

Château Haut-Brisson 2012

CSPC# 771459

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

95% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

St. Emilion

Classification

Grand Cru Classe

Website

<http://hautbrisson.com/>

Organic

Certified Organic in 2010.

General Info

Chateau Haut-Brisson, located in the Vignonet sector of St. Emilion, not far from Monbousquet or Teyssier was purchased in 1997 by Taiwanese businessman Peter Kwok. Peter Kwok, the new owner wanted to discover how far he could push the quality envelop for his Right Bank chateau. Before he could do that, he began increasing the size of their vineyards. When Kwok completed his purchase, the estate was only 8 hectares. Today, Chateau Haut Brisson has a total of 12.77 hectares of land in St. Emilion.

Starting with the 2005 vintage at Haut-Brisson, they introduced the small production, 400 case Bordeaux wine, Haut Brisson La Reserve. This higher end cuvee is a selection of the best parcels and the finest barrels. The wine is aged in 100% new, French oak. Both wines drink well young. There is a second wine, Haut Brisson La Grave.

The Château is currently being part-managed by Kwok's eldest daughter, Elaine, aged 32, while the 17-hectare Château Tour Saint Christophe, which was previously owned by Castel, will pass to Karen, aged 27, while Château La Patache has been secured for Howard, aged 24.

Kwok splits his time between Hong Kong and the US, although Treziers said he visits Saint Emilion every two months and loves French culture.

Vintage

After the very cold and dry winter of 2011–2012, bud break lasted throughout April. The rains of April and May, coupled with mild temperatures, resulted insignificant mineralization and strong vegetative growth of the vines.

Flowering was late (29 May) and drawn out, with a delicate fruit set. The old Merlot plants have at times seen yields reduced due to coulure (shatter, a failure of the fruit to set) or millerandage (shot grapes, incomplete development).

There was settled summer weather from 15 July, with the hottest August since 2003, allowing partial recovery of the growth cycle. From mid-July onwards, 2012 was one of the driest vintages of recent years (along with 2005, 2009 and 2010), resulting in a significant water deficit (120mm lower than the thirty-year average). Ripening in early August was prolonged, with peaks of temperature from July to September and reduced rainfall. The biggest daily temperature difference recorded was 12.9°C, the highest in eight years, favoring a high level of anthocyanins and aromatic intensity. September and October were mild, close to the seasonal norm (27–28°C on 5 October).

Vineyards

Chateau Haut Brisson was certified organic in 2010. They are now farming more of the estate using biodynamic farming techniques. The St. Emilion vineyards of Haut Brisson cover 32 acres and sits on mostly sandy soils. The blend for each Bordeaux wine is on average, 80% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Cabernet Franc. The vines are close to 30 years of age. Vinification takes place in thermoregulated stainless steel vats. The wine of Chateau Haut Brisson is aged in 100% new French oak for between, 15 and 18 months.

Vinification

The berries are slightly crushed to extract the juice, and then placed in fermentation vats with their skins. After a 5-day cold maceration, the temperature mounts steadily to start the process of alcoholic fermentation. Colour & tannins from the skins are extracted slowly over 3 days. Once the alcoholic fermentation is completed, the wine is run into oak barrels for aging.

Maturation

Minimum 18 months in French oak barrels, 70-100% new



Tasting Notes	A soft, immediately approachable classic Saint-Emilion. Raspberries, strawberries, plums, balanced with gentle acidity and rounded off with sweet fine-grained oak. A perfect wine to drink with a special dinner
Production	3,000 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2015-2025
Scores/Awards	<p>88 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2015</p> <p>91 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #218 - April 2015</p> <p>90-92 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #206 - April 2013</p> <p>89-90 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2013</p> <p>87-89 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 26, 2013</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Features a lively core of bramble-laced blackberry and plum fruit, giving way to black licorice and roasted apple wood notes on the frankly toasted finish. A touch obvious in style but will have some fans. Best from 2016 through 2019. 3,000 cases made."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"The basic cuvée of Haut-Brisson (95% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Franc) in 2012 is no shy sibling. It is a beautifully made, dense ruby/purple wine with a brilliant display of creamy blackcurrant and black cherry fruit interwoven with spicy oak. This opulently textured, full-bodied wine is another great success from the Kwok family. Of course, the Réserve cuvée is slightly richer and fuller, but this is top-flight as well and a big-time sleeper of this vintage. Drink it over the next decade or more."</i></p> <p>- RP, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The 2012 Haut-Brisson, a blend of 95% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Franc (13.5% natural alcohol), was produced from yields of 35 hectoliters per hectare. Abundant notes of deep black cherries, black currants, loamy soil, underbrush and Provencal herbs are found in this medium to full-bodied St.-Emilion. Impressive purity, texture and length suggest this cuvee can be drunk young or cellared for a decade or more. The energetic Hong Kong finance magnet Peter Kwok, who owns Haut-Brisson, continues to build a burgeoning empire on Bordeaux's Right Bank, having purchased Tour St.-Christophe and Cornaline. All of Kwok's vineyards either have been or are in the process of being converted to organic farming, and Haut-Brisson has won accolades from this publication since his first vintage."</i></p> <p>- RP, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"A wine with berry, chocolate and light hazelnut character. Full body, with fine tannins and a pretty finish. Nicely done. "</i></p> <p>- JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>"With oak, bright cherry fruit, chocolate-covered cherry and a round finish. 87-89 Pts"</i></p> <p>- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com</p>
