

Château Brane Cantenac 2015

CSPC# 749539

750mlx12

13.6% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 1% Carmenère
Appellation	Margaux
Classification	Second Growth. Deuxieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.
Website	www.brane-cantenac.com
General Info	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.
Vintage	05 + 10 = 15. In 2015, nature treated us with a cross between 2 other exceptional vintages. Climatic conditions were ideal throughout the entire cycle in the vineyard, but particularly favourable in the Margaux appellation during the ripening period. Picking conditions were thus excellent, allowing us to harvest each of the varieties in every plot at their optimal ripeness. The wines have great aromatic richness and splendid tannic structure. They have everything necessary to allow them to age well for many years to come.
Vineyards	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.
Harvest	17th September - 19th October
Maturation	18 months in 70% new French oak
Tasting Notes	A splendid nose with subtle complexity. Very refined fruit with mineral and floral touches and perfectly integrated oak. Above all, aromatic complexity and rare elegance with a deep, richness in the mouth and beautiful ripe, delicate tannins. Tight but gentle with a very fine acidity and immensely long finish.
Production	12,500 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2020-2035
Scores/Awards	93 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2018 90-93 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2016 92 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate Interim Issue - February 2018 93-95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #224 - April 2016 94 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - March 2018 94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2018 93-94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2016 96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 2018 17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - October 2017 17 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2016 93 points - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2016 95 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2017 97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2018 95-97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2016 93-95 points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - March 2016 93 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2016 16+ points - Farr Vintner - March 2016 90-93 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2016



Scores/Awards **96 points** - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - May 2016

96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2018

92-95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2016

94 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2018

16.5+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2016

92-94 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - May 2016

17.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - June 2016

18 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - April 2016

17.5 points - Gault & Millau (score only) - June 2016

Reviews *"Silky and refined, with seductive crushed plum and raspberry fruit that glides along, perfectly melded with singed alder and mesquite notes along with black tea and warm licorice details. A violet element hangs in the background, adding to the elegance. Best from 2020 through 2035. 12,500 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"This has a mix of enticing dark plum and blueberry fruit woven with a solid graphite note and carrying through an alder-edged finish. Has the vintage's velvety feel, but a little extra cut. Score range: 90-93"
- JM, Wine Spectator

The 2015 Brane-Cantenac is medium to deep garnet-purple in color with a nose of crushed black berries and chocolate-covered cherries with touches of fried herbs and tilled soil. Medium-bodied, refreshing and elegant in the mouth, with chewy tannins, it has an herbal lift on the finish."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The 2015 Brane-Cantenac is a blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 1% Carmenère that was picked from 17 September until 7 October (that Carmenère was actually picked on 19 October). It was cropped at 51 hl/ha. This is classic Brane-Cantenac down the line: austere at first, almost aloof, but very well defined and over time it starts revealing lovely tobacco-stained black fruit. The palate is very well balanced with raspberry and wild strawberry on the entry, perhaps more red fruit than I was anticipating. Veins of undergrowth and cedar are in situ on this very well-balanced, reserved and classic Margaux boasting a long and persistent finish that feels satisfying, reassuring even. Not a Margaux for those that seek tons of fruit, it is nonetheless a very terroir-expressive wine that will repay those who know that this cru demands preferably 12-15 years in the cellar. Henri Lurton never wavers from his style of Margaux and it pays dividends here on this great wine for those with patience.
- NM, Wine Advocate

"The 2015 Brane-Cantenac is a blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 1% Carmenère. As usual, this Margaux takes a little time to open up in the glass, eventually revealing scents of blackberry, cedar, mint and a light sprinkling of pencil shavings. That minty element becomes more prominent with aeration. The palate is medium bodied with supple tannin and a fine line of acidity. I adore the harmony and texture of this Brane-Cantenac: very svelte and silky on the surface but underneath there is backbone and very fine focus. The finish has a touch of chalkiness, quite saline in the mouth with a long, persistent finish. What an outstanding Margaux this is going to be although like many great vintages it will require several years in bottle."
- NM, Wine Journal

"Quite impressive ripe dark plums and blackberries with sweet, earthy depth and cedary background oak on the nose. The palate has smooth, slick tannins that carry rich dark fruit long and fresh. This has terrific energy and depth. Really vibrant. Incredible length. Drink from 2022"
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This is very big and rich wine with dense and rich tannins, lots of ripe fruit. Blackberry, blueberry flavors. Muscular yet polished."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Rich, fruity and with great potential, this ripe wine is also dense with firm tannins. Its juicy fruits are a part of a package with the concentrated tannins and smoky wood flavors that allow for long aging. This is an impressive wine from one of the Margaux properties owned by the Lurton family. Drink from 2025."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

Reviews *“Exceptionally deep crimson. Meat and wildflowers on the nose - very interesting. Definitely out of the ordinary. Left-field wine that should not disappoint. Racy and lifted. Really very elegant. Chapeau! “*
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“Purplish mid crimson. Fresh nose with medium intensity. Well sculpted but far from intense or luscious. Something lifted and rather unusual, savoury and transparent about this. Builds towards the very long finish. Definitely outside the norm. 21st-century wine? “
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“Beautifully concentrated floral, fragrant fruit plus minerally depth with smoothness to come. A very fine wine from this on-form second growth.”
- SS, Decanter.com

“Lots to enjoy here - there is an immediate impact where the weight of the fruit drags you down before building you up slowly, giving layer upon layer of fresh, brambly fruits, mouthwatering minerality and charcoal smoke, with an interesting cinnamon spice from the touch of Carmenère in the blend. This is very high quality, showing great complexity and length. Further cellar precision at Brane Cantenac this vintage, with new small wooden vats worked by gravity. (JA)”
- JA, Decanter.com

*“One of a line-up of impressive Margaux in 2015, Brane-Cantenac is at its most textured and well balanced here. The bramble, cedar wood and blackcurrant flavours are complemented by attractive oak, medium weight tannins and vibrant, palate-cleansing acidity.
Drink: 2022-32”*
- TA, timatkin.com

“This wine deserves accolades for its balanced mix of purity of fruit, elegance, grace, refinement and frankly, sexy character. Without reservation, this is the best wine ever produced here. There is a serious depth of flavor, complexity and excitement that makes you want to take another sniff, sip and swallow. The sweet, perfectly ripe fruits, intense florality, silky tannins and length are found in abundance here. And at least for the time being, the wine still sells for a song.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Truffle, forest floor, cocoa and ripe, dark, red fruits enliven the perfume. On the palate, this wine is silky, subtle and focused on freshness and purity of ready fruit. Elegance and weight enhance a long, crisp finish that feels wonderful on your palate. Blending 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 1% Carmenère, the wine reached 13.6% with a pH of 3.78. The Grand Vin represents 42% of the harvest. This is my favorite vintage of Brane Cantenac, although Henri Lurton prefers the 2010. Either way, they are both superior vintages.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Deep and saturated looking; healthy; lovely purity to the nose; layers; Cabernet dominates; cassis; blackcurrants; black cherry; fresh and ripe; lovely palate; some tension; pure and cool overall; pretty seductive wine; some floral notes; cool and sleek with nice extract, depth and length. Lovely Brane-Cantenac. [70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 1% Carmenère, 13.6%alc]. Drink 2022-2035. 93-95+”
- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

“Under the ownership of the Lurton family, Brane Cantenac remains classically Margaux in style but with a touch more polish than in days gone by. Always smooth and supple wine with no hard edges. The 75-hectare vineyard is planted with 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot with the rest Cabernet Franc and a touch of Carmenère. Deep colour with juicy black cherry and cassis aromas on the nose. The black fruit core on the palate is layered with vanilla and coconut, the new wood sitting alongside the primary fruit flavours. This has a polished, plush texture and very good intensity of fruit that lingers on the spicy finish. “
- Farr Vintners

Reviews

"The nose is rich and ripe with a mix of black fruits the palate has depth richness with cassis and dark chocolate supple and fleshy. A hint of vanilla at the back adds to the complexity the finish lifted has length style polished."
- Derek Smedley MW

"Subtle, elegant, quietly powerful, this is one of the best Brane-Cantenacs I have tasted over the past decade. The wine is seamless, with lovely violet, cedar and cassis flavors and silky, dense tannins. A beautiful wine that has both restraint and power."
- JCL, asianpalate.com

"The 2015 Brane-Cantenac is powerful, structured and explosive in feel. A deep, resonant wine, the 2015 boasts off the chart's ripeness allied to formidable structure and tannic heft. I imagine the 2015 is going to need a number of years to become approachable and more than that to be at its best. The dark stone fruit, smoke, tobacco, spice and leather flavors pack a huge punch, but it is the wine's balance that places it among the elite on the Left Bank in 2015. Brane-Cantenac is a total pleasure bomb. I can't wait to taste it with a little bottle age. (AG)"

- AG, Vinous

"A super-expressive, deep wine, the 2015 Brane-Cantenac possesses magnificent intensity and pure power from start to finish. Dark red cherry, wildflowers, smoke, plum, tobacco, spice and game are some of the notes that build as the wine gains richness and volume with time in the glass. There is plenty of tannin lurking beneath, but it is nearly buried by the sheer opulence of the fruit, while the creamy finish alone is striking. This a deeply satisfying wine from Henri Lurton. Brane-Cantenac is another wine that is a pure pleasure bomb in 2015. Don't miss it. Tasted three times."

- AG, Vinous

"The 2015 Château Brane-Cantenac checks in as a mix of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot and the balance Cabernet Franc and Carmenère brought up in roughly 75% new French oak. This medium to full-bodied beauty excels on all accounts and gives up gorgeous notes of blackcurrants, lead pencil, spice and hints of toasted bread. Polished, impeccably balanced, concentrated, and with ripe tannin, it's a rock star in 2015 that can be drunk young or cellared for 20-25 years. Bravo!"

- Jeb Dunnuck

"A neat and tidy Brane, with a firm red fruit theme but the volume is turned down a notch lower throughout the experience than I would have hoped for. A little too hard and coarse on the finish, this wine needs to turn the corner before it ends up being a little too mean and lean. I have a feeling it will not make it."

- MJ, matthewjukes.com
