

Château La Mission Haut Brion 2015

CSPC# 813916

750mlx6

15.1% alc./vol.

Grape Variety
Appellation
Classification
Website
General Info

58% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Cabernet Franc
Pessac-Léognan

Cru Classe de Graves in 1959

<http://www.mission-haut-brion.com/#/home>

Château La Mission-Haut-Brion is the greatest Graves wine after Haut-Brion and in some vintages, is considered the superior wine of the two. La Mission-Haut-Brion is situated just across the road from Haut-Brion in the commune of Talence in the southern suburbs of Bordeaux.

Once a rival of adjacent Haut-Brion, La Mission has actually shared ownership with its neighbor since 1983. While just a narrow suburban street divides the two properties, La Mission's wines maintain their distinctive wilder identity: more powerful and more tannic, often displaying a meaty, truffley character with extended time in bottle. The newly constructed tasting room and cellars here, which opened in 2007, are quite impressive.

La Mission-Haut-Brion has a long and illustrious history in Graves and in some eyes is the greatest estate in Bordeaux. The estate has an unbelievable record of great wines stretching back over the past century and today has a reputation for pure excellence. Robert Parker believes the quality is that of a First Growth. The vines are planted to 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. Since 1983 the Clarence Dillon family, owners of Chateau Haut Brion have owned and managed La Mission now under the expert guidance of Jean-Philippe Delmas, the third generation in his family to manage the properties of the Dillon Family.

Vintage

A cold winter finishing with an even colder month of March, explains a late bud break. This late start was quickly offset by very mild temperatures from the 10th of April. The early and clustered flowering began at the end of May, the weather conditions in June allowed an even and rapid flowering. The months of June and July were particularly hot and dry. A water shortage led to the creation of small berries and a stop to early growth of the vine. The rainy period at the beginning of August was beneficial in producing a speedy ripening. The harvesting started early and spread out.

Vineyards

La Mission-Haut-Brion's vineyards (Cabernet Sauvignon 48%, Merlot 45%, Cabernet Franc 7%) lie on a large (up to 18 metres deep in places) gravel bank interspersed with clay. Average vine age is 27 years.

Harvest

picked between 9 September and 1 October

Maturation

The wine is fermented in temperature-controlled, stainless steel vats and then matured in oak barriques (100% new) for 18 months. The wines of La Mission Haut Brion are rich, oaky, and powerful and need at least 10 years of bottle ageing before they should be broached.

Tasting Notes

The color is quite deep with garnet-red highlights. The nose proves complex from the very first. The oak shows through, but not excessively so, and is well-integrated. The bouquet features hints of chocolate and liquorice when the wine is swirled in the glass, showing how ripe the grapes were. 2015 La Mission starts out with fresh fruit flavors and a dense tannic structure that caresses the palate. It picks up power as it develops towards a long aftertaste with mocha and chocolate nuances. 2015 is unquestionably one of the greatest vintages at La Mission!

Production

6,800 cases made."

Cellaring

Drink 2015-2040



Scores/Awards **96 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2018
98 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate Interim Issue - February 2018
97-99 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #224 - April 2016
98 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - March 2018
100 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2018
100 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2016
96 points / Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 2018
96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2016
18.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2016
96 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2017
99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2018
96-98 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2016
94-96+ points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - March 2016
95 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2016
18.5 points - Farr Vintner - March 2016
94-97 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2016
97 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - May 2016
96+ points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2018
94-97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2016
98 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2018
19+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2016
94-96 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - May 2016
19.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - June 2016
18 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - April 2016
18.5 points - Gault & Millau (score only) - June 2016

Reviews *"Alluring, with steeped plum, blackberry and açai berry fruit imparting a distinctive edge. Slightly burly tannins roam underneath but the fruit is so fleshy and broad they are easily absorbed, while dark pudding, warm tar, licorice snap and roasted alder notes flow in on the lengthy finish. Reveals a gorgeous Turkish coffee accent at the very end. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2025 through 2040. 6,800 cases made."*

- JM, Wine Spectator

"The deep garnet-purple colored 2015 La Mission Haut-Brion is a blend of 58% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Franc and 35% Cabernet Sauvignon. Youthfully mute with bright, youthful red currants, black raspberries, cassis and freshly crushed blackberries notions, it slowly unfurls to reveal an earthy/minerally undercurrent of damp soil, charcoal, iron ore and truffles plus a waft of violets. Medium to full-bodied, decadently fruited and yet wonderfully elegant with very ripe, very silky tannins, freshness that sits well in the background and an almost electric intensity of vibrant red and black fruit flavors, it finishes long and minerally. Just. Beautiful. Consider giving it 6-7 years in bottle before broaching and drink it over the next 30+. 2024 – 2055."

- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The 2015 La Mission Haut Brion is a blend of 58% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Sauvignon and 7% Cabernet Franc that was picked between 9 September and 1 October. Matured in 78% new oak, it has an incredibly pure bouquet with intense blueberry, blackberry, iodine, and cold stone aromas that soar from the glass. There is nothing holding back here - a La Mission with real exuberance. The palate is medium bodied with incredible intensity in the mouth, but without any leaden weight. It is a startling La Mission Haut-Brion to behold at this early stage. It is one of those wines whereas a professional critic, I had to adopt a poker face to hide the untrammled joy this nascent wine imparts. Complete and profound, the 2015 will rank as one of the great modern-day classics from this grand estate, another to add to that long list of magical La Missions. Drink 2030-2070."

- NM, Wine Advocate

"The 2015 La Mission Haut-Brion is a blend of 58% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Sauvignon and 7% Cabernet Franc that was picked between 9 September and 1 October. Throughout its barrel maturation it has clearly retained that purity of fruit with copious blackberry and blueberry scents, that cold stone/cave-like element perhaps more accentuated now that the wine is in bottle. The palate is very well balanced with firm tannin that provides a solid backbone to this La Mission. It is already a complex and intellectual wine with layers of black fruit infused with black olive tapenade, hints of seaweed and white pepper, fresh and tensile from start to finish with a persistent finish that seems to go on for over 60 seconds. As I remarked during en primeur, the 2015 will rank among the

canon of great wines from this estate. I can now rubber-stamp that statement. Anticipated maturity: 2025 - 2060."

- NM, Wine Journal

"Rose petals, sandalwood and currants with some plums and fruit tea. Full-bodied, tight, and focused. Incredibly straight and minerally. Toned muscles here. Tannic. Traditional and unwavering. Try in 2024."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"The purity in this wine is really mind-blowing. So perfect. Licorice. Stone. Blackberry, blueberry. Full body. The power is amazing. But then it finishes ethereal and so agile and beautiful. I am lost for words. This will rank with the best ever from here including 1975 and 1929. 58% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Sauvignon, and Cabernet Franc"

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This wine, rich and opulent, defines the terroir of this estate. It has a rich, dense character, powerful and concentrated. The juicy black fruits enhance the impression of generosity as well as concentration. Drink from 2027. Cellar Selection"

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"96-98. Barrel Sample. While the wine is solid and firm, there is the sense that it also has a more opulent side. That comes from the powerful black fruits that are lying under the dry, solid tannic structure. It is a concentrated, impressive wine with a long future."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Very dark and glamorous-looking. Fairly dumb nose but obviously great weight and intensity. A big brooding monster! Massive charge of tannins. Big and pretty alcoholic on the end. Not very communicative at the moment. Lots of palate-tanning tannins. After a while in the glass, a whiff of cordite emerged. Sorcery?! 15.1%. Drink 2030-2050"

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Taut and tense from the off: coffee, smoky almond and pulsing with vibrancy and energy. Reservations over the high alcohol at 15.1%abv but 3.74pH means you barely feel it. Such beautiful tannic grip and sense of forward motion, showing great ageing potential. Beautiful length of damson and loganberry fruits and fragrant heather and garden herbs. Lovely texture, structured and tannic hold. 78% new oak."

- JA, Decanter.com

"With a depth of color from the rim to the center of the glass, this is all about the incredibly ripe, dark red fruits, soft, but strong tannins and the layers of fruit that seem to start and have a hard time stopping. The finish hangs in there for over 40 seconds! The wine is rich, full bodied and concentrated, yet it is elegant, powerful, and graceful. Everything is in balance and harmony here. This will easily age for 3, 4, 5 or 6 decades."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Smoke, tar, tobacco, flowers, boysenberry and cassis pop with no effort. On the palate, this wine combines power with freshness, length, and purity of fruit. Rich and structured, this delight delivers a multifaceted finish, which I timed at close to 60 seconds! Created from a blend of 58% Merlot and 35% Cabernet Sauvignon and 7% Cabernet Franc, the wine reached 15.1% alcohol with a pH of 3.74. The Grand Vin was made from 56% of the harvest, which took place from September 9 to October 1."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Deep saturated colour; depth on the nose; black fruits but not over-played; some sweetness to the fruit; mannered; cherry and ripe plums; wood a bit present in terms of a slight dryness; will obviously fill out; I always find La Mission the drier and more obviously tannic of the two siblings at this stage; chew on the finish and some warmth. Density. Lots of extract and texture. Minerality. [58% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Cabernet Franc, 15.1%]. Tasted Haut-Brion 7/4/16. Drink 2025-2045. 94-96+"

- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

Reviews

“Marking a huge contrast with the cooler, more graceful 2014 (which I prefer), this is a muscular, even monumental red: tannic, concentrated and a little pruney. It teeters on the edge of excess, but it is pulled back by its acidity. I will watch how it ages with interest. Drink: 2025-35”

- TA, timatkin.com

“Frequently the qualitative equal of sister-Chateau Haut Brion and in some years even better. The historic La Tour Haut Brion vineyard has been incorporated into La Mission now but most of the fruit is relegated to the 2nd label - La Chapelle de la Mission. La Mission's production levels are now smaller than ever and, more than ever, it can be seen as an 'honorary' First Growth. There are normally around 5000 cases produced annually. The vineyard is planted with 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Cabernet Franc and 40% Merlot. The 2015 is 58% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Sauvignon and 7% Cabernet Franc and has a huge 15.1 degrees of alcohol. Deep ruby colour in the glass. Smoky bacon and tobacco sit beneath a nose of brambly black fruit on the nose. This is an exotic, heady and ripe nose. The palate is concentrated, ripe and hedonistic with oodles of ripe cassis fruit and a little damson resting on a bed of smoking charcoal and cedar. The mouth filling intensity of fruit has thick, ripe tannins that coat the palate with structure. This is a huge wine in the context of the vintage and will need more time than most before becoming approachable. A powerhouse with a supremely long, ripe, and complex finish.”

- Farr Vintners

“The nose seems quite light fragrant and fresh, yet the palate has hidden depth a brooding mix of black cherry and cassis. Chocolate richness in the middle fleshy and ripe, sumptuous yet there is balance between richness and freshness. Sweet ripe black fruits at the back depth of flavour yet the finish is lighter brighter long and elegant.”

- Derek Smedley MW

“Spicy and exuberant, La Mission in 2015 is flamboyant and expressive. The palate is layered, joyful and beautifully woven together - a blend of 58% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Franc and 35% Cabernet Sauvignon. An impressive wine that has great concentration and will be one of the vintages that ages well for many decades.”

- JCL, asianpalate.com

“The 2015 La Mission Haut-Brion is every bit the wine I had hoped it would be. Rich, dramatic and powerful, it exudes intensity in all of its many dimensions. Naturally, the aromatics that make La Mission so compelling have not even begun to develop. Readers should plan on cellaring the 2015 for at least a decade, although I suspect the wine will not be ready to drink before age 20, as it clearly needs to shed some baby fat. A heady mélange of black cherry, plum, smoke, licorice and tobacco build into the dramatic, deeply expressive finish. 2025 – 2065”

- AG, Vinous

“In 2015, La Mission Haut-Brion is translucent and deeply expressive to the core. Remarkably polished for such a young wine, the 2015 also handles its 15% alcohol with grace. Smoke, graphite, tar, leather, and incense, the 2015 exudes intensity allied to freshness, a combination that makes it virtually irresistible in my book. The 2015 is also remarkably nuanced for such a big wine, but it has tremendous persistence in all directions. Scents of rose petal, mint, red cherry, and pomegranate meld into the voluptuous finish. Tasted two times.”

- AG, Vinous

“What this wine brings to the party is volume and power. I was completely taken by La Chapelle (the second wine), but the Grand Vin improves on this in every facet of a great wine. This is so commanding and noble that its beggar's belief. The earth is the foundation to this wine, and it is spellbinding and all-encompassing. A work of art and one which will live for an eternity. I can't imagine being able to drink this wine in my lifetime it is so fantastically youthful and closed.”

- MJ, matthewjukes.com

“More opulent, sexy, and concentrated, the 2015 La Mission Haut Brion is a tour de force that has everything you could want from Bordeaux. A huge nose of smoke tobacco, gravelly earth, graphite, cassis, and blackcurrants gives way to a full-bodied, concentrated, perfectly balanced beauty that has incredible depth of flavor and intensity, yet with no weight. While the overall impression is upfront and, in your face, it has incredible elegance and length on the finish (as well as ripe tannin) and will keep for three decades.”

- Jeb Dunnuck
