

C H Â T E A U DUCRU-BEAUCAILLOU



2018 Vintage

*“Nihil sine sole, Nihil sine labore”
Nothing without the sun, nothing without work...*

After a difficult spring, the sun literally bathed the entire summer of 2018 from 1 July to 10 October (35 days at over 30°C and 6 at over 35°C).

Adding to this the hard work of our teams, we reached the exceptional with this vintage.

In terms of rainfall, Saint Julien was favoured. From 1 November 2017 to 31 October 2018, the commune saw a deficit of (-) 75 mm compared to the thirty-year average and in the growing season alone (mid-April to mid-October), (-) 39 mm of rain with a marked drought in August and September. This climatic advantage can be clearly found in the appellation's wines.

At the end of the season, the few drops of rain on 6, 21, 23 and 27 September, insufficient to trigger botrytis, completed the perfect ripening of the grapes.

Never – it seems to me – have we picked Cabernet Sauvignons with such a level of ripeness. The Merlots, for their part, are of a very rare constitution. As for the Petit Verdots – which we find only in La Croix Ducru-Beaucaillou – they are historic.

On average, the harvest takes place 120 days after flowering (and sometimes up to 130 days in certain plots). This is an interesting and promising observation, since it indicates that climate warming does not affect the length of the cycle here (for Cabernet Sauvignon in particular), a key parameter in the qualitative equation. Indeed, a long ripening cycle is synonymous with complexity, while a short one results in banality.

The harvest was characterised by fully achieved ripeness, a perfect state of health, very small berries (0.8/0.9 g for Cabernet Sauvignon, 0.9 to 1.0 for Merlot, 0.6 to 0.7 for Petit Verdot), thick skins and ideal pip ripeness (hazelnut).

Given the exceptional nature of the harvest, the technical winemaking itinerary was carefully thought-out in advance with our consultant oenologist then carefully carried out plot by plot, tank by tank, by our Technical Director and Cellar Master who have achieved a true work of art.

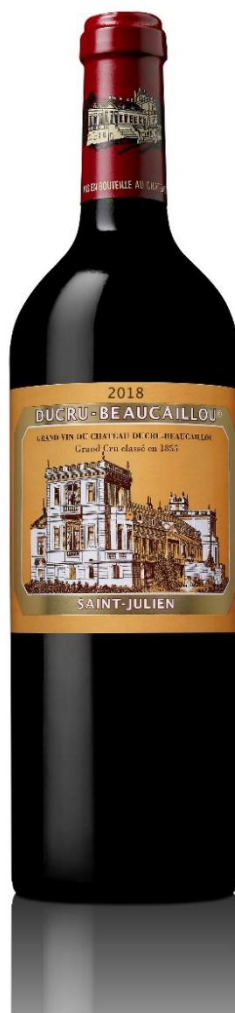
The musts were refreshed as the tanks were being filled, to initiate maceration in the aqueous phase, guaranteeing the extraction of voluptuous tannins and preservation of the fruit.

As the density decreased, pumping over was gradually reduced so that the necessary oxygen was supplied to the yeasts to complete their work, but avoiding the extraction of hard tannins by leaching the skins and seeds in an alcoholic medium.

As a result of the level of ripeness of the grapes but also the draconian sorting that was carried out, as well as the increasingly advanced winemaking techniques used, we note with interest that, while keeping their exceptional ageing potential, our wines are now ready to be tasted in their early youth. This widening of the “window of drinkability” is a boon, as it meets some of our new expectations (introduction of fresh vegetables to meals, more spicy cuisines etc.), and warmer climates that young wines suit perfectly (and better than the oldest).

In the end, the blends are very satisfying: fruit, concentration, richness and smoothness, combined with very nice balance thanks to good acidity and a coherent alcohol level.

While the figures might have invited us to typical characters from further south, these are by no means “wines from elsewhere”. Beyond the power, they have kept a lot of freshness, an enormous amount of fruit. These wines are undeniably Saint-Julien, resolutely Ducru-Beaucaillou.



Everything here is harmoniously counterbalanced, which is why we can no doubt talk about this vintage as a “game-changing” vintage.

Game-changing in two ways:

Game-changing on the emotional level: on tasting, a wine that invades the entire palate and flows into us, irrigating the whole body, sending incredible, unknown shivers down the spine.

And game-changing in the frame of reference: this is a new “yardstick”. A new benchmark. After this, as was the case for benchmark vintages such as: 1945 or 1961. Nothing will be the same again!

Bruno-Eugène Borie

2018
 NIHIL SINE SOLE
 NIHIL SINE LABORE

CHATEAU
 DUCRU-BEAUCAILLOU
 JEAN-EUGÈNE BORIE

15 J. / days > 30°C
 5 J. / days > 35°C
 26 J. / days 0.5 <-> 10 mm
 3 J. / days <-> 21 mm

1st of June
 July
 August
 Sept.
 130 J. / days
 Picking: 19 september 2018

DUCRU-BEAUCAILLOU®
 GRAND VIN DU CHATEAU DUCRU-BEAUCAILLOU
 Grand Cru classé en 1855

Merlot
 100% manual
 Merlot
 19 september / 28 september 2018
 Cabernet Sauvignon
 24 september / 10 october 2018

SAINT-JULIEN

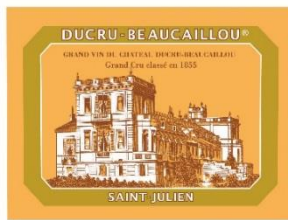
18 months
 100% of new french oak barrels
 Racking "à l'esquisse"
 every 3 months.

15% Merlot
 15% Cabernet Sauvignon

4 to 5 weeks
 Cuvée

Bouleversant

BRILLIANT
 PURPLE-BLACK
 POWERFUL
 GENEROUS
 PERSISTENT



2018 Château Ducru-Beaucaillou

The story:

The heatwave that started at the end of June continues until the harvest. It totally reverses the concerns known in the spring and the prospect of a great vintage is precised from day to day.

The harvesting of Merlot on the Ducru-Beaucaillou plateau began on 25 September and finished on 28 September.

The harvesting of Cabernet-Sauvignon started on 29 September and finished on 10 October.

Cellar Master Tasting Notes (March 2019):

Color : deep, intense, brillant purple-black. Vivid and attractive.

Nose : redolent of black fruits, hint of graphite and violets.

Palate : powerful and elegant structure, fleshy, rich, polished tannins, remarkable length risen by a wonderful freshness. A new standard.

The blend:

- 85 % Cabernet-Sauvignon
- 15 % Merlot Noir

Technical details:

2018 Ducru-Beaucaillou	
Alcohol by volume	14,50 %
Total acidity (H2SO4 g/l)	3,60
pH	3,7
Phenolic index	95

Our commitment:

*The Sample shown was taken from the final selection carried out in the first quarter of 2019. This wine will be aged **18 months** in **new oak barrels**. Our barrels are made from certified French oak, dried naturally outdoors.*

Regular toppings up are carried out during the first six months of ageing. The wines are raked from the bottom of the barrels every three months for a total of seven rackings during the ageing period.

Traditional fining with egg whites is carried out in the barrels. Bottling takes place in a sterile atmosphere under inert gas.

Only the highest quality, all natural corks are used. These are 54 mm long. Our bottles are engraved with the Ducru-Beaucaillou name, laser etched, and include a hologram in the label, for purposes of enhanced traceability.

THE WINE CELLAR INSIDER

by Jeff Leve **98-100**

JEB DUNNUCK

97-100

matthewjukes

THE BORDEAUX REPORT

20+



98-100

Wine Spectator

by James Molesworth

96-99

JAMES SUCKLING.COM 

What is JamesSuckling.com?

98-99

WINE ENTHUSIAST

by Roger Voss

96-98

Decanter

by Jane Anson

97



by Lisa Perrotti-Brown

97-99

vinous

by Antonio Galloni

95-98

2018 **Ducru Beaucaillou** – Pitch black in color, the wine explodes in the glass with flowers, black fruits, wet earth, rocks, stones and a vintage cigar box from the Hotel Monte Carlo. The depth of fruit and flavor is surreal. The wine has authority. Baskets of red and black pit fruit drench your palate, staining your teeth. It is refined, well-designed and dances on air. This is a contender for the best vintage ever produced at Ducru and that is really saying something considering the incredible run of vintages produced here since 2005. The wine was made from a blend of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15%

The grand vin of this terrific estate, the 2018 Château Ducru-Beaucaillou is based on 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot that will spend 18 months in new barrels. It's as classy as they come, boasting a deep purple/blue color as well as awesome notes of pure crème de cassis, smoke tobacco, crushed rock-like minerality, and violets. Haute couture at its finest, with full-bodied richness, building structure and tannins, and remarkable purity, it's certainly in the same ballpark as the magical 2016.

The berries here were around 10-15% smaller than in regular vintages and this goes some way to explaining the volume of flavour and devastating stance of this imperial creation. The key to making such a masterpiece at Ducru was avoiding over-extraction coupled with the care and attention that they paid during winemaking. *Réjouissant* was the word that owner Bruno Borie used when we tasted this wine together and I know that this translates as 'worthy of rejoicing', but also 'heartening' and 'gratifying'. This wine is all of these things and more. It is nothing short of a masterpiece in my opinion. Of course Ducru is often a flamboyant wine and in this vintage, with its extraordinary growing season, those Châteaux that are used to creating larger-framed more ostentatious styles of wine were bound to do very well. With all of the exuberance one might expect under this label but also with immense reserve and a heightened IQ this wine sets a new standard for this estate. It is not a once in a decade wine - it is a once in half a century wine. Control and precision are the watchwords here and this is done of such a scale and with such panache that it is sensational. This is a wine which will amaze every single person on the planet. I cannot think how it could be improved. This is such a detailed wine with so much fruit integrity it is amazing and I have never tasted anything like it from this property. It follows that I am honour-bound to award this delicious wine a perfect score. **20+**

Jet black with a violet rim in the glass, this begins with a fabulously dark nose, all black violets and black bean, grilled black cherry and currants, with a strong floral character. It is broad and yet so elegant on the palate, reposed, restrained, stylish, refined, with a brooding and sinewy substance filled and dark dried fruits, wrapped in a tightly grained structure. It has great density, but this is contrasted with freshness, breadth, vivacity and energy, all of which is supported by a bed of fine, tightly knit, cashmere tannins. This has simply fabulous potential. The *élevage* will be 18 months, in 100% new oak barrels. 98-100/100

CHÂTEAU DUCRU-BEAUCAILLOU St.-Julien 2018 Score: 96-99

Another rock 'em sock 'em St.-Julien here, brimming with nearly exotic blackberry, plum, blueberry and açai berry reduction notes, bristling with brambly energy and racing through a graphite-edged finish. Shows gorgeous perfume throughout, despite the fairly obvious level of concentration.—*J.M.*

This is so layered and beautiful with incredible tannin quality. Full-bodied with a caressing texture that reminds me of the finest cashmere. So layered. You want to swallow this. Brings a smile to the face. Wow. So well crafted.

96-98. Barrel Sample. This is a powerful wine that shows big tannins and great concentration that are matched with intense acidity. The result is a magnificent wine with the dense fruit flavor and bold structure that will lend well to aging.

Extremely complex, this is tight and holds on with an initial austerity. The plentiful tannins layer up right through the palate, but they are sandwiched by gorgeous blackberry and cassis fruits. There's an inkiness and a spice box feel here, with notes of dried herbs, black olive tapenade and graphite, all generously present.

The longer the wine stays in the glass, the more the flesh of the fruit takes precedence and yet the wine manages to also convey a St-Julien classicism. This has all the elements to age exceptionally well, and to give great pleasure along the way.

fruit and floral nuances, it has an exquisitely ripe, fine-grained frame and fantastic freshness supporting the multifaceted, beguiling fruit, finishing with tons of fragrant flowers and mineral sparks. At once beautifully elegant and wonderfully bold.

The 2018 Ducru-Beaucaillou is a wine of pure and total sensual beauty. Layers of intense fruit nearly cover the massive tannins that lurk beneath. Sweet floral notes, spice, mint, lavender and rose petals all grace a sublime Ducru that is long on class and character. In most recent vintages, Ducru has been a tannic behemoth, but the 2018 is remarkably silky, sumptuous and nuanced. In 2018, Ducru is not an obvious wine, but it is exceptionally beautiful. The 2018 is 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot. New oak is 100%. Tasted two times.