

CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC
1^{er} GRAND CRU CLASSÉ "A"



TASTING NOTES 2011

WEATHER CONDITIONS

The vegetation period lasting from 1st April to 3rd September was warm and dry, in particular in April, May and June. On 26 and 27 June for example, temperatures reached 37.8°C. This very hot, sunny weather caused a few incidents of heat damage. July was cool, with average rainfall, while August was quite hot with higher than average rainfall (78mm against the norm of 64mm). The exceptionally hot, dry September allowed us to pick the grapes in optimum conditions.

THE VINE CYCLE

The budburst came fairly early: 26 March for the Merlot and 29 March for the Cabernet Franc.

Flowering occurred extremely early, on 12 May for the Merlot and 17 May for the Cabernet Franc, due to the very high temperatures in April and May. Mid-veraison was observed on 17 July for the Merlot and 24 July for the Cabernet Franc. This was the earliest ever recorded at Cheval Blanc. The cool month of July and the rainy August resulted in a fairly slow, gradual ripening process. So while the harvesting dates were

quite early they were less so than in 1997 and 2003. The excellent weather conditions in September allowed the grapes to attain optimum ripeness on each plot. We were thus able to stagger the harvesting over more than three weeks, from 6 to 28 September. The early drought caused a halt in the growth of the earliest branches on the gravel plots between end June and mid-July. On the clay soils growth stopped at the end of July. The rainy month of August maintained growth on the sandy soils through to mid-September. The pressure of vine disease such as mildew was extremely low until July, picking up slightly at the end of the season due to the August rainfall. The vines opened out generously and most of the plots required thinning. The final yield was slightly higher than the ten-year average.

COMPOSITION OF THE RIPE GRAPES

The weight of the ripe grapes was slightly below average. This is a concentration factor which varies greatly from one soil type to the next. Sugar contents at ripeness were lower than the average over the period 2004-2011 for the Merlot. An almost unheard-of event occurred: the Cabernet Franc grapes had higher sugar content at ripeness than the Merlot. The Cabernet Franc is a later-ripening variety than the Merlot and this year was able to make the most of the highly favourable conditions in September. Ph levels were relatively low in







the Merlot and higher in the Cabernet Franc. Malic acid content was low in both varieties, indicating very good ripeness. On the gravel and clay soils, the grapes were richer in phenolic compounds than the average over the period 2004-2011, which is logical given the low weight of the grapes. On the sandy soils the values were close to the long-term average. But we were below the record values of 2010.

QUALITY OF THE VINTAGE

Several factors contributed to the quality of the 2011 vintage. The hot weather led to early yet complete ripening of the grapes. The water stress brought early growth to a halt and limited the size of the grapes on soils with low or medium water reserves (gravel and clay). The August rains penalised the vintage's potential slightly, particularly on the sandy soils where the vines were not yet in a situation of water stress. The later-ripening Cabernet Franc suffered less in August and was able to reach its full potential in the beautiful September weather. The exceptional event was the fact that the Cabernet Franc grapes were sweeter, less acidic and had less total phenolic compounds than the Merlot.



CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC

The colour is a deep crimson.

The first nose immediately reveals the wine's complexity. The aromatic expression combines hints of violet and peony which develop towards notes of summer fruit, raspberry and black cherry.

This stylish vintage boasts aromatic freshness, precision and clarity.

On the palate the attack is rounded and ample. The middle palate is full and fleshy, with an exceedingly long-lasting finish.

The tannins are elegant and silky, creating perfect balance on the palate.

This wine leaves a highly aromatic impression of fruit and freshness.

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PREMIER GRAND CRU CLASSÉ "A" SAINT-ÉMILION





PREMIER GRAND CRU CLASSÉ "A" SAINT-ÉMILION

LE PETIT CHEVAL

Garnet-red with purple tints.

The bouquet is brimming over with nicely ripe red-fruit aromas, notes of raspberry and blackberry along with hints of spices and black pepper.

This highly aromatic wine is similar to the first wine in its freshness and clarity.

The palate underscores the wine's great balance and length. The attack is full, the texture rounded and dense in the middle palate, revealing a perfectly integrated woodiness.

The intense finish is as fresh as it is long-lasting.

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PREMIER GRAND CRU CLASSÉ "A" SAINT-ÉMILION





CHÂTEAU LA TOUR DU PIN

La Tour du Pin is an 8-hectare vineyard located in very close proximity to Château Cheval Blanc.

The terroir consists of gravel and sand soil on a clay subsoil.

The vines (75% Merlot and 25% Cabernet Franc) are an average of 35 years old.

The experienced Cheval Blanc technical team has been managing the estate since 2006.

Precision winemaking is accompanied by an ongoing commitment to improve quality.

This Saint-Émilion *Grand Cru Classé* is also especially respectful of the environment.



CHÂTEAU LA TOUR DU PIN

A lovely deep red colour.

In the nose the bouquet releases aromas of very fresh fruit: cherry, raspberry and cassis, mingling with notes of spices and cocoa.

The attack is powerful while the middle palate develops towards a nicely fresh impression.

The smooth finish only serves to emphasise the particularly fresh aftertaste.

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CHÂTEAU QUINAULT L'ENCLOS

Acquired in 2008 by Baron Frère and Mr Bernard Arnault, Château Quinault l'Enclos is an elegant vineyard located within the city limits of Libourne.

It benefits from a unique microclimate thanks to its proximity to the Dordogne.

The very homogeneous *terroir* is predominately planted with Merlot vines an average of 50 years old.

The estate is managed by the Cheval Blanc team, who have risen to the challenge of converting the vineyard to organic viticulture over the past two years. Their approach is resolutely quality-oriented in order to display this wine's intrinsic refinement and complexity.

The grapes are fermented to retain maximum fruitiness and purity, to bring out all their elegance, and to extract soft, silky tannin.

In 2010, Château Quinault l'Enclos symbolised a new chapter in its history and move towards greater purity and authenticity by changing labels.



CHÂTEAU QUINAULT L'ENCLOS

This wine boasts a deep, generous crimson colour. The very expressive nose exhales an intense bouquet of ripe summer fruit, raspberry and cassis, mingling with notes of liquorice and floral hints of fresh petals.

On the palate the attack is ample and silky, developing towards plenty of volume and revealing charming, smooth tannins to wrap up the full, long-lasting, fruity finish.

This is a wine offering great overall balance. A real success.

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Château Cheval Blanc

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