

# Château Branaire - Ducru

GRAND CRU CLASSÉ EN 1855  
SAINT-JULIEN

# 2018

## Une signature maison / Home signature

Le nez très expressif offre une belle complexité de fruits bien mûrs, bien équilibrée par des notes plus fraîches. Il se développe intense à l'aération. L'élevage est joliment intégré.

L'attaque en bouche est immédiatement très ronde, d'un volume impressionnant, mais sur des tanins extrêmement fins. Le vin se développe lentement, progressivement, avec une belle logique, et montre un charnu profond, une belle densité, tout en raffinement. La complexité aromatique, mais également une belle acidité, portent le vin sur toute la dégustation, qui s'achève sur une belle longueur de fruits.

**La signature maison** se retrouve clairement dans Branaire-Ducru 2018 avec un fruit expressif, une grande finesse et un équilibre dans la fraîcheur, mais avec une profondeur, une densité et un raffinement exceptionnels.

*The nose, which is very expressive, shows a nice complexity of ripe fruit, well balanced by fresher notes. The intensity of the bouquet develops with aeration and the oak is well integrated.*

*The first impression on the palate is one of silky roundness with impressive volume, overlaying extremely fine tannins. The wine develops slowly and gradually on the palate, following its logical path to a voluptuous mid-palate with beautiful density: always refined – never overpowering.*

*The aromatic complexity, and delicious acidity are omni-present with a lovely long-lasting fruit finish ensuring freshness and lift.*

**The house style of Branaire-Ducru** is very evident in the 2018 vintage: expressive fruit, great finesse and balance, wonderful freshness, but always with exceptional depth, density and refinement.

*“ This is a fantastic Branaire with deep and dark fruit, such as blackberries and blackcurrants. Lots of raspberries, too. Full-bodied with firm and creamy tannins and a super long finish. We will see if it's better than 2016, but on its way. ”*

James Suckling - 95-96 - April 2019



« c'est bon ! »

Jean-Marc Quarin - 17 - Avril 2019

Couleur sombre, intense et belle. Nez intense, fin, fruité, pur et mûr.

Délicat à l'attaque, immédiatement suave en milieu de bouche, aérien, parfumé, le vin évolue savoureux et fondant.

Il s'étire en finale sèvreux et long, avec du velouté sur un grain fin. C'est bon !

“ well-packed ”

Wine Spectator (James Molesworth) - 94-97 - March 2019

This is well-packed, with blueberry, açai and blackberry fruit flavors and licorice snap and fruitcake notes.

Long and refined despite the copious fruit, showing polish and poise through the finish.

“ une bombe de garde ”

Terre de Vins - 97- Juin 2019

Dès le nez, on sait que Branaire-Ducru n'a pas recherché la surmaturité. La bouche est croquante de fruits noirs avec la part belle faite au cabernet sauvignon à hauteur de 58%.

La superbe trame acide qui se dessine fait de ce Branaire-Ducru 2018 une bombe de garde. On en reparle dans 20, 30 ans.



Assemblage/Blending

58% Cabernet Sauvignon

33% Merlot

5% Petit Verdot

4% Cabernet Franc

“ exceptionally balanced ”

Decanter (Jane Anson) - 93 - April 2019

Branaire-Ducru has managed to produce an exceptionally balanced and refined St-Julien in a year when that was not the easiest task.

Depth and complexity is clear, although it's just a little held back right now.

The architecture is such that there are walls to scale and depths to plumb, but with less generosity overall.

“ une grande réussite ”

La Revue du Vin de France (Olivier Poels) - 18/18,5 - Avril 2019

Ce 2018 est une grande réussite.

Le point fort de Branaire-Ducru réside dans sa finesse et son équilibre.

Très belle trame harmonieuse et jolie finale aux notes acidulées.



*« Cerise burlat, mûre, bouche souple, onctueuse, tanins délicats, serrés en finale, belle bouche équilibrée. Une future grande bouteille. »*

Le Point (Jacques Dupont) - **18** - Avril 2019

## Le climat

L'hiver et le printemps 2018 sont bien arrosés : une bonne recharge en eau des sols permet la mise en place d'une belle végétation au vignoble. Les pluies abondantes conditionnent cependant une pression du mildiou exceptionnellement forte, qui nécessite une grande attention. Le débourrement de la vigne est assez tardif, mais homogène. Le printemps est doux, la floraison se passe dans de bonnes conditions.

Renversement de situation à la mi-juillet : l'été est chaud et très sec. Le retard au débourrement est rattrapé, et 2018 est alors un millésime parmi les plus précoces. L'automne est également chaud et sec. Le retard au débourrement est rattrapé, et 2018 est alors un millésime parmi les plus précoces. L'automne est également chaud et sec. La maturité des raisins est très aboutie, sans aucun caractère végétal. La richesse en sucres et la richesse phénolique sont élevées, les pépins sont mûrs précocement.

Les baies de merlot sont de taille moyenne, mais celles de cabernet sauvignon très petites, ce qui permet d'élaborer des vins de belle densité. Les vendanges, très étalées grâce à de superbes conditions météorologiques, débutent le 19 septembre et s'achèvent le 10 octobre. Toutes les parcelles, même les plus tardives, profitent d'un beau temps exceptionnel.

A Branaire-Ducru, la sortie (nombre d'inflorescences par cep) est très régulière (y compris sur les quelques parcelles touchées par le gel en avril 2017). La bonne floraison permet, avec une bonne maîtrise des problèmes sanitaires, d'obtenir de beaux volumes, réguliers sur l'ensemble du vignoble et même sur les parcelles très âgées : le rendement moyen du domaine est de l'ordre de 53 hl/ha.

## The climate

*During the winter of 2017 and the spring of 2018 there was a lot of rainfall: resulting in the water table reaching a good level. This ensured that the soils in the vineyard provided perfect conditions for the development of vegetation. However, the same beneficial rain also brought with it a certain propensity for the development of mildew, which was managed with extra vigilance and care. Bud burst was rather late, but homogeneous. Spring was warm and flowering took place under good conditions.*

*By mid-July things had changed substantially: summer was hot and very dry. The slight delay in bud burst was easily made up for and 2018 proved to be amongst the earliest ripening vintages for years. Autumn too was hot and dry. The grapes reached perfect maturity and showed no signs of any vegetal character. Sugar levels were high, the juice concentrated, the grapes showed good IPT levels and the pips were ripe from an early stage.*

*The Merlot grapes were of medium-size, but the Cabernet Sauvignon grapes were very small, which made it possible to make wines with a superb density. Thanks to superb weather conditions we were able to take our time harvesting: starting on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September and finishing, still under exceptional weather conditions, with the last perfectly ripe plots, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October.*

*At Branaire-Ducru, the output (number of inflorescences per vine) was very regular (even in the few parcels which had been affected by frost in April 2017). The even flowering meant that with vigilance and good control of any potential mildew problems, we were able to reach target volumes, with a great regularity throughout the whole of the vineyard - even in the very old parcels: the average yield of the vineyard this year was in the order of 53 hl / ha.*

**“the most impressive Branaire-Ducru”**

Vinous (Neal Martin) - **92-94** - April 2019

Now this has a really fine bouquet, classic in style but with more fruit intensity than the 2017: blackberry, bilberry, cedar and a touch of singed leather. It is very Saint-Julien.

The palate is medium-bodied with fine grain tannin. Notes of blackcurrant, raspberry, black pepper and cedar with fine acidity and more substance on the finish compared directly with the preceding vintage. Having visited this property for 20 years, I can safely say that this is the most impressive Branaire-Ducru that I have encountered at this stage.

**“exceptionally good”**

Wine Doctor (Chris Kissack) - **95-97** - April 2019

It has a very pure, rich and smoky style on the nose, with grilled blackcurrant fruits, lifted with a gentle touch of green peppercorn.

The palate is rich, substantial and really brimming with creamed-fruit substance, including grilled black cherry, blackcurrant, black olive and black bean, and wrapped up in an appropriate toasted-oak substance. Lots of dark, polished, tannic grip to the finish. This is exceptionally good.

**“ungewöhnlich wuchtig”**

Vinum - **17** - 2019

Ungewöhnlich wuchtiger, feuriger, vollmundiger Wein, dem es auch an Frische nicht mangelt, im Stil des Jahres sehr gelungen.

**“long and savory”**

Robert Parker (Lisa Perrotti-Brown) - **92-94** - April 2019

The deep garnet-purple colored 2018 Branaire-Ducru begins just a tad reduced with broody tar, rubber and fried herbs scents giving way to a fragrant core of warm cassis, blackberry pie and blueberry coulis with touches of smoked meats and tobacco. Full-bodied, firm and rugged in the mouth with brawny, muscular fruit and a sturdy frame of grainy tannins, it finishes long and savory.

**“a fine future”**

Wine Enthusiast (Roger Voss) - **94-96** - April 2019

This is a dense wine that is built by firm tannins, bright acidity and great fruitiness. Its structure is fully integrated into the blackberry fruits that give a rich wine that has a fine future.

**“dazzling”**

Vinous (Antonio Galloni) - **93-96** - April 2019

The 2018 Branaire-Ducru is fabulous. Bright, lifted and impeccably precise, the 2018 is one of the best recent Branaires I can remember tasting. The 2018 is distinguished by its vertical lift, striking aromatic intensity and exceptional balance. Lavender, rose petal, gravel, mint and sweet red/purplish berry fruit are all given an extra kick of textural richness. More than anything else, I was blown away by the wine's density and precision. The 2018 is dazzling. There's not much else to say.

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