

Château Ducru Beaucaillou 2021

CSPC# 756595

750mlx6

12.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

98% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Merlot

Appellation

Saint Julien

Classification

Second Growth. Deuxieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.

Website

<https://www.bordeaux-tradition.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Fiche-technique-Ducru-Beaucaillou-2021.pdf>

Analysis

pH: 3.88 Total polyphenol index: 101 Anthocyanins: 1012

Sustainability

At Ducru-Beaucaillou, excellence is shaped inch by inch thanks to an intimate understanding of what the vines want to offer. Experience, intuition, questioning, for a symbiosis with Mother Earth; humans are only passing through these noble terroirs. Nature being a “subject of law”, every procedure in the vineyard is respectful of the entire ecosystem: herbicides have been abandoned in favour of mechanical weeding and judicious grass cover; chemical fertilisers replaced with manure and quality composts; insecticides with pheromones to fight against grapevine moths or kaolin clay to lure the green leafhopper. Measures to facilitate aeration and sun exposure of the bunches, to avoid Botrytis and, where applicable, bacilli. Before the harvest, constant monitoring of the available nitrogen. Reasoned viticulture, which earned the property ISO 14001 certification in 2016, supplemented since 2017 by HVE3 certification (high environmental value level 3)

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. Œnologues Conseils : Eric Boissenot

Vintage

Like the entire region of Bordeaux, the Margaux 2021 vintage got off to a rough start. The year was shaped by difficulties and challenges. First, the 2021 Margaux vintage was struck by below-freezing temperatures, on April 7 and April 8. Depending on the vineyard, there were various losses of crops due to the icy, unbearably cold nights.

The damage to the Merlot was due to their precocious development. If the frost wasn't enough to deal with, vigneron were also forced to handle heavy periods of rain, downy mildew, uneven flowering, and a lack of sunshine. For all those reasons, 2021 Margaux is truly a winemaker's vintage.

But not everything was bleak for 2021 Margaux. All over the Left Bank, by the end of August, the vintage woke up and so did the growers from what seemed to be a nightmare. Temperatures began rising, and for the first time during the growing season, there was ample sun to help the grapes ripen. Once again, Bordeaux was saved by the late arrival of an Indian Summer. Relatively speaking, except for rainy periods from September 8-9, and 17-19, (the heaviest rainy period), and a few very light showers on September 24-25, things were beginning to much better for the 2021 Margaux vintage.

Vineyards

Soil: Günz gravel dating from the early quaternary period; Area: 75 hectares

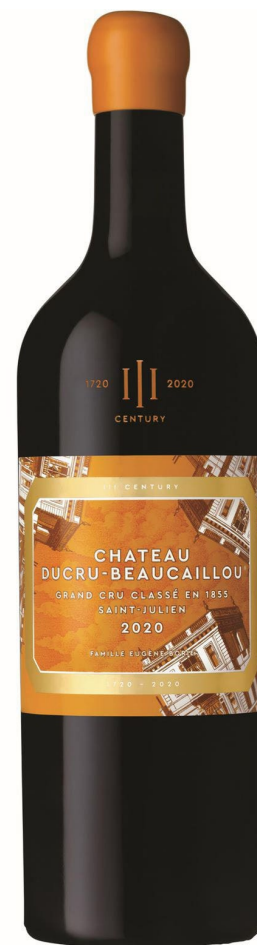
Average age of the vines: 35 years; Density of the vines: 10000 feet per hectare.

Harvest

Harvest took place September 28 - October 11. Yields 25hl/ha.

Winemaking

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



Winemaking	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	Ink color, a pure and concentrated nose with a hint of ink dry opening with notes of fresh violet, crème de cassis, blackberry, and blueberry, followed by exotic spices, a hint cedar and cigar box, and a spark of smoky graphite. The structure is tight, with a firm core of fine, silky tannins, charmers, and impeccable precision; flavors that are engraved with exquisite freshness, giving palpable energy to the palate. Discreet at the start, the wine unfolds and gains power, followed with an impressive, long, ascending and vibrant finish. A pure sophistication.
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	Approx. 7,000 cases made.
Cellaring	Drink 2026-2055
Scores/Awards	<p>94-96 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p>92-94 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - May 2022</p> <p>96-97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022</p> <p>95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2022</p> <p>17.5 points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022</p> <p>96 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022</p> <p>96 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - May 2022</p> <p>97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2024</p> <p>95-97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022</p> <p>95 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2022</p> <p>94-96 points - Thomas Parker, Farr Vintners - April 2022</p> <p>94-96 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p>98 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2024</p> <p>96-98 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p>96 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2024</p> <p>95-97 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022</p> <p>19 points - Matthew Jukes - August 2022</p> <p>99 points - Yves Beck (score only) - June 2022</p> <p>95 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022</p> <p>96-97 points - Terres de Vins (score only) - April 2022</p> <p>96-98 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - May 2022</p> <p>98 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - May 2022</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Unwinding in the glass with aromas of dark berries, cigar wrapper, violets, loamy soil, and spices, it's full-bodied, layered, and velvety, with superb depth at the core, lively acids, and powdery tannins. Complete and penetrating, it's a true classic, reminiscent of a modern-day version of Ducru's brilliant 1996—though today's precision winemaking means that the 2021 is unlikely to go through so long a hibernation as that vintage."</i> - WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"Firm, structured and pure with a cool and solid core of dark currants, blackberries, tar, pencil lead and bitter chocolate. Hints of tobacco, too. Firm but silky tannins. Very pure, with a long, mineral finish. Intense and very focused."</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>"95–97. Barrel Sample. This is a wine with enormous potential with rich tannins and dark black fruits. At the same time, it has lightness that gives it a lift of fine black currant fruits. It will age, of course."</i> - RV, Wine Enthusiast</p> <p><i>"Record proportion of Cabernet in the blend. Cask sample. Deep, bright purple hue. Elegant cedar, dark-fruit, and cassis nose. Lovely depth of fruit, velvety texture, abundant but polished tannins and lingering freshness. Drives on the finish. A well-groomed thoroughbred. Pure, precise, and long and a little more classic than recent years. (JL) 12.5%. Drink 2030 – 2050."</i> - JL, JancisRobinson.com</p>

Reviews

“Beautiful and beguiling nose, perfumed blackcurrants, and dark fruits; damsons, plums, raspberries and rose petals. Lovely crunchy fruit, real bite, and presence in the mouth. Excellent precision, tannins are succulent and ripe they fill the mouth with a juicy, intense granular texture. There is such depth to this - perfume, tobacco, earth, violets, and concentrated fruits that have a verticality to them with an unprecedented 98% of Cabernet Sauvignon providing the support and the backbone. There is a crystalline purity to the fruit giving tension to the overall frame, it’s focused and driven all with excellent definition. This is not a wallflower of a wine - it’s charming and confident, strutting its stuff right now and giving you absolute St-Julien terroir and vintage markers in the glass with slate, graphite, and liquorice salinity on show. Skilled winemaking on show.”
- GH, Decanter.com

“Plush depth to the savoury black fruit, with the highest ever level of Cabernet Sauvignon in this wine, and it’s a standout in the vintage. Not the exuberance that you find in the most recent years of Ducru, but it is excellent, with a creaminess to the cassis fruit alongside rose petal and peony aromatics. Sculpted and seductive, with the austere tannins that are a signature of the year. 100% new oak, IPT 100.”
- JA, janeanson.com

“Classy, and classic, elegant, and refined, I love the purity in the red fruits here in nose, and on the palate. Produced from the highest percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon in the history of the estate, with just a bit of effort you find its aromatic wealth displaying cherries, blackberries, tobacco leaf, flowers, mint, espresso. and spices. The palate is vibrant, regal, slightly firm, crisp, and energetic. The finish delivers its red berries with their spicy edge, and delicate sprig of mint easily. The wine blends 98% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 2% Merlot. Drink from 2027-2060.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Cigar box, tobacco leaf, wet earth, blackberry, flowers, and black currants fill the nose. On the palate, the wine is fresh, polished, soft, and energetic, with a spice, and leafy-tinted finish that leaves you with dark cherries and currants on the backend. There is length, purity, lift, and softness in the finish. This is one of the potential candidates for wine of the vintage. Classic (In a modern way) in style, the wine is a blend of 98% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Merlot. This is the highest percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon in the history of the estate. 12.5% ABV, 3.88 pH. The yields were a scant 25 hectoliters per hectare. Harvest took place September 28 - October 11. Drink from 2026-2055.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Only 20 hl/ha produced at Ducru this year with just 5,000 cases of grand vin. The Cabernet Sauvignon proportion is the highest in history at 98% with just a touch of Merlot. 12.5% abv. Vivid purple colour. Deep blackcurrant fruit showcases the near-all Cabernet fruit in this blend, wafting from the glass with cedar, sous bois and juniper. The palate is cool, driven, and deep, a vertical wine with real drive of blackcurrant as on the palate. Sweet and spicy wood bolsters the fruit and adds some flesh, but this is cut back by chewy, rich and dense tannins. This saline and pure Ducru will need some time to unfurl but the long, saline finish promises a long life ahead.”
- TP, Farr Vintners

“The 2021 Ducru-Beaucaillou was picked at around 24hL/ha and matured in 100% new oak for 18 months, as is customary. It takes time to unfold in the glass, revealing intense blackberry, raspberry, iris flowers and a touch of spice. Very precise, though as expected, more understated than previous vintages. The palate is medium-bodied with a sappy, saline entry and good grip. Classic in style, fanning out toward the finish, and briny on the aftertaste. This is a fascinating, almost old-school Ducru-Beaucaillou.”
- NM, Vinous

“The 2021 Ducru-Beaucaillou captures all the potential it showed from barrel. A delicate, understated wine, the 2021 impresses above all else with its finesse. All the elements are impeccably balanced throughout. Time in the glass brings out the wine’s inner sweetness and gorgeous perfume. The balance with oak, at times a challenge here, is also flawless. With lower alcohol and therefore also less extraction from oak than recent vintages, the 2021 is shaping up to be a modern-day classic. What a wine.”
- AG, Vinous

Reviews

“The 2021 Ducru-Beaucaillou is a pretty significant departure from the past, as it is nearly pure Cabernet Sauvignon. A deep, aristocratic wine, the 2021 possesses remarkable intensity from start to finish. Inky dark fruit, bittersweet chocolate and leather are some of the myriad nuances that develop with some aeration. The 2021 is so well balanced. The 100% new oak, often quite dominant in Ducru en primeur, is so well integrated, likely because lower alcohol extracted less oak imprint. The 2021 is a drop dead gorgeous wine, and a Ducru for the ages. Superb.”

- AG, Vinous

“The 2021 Château Ducru-Beaucaillou is one of the top wines of the vintage. It’s based on 98% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Merlot, harvested from September 21 to October 10, that was vinified in wooden tronconique tanks and brought up all in new barrels. It has a deep ruby/plum hue to go with classic Ducru notes of pure crème de cassis, graphite, crushed stone, and violets, with a kiss of background tobacco and spicy oak. Medium to full-bodied, deep, rich, and concentrated, it has a beautiful mid-palate, ripe, building tannins, and a gorgeous finish. Checking in as 12.5% natural alcohol with a pH of 3.88, hats off to the genius of Bruno Borie and his team for producing a truly Grand Vin in this challenging vintage.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Lastly, the 2021 Château Ducru-Beaucaillou might be the wine of the vintage. It has more depth and density than just about every other wine out there, all while still bringing beautiful tannins and elegance. A blend of 98% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Merlot, harvested from September 21 to October 10th, it was vinified in wooden tronconique tanks and is still aging in new barrels. This beauty hit 12.5% natural alcohol, with a pH of 3.88 and an IPT that’s just about off the charts. Deep black and blue fruits, graphite, spicy oak, tobacco, and chalky minerality all define the bouquet, and it hits the palate with medium to full-bodied richness, a concentrated, powerful mouthfeel, building yet fine tannins, and a great finish. Where most 2021s are going to offer plenty of up-front appeal, this is going to benefit from a solid 4-6 years of bottle age and be incredibly long lived.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“They battled with frost across the Bruno Borie portfolio, but while it was not a problem at Ducru, it was definitely a huge headache at Madame where they lit bougis and used fans for four or five nights. Merlot was most affected with coulure and some millerandage, and then in June and July, they were subjected to record incidences of mildew. Predictive modelling helped the viticulture teams to treat every facet of the vines, and they doubled the squad for eight weeks to around 80 people. This ‘vine cleaning’ significantly reduced volume potential, yet they managed to harvest perfectly ripe grapes. There was no need to green harvest because much of the foliage and some of the bunches had already been removed. 2021 is, in essence, an ode to Cabernet. While Merlot was more problematic up and down the Left Bank, Cabernet proved to be more resistant to all of the climatic challenges at Ducru. Tracey Dobbin MW took me through the range. Her knowledge of the behind-the-scenes decisions was invaluable in understanding why this is such a strong portfolio in this vintage. For example, a small heat spike at the beginning of September knocked out any potential pyrazine, or green, notes that so many of the lesser wines show. They were cautious to avoid any botrytis-affected grapes by forensic sorting. They did this our times – at picking, then manually, then at de-stemming, and finally with an optical sorting machine. The new R&D team even trialled UV treatments in three distinct zones in the vineyard, and who knows whether this worked, but either way, the wines are stunningly pure, so perhaps it had some effect. Extraction had to be very carefully managed because the skins were packed with flavour, but they were still relatively fragile and so super-soft handling was essential, and they only performed remontage in early phases. This background information supports the beguiling perfume and exquisite intensity found in this wine. Pure, long, and upright, and built of amazingly ingredients, this is a catwalk confident Cabernet, staring straight ahead and striding down the catwalk with intent. The fruit on the palate is astonishingly mouth-filling and sumptuous, and yet with only 12.5% alcohol on board, it is also lithe, shape-shifting, refreshing and chillingly bright. Insanely attractive, amazingly concentrated, and brutally elegant, this is one of only a handful of wines that seems to have accepted every challenge thrown at it in 2021 and come back even stronger and more determined to impress.”

- Matthew Jukes

“Vivid, dark ruby with opaque core and narrow purple rim. Fine noble wood nuances, black forest berries, cassis, blackberries, and a touch of fresh orange zest; a multi-faceted bouquet. Juicy, fresh wild berries, subtle hints of cranberries, fine tannins, lively, salty touch, very good length, elegant and animated; a wine with nobility.”

- PM, Falstaff Magazine
