

## La Croix de Beaucaillou 2020

CSPC# 866068

750mlx12

13.7% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety**  
**Appellation**  
**Classification**  
**Website**  
**General Info**

53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot, and 3% Petit Verdot  
St. Julien

'Appellation d'origine contrôlée' of Saint-Julien  
<http://www.chateau-ducru-beaucaillou.com>

'Appellation d'origine contrôlée' of Saint-Julien. This is the second wine of Château Ducru-Beaucaillou, a 'grand cru' classified in 1855. The La Croix de Beaucaillou wines come from the Château Ducru Beaucaillou vineyard. Château Ducru-Beaucaillou is named after the beautiful stones found in its unique wine-growing terroir. This exceptional ecosystem produces fine, elegant, tasty wines, with a long finish – in short, archetypal Saint-Julien wines.

The origins of Château Ducru-Beaucaillou date back to the beginning of the XVIII century, 1720 to be precise. Perched on an exceptional site with incomparable views over the Gironde estuary, in the centre of a hundred-year-old park, Ducru-Beaucaillou is a majestic, Victorian-style castle, which has, over time, become one of the great symbols of the Médoc.

Unusually for Bordeaux, it is built directly above the barrel cellars, enveloping its owners, who have lived here for over sixty years, in the sumptuous aromas of their wine. Today, the estate is managed by the company Jean Eugène Borie SA, which is owned by Mrs. Borie, her daughter Sabine Coiffe, and her son Bruno-Eugène, CEO since 2003, the third generation of the Borie family to head the estate.

The notion of Second growth is difficult to figure out. Most of the vineyards, from the greatest to the more modest ones, now produce a second growth. It is therefore essential to consider the soil's possibilities as well as the quality requirements of the wine owner. Indeed, the quality level of the second wine is directly derived from the first of these elements.

Croix Beaucaillou, like a first growth, is therefore submitted to careful selection. Most of the wines coming from the plots of young vineyards as well as the lesser batches will incorporate the third growth which will be sold or... drunk at the chateau. Croix de Beaucaillou is thus subjected to a reasoned blending aimed at producing a wine which will of course reveal its assets earlier than Ducru B but also the characteristics of a great Saint Julien: elegance, finesse and of course its ability to age. It is worth noting that this wine is far superior to the connotation of 'second wine'. It is a great, noble wine, which we are sure will play a prominent role in the Saint-Julien appellation. La Croix de Beaucaillou has been bottled on the property since 1995. Until then, it was sold in bulk to Bordeaux wine merchants.

**Winemaker**  
**Vintage**

Cellar Master: René Lusseau, Oenologists Consultant: Eric Boissenot

The 2020 season was not without its climatic challenges. Fortunately, due to our well-aerated slopes that rise from the Gironde, we averted the spring frosts of March 30. Our slopes of Günz gravel soils permitted adequate drainage during the heavy rains in late April, and the subsoil reserves provided needed water during the period of drought in July and August. Finally, proximity to the Atlantic Ocean and to the Gironde estuary moderated the temperatures with cool nights during the heat of summer.

After a rather difficult spring, the volume potential of 2020 was small. Then the hot, dry growing season yielded small berries with great concentration, further reducing production volumes. However, the resulting wines have great depth of flavours with a core structure of vibrant acidity and perfectly ripe, finely polished tannins, all of the elements required for an exceptional Grand Vin. In short, 2020 gave us wines that are distinguished, elegant, aristocratic, and indeed rare!

Favourable summer weather that was hot and dry with just the right amount of rain, falling mostly at night, guaranteeing freshness. Ideal conditions in September with clear days and cool nights and a heatwave in mid-September that concentrated the fruit and enabled full phenolic ripeness, giving very fine tannins. Motivated, skilled, and united technical teams who were relentless in their efforts to combat the challenges of the spring,



<b>Vintage</b>	and with the addition of the Quality/R&D department at the end of 2019, brought a new level of competency and excellence to the vineyards and the cellars.
<b>Vineyards</b>	<p>The wines of La Croix Ducru-Beaucaillou come from the vineyard of Château Ducru-Beaucaillou. This exceptional Médoc terroir is situated between the Gironde River to the east, the centre and the west of the Saint-Julien appellation. The estate owes its name to its “beautiful pebbles” ("beaux cailloux", in French) which, because of their high quartz content, make for soils that are poor in plant nutrients.</p> <p>It is precisely this “agrological paucity”, as the late Bordeaux professor and geographer, René Pijassou, described it, that makes them so well-suited to the production of fine wine. In the east, the plots are planted along the rolling Médoc ridges, just above the estuary, while those at the epicenter benefit from a microclimate nurtured by the little La Mouline stream that meanders through the middle of the appellation from west to east before disappearing into the Gironde.</p>
<b>Harvest</b>	The harvest was ideally warm, dry, and early. In fact, it was one of the only vintages in the history of the property where the harvest did not extend into October. No fewer than 150 harvesters worked over 3 weeks to collect the fruit for all four wines. Harvest started with the Merlots on September 11 and finished with the Cabernet Sauvignons on September 30th; the Cabernet Sauvignon grapes were picked average of 125 days after flowering to ensure perfect phenolic maturity, Merlots at an average of 113 to keep freshness. Yields were small with 25-30hl/ha in Saint Julien and 20-25hl/ha in Haut Medoc.
<b>Vinification/ Maturation</b>	La Croix Ducru-Beaucaillou 2019 was aged for twelve months in Bordeaux barrels, 60% in new oak and the balance in one-year barrels (twelve months). Oak of certified French origin, naturally dried outdoors for a guaranteed minimum of three years. Regular topping-up during the first six months, racking from the lower bung hole every two or three months with a total of four rackings. Sterile bottling under inert gas. First category 49 mm natural cork.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	Dense violet colour with pronounced aromas of cassis and cherry with nuances of graphite, cocoa and spice. The palate is full-bodied with a firm core of fine-grained, polished tannins, enveloped with densely concentrated, and defined fruits giving a voluptuous, supple texture. Finely balanced, very persistent finish. Striking presence.
<b>Cellaring Scores/Awards</b>	<p>Drink 2023-2043</p> <p><b>91 points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023</p> <p><b>89-91 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021</p> <p><b>92 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent (score only) - March 2023</p> <p><b>94-95 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p><b>92-94 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021</p> <p><b>90 points</b> - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021</p> <p><b>91-93 points</b> - Farr Vintners - May 2021</p> <p><b>92-94 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021</p> <p><b>92-95 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021</p> <p><b>92-94 points</b> - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Vert de Vin - May 2021</p> <p><b>90-92 points</b> - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021</p> <p><b>95-96 points</b> - Bettane &amp; Desseauve (score only) - July 2021</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>“Unwinding in the glass with aromas of dark berries, plums, violets, and licorice, the 2020 La Croix de Beaucaillou is medium to full-bodied, supple, and fleshy, with a pure core of perfumed fruit and a charming, precise profile.</i></p> <p><i>With its optimally situated gravel soils on the bank of the Gironde around its grand 19th-century château, Ducru-Beaucaillou can boast one of the finest terroirs of the entire Médoc. Planted at a density of 10,000 vines per hectare and farmed organically since 2018, with high canopies and seasonal cover crops, the percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon is increasing at the expense of Merlot. Macerations are classical, followed by élevage in long-seasoned new oak barrels, and only around one-third of the estate's Saint-Julien production makes it into the grand vin. Proprietor Bruno Borie envisages Ducru as something of a Renaissance villa, with its vegetable garden and livestock raised on site as well as viticulture, and he lives on the property. But Borie's vision is also modern, with an in-house research-and-development department.”</i></p> <p>- WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“The 2020 La Croix de Beaucaillou is composed of 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot and 3% Petit Verdot. It has 13.75% alcohol and a pH of 3.78 with an IPT of 91. It is set to age for 12 months in French oak barrels, 60% new. Deep garnet-purple in color, it leaps from the glass with vibrant scents of crushed redcurrants, black raspberries, and fresh black berries, plus hints of bay leaves, lavender, and damp soil. The medium-bodied palate</i></p>

**Reviews** *is full of energetic red and black berry layers with a grainy texture and just enough freshness, finishing with an herbal lift."*

- LPB, Wine Advocate

*"This is really serious. It's full-bodied, tight, and linear with fantastic length. Racy, so fine and intense. Very fine tannins. One of the best Croix Ducru. 53% cabernet sauvignon, 44% merlot, and 3% petit verdot."*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"So much purity and definition, this is a beautiful wine with clarity of flavour. Touches of grilled almond and rosemary, mocha, smoke and coffee bean, there is so much freshness, with juice rushing in between the muscles and a mint leaf finish. 3.78pH, 60% new oak. Yields were 25-30hl/ha. In a year where second wines in the Médoc have sometimes suffered from over-concentration, La Croix de Beaucaillou is a standout success. Drinking Window 2026 – 2042."*

- JA, Decanter.com

*"Tobacco, cedar, mint leaf, cigar box and black currants come together on the nose. The wine is refined, soft and supple with silky tannins, ripe, sweet, fruits, lift and freshness. The elegant finish with its black cherry, mocha and spice nuances tastes as good as it feels. Hold this for 3-5 years before opening a bottle and it will really start showing its essence. The wine is a blend of 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot and 3% Petit Verdot."*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"The 2020 is a blend of 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot and 3% Petit Verdot. The abv is 13.75%. It will be aged for 12 months in 60% new French oak. Deep ruby colour in the glass. Rich cassis fruit but also strong graphite notes on the nose here, layered with just a hint of incense. The palate is rich and chalky in tannin, showing real ambition to be a serious, age worthy wine. The graphite note lingers, adding to the structured and savoury mouthfeel. The brooding fruit is a mix of darker brambly notes and more lifted red cherry. The spicy notes from oak are ever-present without being overpowering. A long, fine finish rounds out this impressive Croix Ducru Beaucaillou."*

- Farr Vintners

*"The 2020 La Croix Ducru-Beaucaillou, matured in 60% new oak for an expected 12 months, is pleasantly reduced on the nose, opening up in the glass with intense black fruit laced with black olive and subtle estuarine scents. The palate is medium-bodied with an appealing powdery texture. A structured Saint-Julien with tangible backbone and grip on the finish. Yet, there is exquisite balance and impressive salinity on the aftertaste. Excellent. 2025 – 2045."*

- NM, Vinous

*"The second wine of the estate is the 2020 La Croix Ducru-Beaucaillou, composed of 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot brought up in 60% new French oak. It's a much more concentrated, structured wine offering classic cassis and blackberry fruits intermixed with notes of scorched earth, tobacco, graphite, and chocolate. Playing in the medium to full-bodied end of the spectrum, it has a great mid-palate as well as the vintage's rich, deep, powerful style. It's going to have some up-front appeal given its balance as well as the quality of the tannins, but this is a serious wine for reserving 2-4 years in the cellar, and it should easily have 15-20 years of prime drinking.*

*Barrel Sample: 92-95*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*"Deep ruby, opaque core, purple reflections, faint brightening on rim. Delicate noble wood nuances, black wild berries, cassis, ripe plum, candied orange zest. Juicy, elegant, fresh red cherry, lively acidity, fine nougat, silky tannins, shows good length, pleasant minerality, good ageing potential."*

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

**Reviews** *“On the nose, fruity, elegant, distinguished, with a fine texture, subtle potency, and a fine airy character. It reveals notes of bright black currant, morello cherry and touches of dense wild blackberry combined with hints of dark berries, violet, plum blossom, graphite as well as hints of vanilla, mocha, subtle hints of toasted hazelnut and discreet touch of bourbon vanilla. On the palate, fruity with juiciness, gourmandize, good definition, minerality, a certain freshness with a little tension, and an airy character. The wine expresses notes of pulpy/juicy blackcurrant, juicy/fresh wild blackberry and touches of morello cherry combined with bits of bright black berries as well as hints of graphite/wet stone, camphor, star anise and fine mocha, a subtle hint of green cardamom and a very discreet hint of roasted coffee. The tannins are fine, elegant, and slightly creamy. A nice work of bitters on the finish that brings an imperceptible touch of eucalyptus. A subtle hint of toasted hazelnut on the persistence.”*  
- Vert de Vin

*“(53% CS, 44% M, 3% PV; 33% harvest; 13.7% ABV; 60% new). The second wine of Ducru-Beaucaillou. Lightly blackcurrant Cabernet, plus a Merlot-herbal, wild-rose aroma, very gently gravelly; medium-full, fresh, finely tannic, long, and elegant and even, its rich, ripe red fruit enveloped in a close-grained tannin, sweet-cored, lightly mineral in aromas, a marked “fresh” impression giving it just a hint of austerity, and with a fine fruit persistence. Very Ducru, very St-Julien in its overall elegance and poise. 2027–40+.”*  
- MS, The World of Fine Wine

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