

## Domaine de Chevalier 2015

CSPC# 765467

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

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

65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot  
Pessac-Léognan

Grand Cru Classe de Graves in 1959

<http://www.domainedechevalier.com/>

The owners of Domaine de Chevalier, the Bernard family, have a long history dating all the way back to the 1155! Documents are available stating that the Count of Angoulême awarded the Bordeaux wine property to Chateau-Bernard for his for his valour in battle against the English.

Domaine de Chevalier in the Graves/Pessac Leognan, appellation, was purchased in 1865 by Arnaud Ricard and his son Jean the Bernard family for 33,000 francs. At the time, the Ricards family were familiar with the Bordeaux wine trade as they worked as coopers, producing some of the best barrels used by many of the best chateau. In 1865, the estate began selling their wine under the Gascon name of "Chivaley". In those days, the 44-hectare property was used for mostly food crops and breeding animals. While there was a tiny Bordeaux wine making operation at the estate, it was not the main interest of the property.

Shortly after the elder Ricard passed away, the son discovered the outstanding potential of the terroir and soil at Domaine de Chevalier and transformed it into a full-time vineyard. The name was changed from "Chivaley" to the French "Chevalier". When Jean Ricard died, his son-in-law, Gabriel Beaumartin, took over and managed Domaine de Chevalier for the next 4 decades. At various times the Ricard family owned other top estates in the Graves appellation including Chateau Malartic Lagraviere and Chateau de Fieuzal.

When Gabriel Beaumartin died in 1940, no one was interested in managing the estate. After a few years, Claude Ricard, Jean's son, started at Domaine de Chevalier in 1948. He was only 21 years old. Under Claude Ricard, Domaine de Chevalier was included in the 1959 Graves Classification. When Domaine de Chevalier was purchased 1983, Olivier Bernard was not much older at 23 years of age. By the time Olivier Bernard arrived, Claude Ricard had already managed the estate for over thirty years.

Domaine de Chevalier is fortunate to have such a fine team to run its affairs. Olivier, whose family business owns the estate, is the outgoing but canny administrator whilst Rémi Edange is hands-on, knowing every vine and every barrel. Whilst their white wines have always been amongst the very finest, the reds were simpler affairs. But from the 1995 vintage onwards greater flair and concentration was in evidence. The quality curve is now further accentuated by the team's bold move to appoint Stéphane Derenoncourt, of La Mondotte fame, as consultant winemaker. Domaine De Chevalier is classified as a Graves Cru Classé.

**Vintage** An unremarkable winter (wet the first two months, then cold between mid- January and mid-February) followed by a dry, warm spring for nearly perfect flowering. Ideal weather to meet the first two conditions for a good vintage: early, quick, and even flowering and fruit set.

Dry, hot early summer weather between fruit set and véraison (colour change) followed by a wonderful month of August that launched ripening.

A halt to vegetative growth at the beginning of véraison: the 3rd condition for a good red wine vintage. Thus, at this stage, the first three conditions for a good red wine vintage – flowering and fruit set that were both early and well grouped together during fine, dry weather, and a stop to vegetative growth – were perfectly satisfied. September and October were cool and sunny, without rain. This meant that there was no rush to pick the grapes, and that the two final conditions for a successful vintage were also met.



<b>Vintage</b>	Therefore, a dry, but not excessively hot month of September (the fourth condition for a great red wine vintage) ensured ripening of the various grape varieties. October was just as sunny, completing the final stages of ripening for the Cabernets and improving the extractability of colouring compounds without a significant drop in acidity. All prerequisites were thus in place for excellent quality grapes in 2015. In short, the 2015 harvest was a very successful for all grape varieties and all colours.
<b>Vineyards</b>	The 80-hectoliter vineyard of Domaine de Chevalier has 42 hectares under vine. The vines are relatively young due to replanting and the fact that the vineyard has frequently been hit by frost. The vineyard of Domaine de Chevalier is used to produce both red and white Bordeaux wine. For the white Bordeaux wine, 5 hectares are planted to 70% Sauvignon Blanc and 30% Semillon. For the red wine, 37 hectares are planted to 64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 3% Petit Verdot. The vineyard is planted to a vine density of 10,000 vines per hectare. On average, the vines are close to 30 years of age. The vineyard management techniques used are sustainable farming methods. Only organic Fertilizers are used, and this is on a parcel-by-parcel basis. Approx. 40-60% of annual crop goes into the grand vin. Domaine de Chevalier has a complex terroir and soil that starts with the forest that surrounds the vineyards three sides.
<b>Harvest</b>	With constant fine weather we reach full maturity of red grapes that refine and mature their tannins. The harvest dates are chosen very precisely, depending on the taste of the berries. Start of Merlots on September 23, the Petit Verdot 2 October, the Cabernet Franc on October 5 and October 6 Cabernet Sauvignon. End of the harvest on 15 October. All varieties have beautiful healthy bunches, but small, with small berries. The skins are thick (scars of drought from April to July). This largely explains the low yields. Nevertheless, the quality is excellent for each variety. Grapes are rich and balanced by beautiful acidity. The great gravel soils have significantly contributed to this beautiful freshness.
<b>Maturation</b>	The wine is fermented in temperature-controlled, stainless steel vats and then matured in oak barriques (50% new) for 18 months
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	Intense dark red color. Very fresh nose, charming and attractive. On the palate, the attack is silky and delicious, it gives way to an exquisite fruity flesh with a very dense structure. Wine is fine, complex and elegant with a lovely mineral freshness. We find the silky and fleshy quality of 2009, combined with the beautiful structure of 2005!
<b>Production</b>	9,167 cases made
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2021-2040
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>92 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2018</p> <p><b>91-94 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2016</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate Interim Issue - February 2018</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #224 - April 2016</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - February 2018</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2018</p> <p><b>96-97 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2016</p> <p><b>95 points/Cellar Selection</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 2018</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2015</p> <p><b>18 points</b> - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2016</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2017</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2018</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - July 2017</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2016</p> <p><b>91-93+ points</b> - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - July 2016</p> <p><b>92 points</b> - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2016</p> <p><b>16.5 points</b> - Farr Vintner - March 2016</p> <p><b>91-95 points</b> - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2016</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - May 2016</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2018</p> <p><b>93-96 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2016</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2018</p>

**Scores/Awards** **18+ points** - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2016  
**92-94 points** - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - May 2016  
**18.5 points** - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - June 2016  
**18 points** - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - April 2016  
**18 points** - Gault & Millau (score only) - June 2016

**Reviews** *"This has a solid core of gently steeped plum and blackberry fruit inlaid liberally with warm ganache and roasted vanilla notes. Warm, dark earth details pervade the finish, along with hints of tobacco and espresso, though this remains suave and perfumy overall. Best from 2021 through 2031. 9,167 cases made."*  
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"Offers an open, easy feel. The creamy structure lets juicy plum and raspberry notes flow along and linger on the finish. Almost languid in character, and very suave. Score range: 91-94"*  
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"The 2015 Domaine de Chevalier is composed of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 5% Petit Verdot. It went through malolactic and aging on its lees during three months in 35% new, 35% one-year-old and 30% two-year-old barrels, with a total aging of 18 months. Medium to deep garnet-purple in color, it has lovely spiciness on the nose—Chinese five spice and black pepper—with a core of red and black cherries and smoked meats. Medium-bodied, finely crafted and refreshing, it's quite minerally in the mouth and persistent on the finish."*  
- LPB, Wine Advocate

*"The 2015 Domaine de Chevalier is a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 5% Petit Verdot picked from 23 September until 15 October at just 35 hl/ha, matured in 35% new oak. It has a sophisticated bouquet that is more reserved than its peers. It possesses one of the most precise, detailed aromatic profiles that I have encountered from this estate, wonderfully poised with black fruit, incense and cold stone. It has wonderful focus and class. The palate is medium bodied with very fine tannin, very complex with lightly peppered black fruit. What marks this Domaine de Chevalier is the reserve and precision on the finish, a wine that is holding something back for its secondary evolution, a salinity that beckons you back for another sip. What a fabulous, intellectual wine from Olivier Bernard. Expect four decades of drinking pleasure - probably more - given my experience of ancient vintages. Tasted three times with consistent notes."*  
- NM, Wine Advocate

*"The 2015 Domaine de Chevalier has an enticing bouquet with very pure redcurrant, raspberry and blackberry notes, briary and cedar emerging later. This is wonderful and very seductive for anyone with a penchant for classic Pessac-Léognan. The palate is smooth and fleshy on the opening with silky tannin, plush red berry fruit with supremely well-integrated new oak. You could almost broach this now, such is its approachability, but it will surely improve over the next 20 or 30 years because its structure is discretely hidden at present."*  
- NM, Wine Journal

*"Suave, spicy oak and warm, stony aromas, making immediate interest and giving way to vivid and fresh dark cherries, blackberries and cassis. The palate adds graphite-like, savory cherry-stone flavors amid smooth, velvety tannins. Tangy blackberries through the finish. Impressive. Try from 2020."*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"This shows class and finesse with ultra-fine tannins and succulent fruit. Full body yet elegant and long. Gorgeous wine. Such length. Vibrant and focused."*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"94–96. Barrel Sample. This wine is ripe and smooth, with a concentrated blueberry character. It is a powerful wine with excellent rich fruitiness sustained by dense tannins."*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"This wine is ripe, rich and generous. It brings out the almost-sweet character of the fruit in this vintage. At the same time, the tannins are firm and support all this fruitiness. The wine will develop well. Drink from 2024."*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

## Reviews

*“Great tension and subtlety. Extremely savoury - almost salty - with freshness and ripeness. Not one of the deepest colours. Lovely appetising low-key classicism. Bravissimo à tous!”*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*“This was tasting great during en primeur, and is living up to its promise here, richly nuanced and layered, with hints of fern and blackberry leaf. It's perfectly ripe but has little touches that hold it back from full exuberance and for me only add to its interest. Classic and yet with a kick, an age able wine with firm tannins. 33% new oak. (JA)”*

- JA, Decanter.com

*“This beautiful wine is elegant, fresh, refined and shows the vibrancy in the earthy, red berries with ease. The tannins are silky. The nose, with its smoke, pipe tobacco and earthy accents on top of the deep red fruits makes its presence known with ease. This is a contender for one of the best wines ever produced here”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“A beauty, with all the smoky, cigar box, dark red fruits and spicy, earthy charm you need. Elegant, refined and classy, this is a contender for the top red wine ever from Domaine de Chevalier, although 2016 is going to give it a run for the money.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“Cigar box, smoke, chocolate covered plums, earth and freshly rolled cigars on the nose, this wine is fleshy, ripe and rich with a good depth of flavor and length in the finish. Produced from a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 5% Petit Verdot and reaching 13.5% alcohol, the wine represents 50% of the harvest, which took place from September 26 to October 16. The wine is being aged in 33% new French, oak barrels.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“Mid depth; some wet rocks; ripe fruit; spices; solid effort; nice creamy tones to the fruit; pretty gutsy on the palate; lots of matter here; grip on the finish. Will impress more after élevage. Tasted UGCB 7/4/16. Drink 2022-2032. 91-93+”*

- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

*“Outperformed (only just) by some of its neighbours in 2015, but Domaine de Chevalier is still hard to beat for value and consistency. Firm and smoky with a carapace of tannin concealing the plummy, fruitcake-like flavours beneath. The acidity brings freshness to the finish.*

*Drink: 2022-35”*

- TA, timatkin.com

*“This much respected property in Pessac-Léognan is run with great care by Olivier Bernard whose family took it over from Claude Ricard in 1983. During the 1980s and 1990s there was a programme of replanting and it is only since the early 2000's, with the vines reaching maturity, that the quality here has returned to that of the great vintages of the 1960s and before. Without doubt, the best vintages of Chevalier are the most recent ones. Domaine de Chevalier performs brilliantly every year now, but prices have remained reasonable. Also, one of our best-selling wines en primeur. The blend of the 2015 is 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 5% Petit Verdot. Deep ruby colour with a fresh blackcurrant and graphite nose with a hint of black truffle and tobacco. The palate is smooth, refined and elegant with classic Graves cedar and blackcurrant. The tannins are refined and smooth but firm enough to frame the palate. The sweet vanilla and nutmeg from new oak adds a layer of complexity and gives a touch of sweetness to the long finish.”*

- Farr Vintners

*“Bright and fresh the nose has fragrance and bright black fruits the start of the palate a mix of bilberry and bramble. Rich and ripe in the middle the fruit underpinned by fine tannins, but it fills out at the back supple and ripe with sweet fruit giving depth on the finish.”*

- Derek Smedley MW

*“A gorgeous Domaine de Chevalier that is layered, sumptuous and intense with plush tannins. Beautifully balanced, seductive and charming with a long finish. A wine that will be enjoyable young but also age well.”*

- JCL, asianpalate.com

**Reviews**

*"One of the stars of the vintage, the 2015 Domaine de Chevalier has turned out even better than I expected. Bright floral notes give striking aromatic lift to the rich, sumptuous fruit. A marvelously complete wine, the 2015 is racy and silky on the palate, yet also has tremendous freshness. Bright red cherry, blood orange, white pepper, spice and dried flowers build into the super-expressive finish. The 2015 has been nothing less than stunning the three times I have tasted it so far. This is a tremendous showing from proprietor Olivier Bernard and his team. The blend is 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 5% Petit Verdot. Tasted three times. (AG)"*  
- AG, Vinous

*"The 2015 Domaine de Chevalier is one of the most striking wines of the year. Weightless, powerful and intense, the 2015 possesses crystalline delineation and precision from the very first taste. Bright red stone fruit, pomegranate, chalk and mint are some of the signatures. In the last of my four tastings, the Domaine de Chevalier showed tremendous richness and intensity as well. It will be interesting to see where the 2015 ends up. The future certainly looks bright. In 2015 the blend is 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 5% Petit Verdot. The wine will see around 35% new oak. Stéphane Deroncourt and his team consult on the red. Tasted four times."*  
- AG, Vinous

*"I was able to taste the 2015 Domaine de Chevalier twice and it showed sensationally both times. A blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot that was harvested between October 1st and October 15th, this deep ruby/purple-colored effort has soaring aromatics of caramelized black cherries, cassis, lead pencil shavings, and forest floor. Deep, full-bodied, intense and beautifully pure, with fine tannin and moderate acidity, it's a gorgeous Pessac-Leognan that needs 4-5 years of cellaring and will evolve for three decades."*  
- Jeb Dunnuck

*"Dense, briary and full, there is an extra dimension of power and extraction here which is impressive and very well handled because it leads with fruit and not oak and the tannins are juicy and mouth-watering and not dry or astringent. Gentle handling is the key here and even though this is a big wine is it still impeccably balanced."*  
- MJ, matthewjukes.com

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