

Château Brane-Cantenac 2021

CSPC# 888284

750mlx6

12.7% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot, 1% Carmenère
Appellation	Margaux
Classification	Second Growth. Deuxieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.
Website	www.brane-cantenac.com
Analysis	pH: 3.66
Sustainability	20% of the vineyard area is grown in organic agriculture and all the techniques used in the vineyard (Air Tec Wine device) as in the winery are environmentally friendly. A replanting program aims at renewing this vineyard in the years to come. Overall, every decision to conduct the vineyard complies with the guidelines for environmentally-friendly viticulture.
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.
Winemaker	Henri Lurton
Vintage	The winter of 2021 was relatively mild, although quite wet, with more than 230 mm of rain falling in the first two months of the year. With the month of March being drier and warmer, our vines flowered between the 23rd and the 30th of the month. Spring was marked by frequent and severe episodes of frost, testing the frost protection sprinkling systems on our white grape vineyards like never before. Temperatures fell so drastically that we lost close to a hectare's worth of our white harvest. On the other hand, our red grape vineyards were less affected by the cold, with only a few vines hit by some morning frost.
Vineyards	Henri Lurton, the proprietor here, has been working to improve quality in the vineyard by regrafting Merlot to high quality Cabernet Sauvignon as they look to keep freshness and structure in the wines. 72 hectares in AOC Margaux with 30 hectares planted on the "Terrasse" n°4, on the quaternary era-deep gravel. 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40 % Merlot, 4% CabernetFranc, 0,5 % Petit Verdot, 0,5% Carmenère. Average vine age is 35 years old.
Harvest	The harvest took place September 23-October 7
Winemaking	The vinification of all the batches was carried out using a R'Pulse system, allowing in particular for the elimination of pumping, a better immersion of the marc and an optimization of the concentration and roundness of the wine. Use of 13% high quality press juice. Aging in barrels is complemented by aging in amphorae. 18 months in French oak barrels, with 100% new.
Tasting Notes	The toasty aromas of Brane-Cantenac are more pronounced this year. But on the palate, it still delivers a matured and sophisticated expression as usual, without any trace of the 2021's character. I really like the texture of the tannins, possessive yet ingenious, combined with a mellow density on the taste buds. This is not only a credit to R'pulse maceration, but also to the winery's near-frenzied selection of the press wine. Christophe, the technical director, told me that they have blended the best 12.7% from more than 100 samples into the Grand Vin, and eventually resulted in this surprising Brane-Cantenac 2021.
Serve with	Chateau Brane Cantenac is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Brane Cantenac is a perfect match with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, salmon, mushrooms, and pasta as well as cheese
Production	unknown
Cellaring	Drink 2025-2041



Scores/Awards **93 points** - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - February 2024
93-95 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022
86-88 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - May 2022
95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2024
94-95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022
95 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022
94 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - May 2022
95 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2024
94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022
92 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2022
92-94 points - Thomas Parker, Farr Vintners - April 2022
93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2024
92-94 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022
95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2024
93-96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022
92-94 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022
96 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022
94 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022
95 points - Vert de Vin - July 2022
93-94 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - May 2022

Reviews *"The 2021 Brane-Cantenac offers up aromas of sweet dark berries mingled with mint, vanilla pod, and spices. It shows its élevage and malolactic fermentation in new oak more prominently than it did en primeur. Medium to full-bodied, with good depth and concentration, it's bright and velvety, with plenty of structuring barrel tannin and a vanillin-inflected finish. The quality of Brane's terroirs and a strict selection shows through, so if it can digest its oak more completely, this will prove exceptional. The 2021 vintage is another success for Henri Lurton and his team at Brane-Cantenac. Harvest finished up here on October 7, and the grand vin emphasizes Cabernet Sauvignon from the quaternary gravel terrace of the plateau of Brane, an early-ripening, optimally situated site that has delivered a wine of impressive amplitude and texture for the vintage. Once again, Brane-Cantenac is one of the highlights of the commune—and the Médoc—this year."*
 - WK, Wine Advocate

"The 2021 Brane-Cantenac shows considerable promise, exhibiting a deep bouquet of wild berries, cassis, spices, and violets, followed by a medium to full-bodied, layered and impressively concentrated palate that's framed by powdery tannins, concluding with a long, mouthwatering finish. This seamless and enveloping wine is a blend of 74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and the balance Carmenère and Petit Verdot. Once again, it's derived from the château's best holdings on the plateau of Brane and is maturing in entirely new barrels."
 - WK, Wine Advocate

"Beautiful finesse here that shows currants, roasted red chili pepper and a hint of charcoal, mineral and pencil shavings. Very refined and layered with a juicy, medium body and a long, composed finish. Classy and very layered. Drink or hold."
 - JS, JamesSuckling.com

"A medium-bodied, very polished Brane-Cantenac with firm yet fine and textured tannins. Deep and compact core of black fruit, herbs, and spices. Pretty licorice and clove notes. Structured and long."
 - JS, JamesSuckling.com

"A dark seductive nose, liquorice, sweet and sticky with a real depth to the aromatics, black chocolate, and perfumed blackcurrants - that glamour that Margaux does so well. High acid here, crunchy fruit with bite and ample appeal. This is a little high-toned still, with the focus on the mineral, slightly austere sides to the bright and youthful strawberry fruit with toasted wood edges. Tannins are so supple and integrated however, they give a plumpness, but this is still quite a linear wine, with such tension and drive - it's tightly-knitted no doubt but has the most gorgeous herbal Cabernet elements on the fresh finish which I totally love. You get understated power, this feels well controlled, sophisticated, and totally delectable. What a lovely 2021. Eric Boissenot consultant. 1% Petit Verdot and 1% Carmenère complete the blend. 3.66."
 - GH, Decanter.com

Reviews *“Dark plum colour, attractive rich texture, with high aromatics and clear power on the nose. Not exuberant, more red and blue, cool fruits, with purity and power, this has concentration and is one of the best in Margaux in this vintage. Has personality and balance, with curls of black chocolate and liquorice, balancing out the ever-present fresh acidities of the vintage. 100% new oak, 3.63ph. 12.7ph. Harvest September 23 to October 7. 41.2hl/h yield, high for the year, but without dilution which was a potential pitfall of high yields. A potential up score in bottle.”*
- JA, janeanson.com

“With a bit of oak that still needs integration in the nose, the perfume quickly moves to roses, tobacco leaf, cherries, black currants, incense, and a background note of orange rind. On the palate, soft, fresh, elegant, and refined, with layers of sweet, ripe, red fruits that taste as good as they feel. This is an incredible success for the vintage. Drink from 2026-2050.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Tobacco, roses, currants, and bouquet garni kick off the perfume. The wine is soft, fresh, medium-bodied, and quite charming, as well as vibrant, finishing with a touch of spice on top of all the sweet red fruits you find on the backend. You will be able to enjoy this on release. 12.7% ABV. The harvest took place September 23-October 7. Drink from 2023-2050.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Fortunately, a near-normal yield here of 41 hl/ha (slightly higher than the 2019 and 2020). Since 2019 only fruit from the plateau makes it into the grand vin at this great estate and the blend this year is 74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot with a touch of Petit Verdot and Carmenère. Maturation in 100% new oak barrels. Mid ruby-purple in colour. Ripe red fruit is layered with a hint of blackcurrant on the nose, together with some violet. The palate shows tightly coiled, polished black fruit. The tannins are refined, etched into the fruit with a persistent chalky texture. Savoury herbal tones and tobacco balance sweeter, smoky notes of charred wood. Perfumed on a long, driven finish marked with bright acidity. Notes of black tea and more cool blackcurrant fruit linger in harmony.”
- TP, Farr Vintners

“The first thing that I notice on the 2021 Brane-Cantenac is that the color is conspicuously deeper than that of the Deuxième Vin. The nose has exquisite, very pure, and delineated scents of raspberry and blackcurrant, with a touch of pencil box and cedar. There is almost a Burgundy-like allure to these aromatics. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins. Classic in style with a clean bead of acidity, there is a noticeable saline/estuarine aspect to this Brane. It’s focused and poised with quite a peppery finish (more-so than out of barrel). Whilst it has no desire to match the imperial heights of other recent vintages, this will allow for perfect drinking over the next 20-odd years. Excellent.”
- NM, Vinous

“The 2021 Brane-Cantenac was picked from September 23 until October 7 at a respectable 41.2hL/ha and aged 100% new oak. It has a fragrant nose of dark red fruit, undergrowth, pencil box and light minty scents, understated at first but opening up nicely in the glass (it always requires patience). The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins and fresh as a daisy, displaying impressive tension. This focused, precise Brane-Cantenac conveys a great deal of harmony. The tensile graphite finish lingers long in the mouth. While not quite reaching the lofty heights of “peak Brane,” this is a very commendable and quite cerebral wine for the vintage.”
- NM, Vinous

“The 2021 Brane-Cantenac is a classy, elegant wine. The aromatics alone are so enticing. Crushed flowers, sweet pipe tobacco, mint, rose petal and cedar open first. The 74% Cabernet Sauvignon is a bit higher than in most years, which comes through in the wine’s aromatic and structural profile. The 2021 is quiet and understated. Élevage was 18 months in 100% new French oak, but the wood is not at all evident—an important and positive sign regarding the wine’s overall balance. Even so, the 2021 is a subdued Brane-Cantenac, one that needs time in bottle to shine at its brightest.”
- AG, Vinous

Reviews *“The 2021 Brane-Cantenac notably marries fruit intensity with energy and structure. There is an exotic richness to the 2021 that is impossible to miss. Kirsch, red plum, blood orange, cinnamon, new leather and spice all meld together. The 2021 is bold, sumptuous, and alluring. There is certainly a lot to look forward to. The oak needs to fully integrate, but that is what élevage is for. Brane-Cantenac was impressive on both occasions I tasted it.”*

- AG, Vinous

“I loved the 2021 Château Brane-Cantenac, and I'd put this up with the top wines in the appellation. Medium-bodied, silky, and pure, with considerable elegance, it has lots of red and black fruits, some floral and herbal, tobacco nuances, ripe tannins, and a great finish. It's a quintessential Margaux with its complexity and nuance.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Vivid ruby, opaque core, purple and ochre tinges at the rim. Elegantly savoury with black berry fruit, a touch of noble wood and hints of liquorice. Complex, taut, cool style, fine tannins, fresh, lively, very precise, and persistent on the finish; a very successful wine reminiscent of the great classics of the Médoc of an early era.”

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“The nose is aromatic, elegant and offers a nice precision/definition, a fine intensity in its elegance, a nice airiness in its delicacy in its power, harmony. There are notes of fresh/pulpy blackberry, bright blackcurrant and more lightly raspberry combined with fine ripe cherry, delicate/discrete violet, an imperceptible roasted hint of the fruit (in the background), fine nutmeg, a subtle hint of fresh pepper/sichuan and a delicate vanilla. The palate is nicely fresh, mineral, balanced and reveals a juicy/acidic structure, a nice sapidity, energy, a discreet crispness, a fine infusion side, a very nice fineness of grain and a nice harmony. On the palate this wine expresses juicy/pulpy raspberry, fresh cherry and slightly fresh lily notes combined with delicate touches of racy minerality, a subtle hint of graphite, chocolate (background and coating), salinity, a subtle hint of fresh/crunchy red berries, an imperceptible hint of fresh blue plum (background). The tannins are sapid, elegant, and racy. Good length.”

- Vert de Vin
