best Value 2019 Bordeaux</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2020</p> <p><b>16.5 points</b> - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - June 2020</p> <p><b>16+ points</b> - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - December 2021</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - June 2020</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Jane Anson, Insidebordeaux.com - January 2022</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2022</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - June 2020</p> <p><b>92-94 points</b> - Farr Vintners - May 2020</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2022</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - June 2020</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2022</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2020</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2020</p> <p><b>92 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2020</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Thomas Parker MW - November 2021</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - June 2020</p> <p><b>94-95 points</b> - Vert de Vin - April 2020</p> <p><b>18 points</b> - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2020</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>"Leads with vivid violet and cassis, while dark plum, blackberry and boysenberry reduction notes follow quickly. Racy, structured, and well-built, with graphite and apple wood driving through the finish. Very pure and aromatic, featuring a nice sanguine echo that lingers at the very end. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2025 through 2038. 13,000 cases made."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"The 2019 Branaire-Ducru unwinds in the glass with aromas of raspberries, blackcurrants, sweet soil tones and hints of cigar wrapper, rose petals and cedar. Medium to full-bodied, deep, and layered, it's youthfully tightly wound, with terrific concentration, tangy acids, powdery tannins and a long, saline finish. While this is a little reserved out of the gates, its energy and classical proportions will richly reward bottle age."</i></p> <p>- WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"Sporting a deep garnet-purple color, the 2019 Branaire-Ducru starts off a little broody, with woodsmoke and graphite-inspired scents giving way to an emerging core of warm cassis, mulberries, and fruitcake plus touches of mocha, rose petals and bouquet garni. Medium-bodied, the palate reveals surprising energy with bags of perfumed black fruits juxtaposed by compelling tension and a fine-grained texture, beautifully supporting the tightly knit layers, finishing on a lingering mineral note. If the bottled wine delivers on this promise, I foresee a wonderfully poised, nuanced Branaire-Ducru of the sophistication and caliber that has not been seen for quite some time. Exciting! 2024 – 2044"</i></p> <p>- LPB, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"Very clear fruit character of blackcurrants, orange peel and spices. Some walnut, too. It's full-bodied with integrated, polished tannins and shows finesse and focus. Love the focused fruit at the end of this. Strength with finesse. Give it four to five years of bottle age. Try after 2024."</i></p> <p>- JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>"Dark-berry and blue-fruit character to the firm, chewy tannins that are polished and solid. Medium to full body. Wood and walnut undertones now. Impressive."</i></p> <p>- JS, JamesSuckling.com</p>

- Reviews** *“This is a richly perfumed wine that has bold tannins and dense black fruits. There is a fine line of juicy acidity cutting through all the richness to lend freshness against all the concentration. This is for long-term aging.”*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast
- “56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, 4% Cabernet Franc. Barrel sample. Juicy, appetising, and very aromatic. Almost primary in the definition of the aromas. Lithe and fresh on the palate, the tannins firm but not aggressive. (JL) Drink 2026 – 2038.”*  
- JL, JancisRobinson.com
- “56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 4% Petit Verdot. Light with quite marked acidity. Muted and dry with good fruit/tannin balance. Sandpaper tannins on the finish. 13.5%. Drink 2027 – 2042.”*  
- JH, JancisRobinson.com
- “Floral-studded nose along with cassis fruits, this is an enjoyable Branaire Ducru that is easy to recommend. Lighter-framed than some in the appellation with its characteristic fine tannins making this a medium-term drinker within the St Julien context. Plenty of juice running through the palate, enjoyable baked earth and menthol notes and a kick of salinity on the finish.”*  
- JA, Decanter.com
- “Hard to resist this finessed and silky Branaire, with finely boned tannins, well balanced black fruits, nuanced tobacco leaf and a crushed mint sign-off. Plenty to enjoy in this wine, there are good tannins. 43hl/h yield.”*  
- JA, Inside Bordeaux
- “Opening with a strong sense of florality, the wine quickly moves to tobacco leaf, red currants, mocha, and cassis on the nose. On the palate, the wine is elegant, fresh, soft, and polished, with silky tannins and a palate filled with sweet, ripe, elegant, black plums and currants with a touch of cocoa at the end in the finish. This is a fabulous vintage for Branaire Ducru. Drink from 2027-2055.”*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “Tobacco, mocha, cassis, blackberry, and flowers are what you initially notice. This is a sensuous, medium/full-bodied, silky, fresh, and pure wine exuding sweet, ripe, black plums, juicy blackberry, and cassis from start to finish. The lift in the endnote gives you ample time to enjoy all the purity in the fruit, which is just great. Produced from a blend of 56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 4% Cabernet Franc, the wine reached 13.7% alcohol with a pH of 3.65. Harvesting took place September 19 to October 9. The Grand Vin was produced from 55% of the crop.”*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “Deep ruby in colour with red cherry and darker plum on the nose. The palate is compact and fresh, with chalky tannins framing hedgerow fruit and a hint of cedar. This elegant and fresh example is well proportioned and harmonious through to the finish.”*  
- Farr Vintners
- “The 2019 Branaire-Ducru is one that I was eager to re-taste in bottle. Deep in color, it has a very well-defined nose of tightly packed dark berries, the tobacco element less obvious than before, and slightly more floral, with light sous-bois notes developing with aeration. The 60% new oak is neatly integrated. The palate shows real vivacity and tension on the entry and delivers crunchy black fruit, touches of blue fruit and a little iodine. Sappy from start to finish, this has a real saline tang that urges you back for another sip. There is definitely more substance compared to previous vintages, and I wager that this represents the best Branaire-Ducru in recent years.”*  
- NM, Vinous

## Reviews

*"The 2019 Branaire -Ducru is one instance where I felt that the first two bottles via the UGC shipment were not quite correct, so I requested two more direct from the château. They were different. It has plenty of dark berry fruit on the nose mixed with smoke, tobacco, and undergrowth scents - just classic Saint-Julien. The palate is medium-bodied with a tangy saline entry, fresh and defined by the crisp tannins. Whereas the first samples lacked a bit of cohesion, this is more focused and detailed with a seriously impressive classically styled, graphite-tinged finish. Result? Best Branaire I've tasted in barrel. Kudos to François-Xavier Maroteaux and his team. 2024 - 2050."*

- NM, Vinous

*"The 2019 Branaire-Ducru is rich, layered, and sumptuous. Black cherry, licorice, spice, leather tobacco and tar build effortlessly in the glass. The 2019 impresses with its density and pure power, which makes it perhaps atypical for Branaire by its historic standards, but it may be the direction the château seems to be headed in. The aromatics are a bit closed right now, but time in bottle should help take care of that. Drink 2029-2049."*

- AG, Vinous

*"The 2019 Branaire-Ducru dazzles from start to finish. All the Branaire signatures - rose petal, lavender, red and purplish fruit - are present, but they are kicked up a few notches, with all of the radiance of the year on full display. Soft, plush, and so alluring, the 2019 Branaire is one sexy wine. Impressive. Tasted two times."*

- AG, Vinous

*"Beautiful blue fruits, tobacco, damp earth, and floral notes all emerge from the 2019 Château Branaire-Ducru. It's medium to full-bodied, flawlessly balanced, has silky tannins, and shows the quality of the vintage perfectly. A blend of 56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc, it will benefit from 4-6 years of bottle age and cruise for two decades or more. It reminds me of the 2009."*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*"Dark ruby garnet, violet reflections, subtle lightening of the edges. Fresh cherries underlaid with liquorice and cassis, a hint of orange zest. Juicy, fine red berry nuances, mineral and fresh, fine tannins, salty touch on the finish, lemony, delicate leafy nuances in the aftertaste, animating food companion."*

- Falstaff Magazine

*"Deep ruby colour with a highly floral, fresh, and fragrant nose. The palate is lithe and pure, with red and black fruits complemented by chalky tannins. The fruit is fresh and slightly herbal, but there is no sense of under ripeness. Cool, compact, and harmonious, this should drink well from a fairly young age."*

- Tom Parker MW

*"The nose is elegant, powerful, racy and offers a finesse of the grain, harmony, a fine complexity as well as sense of the place/terroir. It reveals notes of wild blackberry, wild strawberry, small notes of small ripe black wild fruits associated with small touches of violet, lily/tulip, crushed small cherries as well as fine hints of muscade, sweet spices and very discreet hints of vanilla/caramel (in the background). The palate is fruity, well-balanced and offers a good definition, juiciness, a fine acidulous frame, a good definition as well as gourmandize, a small tension, a fine freshness, and a small fat. On the palate this wine expresses notes of juicy wild blackberry, crushed small cherry, small notes of wild raspberry associated with small touches of pulpy cassis, small black fruits, violet, lily as well as fine hints of sweet almond/sweet spices. Tannins are elegant and well-built."*

- Vert de Vin

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