

Château De La Huste 2020

CSPC# 893373

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

95% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

Fronsac

Classification

Grand Vin de Bordeaux

Website

<http://www.chateaudalem.com/ch%c3%a2teau-dalem---eng.html>

Sustainability

HEV 3 – Member of the Bordeaux Wine EMS Association

General Info

Family estate, owned by the Rulliers since 1860. The Chateau de la Huste's vines are on one of the highest parts of Saillans. In old french, La Huste means the bump. Château Dalem is one of the leading estates in Fronsac, an old appellation near the city of Libourne that is often overlooked by connoisseurs. The vineyard was planted in 1610 and stayed in the same family for over three centuries. The handsome, compact chateau is about a century younger, but still predates most of the châteaux of the Médoc and nearby Saint-Emilion. It is located in the township of Saillans, just on the outskirts of the city of Libourne, and was purchased in 1955 by Michel Rullier. In 2002 his daughter, Brigitte Rullier-Loussert, took over the estate and began to make a series of improvements that have now catapulted Dalem to the forefront of Fronsac estates.

Nearby, the Rullier's manage a separate property known as Château de la Huste, which is a typical Fronsac in a slightly lighter style than Dalem. Chateau de la Huste is an eight-hectare property owned by the Rullier family (Château Dalem) overlooking the town of Libourne across the River Isle Valley.

Winemaker

Brigitte Rullier-Loussert. Eric Boissenot as consultant oenologist.

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 let early flowering which in turn turned into a hot summer 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. October to June: record rainfall of 1120mm (compared with 735mm on average over the past 26 years). Very mild spring, temperatures above average. 106mm of rain between 11 and 20 August, refreshing the vineyard after the drought in July. Early September: ideal conditions for the polyphenolic ripeness of our grapes (cool nights, drying winds, hot and sunny days). Grapes harvested in a very good state of health.

Vineyards

40 hl/ha. The average vine age 40 years. Planting density 5,500 to 6,600 vine stocks depending on the plots. 90% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc. Clay and limestone hills and sloping plateau.

Harvest

Grapes are picked by hand when they are fully ripe and put in baskets. Sorted minutely before and after full destemming

Vinification/

Maturation

The work of the vineyard and winemaking processes are identical to those of Château Dalem with the exception of wine aging, which is half in tanks and half in French oak barrels. Fermentation in concrete tanks with built-in thermoregulation which guarantees better control of the fermentation process. Long vatting period (3 weeks) for a slow and gentle extraction of the phenolic agents. Malolactic fermentation in barrels. 12 to 15 months in 40% new barrels (having matured 1 or 2 batches of wine). 20% of the barrels are replaced every year and toasting levels are selected for optimum enhancement of our wine's fruit flavors.

Tasting Notes

Very expressive nose of iris, raspberry, and cocoa bean. The palate, marked by notes of raspberry and cedar, is smooth and velvety. Full-bodied and well-balanced, a captivatingly wine of fine dimensions, good length, and well-integrated tannins.

Production

9,000 cases made

Cellaring

Drink 2023-2030



Scores/Awards **90 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2023
92-94 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021
89 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent (score only) - March 2023
90 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2023
92-93 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021
90 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021
92 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023
91-93 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021
86 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021
86 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2023
88 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2023
Silver Medal - Concours de Feminalise 2021

Reviews *"A fresh and unadorned style, this red offers a pure beam of damson plum and floral notes that are carried by fine, chalky minerality through the finish. Reveals a pretty tobacco echo. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2030. 9,000 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"The 2020 de la Huste has a deep purple-black color, bursting from the glass with flamboyant notes of crushed blackberries, blueberry pie and ripe black raspberries, plus suggestions of violets, mocha, and licorice. The medium to full-bodied palate is chock-full of juicy black and blue fruits, framed by ripe, rounded tannins and impressive freshness, finishing long, and perfumed. A beautiful powerhouse!"
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"Fresh dark cherries and plums to the nose with some fine spices and hibiscus. This is simple yet crunchy and sappy on the palate, showing some nice, immediate appeal. Concise and fruity. Drink now."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Beautiful Fronsac with structure, polish, and some class, offering blackberry, blueberry and violet aromas and flavors. 95% merlot and 5% cabernet franc."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Fairly subdued right now, this has broad shoulders and some touches of reduction on the nose. Good quality, great texture really feels deep and rich, with bitter black chocolate streaking through the black cherry compote. Reserved though, these are big tannins. Barrel Sample: 90."
- JA, Decanter.com

"Flowers, espresso, plums, and licorice create the perfume. On the palate, the wine is plush, polished, and vibrant with a juicy core of fresh, cherries, coffee, and dark chocolate in the juicy finish. Drink from 2023-2034."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Deeply colored, the wine is ripe, opulent, lush, and rich with layers of black and blue fruits, licorice, and chocolate covered plums. Long and polished, this is a superb example of a value priced Bordeaux wine in a ready-to-drink style, that sells for a song."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"The 2020 Château de la Huste still feels just picked a bit tardy on the nose, though the pruny scents have receded during its barrel maturation. It just lacks a bit of tension and energy. The palate is medium-bodied, balanced yet simple compared to its peers and never kicks on towards the finish. Not bad, but nor is it memorable either."
- NM, Vinous

"The 2020 de la Huste is soft, open-knit, and very easy to like. Crushed raspberry, cedar, and flowers lead into the delicate yet expressive finish. The 2020 is simple, but tasty. Drink it over the next few years."
- AG, Vinous
