

# Château Haut Bailly 2005

CSPC# 749557

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

## Grape Variety

58% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc

## Appellation

Pessac-Léognan

## General Info

For the past four centuries, Château Haut Bailly has overlooked 28 hectares of vines in a single block. These grow on soil consisting of sand and gravel from the Tertiary period with a fossil stone subsoil. Haut Bailly's reputation as one of the very finest wines of Bordeaux was established in the 19th century. Haut-Bailly was bought by the Sanders family in 1955 and was run by Jean Sanders until 1998 when Robert G. Wilmers, an American banker, purchased it. Robert G. Wilmers continues to emphasise quality in all aspects of production, combining a blend of tradition and modernity with respect for the environment. Château Haut-Bailly's unique terroir produces wines that are outstandingly reliable, and whose prestige is due to an inimitable style marked by finesse and elegance.

## Vintage

The 2005 vintage was characterised by:

- Very low rainfall (hydric deficit in winter plus summer drought)
- Exceptional climatic conditions throughout the vegetative process.

Made-to-measure work in the vines, adapted to the climatic conditions, enabled us to achieve a superb vintage. Very low temperatures recorded at the end of February and early March together with a rainfall deficit in winter, close to 60% below the local average, made budding some three weeks late. The hot, dry weather at the end of May caused the vegetation to get off to an explosive start. Early flowering of the Merlots (May 25 through June 2) was closely followed by the Cabernets (May 30 through June 8). Slight hydric stress at the time of "nouaison" (when fruits appear) stunted the berries, presaging a short harvest. High daytime temperatures with drought conditions speeded up the ripening process, under way by mid-July. Pigmentation of the wood appeared before "véraison" (when the fruit colour changes), a sign of early accumulation of the anthocyanins and tannins in the grapes. Weather conditions in the summer were exceptional for Bordeaux, with hot days and cool nights. This continued until the final day of the harvest. Excellent weather conditions throughout autumn allowed us to pick in five weeks, working two days a week and picking mostly in the mornings to avoid peak heat hours. The degree of ripeness was remarkable with natural alcohol levels of 14% for the Merlot and 13% for the Cabernet: never known before at Haut-Bailly! Very low yield (41 hectoliters per ha), but the result was prodigious.

## Vineyards

The Haut-Bailly estate accounts for 33 hectares of the Médoc, of which 30 hectares are vineyard, largely in a single block on a gravel *croupe*. The soils are a mixture of sand and Tertiary gravel over *Faluns de Léognan*, a subsoil rich in sandstone and ancient fossilised shells. The vines themselves are mainly Cabernet Sauvignon (64%), which are planted on the upper parts of the *croupe* and slopes where the drainage is best, with 30% Merlot, which are planted on those plots where the soils are richer in clay. The remaining 6% is Cabernet Franc, and overall the planting density is an admirable 10000 vines/ha.

## Harvest

The vendange began September 14 and was over by October 11. Excellent weather conditions throughout autumn allowed us to pick in five weeks, working two days a week and picking mostly in the mornings to avoid peak heat hours. The degree of ripeness is remarkable with natural alcohol levels of 14% for the Merlot and 13% for the Cabernet: never known before at Haut-Bailly! Very low yield (41 hL per ha), but the result is prodigious. Emile Peynaud's definition: "an exceptional vintage is a vintage obtained in unusual climatic conditions" applies perfectly to the 2005. The power, the freshness, the balance and elegance it displays incline us to believe it will become a legendary vintage.

## Maturation

In small oak barriques (50% new) for 16 months and is bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.



<b>Tasting Notes</b>	Super sweet blackberry aromas. Tons of ripe fruit on the palate. Silky also and fruit covers ample tannins. Great balance and lingering finish.
<b>Production</b>	6,665 cases made
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2017-2035
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>95 points</b> - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2008</p> <p><b>92-94points</b> - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - June 30, 2006</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #176 - April 2008</p> <p><b>93-95 points</b> - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #170 - April 2007</p> <p><b>93-95+ points</b> - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #164 - April 2006</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 2013</p> <p><b>93+ points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - September 2011</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - September 2009</p> <p><b>93+ points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 2009</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - March 2008</p> <p><b>92-94 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - April 2006</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com (score only)</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 1, 2008</p> <p><b>91-93 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 1, 2006</p> <p><b>92 (+?) points</b> - Stephen Tanzer, ST's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2008</p> <p><b>91-94 points</b> - Stephen Tanzer, ST's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2006</p> <p><b>17+ points</b> - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 14, 2006</p> <p><b>18 points</b> - James Lawther, Decanter.com - April 2006</p> <p><b>16.66 points</b> - Decanter.com - April 12, 2006</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - January 30, 2013</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - February 5, 2012</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - July 5, 2011</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - June 17, 2009</p> <p><b>16 points</b> - Farr Vintner - April 2006</p> <p><b>18 points</b> - Simon Staples, Berry &amp; Rudd Wine &amp; Spirit Merchants - December 2008</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wine (no review)</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Jamie Goode, wineanorak.com - October 29, 2007</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)</p> <p><b>17.5 points</b> - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)</p> <p><b>18 points</b> - La Revue du Vin France (score only)</p> <p><b>2 stars</b> - Le Guide Hachette des Vins - 2009</p> <p><b>19 points</b> - Gault &amp; Millau (score only)</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>"Dark purple in color. Offers pure fruit, with crushed raspberry, blackberry and dried flowers on the nose. Full-bodied, with super silky tannins that touch every inch of the palate. Long and racy, with elegance and beauty harking back to bygone days. Best after 2015. 6,665 cases made."</i></p> <p>- JS, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Gorgeous blackberry and chocolate aromas with hints of spice. Focused and refined nose. Full-bodied, with ultrafine tannins and a long, long finish. Lovely fruit. This is up there with the 2000. Score range: 92-94"</i></p> <p>- JS, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Haut-Bailly's American proprietor, Robert Wilmers, backed up by the brilliant Veronique Sanders, continues to go from strength to strength. A fabulous example of this estate, the 2005 is an ethereal, delicate, finesse-styled offering with intensity as well as richness. It has all the concentration one could want, but it comes across as gorgeously elegant and sublime because of its combination of delicacy, power, and depth. Beautiful raspberry, black cherry, currant, graphite, and scorched earth notes are subtle, but provocative. In the mouth, there is good acidity, medium body, ripe tannin, and terrific length. This is a beauty of haute couture from Pessac-Leognan. Anticipated maturity: 2015-2035."</i></p> <p>- RP, Wine Advocate</p>

**Reviews**

*“Kudos to Veronique Sanders, the former proprietor’s granddaughter, and the new American ownership led by Robert Wilmers, for fashioning the finest Haut-Bailly in nearly half a century. While this will never be one of the densest clarets, the 2005 possesses exceptional concentration along with beautiful smoky graphite, raspberry, and black cherry characteristics in its stunning aromatics, a medium-bodied, gloriously concentrated palate profile, good acidity, and sweet tannin. Gorgeous elegance and finesse along with significant concentration and intensity suggest this beauty will be at its finest between 2013-2030+.”*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*“This is the finest Haut-Bailly I have ever tasted, although I suppose the 1900 or 1928 may have possessed similar qualities at the same age. Quintessentially elegant and rich, with surreal lightness and delicacy, it displays an inky/ruby color and beautiful aromas of sweet raspberries, black currants, flowers, graphite, and minerals. Medium-bodied and stunningly concentrated with moderately high but sweet tannin, this modern-day legend represents a new reference point for this estate (now American-owned). Anticipated maturity: 2012-2030.”*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*“Tasted at Berry Brother & Rudd’s vertical. Like its peers, the 2005 has closed down on the nose and demands rigorous coaxing from the glass. There is a beguiling purity here: raspberry and wild strawberry, touches of fresh apricot and orange blossom but these aromas are all tightly contained. The palate is medium bodied with very fine tannins and a slight graininess to the texture. Blackberry, graphite and a touch of tobacco that lead to a refined finish this is intense rather than powerful with a long tail of flavour lingering in the mouth. Class...pure class. Drink 2016-2030+ Tasted October 2011.”*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“Tasted at the chateau, like so many 2005s, the Haut-Bailly seems to have completely closed down or gone off in a sulk. Traces of cedar and sandalwood, faint hints of stewed black tea, but the fruit component has completely gone AWOL...for now. The palate is full-bodied with dense, sinewy tannins, quite firm and masculine in the mouth with Cabernet Sauvignon dominating the very Graves-like finish. It reluctantly opens over the course of 30 minutes but do not approach this wine for the time being. Drink 2016- Tasted March 2011.”*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“Tasted at the Fine Wine Experience vertical in London. Lovely limpid purple/garnet core. The nose is still very intense and focused, lovely definition, it hardly seems to have moved on over the last year. Blackberry, leather, cedar, hint of cigar box coming through. The palate is full-bodied though it seems to have lost some of its puppy fat since last year with very fine, silky tannins, lovely poise and focus. Lovely purity and tension, so much unbridled vivacity. Blackberry touches of blueberry and red cherry although still backward on the finish. This just oozes class. Drink 2015-2035. Tasted March 200 “*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“Tasted single blind at Southwold. Not quite as an impressive showing as at the chateau last year but still a great wine. It has a very ripe, opulent nose of baked black cherries, strawberry, a touch of raisin and fig, but complementary rather than dominant. The palate has layers of ripe oaky fruit, modern in style, difficult to get past the oak at the moment, a wine that may close down for a few years. Chewy black fruits on the finish. Drink 2012-2035. Tasted January 2009.”*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“A limpid garnet colour. The nose is closed at first but has immense depth and concentration with notes of blackberry, plum, almond, leather and coconut. Very good definition but it will need a few years to unfurl. Full-bodied, very pure and focused, this has exceptional poise and delineation with vibrant acidity and an almost citrus-like freshness and vivacity. Firm grip of the raspberry, cherry and cranberry finish. This is a complete Haut-Bailly with years ahead. Magnificent. Drink 2015-2035. Tasted September 2007.”*

- NM, Wine Journal

**Reviews** *"A very sweet ripe feminine nose of black cherries, strawberry and rose petals. Something Margaux like about it. Very good definition. Structured palate, again quite masculine, conservative even. Good acidity. Blackberry and tobacco on the finish. Good length. A long-term Haut-Bailly. Again, it will come into its own after barrel-ageing. Tasted April 2006."*  
- NM, Wine Journal

*"An impressively structured wine from an estate that is at the forefront of quality in Pessac-Léognan. It is balanced, a rich rounded wine, with considerable depths of black fruits, dark tannins and power."*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"91-93 Barrel sample. Dark, very tough, this wine certainly lacks charm at this stage, with the fruit completely hidden by tannins. But it will come around, because the weight is there, even if the pleasure isn't at the moment."*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"Good bright medium ruby. Deep aromas of plum, currant, tobacco, mocha and menthol. Super ripe and rich but with superb ripe acidity and firm tannins currently keeping the fruit and mineral elements under wraps. Just this side of severe today: here's a 2005 that appears already to have shut down in the bottle. Best today on the back end, where the wine really spreads out horizontally to saturate the palate. I'd give it a good 12 years of aging; it should be very long-lived. Classy, sharply chiseled Haut-Bailly with noteworthy elegance."*  
- ST, International Wine Cellar

*"Deep, bright ruby. Crushed cassis, minerals and licorice on the nose, with a suggestion of menthol austerity that may simply be a function of the wine's sheer concentration. Dense, sweet and pure, with very intense, sharply delineated flavors of dark berries, menthol and minerals. This really spreads out impressively on the back end, finishing with big but silky tannins and great strength and purity. Having once tasted the 1928, 1945 and 1961 H-B blind and thinking they were of first-growth category, I am confident in predicting that the young 2005 has the sheer structure to live for a long time. A superb sample."*  
- ST, International Wine Cellar

*"Sappy, savoury, essence of Graves (Pessac-Léognan). Lively mouthful of fresh, not overripe, fruit that spreads seductively across the palate - not especially complex but with good sandy tannins underneath. Very supple and more-ish. Drink me, says this wine."*  
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*"Lovely precision of fruit. Vibrant dark fruit notes. Reserved but intense. Clean and fresh with firm, fine tannins. Suave medium-bodied texture. Drink 2013-2030."*  
- JL, Decanter.com

*"Deep, smoky fruit shows ripeness and elegance. Broad, open palate. Clean expression, showing a classy vineyard. Drink from 2009-16."*  
- Decanter.com

*"With a nose of smoke, oak, spice, black cherry liqueur, earth and tobacco, this powerful expression of Haut Bailly is long, fresh, silky and concentrated. Give it a few more years before it begins to really strut its stuff. This is first of several great wines produced by the team of Wilmers and Sanders."*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"Smoke, hot bricks, truffle, fresh blackberries, forest floor and cigar box aromatic fireworks open the wine up. Luscious, elegant, rich and refined, this is still young and almost primary. The wine ends with freshness, purity of fruit and balance. A few more years will add a lot to this already, special Pessac Leognan wine."*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"The first breakthrough vintage for Chateau Haut Bailly, from an assemblage of 58% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36% Merlot and 6% Cabernet Franc, this sublime wine blends power with elegant, ripe fruit for a rich, supple, suave, smoky, mineral, cassis, spice, truffle and blackberry infused wine. Still young, give this another 6-8 years and it will reward your patience with sublime drinking."*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

**Reviews** *"This took me by surprise. I admit, I liked the 06, but I loved the 05! Gobs of black fruit, smoke, chocolate and tobacco. Dense and filled with elegant, ripe fruit. There is a lot going on in this wine. The style, elegance and finesse is a pleasure to taste, swirl, sniff and sip. This was so good; it is one of the few wines I bought after tasting it. The wine reminds me of scaled down version of Haut Brion. If you like Haut Bailly, or Graves, this Bordeaux wine belongs in your cellar."*  
- JL, [thewinecellarinsider.com](http://thewinecellarinsider.com)

*"After the sensational 2004 Haut Bailly we were anticipating a rival, or an equal. We were wrong. The 2005 has everything that the 2004 has but cranked up by about 40%. Its intense multilayered flavours are exceptional. The wine is totally decadent and yet so precise. Packed full of typical Graves minerality, incredibly concentrated raspberry and cream flavours, sit alongside great acidity and massive tannins. Veronique Sanders said, 'This is the finest wine that we have ever made.' We say, 'Buy as much of this as you can afford.'"*  
- SS, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants

*"56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 38% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc. Veronique Sanders has quietly been producing very classy wines here in recent years that don't necessarily show off when tasted from barrel. The 1998 was outstanding recently in a blind tasting and the 2004 last year was one of the best young Haut Baillys we had ever tasted en primeur. The great Jean-Bernard Delmas of Haut Brion (a legend amongst Bordeaux winemakers) has now been brought in as a consultant. Big, juicy, well-rounded with plenty of extract and tannin too. Well made, clean and refined."*  
- Farr Vintners

*"Fine aromatic nose is pure and intense, with gravelly freshness. The palate is intense and savoury with fresh mineral character and good tannin under the dark fruits. Lovely, tight and acidic."*  
- JG, [wineanorak.com](http://wineanorak.com)

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