

Château Ducru Beaucaillou 2020

CSPC# 756595

750mlx6

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

81% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Merlot

Appellation

Saint Julien

Classification

Second Growth. Deuxieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.

Website

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

Analysis

pH: 3.83 Total polyphenol index: 90 Anthocyanins: 1000

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.

2020 Label

In celebration of its tercentenary, Château Ducru-Beaucaillou has reinvented its historic label. At once elegant and sophisticated, decisively modern and audaciously disruptive, the new design nonetheless maintains continuity with the estate's history and centuries-old values, striking a magnificent balance between the classic and the contemporary in an expression of joy and liberty.

Capturing the brilliance, perspectives, and energy of the 2020 vintage, the design is the result of a holistic approach to the aesthetics of the bottle and the wine within. A true aficionado of contemporary art, Bruno-Eugène Borie explains his affinities:

"It was our conviction that the creation of this ephemeral label designed expressly for Château Ducru-Beaucaillou's three hundredth vintage had to be seen as an event in and of itself. It was necessarily inspired by a kind of poetic rebirth of Ducru-Beaucaillou's legendary label, which had remained unchanged since its creation by the Johnstons in 1870. This new design recalls major art movements and techniques of the twentieth century: abstract art, collage, deconstructed forms, and new realism."

The playful yet deliberate design is reminiscent of lacerated works of art, and the triple collage of the Victorian tower from the château's southern façade incarnates the estate's three centuries of existence and the three generations of the Borie family to helm Château Ducru-Beaucaillou. Like a series of triptychs or ripple effects, they lend resonance to the dazzling illuminations of those inspired beings who have from one era to the next sublimated this most exceptional wine as they sought out myriad expressions of the spirit and celebrations of the ineffable.

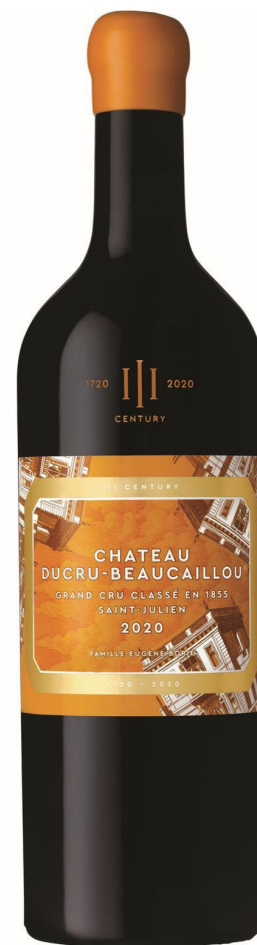
Pure and modern, the tricentenary logotype appears in enameled orange characters on the bottle's shoulder, just above the label. The upper part of the neck is sealed with wax embossed with the estate's seal in its signature orange hue, a color that evokes Orient, Asia and the Palladian art forms that the Johnstons held dear. It is a design in which the present and the past come together in the pursuit of excellence, a feast for the eyes that is a fitting prelude to the delights of the precious nectar within.

Winemaker

Rene Lusseau

Vintage

2020 - a year of more than the usual challenges. In a few words, 2020 is a high-quality vintage of less than normal quantity. The mild and wet spring led to early flowering which in turn turned into a hot summer



Vintage	including over fifty days of drought, and a heat spike during the summer. The diminished yields of the year resulted from mildew pressure in the spring and a few hail-producing thunderstorms, and in fact is one of the lowest yield vintages in the last decade. The heat throughout but particularly at the end of the summer led to concentrated fruit. And of course, COVID 19 led to most critics' inability to travel to the various Chateau or en premiere events to taste, most were able to taste from home. Not an ideal circumstance but given the year's weather and the expertise of these top producers, critics are overall excited and pleased with the prospects of the 2020 vintage.
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.
Harvest	Picking took place September 11 - September 30.
Vinification/ Maturation	Ducru Beaucaillou 2020 will age for 18 months in 100% new oak barrels. Certified French oak naturally matured outdoors. Regular topping-up is carried out during the first six months of ageing. The wines are then racked by gravity every three months, with a total of seven rackings during ageing. Traditional fining performed in barrel with egg whites. Bottling is carried out in a sterile atmosphere under inert oenological gas. Only first-quality natural corks with a length of 54 mm are used. Our bottles are laser etched, engraved with Ducru Beaucaillou, and have holograms incorporated into the labels.
Tasting Notes	Opaque colour with an explosion of rich black fruits, crushed gravel, exotic oak spices and a floral perfume. This wine possesses a tight structure with layered, silky tannins, great precision, and breadth of flavours, underpinned by superb freshness. Very elegantly composed, with perfectly mastered power. Great finish, the flavours perfume the palate with endless persistence. To add to the glorious 2018 & 2019, Ducru Beaucaillou marks its 300 th anniversary with the richest wine in its history. The warm climatic conditions suit it well, allowing Ducru Beaucaillou to assert with great depth its aristocratic elegance. The style of 2020 is reminiscent of the academic 2010 but with a higher concentration of flavours and greater density of anthocyanins and tannins, underlined with the Ducru's trademark freshness, giving an exquisite, succulent texture.
Serve with	Chateau Ducru Beaucaillou is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Ducru Beaucaillou is a perfect match with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, salmon, mushrooms, and pasta as well as cheese.
Production	7,000 cases made.
Cellaring	Drink 2030-2055
Scores/Awards	<p>95 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023</p> <p>95-97 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021</p> <p>99 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - March 2023</p> <p>97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2023</p> <p>98-99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021</p> <p>96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021</p> <p>99 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2023</p> <p>98 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p>97-99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021</p> <p>94 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021</p> <p>94-96 points - Farr Vintners - May 2021</p> <p>96-98 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021</p> <p>100 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023</p> <p>97-99 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021</p> <p>97 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021</p> <p>97-98 points - Vert de Vin - May 2021</p> <p>94-95 points - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"The 2020 Ducru-Beaucaillou unwinds in the glass with aromas of dark berries, pencil shavings, violets, and pipe tobacco, all framed by creamy new oak. On the palate, it's medium to full-bodied, fleshy and concentrated, with a deep but tightly wound core that's still quite wrapped up in extract and oak tannin, even if it isn't quite as big-boned as its 2019 counterpart. It will require some patience."</i></p> <p>- WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"Opaque purple-black colored, the nose slowly unfurls to reveal tantalizing scents of crushed blackcurrants, wild blueberries, and boysenberries, leading to suggestions of chocolate mint, star anise, red roses, and unsmoked cigars with a waft of cedar chest. The medium-bodied palate delivers impactful, muscular black fruits with a firm frame of ripe, fine-grained tannins and seamless freshness, finishing long and fragrant."</i></p> <p>- LPB, Wine Advocate</p>

Reviews

“Deep garnet-purple in color, it is a little subdued to begin, yet soon comes galloping out of the glass with a fabulously intense core of blueberry pie and creme de cassis, leading to suggestions of dark chocolate, Indian spices, rose oil, and iron ore, plus a hint of cardamom. The medium-bodied palate is densely packed with bright black fruits, supported by exquisitely fine-grained tannins and bold freshness, finishing very long with loads of exotic spice and mineral layers. Very perfumed, it is simultaneously powerful, elegant, and beautifully poised - a triumph. This is the 300-year anniversary bottle.”

- LPB, Wine Independent

“Blackcurrants and blueberries with violets and crushed stone. Extremely aromatic. Full-bodied but very tight and reserved, with racy, almost steely tannins. Some subtle sweet fruit in the center palate. Great transparency and clarity. Super precision here. Vertical and polished. Try after 2028.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“Really perfumed and complex with blackberries, blackcurrants, and flowers. Gorgeous cabernet sauvignon character. Full-bodied with really fine, polished tannins. Superb length and intensity. Very compact and seamless. Ethereal. Just goes on and on.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“The tannins are dense while the texture shows a dusty suspended character that gives the wine great charm. Yet, having said that, the concentration will give this wine long term aging both from the acidity and the structure.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Evocative and moreish, a Ducru that beguiles and delights from the start with a scented nose full of cedar, rose, violets, cherries, and damsons - a riot of Cabernet typicity. Vibrant and pulsing on the palate, this has grip and intention from the get-go. Massy, full and wide in the mouth - there's density and this is broad but it's delicate too - a sense of weightlessness with such movement and energy and a soft sweet, succulent grip throughout. Powerful with present tannins that unravel slowly so there's time to appreciate the details as they come. A thoughtful and intellectual wine that leaves a smile on your face.”

- GH, Decanter.com

“An amazing Ducru, one of the wines of the vintage. Hugely persistent, chiseled and precise, yet succulent in its berry and cassis fruit character. The slate and pencil lead finish slows things down and grabs hold of you, I love the push-and-pull of the tannins. Always a confident and well-finessed wine, really flexing its muscles in 2020. 100% new oak barrels.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“Richly colored, the wine delivers a complex nose of cigar box, tobacco leaf, wet forest floor, camphor, red and black currants, blackberry and creme de cassis. Supple, sensuous, elegant, and concentrated, the wine focuses on its refined character, purity of fruit and silky textures. Long, vibrant, and incredibly refined, the finish builds as it lingers. This gem should start to really unfurl after its 10th birthday and provide fabulous drinking for 25-35 years after that. Not as powerful as some recent vintages, instead this is a stunningly graceful Ducru. Picking took place September 11 - September 30. Yields were low at close to 30 hectoliters per hectare.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The 2020 marks Ducru Beaucaillou's 300th anniversary. Production is 25% down on last year. The abv is 13.5%. Deep ruby in colour. The nose is refined but intense, bringing cool blackcurrant fruit with the classic riper flair this wine is known for - hints of kirsch and sweet spice but also floral tones. The oak is present but sits in tandem with a strong graphite note that follows onto the palate, leaving a strong impression of freshness. There is superb delineation of cool black cherry and blackcurrant, bolstered by savoury spices of oak. The tannins are ever-present but refined, adding a full structure without dominating the fruit. This an elegant, chiseled Ducru with a long and harmonious finish.”

- Farr Vintners

Reviews

“The 2020 Ducru Beaucaillou was picked from 11-30 September, matured entirely in new oak for an expected 18 months. It has a very succinct bouquet, not one that leaps from the glass and demands attention, but it unfolds slowly, at its own pace, revealing enticing scents of blackberry, cedar, iris petals and crushed stone. The palate is medium-bodied with sappy black fruit. There is a saline spine that runs through this Saint-Julien from start to finish, a quite enormous structure that exerts grip towards the finish. It is not a Ducru-Beaucaillou that goes out to deliver finesse or understatement, but one that you will have to cellar for a few years, pull out and have the superlatives ready. This is an immense and cerebral Ducru-Beaucaillou from Bruno Borie and his team.”

- NM, Vinous

“Lastly, the 2020 Château Ducru-Beaucaillou is another legendary wine from this château that has been on an incredible run over the past decade. ... it has a saturated purple hue to go with an incredible, mineral-laced bouquet of crème de cassis, liquid violets, graphite, and tobacco leaf. More structured and concentrated than any of the Léoville’s, this blockbuster, deep, concentrated, full-bodied Saint-Julien has off-the-charts purity, ultra-fine tannins, and a great, great finish. I wrote in my notes, “Like the 2010, only better.” You won’t find a more concentrated yet flawlessly balanced and elegant wine out there. It’s going to need a decade of cellaring and will have 40, 50, if not 60 years of longevity.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“The 2020 Château Ducru-Beaucaillou offers a gorgeously pure nose of crème de cassis, graphite, crushed stone, toasty oak, and lead pencil shavings. Full-bodied, concentrated, and structured, it reminds me of a hypothetical mix of the 2010 and 2016, offering serious concentration paired with a gorgeous sense of precision and purity. It’s going to take a decade of cellaring to hit the early stages of maturity (it will have some up-front appeal if you’re interested) yet evolve for 50 years or more. Along with the Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande, it might be the wine of the vintage from the Médoc.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Deep ruby with an opaque core and purple reflections. Savoury notes of cloves, cinnamon and cardamom, floral nuances, dark wild berries, a hint of liquorice, very complex. Juicy on the palate, delicate nuances of blackberry, blueberry and some nougat, ripe, silky tannins, has great length and freshness, good ageing potential, seems light-footed and balanced. A classic Claret of the modern age.”

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“On the nose, elegance/power/subtlety, nice aromas, nice complexity, fine depth, a nice multi-layered side, some freshness, a fine powdery side, and a nice complexity/fullness. It reveals notes of fresh boysenberry, fresh/ripe wild black berries and touches of wild raspberry combined with hints of ripe cherry/cherry blossom, fresh lily as well as hints of star anise, sweet spice. On the palate, fruity, balanced, very fine, very discreetly tight, like a little red thread, and offers juiciness, freshness, minerality, a mineral/acidic frame as well as precision, gourmandize, a nice fineness of grain, a nice guideline, power (in finesse). The wine expresses notes of pulpy/juicy blackberry, bright blackcurrant and touches of juicy/pulpy cherry combined with hints of bright redcurrant, cherry blossom, violet, chocolate, graphite as well as fine hints of star anise, toasted oak/caramelization, discrete hints of zan, cinnamon and an imperceptible hint of eucalyptus. Good length and persistence. Chewy finish/persistence. The tannins are precise, elegant, structured, powerful but delicate and quite polished. A very nice wine, a great wine, maybe the best ever tasted in primeurs, but which needs time to reveal itself! See you in 10 years or more.”

- Vert de Vin

(81% CS, 19% M; 33% harvest; 13.5% ABV; 100% new). A fine Cabernet nose with a discreet new-oak vanilla, refined and very gently mineral; medium-full, very fresh in acidity, and with Ducru’s trade-mark super-fine texture, but this year’s fairly firm tannins; a rich, elegant wine with, clear to perceive, the extra sinew and masculinity that Bruno has said he is looking for in recent vintages, noticeable as a little more extract, making the wine that little bit firmer, and which will make it longer to mellow as well; typically long and effortless and graceful across the palate, and with a lovely, gentle, mineral-fragrant finish. Succulent, juicy, complex, and classy, but also aristocratic, upright, and a touch severe in bearing. It will be very rewarding in the long term. A sort of refined version of 2010 here, less muscle, more polish, lower alcohol, and, as so often, rubbing shoulders with the first growths. 2035–60+.”

- MS, The World of Fine Wine
