

2023 VINTAGE NOTEBOOK



« THE EXQUISITE MARRIAGE OF ATLANTIC
CABERNET SAUVIGNON AND SOLAR MERLOT »



2023

"The exquisite marriage of Atlantic Cabernet-Sauvignon and solar Merlot"

With its crystalline purity of fruit, vibrant energy, and refined texture, the Ducru 2023 exudes sheer elegance and allure. Once again, our privileged terroirs have proven their capacity to mitigate challenges posed by climatic conditions, while our dedicated teams worked relentlessly to ensure excellence. A heatwave from late August to early September proved instrumental in achieving optimal ripening, adding depth and complexity to this great vintage.

KEY POINTS FOR 2023 SUCCESS

→ Extended Time in the vineyard

- Strategic leaf thinning for ideal aeration and protection against sunburn.
- Relentless management of disease pressure
- Adapted cover crops to mitigate weather extremes

→ Correction of yields

- A very successful flowering gave a generous yield potential. To ensure ideal concentration, this was corrected with green harvesting.

→ Protracted Harvest

- The team tasted intermittently leading up to and during harvest ensuring an optimized date for each plot, hand picking each grape at its peak ripeness, resulting in an extended harvest period. The Merlots were picked early (September 8-15) in heatwave conditions and the Cabernets were picked late (September 23-October 3) in sunny but cooler conditions resulting in a vintage of 2 harvests. The resulting blend represents a harmonious union of Atlantic Cabernet Sauvignons and sun-kissed Merlots.

WINTER

Temperatures remained cool, reminiscent of those observed in the last century, while precipitation slightly exceeded average levels. In these favorable winter conditions, the vine was able to replenish its reserves, depleted by the 2022 heatwave. Pruning began on November 28th, marking the start of meticulous preparation for the upcoming season.

SPRING

The first rays of sunshine in the second week of March set the vine back in motion, with the first signs of budbreak appearing in late March. For Ducru-Beaucaillou, we observed budbreak on the plateau on March 28. Our enthusiasm for the upcoming growth is briefly interrupted on the night of April 4-5 when we mobilize all teams and resources to protect against potential frost damage. Fortunately, no damage is noted. As spring progressed, the warm and dry weather set the stage for a beautiful flowering starting May 22, followed by a robust fertilization period on May 28 and 29. This confirms an early vintage, with high potential for both quality and quantity.

SUMMER

After a beautiful spring, June and July were characterized by warm overcast weather, interspersed with occasional storms. These tropical conditions resulted in high mildew pressure and the first oil spots on the leaves, indicating mildew, were observed in June. Throughout the summer, the teams worked tirelessly to control the propagation of mildew spores by removing impacted leaves and bunches, creating a well aerated canopy. Selected cover crops were also sowed during the summer months to help transpire water in the vineyards. The mildew peaked in early July and was effectively controlled by veraison.

RIPENING

The first berries started changing colour on July 25th, marking the beginning of veraison. To ensure quality, green harvesting (the removal of bunches before ripening) was necessary to limit yield and achieve full ripeness. A dramatic shift in climatic conditions beginning mid-August, enabled the grapes to reach beautiful maturity, as ideal hot and dry conditions persist through to September.

HARVEST

The team tastes unremittingly in the buildup to the harvest, to ensure an optimized date for each sub-plot. The entire crop was hand harvested from **8 September to 3 October** by an experienced team of 180 harvesters. The Merlots were harvested early (September 8-15) in heatwave conditions, while the Cabernets were harvested late, from September 23-October 3 in sunny but cooler conditions. This significant labour force enabled us to be efficient and flexible in our harvest decisions, allowing us to harvest each bunch a pointe, at its perfect physiological ripeness. The berry weights were generous on the Merlots while the Cabernet Sauvignon berries ranged from compact to generous.

Fruit sorting is always a critical operation at Ducru Beaucaillou. We have four selection moments: first, individual bunches are selected when harvested from the vine, then portions of unsuitable bunches are discarded on mobile manual sorting tables in the vineyards. Upon reception in our cellars, the bunches are mechanically sorted with destemming, and finally, each berry passes through an optical sorting machine, where only healthy, ripe berries are retained. The fruit that made it to the end had impeccably pure aromatics, vibrant freshness, and a perfect tight knit tannic structure yielding rich wines with great elegance and power.

IN THE CELLARS

The entire volume of the Grand Vin is fermented in state-of-the-art conical oak Smart Vats that allow us to further refine our approach. Their smaller size enables better homogeneity for each lot. The tanks collect relevant data from inside the tank (temperature, density/sugar, oxygen) and provide live updates allowing us to be reactive and precise in our methods. The tanks also perform automatic, gentle remontages that can be fractioned over a 24-hour period, allowing us to get the best out of the tannins without over-extracting.

Ducru Beaucaillou is aged for a total of **18 months**, while La Croix Ducru Beaucaillou, Le Petit Ducru and Madame Ducru Beaucaillou are each aged for **12 months**. We work closely with our coopers to select barrels that complement our style of wine. We source from only the most reputed forests of France and insist that our staves are seasoned for a minimum of six years, which together assures that we work with only the very best, tightly-grained oak.

THE PRIVILEGE OF TERROIR

The 2023 vintage was not without its climatic challenges. Fortunately, our well-aerated slopes, that overlook the Gironde estuary help to mitigate disease pressure. Our Günzian gravel soils permitted adequate drainage throughout the summer months, which helped control vegetative growth and provoke veraison. They also promote extensive rooting that enabled our vines to access subsoil water reserves during the late summer heatwave. Finally, proximity to the Gironde estuary and to the Atlantic Ocean provided cooling breezes, which helped to create a healthy canopy during the humid summer and helped to moderate the intense heat at the end of the season.

A COMMITED AND SKILLED TEAM

Ducru-Beaucaillou is graced with a motivated and highly skilled team led by visionary leader Bruno Borie and Technical Director Emmanuel Bonneau. The team is comprised of 4 oenologists and 3 agronomists, accompanied by passionate and competent teams, completed with 80 vigneronns for the growing season and 180 harvesters. Their objective is to continuously push the boundaries of quality, to produce wines that affirm the refined style of Ducru Beaucaillou for every unique vintage.

Our team includes a Quality / R&D department, comprised of three agronomy/oenology engineers, Cécile Dupuis, Anaïs Faucon, and Maud Vinet. Their mission is to research and trial various options for every step of the production process, resulting in wines with even greater purity and precision.

The team is complete with consultant oenologist Eric Boissenot, who brings his unmatched expertise in blending to the very top wines of the Médoc.

A CONTRACT WITH NATURE

The entire Ducru Beaucaillou estate is HVE (Haute Valeur Environnementale) certified, ensuring organic treatments are prioritized for disease control. For soil health, we perform a range of operations to reduce compaction, restore key nutrients, and increase biodiversity. Our primary objective is to ensure that every practice is the very best for our soils, our vines, our wines, and our successors; our R&D team is dedicated to this mission.

In 2022, we launched an ecosystem management initiative. The first steps included an analysis of the company's carbon footprint and an assessment of our ecosystem's biodiversity. Based on the results, we have implemented a range of measures to reduce our CO2 emissions and improve our physical environment. For example, last summer, we contributed to an initiative that planted 10,6 km of hedgerow (31 different species) along watercourses throughout the appellation to reduce erosion, store carbon, and promote biodiversity. We also installed spore captors throughout the vineyards to increase the precision of mold and mildew treatments.

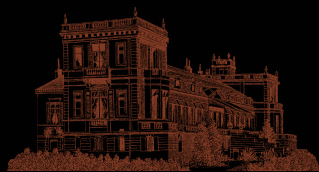
Château Ducru-Beaucaillou is also a patron of PLANTONS POUR L'AVENIR, an organization that carries out significant reforestation projects. Our contribution in 2022 led to the planting of 12,000 trees/10 ha of reforested plots and 1680 tons of recovered CO2.

THE ESSENCE OF DUCRU: PURITY, VIBRANCY, REFINEMENT, AND POWER

The 2023 Ducru possesses a pure, focused nose with delicate violets combined with rich black fruits, cassis, blackberry, a touch of exotic spices, and a waft of cedarwood. The core is densely concentrated with great tannic richness, layered, caressing, and very finely grained, underpinned by exquisite saline laced freshness bringing succulence to the palate. The remarkable concentration leads to a very long, perfumed persistence, with subtle star anise and graphite notes on the finish.

A VINTAGE NOT TO BE MISSED IN A DISCERNING CELLAR COLLECTION

Château Ducru-Beaucaillou 2023 is backed by a legacy of excellence and a tireless commitment to innovation. This great vintage represents the culmination of centuries of winemaking mastery, with our third generation continuing to honor our Medocain roots. Our unwavering dedication to quality is evident, upheld through our non-compromising approach to winemaking. Furthermore, Ducru Beaucaillou's consistent scoring at the top of the hierarchy reaffirms its status as a benchmark of quality and prestige. Moreover, beyond its immediate appeal, our wines have demonstrated a propensity to appreciate over time, combined with remarkable ageing capacity, making them not just a purchase, but a long-term investment in quality and heritage.



DUCRU-BEAUCAILLOU®

SAINT-JULIEN

2023