
Domaine de Chevalier Blanc 2016

CSPC# 864620

750mlx6

12.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

75% *Sauvignon Blanc*, 25% *Sémillon*

Appellation

Pessac-Léognan

Classification

Cru Classe de Graves in 1959

Website

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

General Info

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.

Winemaker

Rémi Edange. Stéphane Derenoncourt consults.

Vintage

An incredibly wet spring was quite worrying for winegrowers at the time (danger of fungal diseases), but later proved to be a godsend. The soil's water reserves were largely reconstituted, enabling the vines to cope with the exceptionally dry, hot summer. The grapes finished ripening during beautiful, relatively warm weather, with very little rain and cool nights. This un hoped for, simply incredible weather for Bordeaux made it possible to harvest deeply-coloured, aromatic grapes with beautiful acidity. The best white wine terroirs in Bordeaux (limestone, clay-limestone, and clay-gravel soils) protected the vines from premature or overly severe water stress. Sauvignon Blanc grapes retained surprising aromatic freshness and acidity on these types of soils. The Sémillon grapes were also very successful: plump and tender.

The dry, hot summer of 2016 was also conducive to the perfect maturity of grapes in Sauternes and Barsac prior to the development of botrytis. This is a vital prerequisite



Vintage	for the quality of sweet white wines. Two short, but significant rainy periods triggered the development of noble rot starting in mid-September. This was followed by a return to an anticyclone propitious to concentrating the grapes. Very spread out in 2016, the harvest began in the latter half of September and finished in early November.
Vineyards	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Domaine de Chevalier has a complex terroir and soil that starts with the forest that surrounds the vineyards three sides. The forest enhances the extremes of temperature and increase the risk of frost. The terroir is also gravelly black sand soils that are on average 60-90 cm deep. The rich sub-soil consists of a clay-gravel base mixed with hardpan. The vineyard drainage system, built in 1962, important as it drains excess water. At Domaine de Chevalier, it makes a big difference because the sub-soil is prone to retaining humidity. A wind machine and even helicopters are also used to keep the vines dry on occasion. This works because the helicopter blades stir and blend the lower layers of cold air with warmer air and helps avoid damage from frost.</p>
Harvest	The dry white wine harvest began on 12/09 with Sauvignon Blanc and finished with Sémillon on 05/10. The golden-coloured grapes were handpicked in four passes. They were rich, tasty, fresh, and in prime condition.
Maturation	Fermentation in barrels. Age in barrels for 18 months (40% new oak) with bâtonnage (stirring the lees with a stick)
Tasting Notes	Domaine de Chevalier Blanc 2016 offers a nose with refined aromas of vine peach, acacia flower with mineral and smoky notes. Delicately unctuous and rich despite a nice acid tension, the mouth is exquisite, crunchy in fruit with a nice volume and a great finish. An extraordinary wine that is ready to drink but which, for the most patient, can be put aside for another twenty years!
Serve with	Domaine de Chevalier Blanc is a perfect wine to serve with all types of seafood, fish, shellfish, crab, lobster, chicken, veal, port and of course cheese.
Production	1,800 cases made.
Cellaring	Drink 2021-2030.
Scores/Awards	<p>94 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2019</p> <p>90-93 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - May 2016</p> <p>92+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - November 2018</p> <p>90-92 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #230 - April 2017</p> <p>98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2019</p> <p>96-97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2017</p> <p>97 points/Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 2019</p> <p>17++ points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2017</p> <p>94 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2017</p> <p>96 points - Decanter.com - May 2019</p> <p>95 points - Decanter.com - April 2017</p> <p>96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - August 2021</p> <p>94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - September 2019</p> <p>94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2017</p> <p>93 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2017</p> <p>94 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - January 2016</p> <p>93+ points - Farr Vintner - April 2017</p> <p>92-95 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2017</p> <p>94 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - August 2020</p> <p>94 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - January 2019</p>

Scores/Awards **92 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - January 2019
89-92 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2017
99 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2019
94 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2019
92 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com (score only) - April 2017
93 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - May 2017
96 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - May 2017
19 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - December 2019

Reviews *"This flirts with a tropical hint, as peach and nectarine details peek in on the core of meringue, lemon peel, shortbread, melon and yellow apple fruit flavors. Heather and macadamia nut notes gild the finish, which is rounded along the edges but still racy through the middle. This needs a little time to settle in fully. Best from 2021 through 2030. 1,800 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Bright and fresh, with a rounded edge to the mix of lime curd, verbena, green plum and quinine flavors. On the weighty side of the spectrum but has the freshness for balance. Score Range: 90-93 "
- JM, Wine Spectator

"The Domaine de Chevalier 2016 Blanc is a blend of 70% Sauvignon Blanc and 30% Sémillon. The nose reveals spiced pears, waxy lemons, honeysuckle, and yuzu with wafts of lime juice and green guava. Medium-bodied with great intensity and elegance, it has a racy line cutting through the citrus and tropical layers, finishing long."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The Domaine de Chevalier 2016 Blanc has a somewhat delicate, nuanced bouquet this year, one that demanded gentle coaxing from the glass. It reveals delineated aromas of green apple, gooseberry and kiwi fruit, flintiness tucked just behind. The palate is well balanced and slightly Burgundy-like on the entry (strangely, not unlike a Nuits-Saint-Georges Blanc!). It opens nicely in the glass but never loses its head. The palate is well balanced with crisp acidity and fine delineation, with pretty lemongrass and shaved ginger notes judiciously sprinkled over the finish. It is a Domaine de Chevalier Blanc that I would be inclined to consume in its youth rather than cellar, but hey, you never know the longevity of these wines; they can always surprise you."
- NM, Wine Advocate

"Still very shy on the nose, but the candied citrus, fresh melon, pear, and quince notes come through on the palate, together with discreet, toasty oak. Although this is really concentrated, the power is underplayed and the enormous, herbal, and mineral depth steals up on you slowly and then whisks you away. You could enjoy it now, but there's enormous aging potential. A blend of 70 per cent Sauvignon and 30 per cent Semillon. Try in 2021."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"A white with sliced apple, pear and lemon character. Medium to full body, layered and so long. Tight and exciting. So salty and mineraly. Structured. Phenolic intensity and all wound up. What a white!"
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"This luscious wine from old-vine Sauvignon Blanc is filled out even further by the 30% Sémillon in the blend. It is rich in feel and intense in a white fruit flavor, with touches of spice from the wood aging. It is fresh and textured on the finish. Drink from 2024. *Cellar Selection* (RV)."*
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Light and so discreet one can understand why it never shows well in blind tastings. Edge of green. Succulent but so dry and low key... Wait a decade at least and it should please enormously. Drink 2030-2050."
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Intense and focused. 75% Sauvignon Blanc and 25% Semillon. Oak imparts extra complexity to this wonderfully concentrated wine. Restrained and refined yet powerful. A great vintage and benchmark Pessac-Léognan white."
- Decanter.com

Reviews

"This is clearly one of the more impressive whites on display here. They have teased out a sense of verticality, and you can feel the walls and scrape the flesh of the citrus. If it wasn't for the heights that we know Domaine de Chevalier can ascend to, you would be sighing over the structure of this wine. White peach and rich pear are seasoned with beautiful spicing, but it just lacks the grip and drama of the best vintages. Drinking Window 2019 – 2035."

- JA, Decanter.com

"This is so young right now, which seems crazy to say for a white wine, I know. But at two years old it has hardly begun to gather us to its side, let alone reveal its secrets. This will clearly have plenty to show in a few years' time - white peach and pear flavours, and a gorgeous texture of slate caught against saline minerality. This is going to age, and then some. It has closed down since 2016 En primeur."

- Decanter.com

"Continuing to blossom, with no effort, the lemon chiffon, flowers, yellow citrus, flowers, rocks and orange grab your nose and palate. The Sauvignon Blanc dominates with its crisp, fresh, bright, crunchy stylings and waxy lemon accents."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Here you find all the juicy, sweet lemons, pomelo, spice, vanilla and flowers you could ask for. Made from blending 75% Sauvignon Blanc and 25% Semillon, the wine is round, lush, sweet and vibrant, and forward in style, so you can drink this on release, or with just a few years of age."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Blending 75% Sauvignon Blanc and 25% Semillon produced a richly textured, fat, sweet, lush, ripe wine with a mineral and yellow citrus driven character that is on display in the finish."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"One of the tighter, more focused Pessac-Léognan whites in 2016, this is smoky, concentrated and almost coiled on the tongue, with plenty of toasty oak, pithy acidity and considerable underlying concentration. 2019-28"

- Tim Atkin MW

"One of the truly great names of dry White Bordeaux. Chevalier Blanc has a loyal following and is a wine with an amazing ability to age despite being attractive in its youth. The 5 hectares of vines are planted with 70% Sauvignon Blanc and 30% Semillon. Very spicy and slightly herbal on the nose, with flinty citrus fruit. The palate is taut and fresh, with compact purity on the palate carried by a line of zesty acidity. Still youthful and tight, this is one of the few 2016 white Bordeaux which may need a little time in bottle before drinking. Fleshing out through the finish, more tropical pineapple fruit and ripe peach with a touch of beeswax are revealed on the finish."

- Farr Vintners

"The nose is light fragrant floral discreet the palate starts with citrus firmness bright but there is mid richness white peach and pear. The back palate has a citrus mix the finish light, fresh and very long. 2018-26"

- Derek Smedley MW

"The 2016 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc has a well-defined bouquet of white peach, apricot and light candle wax aromas and nicely integrated oak. The well-balanced palate leads with quince and orange peel on the entry, revealing a pleasant bitter undertow and fanning out with confidence toward the saline finish. Excellent. Tasted blind at the annual Southwold tasting. 2021 – 2040"

- NM, Vinous

"The 2016 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc has a clean, precise bouquet with a fine mineral vein that becomes more pronounced with aeration. The well-balanced palate is poised and harmonious, delivering a fine bead of acidity and real weight and penetration toward the lightly peppered finish. Superb. Drink 2020-2038."

- NM, Vinous

Reviews *“The 2016 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc offers quite a bit of upfront intensity and attack, but then loses persistence through the mid-palate and finish, which makes it come across as rather monolithic. I don't see the focus, tension or energy that are such signatures of the Blanc. Perhaps time in bottle will help to some degree, but I am not too optimistic that will happen. 2026 - 2066.”*

- AG, Vinous

“Domaine de Chevalier's 2016 Blanc is unusually soft and silky; words I can't believe I'm writing about a young vintage of this reference-point white. Creamy, ample, and inviting, the 2016 should drink well pretty much right out of the gate. These wines have a track record of aging for decades; I imagine the 2016 might have a slightly shorter life than other recent vintages, but not by much. The only thing missing is the delineation and explosive energy that, in the best vintages, makes the Blanc one of the world's most distinctive and pedigreed whites.”

- AG, Vinous

“The white of the vintage is the 2016 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc, which comes from a high-density planting of 30-year-old vines located west and south of the town of Léognan. A blend of 75% Sauvignon and 25% Sémillon raised in 35% new barrels, it offers a massive bouquet of crushed citrus, salty minerality, white flowers, and grapefruit. Racy, full-bodied, concentrated and beautifully textured, it's a brilliant wine that has more flesh and texture than the 2015 and will keep for two decades or more. Hats off to the team at Domaine de Chevalier for this brilliant, brilliant white!”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Light yellow-green, silver reflections, delicate hints of yellow tropical fruit, a hint of orange zest, nuances of grapefruit. Compact, firm texture, delicate kiss of wood, notes of ripe stone fruit, elegant and persistent, good aging potential.”

- Falstaff Magazine
