

Château Ducru Beaucaillou 2016

CSPC# 756595

750mlx6

13.63% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Merlot

Appellation

Saint Julien

Classification

Second Growth. Deuxieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.

Website

<http://www.chateau-ducru-beaucaillou.com/site2006-va/index.html>

General Info

Classified 2nd growth in 1855. Château Ducru-Beaucaillou is named after the beautiful, large stones found in its unique wine-growing terroir. The exceptional ecosystem produces fine, elegant, tasty wines, with a long finish - in short, archetypal Saint-Julien wines. Perched on an exceptional site with incomparable views over the Gironde estuary, in the centre of a hundred-year-old park, Ducru Beaucaillou is a majestic Victorian-style castle which has, over time, become one of the great symbols of the Medoc. Unusually for Bordeaux, it is built directly above the barrel cellars, enveloping its owners, who have lived here for over sixty years, in the sumptuous aromas of their wine. Today, the estate is managed by the company Jean Eugène Borie SA, which is owned by Mrs. Borie, her daughter Sabine Coiffe and her son Bruno-Eugène, CEO since 2003, the third generation of the Borie family to head the estate.

Winemaker

Rene Lusseau

Vintage

The year 2016 started off with the water tables full, thanks to the heavy rainfall from January to March. Three difficult months for the vineyard workers but which saved the day for this vintage! The mild temperatures in March ensured an early budburst but the colder, rainy mornings in April slowed down the growth cycle. From mid-June to mid-October, rainfall was well below the seasonal average. During the first two weeks of August, the colour change was short and even on each of the properties. The grapes developed in radiant, dry weather conditions. Light showers appeared in mid-September to re-boost the ripening process on the terroirs offering less water retention, thus perfecting the maturation of the tannins. The absolutely perfect weather conditions during harvest time allowed us to pick grapes boasting remarkable quality.

Vineyards

Soil: Günz gravel dating from the early quaternary period; Area: 75 hectares
Average age of the vines: 35 years; Density of the vines: 10000 feet per hectare:
picked from around 28 September to 6 October

Harvest

Vinification/ Maturation

Already reduced by shot berries, millerandage and a difficult flowering, the net yields (after green pruning and thinning as well as different degrees of manual, mechanical and optical sorting) were extremely low: 30 hectolitres/hectare. Together with the 2011 vintage this is the smallest crop at Ducru Beaucaillou during the last 25 years.

Tasting Notes

This is packed and stacked with tons of spiced red and black fruit, a long, thick texture and super sweet tannins. Blackberry, wild raspberry, pencil lead and dark chocolate are present in this huge and tensile wine of strength and focus.

Production

7,500 cases made.

Serve with

Pair this wine with whole chicken roasted with herbs, lamb sausage with rosemary new potatoes, or veal in an olive oil-based sauce.

Cellaring

Drink 2022-2058

Scores/Awards

97 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2019

97-100 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2017

98 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate Interim Issue - November 2018

96-98 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #230 - April 28, 2017

99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2019

97-98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2017

98 points/Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 2018

97-99 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2017



Scores/Awards **17 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 5, 2017
97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - October 2018
97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2017
99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2017
96 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2017
18 points - Farr Vintner - February 2017
90-95 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2017
97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - January 2019
98 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - January 2019
94-97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2017
100 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2019
96-99 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - November 2017

Reviews *"Offers exotic, cashmere-textured, mocha-infused blackberry, cassis and plum puree flavors, with smoldering incense and warm fruitcake notes and a swath of plush yet serious grip too boot, showing ample depth and breath. As distinctive a Bordeaux as there is these days. Best from 2025 through 2040. 7,500 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Offers a scintillating display of roasted apple wood, incense and warm ganache before the core of cassis, plum preserves and raspberry reduction starts to step forward. The finish, loaded with grip but remarkably polished, pulls everything together. A huge, undeniable wine, overt in style. Score range: 97-100"
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2016 Ducru-Beaucaillou features a wonderfully savory, earthy/meaty nose, delivering well-defined notes of tapenade, truffles, charcuterie and sautéed herbs over crème de cassis, wild blueberries and kirsch with wafts of pencil lead and menthol. Medium to full-bodied, the palate is built like a brick house with the taut, muscular fruit well framed by very firm yet very ripe and finely grained tannins, offering a quiet intensity of red fruit and mineral sparks and finishing with epic length."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The 2016 Ducru Beaucaillou...the bouquet is very closed at first, and so I aerated the Grand Vin by transferring from one glass to another. It gradually unfurls to reveal scents of blackberry, bilberry, cedar and a touch of pencil lead. The palate is medium bodied with a firm backbone cloaked in layers of black fruit. The new oak is probably more present here than some of its peers, but there is more than sufficient substance to absorb that. The mineralité surfaces right towards the persistent finish, completing what is a Ducru Beaucaillou built for the long term."
- NM, Wine Advocate

"Super perfumed, attractive violets with a thread of fresh blueberries, cassis, blackberries and dark plums, delivering a very enticing impression. Beautiful ripeness here. The tannins are perfectly ripe and layers meld into each other, carrying deep, graceful and plush, velvety dark fruit long into the vibrant and seductive, chocolate-laced finish. Great potential. Try from 2024."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Very focused and reserved with a mineral, blackberry, licorice and blackcurrant character. Full and refined. Walking a tightrope between steely tannins and dark fruit. This is highly intellectual and unique. Great finish. Remake of the extraordinary 2014? Stronger than the 2015, for sure."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This wine conveys density, but its richness is sublimated by the complex structure and beautiful ripe fruit. Its power comes from the structure as much as the fruit, promising a wine with an immensely long life ahead of it. Drink from 2025."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"97–99. Barrel Sample. This wine is so stylish, with a great future that is all balance and elegance. There are structured tannins as well as ample acidity that will allow the wine to age gracefully. A great Ducru with restrained power for long-term aging."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

Reviews

“85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Merlot, 100% new oak. Yields were the lowest in the commune: just 37 hl/ha because of poor flowering, esca pruning and selection. Still, 7,500 cases made! Very dark. Racy and sinewy with lots of richness and energy. Smooth and supple and quite sweet – arguably too sweet? – but with masses of tannins buried down there. Blackberry compote mixed with health juice. “

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“Bruno suggests the 2018 might be a little like the 1961, but instead of frost at flowering they had mildew. Yields were average at 20hl/ha, the stunning summer helping to produce incredible concentration. This is a whole other level of richness and tightness, with very fine, taut tannins and concentrated, utterly gorgeous fruit with touches of violet and a silky, spun-lace texture. This is one of the best wines I've tasted today, just supremely elegant with depth and verticality. It's still knitted up and only unrolls extremely slowly; linear and laser-like. It has the concentrated signature of 2016 with lift, but again in St-Julien I can also see the hand of 2010, more so than in other appellations. Drinking Window 2026 - 2045 (JA)

- JA, Decanter.com

“Another exceptional success for St-Julien in 2016, following the longest growing season in the recorded history of the property. Reasonable alcohols, because of the slow maturation, emphasize the juiciness of the fruit. Hugely intense and concentrated black brambly fruits, with layer upon layer of stunning liquorice, dark chocolate, rich black cherry and graphite. This is an utterly beautiful wine and it approaches the essence of what owner Bruno Borie must want for this estate, I am sure. It is easy to imagine uncorking this with excitement in 10 or 15 years. The final blend is 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot, with a high tannin index of 80IPT and a 3.71pH, aged in 100% new oak for 18 months.

Drinking Window 2027 – 2050”

- JA, Decanter.com

“Opaque with shiny, purple highlights, this creation is brimming with flowers, licorice, dark berries, boysenberry, black cherry, smoke, espresso and a spot of wet earth on the nose. With velvet textures, density of fruit and a finish that remains with you for close to 60 seconds, this is a seldom-encountered purity of fruit, which is pulling ahead in the competition for the best Ducru Beaucaillou ever! Produced from 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot, the wine reached 13.63% alcohol with a pH of 3.71 and is aging in 100% new French oak barrels. The Merlot was harvested from September 26 to September 30 and the Cabernet Sauvignon from October 7 to October 14. Yields were only 30 hectoliters per hectare

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“A delicious, focused, well-structured Ducru from a very fine vintage, this has fine tannins, very stylish oak integration, dark berry scents, some Asian spices and a silky, polished finish. Deceptively forward, because this should age beautifully in bottle. 2025-40”

- TA, timatkin.com

“Ducru is on top form these days. Bruno Borie has made some very serious wines at Ducru in recent vintages with many vats previously destined for the grand vin now being used for the second label. From 2003 onwards production of the first wine has been reduced from 15,000-20,000 cs to 9,000-11,000 cs. There is now more second wine - La Croix de Beaucaillou - than there is Grand Vin. Bruno's policy is now to only select fruit from the heart of the Ducru vineyard, overlooking the estuary for the Grand Vin. Ducru is clearly back where it belongs at the top of the super-second league. Picked between 24th September and 14th October, the 2016 is a blend of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot, in 100% new oak barrels. Creamy and ripe on the nose with bramble fruits, vanilla pod and wood smoke. The palate is intense and powerful, with muscular yet ripe tannins providing ample structure for the generous cherry and damson fruit. The purity of fruit takes well to the smoky, spicy oak treatment that adds layers of sweet and savoury complexity. Very fine, precise and long on the finish, this is harmonious, classic and complex Bordeaux of the highest quality.”

- Farr Vintners

Reviews *"Spring violets the nose has a fragrant floral charm the start of the palate has a mix of fresh fruits quite light but there is mid richness depth sweet fruit. The tannins are fine integrated the back palate supple and fleshy the finish stylish lighter with blueberry freshness. 2026-45"*

- Derek Smedley

"The 2016 Ducru-Beaucaillou, bottled in August 2018, is very deep in color. It has a tightly wound bouquet of blackberry, boysenberry and minerals and a faint estuarine tang of oyster shells. The palate is medium bodied with very fine tannin, layers of pure blackberry and wild strawberry, and veins of blue fruit tinged with a conspicuous graphite note that becomes more pronounced with aeration. This is almost a Pauillac-like Ducru-Beaucaillou, quite noble and blue-blooded. A wine that should give 40 to 50 years of drinking pleasure."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2016 Ducru-Beaucaillou is an arrestingly beautiful wine. Powerful and sensual in the glass, the 2016 exudes remarkable concentration from start to finish. Red cherry fruit, pomegranate, blood orange, menthol and sweet tobacco all race across the palate. Vivid, sumptuous and impeccable in its balance, Ducru is one of the wines of the vintage in 2016. It has been unforgettable on both occasions I have tasted it from bottle so far. Drink 2031-2066."

- AG, Vinous

"One of the highlights of the vintage, the 2016 Ducru-Beaucaillou is simply magnificent. Vertical structure and intensity in all of its dimensions make a strong opening statement. Dark blue and black fruit, spice, new leather and smoke run through this superb, spectacularly rich, voluptuous Saint-Julien. The tannins are present, but they are nearly buried by the sheer intensity of the fruit. Nothing really stands out. In the end, the 2016 is a wine of spectacular balance and pure class. The natural richness comes through in the gravitas and profoundness of the finish. Even with all of its intensity, the 2016 comes in at just 13.5% alcohol. Tasted two times."

- AG, Vinous

"Reminding me of the 2010 with its incredible stature and class (as opposed to the more opulently styled 2009), the 2016 Château Ducru-Beaucaillou is a legendary wine from the genius of Bruno Borie, who has managed this estate brilliantly since he arrived in 2003. A blend of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot brought up all in new oak, the 2016 has a mammoth bouquet of crème de cassis, espresso, camphor, crushed violets, toasty oak, and graphite. Full-bodied, concentrated, and backward on the palate, it nevertheless has perfectly integrated acidity and building tannins, a concentrated, layered texture, off-the-charts purity of fruit, and a finish that won't quit. Give this powerful, concentrated wine a solid 7-8 years of bottle age and enjoy it over the following 50 years or more."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"Showing how strong the Médoc is in 2016, the 2016 Ducru-Beaucaillou is going to rival the 2009 and 2010 (although it's more in the style of 2010). Inky colored and loaded with classy notes of crème de cassis, liquid violets, blueberries, graphite and building minerality, it's full-bodied, concentrated, rich, deep, and tannic. This is a tour de force readers should snatch up. 2026 – 2066"

- Jeb Dunnuck
