

Château Beau-Séjour Bécot 1976

CSPC# 854931

1500mlx6

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

70% Merlot, 24% Cabernet Franc, 6% Cabernet Sauvignon

Appellation

Saint Emilion

Classification

Premier Grand Cru Classe B in 2006.

Website

<http://www.beausejour-becot.com/>

General Info

Situated on the St Martin de Mazerat plateau, immediately to the west of the old town, Beau-Séjour Bécot lies in the very heart of Saint-Emilion.

This historic vineyards of Chateau Beau-Sejour Becot has a long and interesting history. Beau-Sejour Becot began life as an estate owned by the monks of St. Martin Abbey in St. Emilion. The monks managed the Bordeaux vineyards at what later become Chateau Canon. They also watched over the vines that were used to eventually create Beau-Sejour Becot.

Beau-Sejour Becot found its name in 1787 with the help and idea of a member from the Figeac family. General Jacques de Carles, who was part of the Figeac family said the estate should be called Beau-Sejour Becot. The name stuck! Skipping ahead over 100 years, Pierre-Paulin Ducarpe split the Beau-Sejour Becot vineyards between his two children, giving the chateau, plus other structures along with half his vineyards to his daughter. After she married, she took her husband's name, Duffau-Lagarosse. That marriage gave birth to what we now know of as Chateau Beausejour-Duffau-Lagarosse.

In 1924, Chateau Beau-Sejour became the property of Doctor Jean Fagouet. Michel Becot, whose family lived in St. Emilion since 1760 owned Château La Carte since 1929. In 1969, the Becot's purchased Beau-Sejour, renaming it Beau-Sejour Becot. In 1979, the Bécot family enlarged Beau-Sejour Becot with the purchase of 11 acres of Bordeaux vineyards on the Trois Moulins plateau. Since 1985, the property has been managed by his sons, Gérard, and Dominique. Gerard's daughter, Juliette Becot is involved in running Beau-Sejour Becot, as well as the family's other properties in St. Emilion and Cotes de Castillon.

Michel Bécot retired in 1985, turning over the management of the chateau to his two sons Gérard and Domonic. Juliette rejoined them in 2001.

Winemakers

Michel Rolland was the consultant (1980-2018) Thomas Duclot consultant (2018-now)

Vintage

The 1976 vintage for Bordeaux was reasonably good despite some rocky weather conditions.

The growing season began with a hard drought, which affected much of Europe, and both spring and summer were extremely dry. At times, the summer saw severe heat spikes, which were enough to shut some vines down. However, heavy thunderstorms in September rehydrated vineyards but some grapes became waterlogged as a result and the harvest, which was earlier than usual, was disrupted. Unfortunately, as the heavy rains had run through so much of September, some of the initial promise was lost. Although, the grapes were particularly rich and intense with big tannins – as a result of the intensely hot summer – the rains took some of their power away, serving to minimize some of the fruit, body and structure. As a result, the wines failed to have quite the aging power as critics initially thought.

Vineyards

Situation: on the western plateau of Saint-Emilion, in the old parish of Saint-Martin de Mazerat. Surface area: 16,52 ha. Whole estate: 18,50 ha.

Soil: chalk with fossilised starfish. Grape varieties: 70% Merlot, 24% Cabernet franc, 6% Cabernet sauvignon. Planting density: 6,600 vines per hectare.

Average age of vines: 40 years.



Harvest	The date of picking is decided by walking through the vines, examining the colour of stems, tasting berries and then making analysis. "Around 80% of our pickers are the same every year. Some have been coming from 30 years, some are retired, and others take their holidays around harvest time. There are also students, although less than before as the academic year starts earlier. There is one family where three generations have worked in our vineyard."
Vinification/ Maturation	"We vinify plot by plot. For the alcoholic fermentation we use 70-hectoliter, temperature-controlled, stainless steel inverse conical steel-vats. We use infusion methods with pigeage and "donuts" (large rubber rings used to submerge the cap, as seen at Les Carmes Haut-Brion for instance) for gentle and progressive extraction. During the maceration, the berries and the must are protected from oxidation by the immersed cap of skin and so we no longer use SO2 (in that part of the process). In the past we had exceptional aromatics from the beginning, all the way up to the end of fermentation. But I was a little frustrated because I felt the aromatics on the final wine was not as pure or intense. Then I recalled my grandfather saying to me: "When it smells good in the cellar, it means that it is not so good in the glass." He was right. We work now on Beau-Séjour Bécot and Joanin Bécot with this "infusion method" to capture and keep these aromas until bottling.
Tasting Notes	The Bécot family make a highly rated grand vin: rich and lively, it becomes more refined and complex after a few years in the bottle. This wine is deep purple in colour, offers elegant fruit and wood aromas, combined with delicate mineral notes. On the palate, notes of truffle and spices. Beau-Séjour Bécot is soft and supple. It combines rich and flamboyant aromas to a nice acidity that balances this wine. A wine to be tasted matured after 15 to 20 years.
Serve with	Game meats and game birds. Serve at 16°C
Production	75000 bottles made.
Cellaring	Drink now to 2023
Reviews	<i>"This time capsule comes directly from the château's cellars. The wine shows the sweetness from the summer heat in 1976, but the rain that year stops it from tasting prune. It's supple, with hints of raisin and cigar box. The tannins are almost entirely absorbed into the wine; it's a pleasure to drink now. For those looking to experience a mature wine from a great terroir, this would be perfect with a good meal and conversation between friends."</i> - Max LondrelleL, BBR.com
