

Château Haut Brion 2017

CSPC# 813914

750mlx6

14.25% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

56% Merlot, 37.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6.5% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

Pessac-Leognan

Classification

Premier Grand Cru Classé

Website

<https://haut-brion.com/#/wines>

General Info

1st classified growth in 1855. Haut Brion was founded in 1525 by Jean de Pontac and since then, many illustrious personalities succeeded each other as owners. The last among them was Clarence Douglas Dillon, American financial minister under the Kennedy government. Today, the continuity and presence of the Dillon family are ensured by Prince Robert of Luxembourg who watches over the destiny of Domaine Clarence Dillon S.A.S., having joined the management of the Company in June of 1997 and succeeding his mother Princess Joan de Mouchy as President at the end of July 2008. Haut Brion is the sole 1st classified growth from the 1855 classification which is outside of the Medoc appellation. Its terroir may be compared to the one of Latour. Even if it is not the more concentrated wine, Haut Brion is the noblest wine of Pessac Leognan, and its longevity is incomparable. The silky structure of the tannins is always exceptional. Classed Premier Cru of the Gironde in 1855, and Cru de Graves in 1953, Château Haut-Brion was also classed thus in 1973, and although this latest classification only concerned the Médoc whilst Haut-Brion is located in the Graves appellation, the minutes of the 1973 classification meeting state: The jury, considering the situation of Château Haut-Brion and its long traditional connections with the Médoc Premiers Crus, and taking into account this tradition, the customs and practices on the one hand, together with its very eminent virtues on the other, has deemed it to be worthy of featuring alongside the Médoc's Premiers Crus Classés

Winemaker

Jean-Philippe Delmas

Vintage

At Château Haut-Brion and neighboring La Mission Haut-Brion, only about one hectare out of around 80 hectares of vineyards was damaged by frost in 2017. It seemed that in the areas where there was a little wind, there was no frost. Bud break was on March 13—not so early for this warm little pocket of vineyards close to the city—but the evolution of the vines was certainly faster than usual for the rest of the spring. It was a very dry, warm spring with even flowering. At the end of June, there was some rain to quench the parched vines, then July was a little cooler, according to Jean-Philippe Delmas. By mid-September, after the whites had already come in, the rains became an issue. The Merlot was almost all in before the rain, but the Cabernet Franc was affected and not much was used this year. Cabernet Sauvignon was harvested after the rains. Overall yields averaged-out at a very respectable 49.6 hectoliters per hectare.

Vineyards

Vines have been cultivated here for at least six centuries, in a vineyard once surrounded by pasture and parkland, now by suburban houses. Despite the encroaching reality of the 21st century, within the walls of the Haut-Brion there lies an excellent *terroir*, typical of Bordeaux in that it revolves around two gravel *croupes* - the same can be said for many of the leading estates of the Médoc. These gravelly mounds rise to the heady altitude of 15 metres, a lofty summit compared to much of the surrounding land, providing two south-east facing slopes perfect for the vine. The soils include ancient stones washed down from the Pyrenees over many millennia, Gunzian gravel peppered with quartz and related minerals, hardened conglomerates of stone and flint. All in all, there are just over 51 hectares of vines which are cared for by vineyard manager Pascal Baratié, who also looks after the vineyard of neighbouring La Mission Haut-Brion.

Harvest

harvest took place August 31 to September 29

Maturation

70% in new barrels during 20 month/s



Tasting Notes	Jean-Philippe Delmas compares the 2017 to 1988 because of the freshness of the acidity and the ripeness of the fruit. A blend of 53 percent Merlot, six percent Cabernet Franc and 40 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, with aromatics of morello cherry and damson fruits. The palate is fresh with silky tannins, dark, ripe fruit that really shines through on the palate and coats the mouth giving the sensation of vibrant acidity coated by expressive, blue fruit. It finishes very long with a gentle, saline finish.
Serve with	Best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised and grilled dishes. Chateau Haut Brion is also good with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, salmon, mushrooms and pasta.
Cellaring	Drink 2024-2040
Scores/Awards	<p>96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2020</p> <p>97 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2020</p> <p>95-97 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate #236 - April 2018</p> <p>98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2020</p> <p>95-96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2018</p> <p>96 points/Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2020</p> <p>97-99 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2018</p> <p>17.5+ points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2018</p> <p>97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2018</p> <p>97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2018</p> <p>95-97 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2018</p> <p>17+ points - Farr Vintner - April 2018</p> <p>92-95 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2018</p> <p>95 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2020</p> <p>94-96 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2018</p> <p>96+ points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2020</p> <p>93-96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2018</p> <p>93 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2020</p> <p>94-96+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2018</p> <p>19+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2018</p>
Reviews	<p><i>“Features red and black currant fruit flavors, laced with bramble, apple wood and anise notes, backed by a powerfully rendered finish. Despite the heft and density, this comes off as refined, with streamlined tannins, buried acidity and a long finish of incense and red tea elements. Not as dense and backward as the top years, but still exhibits pedigree. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2024 through 2040”</i> - JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>“A blend of 53% Merlot, 6.3% Cabernet Franc and 40.7% Cabernet Sauvignon, the deep garnet-purple colored 2017 Haut-Brion sashays gracefully out of the glass with fragrant notions of black raspberries, kirsch, dark chocolate, star anise and candied violets with a core of warm red and black currants and a touch of pencil lead. Medium to full-bodied, the palate bursts with red and black fruit layers, superbly supported by firm, ripe, finely grained tannins and fantastic freshness, finishing very long and mineral laced. Drink 2023-2057.”</i> - LPB, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“... the very deep purple-black colored 2017 Haut-Brion is a little closed on the nose, revealing fresh blackberries, black currants and dark chocolate with suggestions of pencil shavings, beef drippings, tilled soil and cracked black pepper plus a waft of lavender. Medium to full-bodied, it has very firm, ripe, grainy tannins and a lively backbone structuring the tightly knit earth and black fruit layers, finishing with compelling mineral and perfumed layers.</i> - LPB, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“This is extremely aromatic and perfumed with crushed-berry, flower, currant and orange-peel character. Full-bodied, very tight and focused with fabulous depth and density that brings you down through the wine. Deep and serious. Very classic wine that reminds me of top Haut-Brion’s of the mid-1980s. Try after 2025”</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p>

Reviews *"A tight and focused red with dark-berry, chocolate and hazelnut character. Medium to full body, firm and silky tannins and a linear and fine finish. Very refined. Elegant and balanced."*
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This perfumed wine shines with black fruits. Against this, the wine's tannins are solid and firm, promising long-term aging. The wine's structure—black fruits against tannins—is a classic for this estate. Drink from."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"The tannins are the secret of this bold wine granting longevity and great structure. At the same time, the ripe blackberry fruits are rich yet bright and fresh. The wine will take time to mature. Drink from 2025."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Colour of black cherries with healthy crimson rim. Warm oak spice over cool dark fruit. Succulent, mouth-watering and so supple. There's a core of pure black fruit and an elegance in both non-sweet fruit and fine-boned structure but all with a discreet generosity. Needs time to meld but it's magnetic in its attraction. Perhaps a little less rich than La Mission but more intense and persistent at this stage. Drink 2027-2047"
- JH, JancisRobinson.com

"A hugely captivating wine, one of the contenders for red of the vintage. There's an incredible plush, dense texture to the fruit here, with just the slightest pulling back on the final section that suggests the damson, cassis and black cherry fruit is not at the full extent of ripeness seen in 2016 and 2015, but there is absolutely no question that this is a successful, rich and well-expressed wine. It's extremely powerful and well-constructed, with great tannins and a succulence which grows through the palate. 3.73pH."
JA, Decanter.com

"Ripe tannins and volume in all the right places, this wine tempts with verve and depth of flavor, length and complexity and gets up close and personal with the tannins. And in my overeducated and sometimes pompous opinion, the wine is going to require a minimum of 12-15 years of aging before it becomes civilized enough to drink. The wine reached 14.25% alcohol with a pH of 3.73 and represents 45% of the Grand Vin."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Super concentrated black fruit aromas, with just a tinge of oak, and a whiff of ripe menthol and peppermint. Brooding, with tar and violet complexity. Rich in the mouth with concentrated fruit flavours, spices, and damson notes. Dry tannins, fresh acidity. Very long indeed. For me, La MHB has it this year, with just a little more layered complexity."
- TA, timatkin.com

"Haut Brion had no frost in 2017 and yields were similar to those of 2016. Haut Brion traditionally starts picking some 2 weeks before the North of the Medoc and they started the red harvest this year on August 31st, finishing on 29th September. Jean-Philippe Delmas says that the wine is the product of a dry summer but not a hot one. It is like the 2014 but with more charm or the 2012 with more flesh. Looking back, he says that it reminds him of the 2001. A deep ruby in the glass with a brooding, reticent nose of black fruits, earthy flint, and a touch of roasted coffee bean. The palate is opulent, with a velvet texture from ripe, mouthcoating tannins and notes of blackberry, blackcurrant and black cherry. The acidity seems lower than for many wines in this vintage, but it is still bright and lifts the finish to turn the fruits to blossom, pairing wonderfully with the exotic spices and mocha that linger from the well-judged use of oak. This is a hedonistic Haut Brion that still retains the poise and harmony of the best wines in this vintage."
- Farr Vintners

"Concentrated fruit the nose has a rich mix of black fruits the palate cassis and black cherry depth of flavour. It is more restrained at the back fragrance and freshness fine tannins the finish long stylish and elegant. Drink 2027 - 2040."
- Derek Smedley MW

Reviews

"The 2017 Haut-Brion was bottled 10-18 June. It impressed from barrel and it continues to do so now incarcerated in glass. It has an irresistible bouquet with ebullient red berry fruit, sous-bois, graphite and oyster shell, perhaps one of the most Burgundy-like aromatics that I can recall in this First Growth. The palate is beautifully balanced with very fine tannins. There remains a little new oak to be fully assimilated, yet winemaker Jean-Philippe Delmas has managed to retain the symmetry that I observed from barrel a few months ago. Whilst not amongst the top tier Haut-Brion wines, it is a delicious and classy wine that will give three decades of drinking pleasure."

- NM, Vinous

"It has a more generous bouquet than the La Mission Haut-Brion at this point: black cherries, blueberry, a little confit fruit, hints of warm gravel and clove. It is much more restrained than the previous vintages – cooler and linear. The palate is medium bodied with firm tannin, nicely structured with more grip in the mouth than the La Mission. What it has in common with the aforementioned is a sense of symmetry. It feels very persistent with a light marine/oyster shell influence on the finish."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2017 Haut-Brion is rich and virile, even in a vintage where it has less power than is the norm. My impression is that the 2017 is going to lie dormant for many years before it awakens, but its pedigree is quite obvious. Black cherry, plum, gravel, smoke, licorice and dark spice all burst out of the glass. The 2017 is a powerful, vertical Haut-Brion endowed with a real feeling of gravitas and somber intensity. The long, substantial finish suggests readers can look forward to many years of fine drinking. (AG) 96+"

- AG, Vinous

"The 2017 Haut-Brion is intriguing. Less powerful and explosive than it can be, in 2017 Haut-Brion makes its case with persistence over heft. Time in the glass brings out attractive suggestions of tobacco, game, bacon fat, iron and wild cherry. It will be interesting to see where the 2017 goes from here. Today, it lacks the visceral thrill that makes the best vintages utterly irresistible, even if the phenomenally long finish is a thing of real beauty. The blend is 53% Merlot, 40.7% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6.3% Cabernet Franc."

- AG, Vinous

"A more structured, straight, focused wine than the La Mission Haut-Brion, the 2017 Chateau Haut-Brion is based on a similar blend of 53% Merlot, 40.7% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 6.3% Cabernet Franc brought up in 69% new French oak. Plenty of cassis and red currant fruits as well as notes of tobacco, Asian spices, cedar pencil, and violets all emerge from this medium-bodied, elegant, nicely textured, and concentrated Haut-Brion. It's very much in the classic, sleek style of the vintage and has good acidity, plenty of polished tannins, and a great finish, yet not a massive amount of flesh or baby fat. This classic effort needs 7-8 years of bottle age and will have 30+ years of longevity. 93+"

- Jeb Dunnuck

"The top wine, and unquestionably one of the wines of the vintage.... It's cut from the same cloth as the Le Clarence de Haut Brion, only with the intensity, richness, and structure turned up. Cold fireplace, smoked earth, black currants, and truffle notes all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, dense, concentrated and surprisingly structured 2017 that stays perfectly balanced and elegant on the palate. It doesn't have the sheer breadth of the 2015 and 2016 yet is classic Haut Brion all the way. It should match or exceed the 2014."

- Jeb Dunnuck

This is another heroic Haut-Brion and like its partner across Avenue Jean Jaurès it has a tannin structure and freshness which are uniquely appealing. There is more stern fruit here and it is straight jacketed in strict tannins and bold brushstrokes of acidity. The flavour is a little reluctant to emerge and yet there is spice here and also both red and black fruit (whereas La Mission focused more on the black side). There is also a lovely tender floral scent which hovers over the glass. It is a key to the fascinating top notes which will undoubtedly emerge given time. 2017 Haut-Brion will need a long while to slumber before it is ready to perform, so do not be in a hurry."

- MJ, matthewjukes.com
