

# Château Brane Cantenac 2011

CSPC# 749539

750mlx12

13.0% alc./vol.

<b>Grape Variety</b>	56.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 37% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc, 0.5% Carménère
<b>Appellation</b>	Margaux
<b>Website</b>	www.brane-cantenac.com
<b>General Info</b>	Château Brane-Cantenac was for many years the home of Lucien Lurton - it is now owned and run by his son Henri. Its vineyards are located west of the village of Cantenac in the Margaux appellation. Brane Cantenac was perceived throughout much of the 70s and 80s as an underperforming property. Since Henri took over, there has been extensive investment in the cuverie and chai, as well as vastly improved vineyard management techniques. Consequently, the wines at Brane Cantenac now show more weight and concentration, although they still possess that haunting bouquet and quintessential elegance that characterise the wines of Margaux. It is classified as a 2ème Cru Classé.
<b>Vintage</b>	<p>-The warmest year since 1900, on par with 2003. The average annual temperature was +1.6°C higher than usual.</p> <p>-An exceptionally warm and dry spring (4 to 5°C warmer than usual in April).</p> <p>-A local violent storm accompanied by hail on June 4th.</p> <p>-The coldest month of July since 1993 (1.6°C colder than usual).</p> <p>-A warm month of September (2°C warmer than usual) with high sunshine and a 50% water deficit.</p> <p>"The 2011 vintage was complicated throughout the growing cycle. In addition to all our efforts, there were two key factors in obtaining high-quality wines. The first was the plateau of Brane's soil water reserves, thanks to which the vines did not suffer from the spring drought. The second was the use of optical sorting. It is clear that without this tool, the wines produced at Brane-Cantenac would not have achieved the same quality level."</p>
<b>Vineyards</b>	Brane-Cantenac's 75 hectares of vineyards are planted with Cabernet Sauvignon (55%), Merlot (40%), Cabernet Franc (4.5%) and Carmenère 0.5%, and lie on fine, gravelly soils.
<b>Harvest</b>	<p>-Harvesting occurred early, comparable to 2003.</p> <p>- The Merlots were harvested from September 9th to 19th. The grapes, although they had ripened unevenly, produced round, full-bodied wines thanks to sorting.</p> <p>- Harvesting of Cabernet Sauvignons ran from September 19th to 27th. Once again, this year, Cabernet Sauvignon was the vintage's prized grape on account of the strength and length of the wines it produced.</p> <p>- The Cabernet Francs were picked from September 21st to 23rd. Their quality was second to none.</p> <p>-The Carmenère was harvested on October 10th. It was used in the blend of Brane-Cantenac's first wine for the first time. The tannins in this grape leave an utterly singular impression in the mouth.</p> <p>-The health status was more delicate this year. Here again, sorting was performed to remove damaged berries.</p>
<b>Maturation</b>	Vinification includes up to 18 months' wood ageing, using 60-70% new oak.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	Closed, spicy nose, very Cabernet in effect; elegant, nicely concentrated, fine textured, middleweight; juicy, fleshy, vital, appetizing, and refined. Here's a delicious sweetness of flavor without being particularly dense; long across the palate and long to finish. As always, with this cru, there is a faint suggestion of fluidity, but that's part of its easy, gracious style. Not a grand wine, but this is a lovely middleweight of great charm and class too.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2010-2040



**Scores/Awards** **90 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2014  
**88-91 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2012  
**90 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #212 - April 2014  
**90-93 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #200 - April 2012  
**88-90 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2012  
**88-89 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2012  
**93 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 1, 2014  
**92-94 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 11, 2012  
**91 (+)? points** - Stephen Tanzer, ST's International Wine Cellar - July/Aug 2013  
**92 points** - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)  
**16.5 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2012  
**17.5 points** - Decanter.com - April 18, 2012  
**92 points** - Jane Anson, The New Bordeaux - April 2012  
**93 points** - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2011 (No review)  
**90-91 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 19, 2012  
**89-91 points** - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - April 2011  
**94 points** - Gilbert & Gaillard - May 10, 2012  
**18 points** - Vinum Wine Magazine - April 2012 (score only)

**Reviews** *"Offers a pretty, dusty edge, with lightly mulled cherry and plum notes, stitched with floral hints and a touch of singed sandalwood. Shows good flesh through the finish, with a pebbly backdrop. Best from 2016 through 2026. 8,330 cases made."*  
 - JM, Wine Spectator

*"Nice sappy feel, with juicy kirsch and plum flesh notes and lots of well-integrated spice on the finish. Lightens up a touch in the end but stays focused. Score range: 88-91"*  
 - JM, Wine Spectator

*"Henri Lurton has turned out a juicy, elegant, stylish 2011 Brane Cantenac displaying a dense ruby/plum color as well as a perfumed bouquet of red and black fruits, earth and spring flowers, attractive length, a texture that builds incrementally, beautiful purity and overall harmony. This outstanding, medium-bodied effort should age nicely for 15+ years."*  
 - RP, Wine Advocate

*"Made in a sexy, perfumed style, this 2011 seduces the taster with its wonderful aromatics of blue, red and black fruits, flowers, damp earth and forest floor. With excellent to outstanding concentration, fresh acidity and velvety tannins, this plush Margaux is atypically opulent/flamboyant for the vintage. Drink it over the next 12-15 years."*  
 - RP, Wine Advocate

*"The Brane Cantenac is a blend of 37% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc, 0.5% Carménère and 56.5% Cabernet Sauvignon cropped from 9th to 19th September for the Merlot and 19th to 27th Cabernet Sauvignon, the Carménère on the 10th October (the first time it has been promoted to the Grand Vin, so well done vines.) As usual, the sample needs several minutes to find its composure in the glass. Eventually, it finds its even keel with attractive wild berries, graphite and crushed stone, very crisp and well defined as if there are spaces to be filled between the aromas (this will be done during the élevage.) The palate is medium bodied with tensile tannins. There is a touch of unresolved oak whilst the finish is a little pinched at the moment with a slightly attenuated finish. As usual, I bet this will taste far superior after five years, but I wonder whether there is just enough substance here? Wait and see, but I appreciate the style. Tasted April 2012."*  
 - NM, Wine Journal

*"Sweet tobacco with blueberries and spices. Full body, with round tannins and a straightforward finish. Nicely done."*  
 - JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"This serious estate has made a fine 2011 wine. While deep and ripe with blackberry flavor and acidity, it also has dense structure. It shows both power and style, with notes of wood aging likely to fade. Drink this fine wine from 2017."*  
 - RV, Wine Enthusiast

- Reviews** *"91-93. Barrel sample. Solid and dominated by dry tannins from both wood and fruit, this wine has intense, juicy black-fruit flavors. It's open and lively but shows a core of dense dryness."*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast
- "Fine fragrance of Cabernet cassis fruit, fine middle sweetness, fine natural concentration behind the lifted, elegant facade, great potential complexity. Drink 2015-2030."*  
- SS, Decanter.com
- "Bright ruby-red. Currant, bitter chocolate and a complex leafy quality on the nose. Then juicy, spicy and perfumed on the palate, with good peppery lift to the bright, concentrated flavors of cherry, spices, smoke and graphite complicated by cedar and tobacco nuances. Really textbook claret here, with the length and tannic spine for at least two decades of positive development in bottle."*  
- ST, International Wine Cellar
- "Deep cherry red. Leafily aromatic. Lifted red-cherry fruit, almost minty/herbal. Lots of oak sweetness on the palate, dampening down that brightness of fruit. Though the brightness re-emerges on the sweet-fruited finish. Fresh and lithe and although the tannins are dry and powdery, the whole thing is refreshing on the finish."*  
- JR, JancisRobinson.com
- "Fairly classic Margaux, good definition and getting some chocolate and caramel wafer flavour from a gentle toast. They eliminated up to 10% of some plots with the optical laser sorter. a touch (0.5% of Carménère in this wine). I tasted it as a single lot Carménère before the primeurs, and loved its spiciness, but at this stage the impact is minimal. Lost some vines to hail, plus the heat in June, plus the tri, but proportionally not bad, 42% first wine this year, just a lot less second and third wine. 92."*  
- JA, The New Bordeaux
- "From a blend of 56.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 37% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc, and for the first time, a small percentage of .5% Carménère has been added as well. Forest aromas with leaves, kirsch, flowers and spice, this medium-bodied, soft and round wine ends with a fresh and bright black raspberry and cassis finish."*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- "This is a medium bodied Brane Cantenac with fresh lively fruits and delicate floral flavours. There are many subtle layers of fruit, but right now the flavours are understated and the wine is fairly quiet. This is an elegant Margaux with supple texture, refined tannins and a fairly long finish. Gentle extraction with lightness and finesse."*  
- JCL, asianpalate.com
- "EN PRIMEUR - Deep garnet-red. Nose of ripe red fruits (plum) with subtle oak and graphite. Fleshy, fruit-driven entry that is well-balanced and shows good acidity. Firmer middle palate with a subtle bitterness that will melt. Real allure here."*  
- en.gilbertgaillard.com
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