

Château Ducru Beaucaillou 1986

CSPC# 756595

750mlx6

13.95% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% 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

Bruno Borie

Vintage

Winter was harsh, although the frosts were not as sharp as the previous year. Growth was slowed by a cool, damp spring, but the vegetation caught up as a result of the fine weather in late spring/early summer. Flowering took place in exemplary conditions, and conditions continued hot and dry until the middle of September, when heavy rains fell, particularly on the 23rd, when some 10cm of precipitation fell during the course of one day. Temperatures picked up for the October harvest.

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

October

Maturation

Aged for 18 months in 95% new French oak barrels, other 5% of barrels are one year old. The barrels are all made from oak of French origin that is dried naturally outdoors. Regular topping-ups are carried out during the first six months of ageing. The wines, which are racked every 2 to 3 months, undergo a total of seven rackings during their élevage. They are fined in barrel by the traditional method.

Tasting Notes

Supple yet full-bodied, a typically fine Saint Julien that needs 8-10 years to reveal its rich and fruity, elegant flavors of cassis, vanilla and ripe blackberries.

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.

Cellaring

Drink 1995-2020

Scores/Awards

95 points - Thomas Matthews, Wine Spectator - October 1992
91 points - Thomas Matthews, Wine Spectator - June 1989
94 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - August 2020
91 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #228 - December 2016
90+ points - Robert Parker, Bordeaux Book 4th Edition - December 2002
92 points - Robert Parker, Bordeaux Book 3rd Edition - December 1997
92 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #88 - August 1993
90 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal 0312 - November 2011
91-93 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - November 2003
16 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - September 2002
95 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2019



Scores/Awards **88 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2014
88 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - November 2003

Reviews *"A monster in its infancy. Almost black in color, with intense cassis, herb and mint aromas and superrich, dense cassis and licorice flavors. May last forever."*

- TM, Wine Spectator

"Beautifully fruity and intense, with spicy, floral aromas and cassis and violet-like flavors inside an oaky, tannic structure. Finishes dry and hard, so cellar until at least 1995."

- JS, Wine Spectator

"Medium brick in color with a touch of brown, the 1986 Ducru-Beaucaillou reveals growing notes of dried mulberries, kirsch and raisin cake with nuances of celery salt, dried bay leaves, truffles and charcuterie plus hints of old leather sofa and fallen leaves. Medium to full-bodied, the palate has quite a powerful structure with firm, chewy tannins and bold freshness supporting the muscular, dried berries flavors, finishing long with a dried mint kick."

- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The 1986 Ducru Beaucaillou was served by Bruno Borie both decanted and directly from bottle, poured blind. From the bottle, it has an attractive bouquet with plush blackberry and wild strawberry fruit, indeed, showing more fruité than I was expecting. There is a roundness to these aromatics, perhaps a little more like 1985 in some ways. The palate is medium-bodied and here the seriousness and structure of the 1986 vintages shows through. There is impressive body and though it felt firm and masculine on the finish, there is clearly sufficient fruit that counterbalances the backbone. The decanted version showed a little more volatility on the nose, but here I discerned more complexity on the palate. The 1986 Ducru poured directly from bottle felt a little more savory and strangely, more cohesive, with more of the terroir coming through on the slightly loamy, brown sugar-tinged finish. Tasted July 2016"

- NM, Wine Advocate

"At 16 years of age, this wine continues to taste more like a 5 to 7-year-old Bordeaux. The color is a handsome dark ruby with just a bit of pink at the edge. The wine exhibits sweet red and black currant fruit intermixed with wet stones, spice, and flowers. Medium-bodied and still moderately tannic, but very concentrated, this firmly structured, slightly austere wine has tremendous upside to it. By the way, this was the first vintage where I began to notice on some bottles the wet cement/damp cardboard aromas that were far more increasingly evident in the subsequent vintages, 1987, 1988, 1989, and 1990. Interestingly, the last five times I have tasted the 1986 Ducru-Beaucaillou, they were totally pristine bottles. Anticipated maturity: 2006-2030. Last tasted, 5/02."

- RP, Wine Advocate

"This wine remains backward, tannic, and in need of another 5 or more years of bottle age. The 1986 Ducru possesses a dark ruby color with purple nuances. Initially the bouquet is restrained, but with coaxing it reveals scents of lead pencil, sweet cranberry and black currant fruit nicely intertwined with aromas of steel, minerals, and earth. Rich and medium to full-bodied, but excruciatingly tannic, this is an intensely concentrated Ducru-Beaucaillou with formidable aging potential. Readers should note that 1986 is the first vintage where some bottles were marred by off-aromas of damp cardboard. The last three times I tasted the wine the bottles were totally pure, with no evidence of this disturbing irregularity. Anticipated maturity: 2002-2030. Last tasted 3/97"

- RP, Wine Advocate

"A classic Ducru-Beaucaillou built for the long haul, the 1986 is tannic, hard, concentrated, and deep, yet still youthfully firm and closed. Patience is necessary, although this wine is beginning to open up. Anticipated maturity: 1995-2015. Last tasted, 1/93."

- RP, Wine Advocate

"The 1986 Ducru can be variable due to the infection in the cellar at the time. This was a good bottle that is ageing well. The nose displays fine intensity with dark plum, blackberry, graphite and just that touch of oyster shell with well-integrated oak. The palate is medium bodied with supple tannins, missing the delineation of a top-flight Ducru but jam-packed with ripe black fruits towards the long finish. It just misses the precision of today's wines but is still a delicious Saint Julien. Tasted November 2011."

- NM, Wine Journal

Reviews *“Similar colour to the 1985 but more youthful on the rim. The nose is quite muted with scents of dried blood and oyster shells. The palate has similar concentration to the 1985 but far more cohesive and well knit. Dense inky black fruits with cooked meats. Quite complex with sharp acidity. The mid-palate lacks some vigour, but the finish is long and smoky. A very fine masculine 1986. Drink over 10 years. Watch out for defective bottles though (hence the question mark.) Tasted November 2003.”*
- NM, Wine Journal

“Very deep colour with slight evolution at the rim. Clean, dense, and refreshing with some dryness on the finish. Austere, chewy and with noticeable tannin at the end. This is a wine which is dry in both senses: not sweet and extremely tough.”
- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“Blackberry, mint and black pepper abound here. The palate has serious structure, with an emphasis on liquorice, restrained vanilla, cedar, and earth. It's still pretty concentrated and voluptuous. Recorked at the chateau in 2001. The exact blend was not recorded, so the blend shown reflects the vineyard plantings, with 5% Petit Verdot. (JA)”
- JA, Decanter.com

“Tannic, classic, stern and tough style of old school Bordeaux is more fun in the nose than on the palate with its austere, slightly dry personality.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“More tannin than fruit. Hard, austere, and charmless. Not a wine for pleasure seekers.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
