Château Smith Haut Lafitte 2021

CSPC# 852073 750mlx6 13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety
Appellation
Classification
Website
Sustainability

63% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot.

Pessac-Léognan Grand Cru Classé

http://www.smith-haut-lafitte.com/en/smith-haut-lafitte-vin-rouge.html
Certified organic with the 2019 vintage, the Cathiard family banished herbicides at
this address in 1991, radically reducing chemical treatments and suffering the
consequences for several years in the form of much diminished yields (today, happily,
materiel and techniques are more sophisticated). In addition to organic methods,
cover crops have been deployed on the vineyard's central blocks and western band,
where soils are less well drained. Hedges have been planted to encourage
biodiversity, and ultraviolet treatments are being trialed as an alternative to copper
sulfate. In addition to such initiatives, the technical team is adapting to a warmer
climate: that means picking a touch earlier, certainly, but more importantly, adapting
in the vineyards, with somewhat lower canopies and an end to systematic deleafing
to retain fresh, vibrant flavors.

General Info

Château Smith-Haut-Lafite has been transformed during the last decade from being a perennial underachiever to being one of the leading estates in the Graves region. For many years, it was owned by the Bordeaux négociant Eschenauer - in 1990 it was bought by former Olympic skiing champion, Daniel Cathiard. He cut down on the amount of chemicals and herbicides used in the vineyards, and fully modernised the winemaking facilities. The proportion of new oak barrels used in the maturation process was increased and a trio of eminent oenologists (including the ubiquitous Michel Rolland) were hired as consultants.

In July 2011, Chateau Smith Haut Lafitte purchased a majority of the vineyard property belonging to the neighboring estate, Chateau Le Thil. Out of the 42.5 acres of vines, 28.7 acres, the chateau and 20 acres of parkland went to Smith Haut Lafitte. Much of that land is located next to Smith Haut Lafitte and was actually part of the original estate that was owned by Lodi Duffour Dubergier. In essence, this reunited the original vineyards. Le Thil belonged to his nephew, from whom the de Laitre family is descended. The remaining vineyard land was sold to Les Carmes Haut Brion.

Winemaker Vintage Fabien Teitgen. Michel Rolland and Stéphane Derenoncourt consult. 2021 is atypical, following the pattern of "1" vintages.

The climatic conditions were totally extraordinary, with a very challenging and highly stressful growing season leading up to the late harvest.

Coming out of winter, conditions were calm and mild with budburst occurring between 24th March and 1st April across our plots. We had to endure 9 nights of frost between 28th March and 19th April, and this impacted our yields – in addition to the unusually long flowering period which lasted all through June due to an unusually wet spring.

Very warm temperatures combined with relatively high rainfall created almost 'tropical' conditions, leading to wild vegetative growth. This required us to employ significant manpower and intervene quickly to keep our trellis in optimal condition. By doing so, we were able to control the ripening of our grapes by pushing back the harvest, overcoming some rainy spells between the 18th and 29th September in the process. There was constant pressure and suspense right up until the last moment, meaning that I certainly won't forget the birth of this unique vintage.

Vineyards

The 55 hectares of vineyards are located on a gravel ridge to the east of Château Haut-Bailly. The red wine is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon (55%), Merlot (35%) and Cabernet Franc (10%). Average vine age is 38 years. Harvest September 22 to October 14. 23hl/h yield.

Harvest Vinification/

Maturation/ Whole grapes are fermented at 28°C in small wooden vats with extraction by manual punching down. Aged 18 months in barrels (60% are new barrels produced in our in-house cooperage), with aging on lees. After being racked a single time, wine is aged according to its profile.



CHATEAV

SMITH HAVT LAFITTE

Tasting Notes A very open nose of fresh red fruits, raspberry, strawberry, and black fruits, blackberries, blackcurrant). Hints

of sweet spices, liquorice, tobacco leaf. Complex and fresh. On the palate, it is well balanced with a good freshness and great deal of vivacity. Good concentration with a nice et soft texture, the wine offers a perfect harmony. Very lively, it is full of energy and delivers a great length. Nice complexity of flavors ranging from fresh fruits to spices, cigar box and hint of smoky minerality, faithful to the terroir of Graves. A great and

complex wine between harmony and smoothness

Serve with meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, chicken, roasted, braised and grilled dishes

Production 10,000 cases made **Cellaring** Drink 2024-2036

Scores/Awards 93 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - January 2024

95 points - Yohan Castaing, Wine Advocate - February 2024 **16.5+ points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022 **94 points** - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022

95 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - May 2022

95 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2024

94 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2022 96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2024

18+ points - Matthew Jukes - August 2022 **95 points** - Jean Marc Quarin - April 2022

94 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022