
Domaine de Chevalier Blanc 2018

CSPC# 790380

750mlx12

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. Domaine De Chevalier is classified as a Graves Cru Classé.

Winemaker

Rémi Edange. Stéphane Derenoncourt consults.

Vintage

2018 Pessac Leognan is the product of a challenging growing season. Like the rest of Bordeaux, the vintage had an auspicious start as the vineyards were underwater. It was not just the non-stop rain that went on for months.

There were hailstorms to contend with as well. And if that wasn't enough, the devastating mildew attacks hit hard, especially in organically farmed vineyards. However, it is important to note that mildew was much more prevalent in the south, in the Graves appellation.

Fortunately, by the middle of summer, everything changed for the better. With the gorgeous sunny, warm, and dry weather conditions, the vineyards managed to dry out. In fact, at one point, there was so much water stress due to the dry conditions that young vines in several vineyards were decimated.



Vintage	<p>Several vineyards began to suffer from hydric stress with so little moisture remaining in the soils. Clearly, Bacchus is a fan of 2018 Pessac Leognan because just when it was needed the most, much needed light rains fell the end of the summer, saving the vintage.</p> <p>Following the warm, dry summer, September and October remained hot, dry and sunny as well, which was perfect for the red wine grapes. But it was a little too hot and dry for the white wine grapes. Picking of the white wine grapes began in August, allowing the fruit to retain as much freshness as possible.</p>
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	Dates unknown
Maturation	Fermentation in barrels. Age in barrels for 18 months (40% new oak) with bâtonnage (stirring the lees with a stick)
Tasting Notes	Intense, fresh, and elegant nose, of vine peach, acacia blossom and honeysuckle mixed with mineral and smoky notes (quartz, silica). Delicately creamy and rich palate despite a good acid tension. Exquisite concentration, energy, and radiance of fruity taste. Good volume without heaviness. Great long finish.
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	2,000 cases made.
Cellaring	Drink 2021-2030.
Scores/Awards	<p>96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - January 2021</p> <p>93-96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - June 2019</p> <p>95 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2021</p> <p>93-95 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019</p> <p>98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2021</p> <p>97-98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019</p> <p>97 points/Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2021</p> <p>94-96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2019</p> <p>17+ points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - October 2020</p> <p>17.5 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2019</p> <p>94 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2020</p> <p>94 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2019</p> <p>96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2021</p> <p>96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019</p> <p>16.5+ points - Farr Vintner - April 2019</p> <p>93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p>91-93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - November 2019</p> <p>95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p>90-93 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2019</p> <p>96 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2021</p>

95-97 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2019
17.5+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2019
92-94 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - February 2021
93 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com (score only) - March 2019
95 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2019
18 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - June 2019

Reviews

"Gorgeous, with both rich and racy elements as lemon curd, shortbread and honeysuckle notes contrast with lemon pith, thyme and fleur de sel notes. Long finish has wet straw and paraffin hints, adding length and range. Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon. Drink now through 2030. 2,000 cases made."

- JM, Wine Spectator

"Lively lime pith, herb, green apple, fennel and verbena notes streak through. The very focused finish has good zing for the vintage. Defined and long, this will unwind a bit more slowly than most of its peers. Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon. 2,000 cases made."

- JM, Wine Spectator

"The Domaine de Chevalier 2018 Blanc offers up a gorgeous perfume of ripe Bosc pears, grapefruit oil, mandarin peel and lemongrass, leading to wafts of sea spray, lime blossom and beeswax. The medium to full-bodied palate has a seducing opulence, delivering layers of citrus, pear and floral-inspired flavors with a satiny texture and seamless freshness, finishing long with a spicy kick. It makes for a complex, decadently delicious wine right now, but give it 4-5 years in bottle to see it take on even more savory/toasty layers and drink it for the next 10-12 years or more."

- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The Domaine de Chevalier 2018 Blanc slowly reveals beguiling scents of lemongrass, lime leaves, fresh grapefruit, allspice and ginger with a core of fresh lemon and grapefruit. Medium to full-bodied, the palate delivers bold citrus and spice layers with fantastic tension and a chalky finish. Aging on lees in barriques, 35% new, is anticipated to go for 16 months."

- LPB, Wine Advocate

"This has a complex nose of dried apple, green mango, grapefruit zest, dried honeysuckle and crushed almonds. It's full-bodied with bright acidity and a dense, phenolic texture. Vivid and layered with fantastic precision. Very, very long. This needs time. Better from 2026."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This is dense and very structured with phenolic tension and depth. Full-bodied, lightly phenolic with sliced apples, cooked pears, and lemons. Lively and intense. Solid as a rock. This is one to watch."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"One of the iconic white wines of Bordeaux, produced in small quantities, this is a powerful and rich expression of ripe Sauvignon Blanc. The fruitiness, with its tropical hints, is enhanced by the wine's complexity, touches of spice and density. Drink this impressive wine from 2024. *Cellar Selection*."*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Low yields have given this wine great concentration. It has intense herbal and lemon flavors, as well as a tangy texture that will encourage this wine to age well. Its acidity and freshness are balanced by the texture to give it density and intensity on the finish."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"75% Sauvignon Blanc, 25% Sémillon. Biodynamics and organic methods. There's oak, clearly, but it's refined and more oatmeal than spice. The citrus fruit has a hint of orange and there's ripeness in an almost tropical note. On the palate, all this rich fruit continues but matched by citric freshness. Deep and long and should age well. Just a very slight note of (attractive) bitterness on the finish, which adds to the freshness. (JH)"

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

Reviews

“Barrel sample. Smells classy at the outset, even though it is introvert because so young: just has hints of everything, fresh citrus, oak spice and leesy depths. On the palate, an incipient quality: cool, fresh, well-structured, and deeper than most in this vintage. Lightly chewy, lots of fruit and a hint of spice on the finish. Powerful and long. Impressive. (JH)”

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“This clearly has focus and stone-fruit steely determination. Clear opulence and density if not quite the grip of this wine in the very best white vintages. Excellent white pepper spice as it opens.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“What this white does that not everyone has achieved in 2018 is hold your attention. It's not a 2017 or 2011 at Chevalier, but it has grip and personality and a whoosh of citrus and fleshy pear flavours that are highly enjoyable. Touches of spice run through the finish, together with a sweetness that speaks of the ripeness of the fruit. You could drink it today of course, but this is a white that can go two decades without blinking, so I wouldn't worry too much. Drinking Window 2020 – 2030.”

-JA, Decanter.com

“Round, bright, lush, creamy, and juicy, with layers of fresh, crisp pomelo, waxy lemon peel, green apple, flowers and stone with a dab of honey, there is a lot to like here. Give it a few more years in the cellar and there will be even more to like as it ages.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“With a blast of crisp, zesty pomelo, floral scents and a full body loaded with crushed rocks, Mandarin oranges, mango, and a background of pineapple, this is tasty now -- I could not stop drinking it. I can only imagine how good this is going to be with a decade or two of aging!”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Bright and ripe with a saline edge reminiscent of preserved lemons on the nose. The palate is riper, with hints of tropical fruit and lemon curd that adds weight. This is cut through by vibrant acidity and a flinty, smoky undertone that is subtle but significant. Complex and intense, there is real drive on the finish that adds to the tension and power.”

- Farr Vintners

“The 2018 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc has opened up since I tasted it from barrel; this half-bottle was allowed 30–45 minutes to open. It has a little more zip on the nose, the orchard fruit and touches of black currant and orange pith bursting from the glass. The palate is finely tuned with a superb bead of acidity, and more citric than the nose, still with that energy and tension and a light tang of marmalade and lemongrass toward the finish. While I maintain that it is not the best Domaine de Chevalier Blanc that I have ever encountered, it has gained more personality during its maturation and it should drink well for 20-plus years.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2018 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc has a tightly-wound bouquet with granite/limestone aromas infusing the malic, apply fruit. It is more austere than other vintages I have tasted over the last 30 years (which is all of them.) The palate is well balanced with a fine bead of acidity, taut and energetic with good depth towards the lightly spiced, marmalade-tinged finish. This gets better as it goes along. No, not the greatest Domaine de Chevalier Blanc, but it seems to be improving during its élevage. Drink 2023-2040.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2018 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc has come together beautifully over the last two years. Rich and unctuous in feel, the 2018 offers terrific nuance to match its creamy, enveloping personality. Dried pear, marzipan, lemon confit and white flowers all build as the 2018 blossoms in the glass. The poised, deeply resonant finish is striking. I am so impressed with the 2018, a wine that is far more convincing in bottle than it was from barrel.”

- AG, Vinous

Reviews *“Domaine de Chevalier's Blanc is surprisingly unctuous in this vintage. Lemon confit, dried flowers and chamomile are some of the many notes that develop in the glass. The Blanc is, of course, famous for its age worthiness, but I don't see the complexity, energy or structure of the very best years. I would prefer to drink it on the younger side. In 2018, the red is vastly more interesting than the Blanc. The blend is 75% Sauvignon Blanc and 25% Sémillon. Tasted three times.”*

- AG, Vinous

“One of the top whites in the vintage, the 2018 Domaine De Chevalier Blanc is mostly Sauvignon blended with 25% Sémillon that was raised in 35% new French oak. A forward, approachable vintage for this cuvée, it has a beautiful, medium to full-bodied style as well as loads of lemon curd, white grapefruit, toasted bread, spice, and a kiss of chalky minerality. Balanced, pure, and elegant, drink this killer Bordeaux Blanc over the coming 10-15 years.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“One of the whites of the vintage is the 2018 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc, which is both powerful and fresh in the vintage. Crushed citrus, tart melon, lemon curd, and crushed rock-like minerality all give way to a pure, full-bodied dry white that has integrated acidity and a great, great finish. A blend of 75% Sauvignon Blanc and 25% Sémillon that will spend 18 months in 35% new French oak, it's going to be relatively accessible in its youth (unlike the 2015) yet should age beautifully.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“(75 Sauvignon Blanc, 25 Semillon) This is one of the most balanced white wines of the vintage and it is neither too oaky, nor is it too oily. There is depth of fruit here, but it is calm, smooth, layered and there is lovely acidity on the finish.”

- MJ, matthewjukes.com
