

## Château Haut Bages Libéral 2018

CSPC# 742344

750mlx12

14.5% alc./vol.

CSPC# 831117

750mlx12

14.5% alc./vol.

SOLD OUT

### Grape Variety

79% Cabernet Sauvignon, 21% Merlot

### Appellation

Pauillac

### Classification

5ème Cru Classé

### Website

[http://www.hautbagesliberal.com/\\_flash/index.html](http://www.hautbagesliberal.com/_flash/index.html)

### Sustainability

Biodynamic. Undergoing conversion to Organic.

### General Info

The name of Château Haut-Bages Libéral has two roots. The LIBERAL family ran the property in the early eighteenth century. Brokers from father to son, they sold the harvest in the Netherlands and Belgium. Their name adjoining to the topographical designation, earned them to be invited worldwide to the table of political parties of the same name. Over time, these connoisseurs gathered the best soils of Pauillac. Thus, this 5<sup>th</sup> Classified Growth in 1855 now has half of its vineyards adjacent to Château Latour and the other half behind Château Pichon Baron, on the heights of the locality "Bages", a large plateau in the south of Pauillac.

The property would regain his youth when, in 1960, the Cruse family, owner of Château Pontet Canet, another 5th Classified Growth in Pauillac, acquired the property. The Cruse would launch an extensive program of replanting the vineyard. However, it was in 1983 at the arrival of the Villars family that Château Haut-Bages Libéral really recovered its former glory. Today, the property is run by Claire Villars Lurton. She undertook an overhaul of the tool of winemaking, and she directs the vineyard management to a sustainable viticulture.

### Winemakers

Thomas Bontemps. Winemaking consultant Eric Boissenot

### Sustainability

Today, Claire Villars-Lurton owns the estate; she has undertaken a complete overhaul of the winemaking tool and is orienting her management of the vineyard towards a sustainable viticulture. The vintage is now undergoing certification in organic and biodynamics farming. The estate is in the process of getting its organic agriculture certification with the aim of achieving certification in biodynamics. Château Haut-Bages Libéral oversees a 30-hectare vineyard with an exceptional terroir located on the famous Bages plateau that rests on Garonne gravel soil dating back to the Gunz Ice Age.

### Vintage

2018 is a vintage that will certainly mark the spirits ... On the one hand because it was very difficult to born. A humid spring and an exceptional pressure of fungal diseases were followed by a summer with extreme sunshine conditions. Certain areas of the Margaux appellation and more generally the South of the Médoc were favored by a few thunderstorms during the summer which allowed to reduce the impact of the water stress.

The musts with complicated fermentation potentials (high degrees, malic acid in low concentration) ended up keeping the technical teams under pressure until the end of the winemaking process. In addition, the quality of the wines produced has a character and a quite remarkable sweetness. From the first days of vinification, the vats perfumed the cellars with a generous and intense fragrance, letting the musts with a juicy and round characters. At the end of the maceration, our feelings were confirmed when the tastings revealed powerful and concentrated wines. The levels of acidity remained moderate despite their high levels. This acidity allowed the wines to keep a surprising freshness. On the aromatic level, the wines are expressive and precise, the palate is both powerful and silky.

### Vineyards

The 30-hectare property is superbly sited in the south of the Pauillac appellation between Château Latour and the 2 Pichon's. The vineyards (Cabernet Sauvignon 75%, Merlot 25%, lie on deep gravel beds over limestone.



<b>Harvest</b>	from September 17 to around October 10
<b>Maturation</b>	The wines are matured in oak barriques (40% new) for 16 months. Since Claire Villars has been at the helm, the wines have become deeper in colour and more concentrated, with notable depth of fruit. It is classified as a 5ème Cru Classé.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	<p>A rich, powerful and structured red Grand Vin from Pauillac</p> <p>An exceptional vintage for Bordeaux, 2018 was one of the great years at the Pauillac Grand Cru Classe Chateau Haut-Bages Liberal. It is now being compared to the legendary 2009 and 2016. The comparison between vintages brings us immediately to great references ...2009 for the richness and roundness with its solar temperament; 2016 for the power and smoothness of the tannic frame and the remarkable ageing potential. A vintage at the crossroads of the best of both worlds: precise blend of classicism and generosity.</p> <p>While the 2018 season began with challenging climatic conditions that required constant care from the technical teams in both the vineyard and winery, the Chateau Haut-Bages Liberal 2018 bears the signature of the great wines of Pauillac.</p> <p>Blending Cabernet Sauvignon (79%) and Merlot (21%), the Chateau Haut-Bages Liberal 2018 seduces with its intense expression, precision, and generous fruit. The palate is very generous, revealing great richness, delicacy, and a wonderfully smooth and silky tannic structure. The beautiful acidity of the vintage gives it a great freshness, promising a remarkable potential for age. All the while representative of the classic style of a great Pauillac, the Chateau Haut-Bages Liberal 2018 is clearly one of the greatest vintages of the property.</p>
<b>Serve with</b>	Chateau Haut Bages Liberal is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Haut Bages Liberal is also good with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2026-2040
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>97 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2021</p> <p><b>96-97 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019</p> <p><b>15 points</b> - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - March 2019</p> <p><b>92 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2020</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2021</p> <p><b>91-93 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - November 2019</p> <p><b>94+ points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p><b>92-95 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2019</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - February 2021</p> <p><b>16.5 points</b> - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2021</p> <p><b>17.5 points</b> - Bettane &amp; Desseauve (score only) - April 2019</p> <p><b>18 points</b> - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - June 2019</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>"Pretty blackberries, blueberries and violets with some crushed-raspberry aromas follow through to a full body with wonderfully crafted and pure tannins that intertwine wonderfully with the blue fruit and blackberries. Long and endless. A triumph here. From biodynamically grown grapes. Try after 2026."</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>"A fantastic wine with lovely depth of ripe fruit and transparency and beauty. Full bodied. Succulent and rich tannins to the gorgeous fruit. From biodynamically grown grapes."</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>"In conversion to biodynamic. Barrel sample. Black core with purple rim. Intense cassis aroma with a hint of dark chocolate. It seems rather woody on the palate, as if the oak is intruding here. Thick tannins and a pretty tough woody finish. Disappointing, especially on the palate – is it a particularly oaky sample? Here I found it impossible to tell how long this wine will age well. (JH)"</i> - JH, JancisRobinson.com</p> <p><i>"Some pretty fierce tannins on display; then as it opens the emphasis goes to pencil lead and cassis. There is plenty of Pauillac character here, but you have to wait for it to unfurl. Partly aged in amphorae, alongside 40% new oak. A good yield of 45hl/ha despite current conversions to biodynamics. (JA)"</i></p>

- JA, Decanter.com

*“Medium/full-bodied, bright, lifted layers of sweet, juicy red currants pop up on the nose along with tobacco, cedar, cigar box and a light hint of oak. There is a brightness to the fruit in the mouth, chewy tannins and a crispness to the red berries that carries through from start to finish.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“The 2018 Haut-Bages Libéral, which was tasted directly from barrel at the property, was picked at 50hl/ha from September 17 to around October 10. There is about 60mg of SO2 in this wine. It has a delightful bouquet of blackberry, boysenberry and light pencil box aromas that show engaging purity. The palate is medium bodied with slightly chalky tannin, the acidity very well-judged and the 40% new oak nicely integrated. There is a boldness to this Pauillac that I like and that perhaps has not been evident in previous vintages. The solid finish displays fine density. This is definitely worth checking out. \*Biodynamic\*.”*

- NM, Vinous

*“The 2018 Haut-Bages Libéral is super-impressive right out of the gate. It shows all the depth and intensity I saw from barrel, with maybe a bit more tannic impact. Ripe red cherry, plum, orange peel, cedar and sweet spice all build in the glass. The 2018 is going to need a few years to come into its own, but it is a gorgeous Pauillac. (AG) 94+.”*

- AG, Vinous

*“The 2018 Haut-Bages Libéral takes all of the signatures of the property and turns them up to 11. Rich, ample and yet also incredibly refined, the 2018 is a total knock-out. Super-ripe red cherry, plum, cedar, tobacco and star anise infuse this powerful, sumptuous Pauillac. Even with normal yields of 45 hectoliters per hectare, Haut-Bages Libéral is a stunningly deep, potent wine. The blend is 79% Cabernet Sauvignon and 21% Merlot.”*

- AG, Vinous

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