

# Château Talbot 2011

CSPC# 744976

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

## Grape Variety

62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot

## Appellation

Saint Julien

## Website

[www.chateau-talbot.com](http://www.chateau-talbot.com)

## General Info

4th Cru Classé in 1855. Legend relates that the name of this imposing estate originates with Connétable Talbot, a famous English warrior, defeated at the battle of Castillon in 1453. Talbot is one of the Medoc's oldest estates, its glory never tainted. Through the years it has been fortunate enough to remain in good hands. The owners are Nancy Bignon-Cordier and her family. They are the fourth generation of Cordiers to manage this Saint-Julien fourth classified growth.

## Vintage

Winter 2010-2011: This year again, winter was dry, one of the driest in the decade. The winter chill was indeed present from December to February... for the benefit of our ecosystem.

Spring 2010-2011: The sharp rise in temperature in March resulted in an early budding of the vines at the beginning of April. Then, Bordeaux enjoyed a quite exceptional spring from April to June, with a severe drought and historically high temperatures. We thus experienced 40 days with maximum temperatures exceeding 25°C and a heat wave (with temperatures of 37 to 39°C i.e. +/- 100°F) on the 26th and 27th of June.

At first, the spring conditions

- promoted a precocious growth cycle (budding, flowering, fruit setting)
- limited the vegetative expression of the vines in favour of the fruits.

In summer, however, we returned to more traditional Atlantic conditions with a few wet and cool days between the 14th July and the 15th August. Ultimately, rains, throughout, the cycle remained within the seasonal average for Bordeaux.

An important fact: if, at the outset of summer, the vegetal cycle was three weeks ahead in comparison with 2010, the mediocre weather conditions at midsummer slowed down the process and erased much of the precocity acquired in the spring. This extension of the cycle was an undeniable qualitative element.

## Vineyards

The vineyards of Château Talbot dominate St Julien, in terms of size at least, as they account for an impressive 107 hectares; in an appellation that amounts to little more than 900 hectares, that is a big vineyard! All the other *châteaux*, from the great second growths such as Ducru-Beaucaillou, Léoville-Las-Cases and Gruaud-Larose, down to the humble *cru bourgeois* properties (of which there are few), seem to dance around the periphery (mainly to the east, closer to the Gironde) of the Talbot estate, such is its size. The soils underfoot are, as is typical here, ancient quaternary gravels offering excellent drainage. Of the vineyard area, 102 hectares are planted to red varieties, mostly Cabernet Sauvignon (66%), followed by Merlot (26%), Cabernet Franc (5%) and Petit Verdot (3%); there are also 5 hectares of Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon. The vines are planted at a density of 7700 vines per hectare, mostly on 3309 rootstock although there are also some on 101.14 and Riparia. They are Guyot trained, the norm in Bordeaux, average 42 years of age, and are harvested by hand with a final yield in the order of 45 hl/ha.

## Harvest

September 7th to September 28<sup>th</sup>. Harvesting is performed by hand, with no fewer than 180 cutters. This step, crucial in the making of a great wine, is subject to numerous selective sortings. Initial grape selection is performed on the plant, the second when the grapes arrive at the vat house; eight to ten persons on either side of a seven-meter sorting table eliminate grapes not meeting optimal maturity standards. This precision work conserves the grapes' and the terroir's most intense expression.



<b>Maturation</b>	The oak used for the élevage comes for eight different coopers, with 50% new wood each year for the <i>grand vin</i> which is bottled as Château Talbot. This accounts for between 50-60% of the estate's production in a typical vintage, amounting to approximately 30000 cases per annum.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	Dark fruit. The palate is supple, very elegant, pure, harmonious, a wine that certainly deserves examination. A very well-defined palate, the tannins well judged, ripe and velvety, showing through with good acidity, but it all seems very harmonious, elegant and yet with substance, despite the lifted character of the fruit.
<b>Production</b>	32,782 cases made
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2014-2029
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>90 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2014</p> <p><b>89-92 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2012</p> <p><b>90 points</b> - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #212 - April 2014</p> <p><b>87-89 points</b> - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #200 - April 2012</p> <p><b>86-88 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2012</p> <p><b>92 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2014</p> <p><b>92-93 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2012</p> <p><b>91 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 1, 2014</p> <p><b>93-95 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 11, 2012</p> <p><b>87-89 points</b> - Ian D'Agata, ST's International Wine Cellar - April 2012</p> <p><b>16.5 points</b> - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2012</p> <p><b>17 points/4 stars</b> - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2012</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2012</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)</p> <p><b>86 points</b> - Jane Anson, The New Bordeaux - April 2012</p> <p><b>89 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - February 16, 2014</p> <p><b>88-90 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 13, 2012</p> <p><b>87-89 points</b> - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - October 2013</p> <p><b>15 points</b> - Farr Vintner - March 2012</p> <p><b>88-90 points</b> - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2012</p> <p><b>16 points</b> - John Berry, Berry &amp; Rudd Wine &amp; Spirit Merchants - April 2012</p> <p><b>85 points</b> - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - April 2012</p> <p><b>16.5 points</b> - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)</p> <p><b>16 points</b> - Gault &amp; Millau 6 (score only)</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>"This pulls no punches in terms of style, presenting fleshy ganache and tar notes out front, with an ample core of crushed plum and macerated black currant fruit and a long, muscular, tarry finish. A strong showing. Best from 2016 through 2026. 32,782 cases made."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"This has solid depth, with good winey currant and blackberry fruit at the core, picking up briar, anise and sweet tobacco as it moves through the finish. Score range: 89-92"</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Talbot's dense ruby/purple color is followed by an attractive, spicy, earthy St.-Julien displaying hints of tapenade, black cherries and soil undertones in a forward, lush, round, seductive style. This excellent, medium-bodied 2011 should provide delicious drinking for 10-15 years. Talbot appears to have succeeded admirably in this vintage."</i></p> <p>- RP, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"Copious black currant, olive, unroasted coffee bean, forest floor and underbrush characteristics are present in this attractive, dark plum/ruby/purple-tinged offering. One of the lighter-styled 2011 St.-Juliens, the well-made Talbot can be drunk over the next decade."</i></p> <p>- RP, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The Talbot 2011 has a tight, slightly pinched bouquet with blackberry and sous-bois, but missing a little "energy" considering that Saint Julien is one of the year's more consistent appellations. The palate is medium bodied with light sappy dark berry fruit. The oak is nicely integrated although it is hampered by a rather dry, very</i></p>

**Reviews** *conservative finish. It is not a bad Talbot, but it needs to evolve more personality. Tasted April 2012.*  
- NM, Wine Journal

*"A juicy young 2011 with chocolate, berry and toasted-oak character. Full and rich. Needs time to soften. This is better than the 2010 Talbot. Try in 2017."*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"This is very fine for the vintage with a lovely blueberry and currants and spice character. Full body, with well-integrated tannins and a pretty finish."*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"With attractive, juicy fruit, this wine has as much freshness as it does structure. The palate is warm and open with blackberry fruits that are rounded and soft. Spice and some tannins show through on the finish. Drink from 2017."*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"93-95. Barrel sample. A dark and brooding wine, its fruit is firmly embedded in the tannins. The wine seems to hold its fire and is both dense and concentrated."*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"Deep ruby-purple. Spicy tobacco, red cherry and aromatic herbs on the open nose. Then sweet and supple in the mouth, with flavors of red plum, Oriental spices and aromatic underbrush. Finishes with smooth tannins, a touch of heat and a savory quality. In an uncomplicated, easy-drinking style but with no shortage of flavor."*  
- ID, International Wine Cellar

*"Dark cherry crimson. Cassis aroma, a touch dusty. Furry texture with thick tannins, freshness pulling it through on the finish. Nice density of fruit should fill out the frame as the tannins soften/clarify. Drink 2018-2030."*  
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*"Fine spicy cassis fruit and already showing smooth and elegant ripeness. It will open early but also keep well."*  
- SS, Decanter.com

*"Yet another example of the impressive quality of the St Julien classed growths in 2011, this is a deceptively forward blend, showing appealing aromatics, filigree tannins, cassis and cigar box notes and a fine, balanced finish with good oak integration. This won't keep for ages, but it's a delicious, old-fashioned claret. 8+ years."*  
- TA, timatkin.com

*"Wow, some good menthol but this is over extracted, making things bitter. The first one in this flight to show classic bitter over extracted flavours. 86"*  
JA, The New Bordeaux

*"Smoke, juicy, ripe, dark, red berries, licorice and espresso beans create the aromatics. The tannins are a bit dry, which carries through into the finish."*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"With truffle, coffee, smoke and black cherry jam, this medium-bodied wine has round tannins with a short, fresh red berry finish. 88-90 Pts."*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"Mid depth; some spice, little ink and resin; blackcurrants and some cream; chewy palate; little compact in the middle but reasonable length. Drink 2017-2026. 87 UGC Oct '13 [Earlier note] Mid depth, concentrated at the core; cassis, some blackcurrant, strong notes; some depth; nice entry, density some earth and blackcurrants but a little dry in the mid-palate. Chewy finish. Not a bad effort but not the best. Tasted twice at UGC. 87-89."*  
- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

**Reviews** *“A very well-known Chateau throughout the world. En Primeur prices are usually reasonable and the popularity of the name ensures strong demand and increased prices when it is ready to drink. Not normally a wine to win blind tastings as it is relatively early maturing, but always popular. Made from 62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot and 5% Petit Verdot in 50% new oak. Pretty fruit on the nose. Good concentration of medium weight, elegant berry fruit. Good purity and elegance.”*

- Farr Vintners

*“Although the nose is firm and tight there is a richer sweeter feel on the palate. Bramble and bilberry give some freshness but the cassis and black cherry that show on the finish give it depth and richness.”*

- Derek Smedley MW

*“Full-bodied aroma with cassis and red plum to the fore. Plenty of weight and depth of fruit on the palate, with good intensity. Plentiful tannins but well-coated by the ripeness of the fruit. As usual with Talbot, a solid, reliable wine but with an added dimension of finesse this year.”*

- JB, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants

*“Simple, pleasant wine with firm tannins in the finish. The wine lacks substance and layers in the mid palate with insufficient depth and complexity. Not one of Talbot's best vintages. Tasted in: Bordeaux, France. Maturity: Young.”*

- JCL, asianpalate.com

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