

Château Cantemerle 2019

CSPC# 866159

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 4% Petit Verdot
Appellation Haut-Médoc
Classification 5ème Cru Classé
Website <http://www.cantemerle.com>

Sustainability HVE Certification

General Info Chateau Cantemerle is one of the first well known Bordeaux estates you see as start the drive along the D2, as you head towards the Medoc. Chateau Cantemerle is also one of the oldest properties in the Bordeaux wine region. Historical documents listing the Lords of Cantemerle of La Sauve Majeur Abbey, can be dated all the way back to the 12th century. The documents exist thanks to the monks who recorded any business that transpired in the monastic community.

In 1855, when the classification of the Medoc took place, Chateau Cantemerle was accidentally left off the list of classed chateaux. It was at the insistence of Madame Villeneuve-Durfort that her property be reinstated in the classification. That re-addition became the first of only two changes in the classification.

In 1852, Fleuret-Jean-Baptiste, Count of Lavergne, was a pioneer in the fight against mildew. The first attempts to control it were done by dusting the vines with sulphur at Cantemerle. He was rewarded for his efforts with several medals and a prize from the Academy of Bordeaux.

Until the late 1800's, the fortunes of Cantemerle could not have been any better. What happened next devastated the property. Cantemerle was not only the worst hit of the Medoc classified growths during the phylloxera crisis, but the vines were also attacked by downy mildew between 1879 and 1887. Consequently, the annual production of Chateau Cantemerle was slashed by 50%.

In 1892, the descendants of the last of the Villeneuve family, Jeanne Armande, Baroness Charles d'Abbadie, sold Chateau Cantemerle to the Dubos family after owning the estate for over three hundred years. The last family owner, Bertrand Clauzel sold Chateau Cantemerle in 1981 to the SMABTP group. At the time of the purchase, Chateau Cantemerle was in serious need of restoration. 40 hectares of vines, close to 50% of the estate needed replanting. In 1999, the new owners purchased 20 hectares of vines from Domaine du Moines Nexon, increasing the size of the Chateau Cantemerle. Other improvements were made in the cellars and the wine making facilities. The SMABTP Group has continued increasing their holdings in Bordeaux with purchases in the Right Bank. They recently added Chateau Haut Corbin, Chateau Grand Corbin and Le Jurat which are all located in St. Emilion appellation

Winemaker Consultant oenologist: Eric Boissenot

Vintage In 2019, early budding was followed by a sporadically wet and cool April, May and June. This meant uneven flowering in early June, but from mid-June onwards the weather turned dry and hot, leading to successful fruit set. July was mainly dry but with some storms. This meant the gravel terraces of the Médoc and limestone soils in general had no problems getting the right kind of hydric stress, but more water-logged soils found it tougher. August and September were hot and dry, so ripening and harvest were successful, except for certain cases of extreme water stress on the driest soils, which saw some bunches shrivel in early September.

June right through to October saw higher temperatures than average.

Rain from 20 September onwards allowed the Merlots to ripen, often with high alcohol, and Cabernet did particularly well because the rains meant their ripening could go on for longer, lowering alcohols and allowing for more 'normal' development after the hot weather.

Some estates saw gaps between technical and phenolic maturity, as is often the case in hot vintages, and this had to be managed carefully.



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| Vineyards | 96 ha under production. Silica and gravel soils of the quaternary era. 68% Cabernet Sauvignon - 23% Merlot - 5% Cabernet Franc - 4% Petit Verdot Average age of vines: 38 years Vine density: 7 800 plants per hectare |
| Harvest | Handpicked harvest with selective sorting in the vineyard. |
| Maturation | Total destemming. The grapes are hand-sorted before crushing. Fermentation: 6-8 days at 24 -28°C. Maceration: 20 -25 days. Ageing for 12 months in french oak barrels (medium toast) which 40% are new. An ultra-light fining is done prior to bottling. |
| Winemaker's Notes | The superb maturity of Cantemerle's Cabernet Sauvignon is evident up front by its degree of concentration and complexity—the sign of a great Médoc wine. Before tasting this fine bottle, you'll want to transfer it to a decanter an hour before serving. After this preparatory step you'll discover the wine's fuller aromatic richness: the bouquet expresses cherry, olive, and tobacco notes, as well as hints of oak that are still somewhat present. In the mouth, silky tannins launch a symphony of spicy, peppery, and fruity flavors upon the palate that are of great quality and generously supported by a long, full softness. The finish is lengthy and lively, neither limp nor harsh. A well-constructed balance is the foundation which supports a structure of freshness, elegance, persistence, and a perfectly controlled power. |
| Tasting Notes | Regularity is the key word when speaking of this vintage. A deep color sets the stage, followed by a complex and delicate aromatic expression. Then, there is a lively sensation in the mouth, with a good reserve of energy. Finally, a long finish, fine and precise. |
| Serve with | The wine of Chateau Cantemerle is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Cantemerle is a perfect match with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta as well as cheese. |
| Production | 33,000 cases made. 400 000 bottles. |
| Cellaring | Drink 2022-2030 |
| Scores/Awards | <p>90 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2022</p> <p>92 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p>89-91 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - June 2020</p> <p>95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2022</p> <p>93-94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2020</p> <p>93-95 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2020</p> <p>16.5 points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - June 2020</p> <p>16 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - December 2021</p> <p>92 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - June 2020</p> <p>92 points - Jane Anson, Insidebordeaux.com - January 2022</p> <p>92 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2022</p> <p>92-94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - June 2020</p> <p>91-94 points - Farr Vintners - May 2020</p> <p>91-93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - June 2020</p> <p>91-93 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2020</p> <p>91 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2022</p> <p>89-91 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2020</p> <p>87 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2020</p> <p>93 points - Thomas Parker MW - March 2022</p> <p>91 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - June 2020</p> <p>16.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2022</p> |
| Reviews | <p><i>"Very direct in feel, offering plum and cherry puree notes gilded with violet and anise hints. Shows a graphite accent on the finish, which adds depth as the fruit blossoms around it. Solid. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2030. 33,000 cases made."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Opening in the glass with notions of rich berry fruit, licorice, cedar, violets, and loamy soil, the 2019 Cantemerle is medium to full-bodied, with a fleshy core of fruit, lively acids and powdery tannins that gently assert themselves on the finish. This shut down a little after bottling (some 11 months ago at the time of writing), but it is beginning to bounce back to reveal a wine of real charm and character. - drink 2025-2045"</i></p> |

Reviews

Château Cantemerle saw substantial investments in the 1980s and since then has cruised along very happily—until now, with a new winery and cellar about to enter the construction phase. There are 98 hectares under vine, some 68% of which are planted to Cabernet Sauvignon, at a density of 8,500 vines per hectare. Occupying a crescent around the château, the vineyards sit on Mindel gravels, and the terroir is rather homogenous, such that any given parcel has the potential to make it into the grand vin (the second wine is mostly derived from young-vine parcels). Farming is thoughtful, with minimal chemicals and cover crops employed to limit vigor in parcels planted with Merlot. In the last few years, almost one kilometer of hedges has been added, to enhance biodiversity. The air-pulse system was prototyped here, so that's the order of the day during vinification, and élevage employs moderate percentages of new oak.”

- WK, Wine Advocate

“Sporting a deep garnet-purple color, the 2019 Cantemerle springs from the glass with exuberant notions of raspberry preserves, crushed blackcurrants, and Morello cherries plus hints of cloves, cassia, eucalyptus, and melted chocolate with a waft of dried herbs. Medium-bodied, the palate has a real skip in its step with crunchy red and black fruit flavors and a racy line of freshness, finishing a little chewy.”

- LPB, Wine Advocate

“A red with lots of currant, blackberry, fresh herb, and tobacco character. Hint of mushroom, too. It’s full and layered with polished, chewy tannins and a bright and fresh finish. Very long and focused. Give it time to come together. Very classic character here. Best after 2026.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“Crushed berries and walnuts with red-chili and mushroom notes. It’s medium-to full-bodied and soft. Juicy at the end. Ripe tannins and good balance”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This grand classed growth has produced a richly structured wine that is balanced by ripe black fruits. It shows spice from the touch of Petit Verdot in the blend, as well as fine acidity and freshness that give it poise and a vibrant finish.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 4% Petit Verdot. Barrel sample. Really quite graceful in a Margaux sort of way. Fresh, zesty nose with cassis and graphite notes. Juicy and long with plenty of delicately etched tannins offering refinement to the palate. Sufficient fruit weight. Clean, persistent finish with no excess. (JL). Drink 2026 – 2034.”

- JL, JancisRobinson.com

“67% Cabernet Sauvignon, 24% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 4% Petit Verdot. Black core and deep crimson rim. Pure, deep cassis nose. Powerful, dry, dark-fruited wine. Elegantly structured without a great deal of flesh but the tannins are very fine. Firm, chewy finish. (JH) 13.5%. Drink 2025 – 2035.”

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“Enticing aromatics, clear cassis fruits, astringency on the tannins which bodes well for the ageing as they also have good pliability. Not quite up with their very best vintages but we are getting close here, with tension to the core of the wine, well-judged berry fruit extraction, and clear structure overall. Great Médoc signature. 4% Petit Verdot completes the blend.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“Plenty of smoked cedar oak on the opening beats, this is full-throated in its extraction, but comes across as confident rather than too much, and as it softens the damson and black cherry fruits are attractive. A healthy 55hl/h yield, with 40% new oak.”

- JA, Inside Bordeaux

- Reviews** *“Quite savory with a bouquet of herbs, wet earth, currants, spice, and cocoa. Medium-bodied, soft, fresh, earthy, forward, and earthy, give it a few years in the cellar before pulling the cork. Drink from 2024-2037.”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “Fresh picked flowers, oak, wet earth, cassis, and blackberry aromas start off the wine. Medium-bodied, with silky, soft, elegant textures, sweet, ripe, delicate fruits, and a refined, fruit-filled finish.”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “The blend in 2019 is very similar to the overall plantings: 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, with 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 4% Petit Verdot. There is a new pump over system in use here, called "Airpulse" which is seen as a major change in the winemaking and removes the use of pumps. This should add a layer of refinement to the structure of the wine. The yields are 55hl/ha, and the wine will be aged in 40% new French oak for 12 months. Bright ruby in the glass, the nose is sweet and plummy with just a hint of sandalwood and cedar. The palate is fleshy in fruit but tamed by chalky tannins. This is superbly proportioned and harmonious, offering freshness despite the plump fruit at the core. Vibrant with fruit yet with a savoury edge on the finish.”*
- Farr Vintners
- “The 2019 Cantemerle has a ripe and sensual bouquet with ample black cherry and blueberry scents that burst from the glass, flecks of dark chocolate and clove emerging with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with saturated tannins that impart a fleshier mouthfeel compared to previous vintages. It works well because there is still ample structure underneath and cunningly disguised. Smooth as silk on the finish, this is simply a delicious Cantemerle.”*
- NM, *Vinous*
- “The 2019 Cantemerle is fabulous. Deep, inky, and super expressive, Cantemerle is a real standout in 2019. Dark red and purplish berry fruit, grilled herbs, rose petal, spice, sweet pipe tobacco and mint are some of the many notes that develop here with a bit of coaxing. More than anything else, it is the wine's extraordinary balance and sense of harmony that stand out here. Don't miss this!”*
- AG, *Vinous*
- “An incredibly consistent estate that always delivers a quality wine, the 2019 Château Cantemerle checks in as 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot and the balance Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Classic Médoc notes of red and black currants, cedar pencil, sappy herbs, and tobacco give way to a medium-bodied 2019 with terrific balance, ripe, polished tannins, good acidity, and outstanding length. This terrific wine will benefit from just short-term cellaring and keep for 15+ in cold cellars. Best after 2023.”*
- Jeb Dunnuck
- “This consistent estate has produced a rocking 2019 Château Cantemerle. Based on 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot, its deep purple color is followed by classic notes of blackcurrants, cedary herbs, dried earth, and chocolate. Medium-bodied, nicely balanced, and textured on the palate, this solid, possibly outstanding, Haut-Médoc should keep for 15 years.”*
- Jeb Dunnuck
- “Dark ruby garnet, violet reflections, subtle lightening of the edges. Attractive black fruit nuances of cassis, blackberries and heart cherries, delicate precious wood spice is highlighted. Medium-bodied, red berries, slim texture, fresh and easy to drink, mineral aftertaste, versatile food accompaniment with a cherry finish.”*
- *Falstaff Magazine*
- “The blend in 2019 is very similar to the overall plantings: 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, with 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 4% Petit Verdot. Bright ruby purple colour. Fine and fresh on the nose with light cedar, camphor, and cool black fruit. There is an underlying ripeness that gives real intensity and enticement to the nose. The palate is compact and well-measured, driven by fine layers of succulent black and red fruit. The spice is gentle and well-integrated together with sandy but ripe tannins. This is classic Claret with added oomph, displaying very fine balance and good length with a light dusting of spice and sweetness. Undoubtedly one of the best Cantemerle's we have ever tasted. Very good value for money.”*
- Tom Parker MW
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