



# CABERNET SAUVIGNON

With Cellar Master  
Marcel Bregstein

## CABERNETS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



## Cabernet Sauvignon

**Cabernet Sauvignon** is probably the most famous red wine grape variety on Earth. It is rivaled in this regard only by its Bordeaux stablemate Merlot, and its opposite number in Burgundy, Pinot Noir. From its origins in Bordeaux, Cabernet has successfully spread to almost every winegrowing country in the world. It is now the key grape variety in many first-rate New World wine regions, most notably Napa Valley, Coonawarra and Maipo Valley. Wherever they come from, Cabernet Sauvignon wines always seem to demonstrate a handful of common character traits: deep color, good tannin structure, moderate acidity and aromas of blackcurrant, tomato leaf, dark spices and cedarwood.

Used as frequently in blends as in varietal wines, Cabernet Sauvignon has a large number of common blending partners. Apart from the obvious Merlot and Cabernet Franc, the most prevalent of these are Malbec, Petit Verdot and Carmenere (the ingredients of a classic Bordeaux Blend), Shiraz (in Australia's favorite blend) and in Spain and South America, a Cabernet – Tempranillo blend is now commonplace. Even the bold Tannat-based wines of Madiran are now generally softened with Cabernet Sauvignon.

DNA profiling carried out in California in 1997 confirmed that Cabernet Sauvignon is the product of a natural genetic crossing between key Bordeaux grape varieties Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc. Most wine authorities agree that this crossing happened only within the past few centuries, making the variety's global fame and dominance all the more impressive.

There are two key reasons for Cabernet Sauvignon's rise to dominance. The most simple and primordial of these is that its vines are highly adaptable to different soil types and climates; it is grown at latitudes as disparate as 50°N (Okanagan in Canada) and 20°S (northern Argentina), and in soils as different as the Pessac-Leognan gravels and the iron-rich *terra rossa* of Coonawarra. Secondary to this, but just as important, is that despite the diversity of terroirs in which the vine is grown, Cabernet Sauvignon wines retain an inimitable "Cab" character, nuanced with hints of provenance in the best-made examples. There is just a single reason, however, for the durability of the variety's fame and that is simple economics; the familiarity and marketability of the Cabernet Sauvignon name has an irresistible lure to wine companies looking for a reliable return on their investment.

A vigorous variety (another characteristic in its favor), Cabernet Sauvignon produces a dense leaf canopy and relatively high grape yields, giving wine producers a fairly open choice between quantity and quality. Careful vineyard management is essential, however, to coax the best out of the fruit.

As a late-flowering and late-ripening variety, Cabernet Sauvignon grapes mature slowly. This can also work for or against wine quality; in a cold season or climate there is a risk of the grapes failing to ripen fully, while in most other conditions the steady rate of progress offers producers a wider choice of harvest dates.

Few would argue that the finest examples of Cabernet Sauvignon wine are found in Bordeaux and California, a standpoint supported by the 1976 Judgment of Paris. The past two decades have seen a raft of quality Cabernets emerging from New World regions such as Maipo in Chile and Coonawarra in Australia. These are gaining popularity with an increasingly broad consumer base as the world's most prestigious Cabernet Sauvignon wines become prohibitively expensive. The variety has now made its way even into such established and traditional Italian names as Chianti and Carmignano (albeit restricted to 15 percent of the permitted blend), evidence that even the oldest and most traditional wine institutions now recognize the value of this most famous of grapes.

As I mentioned previously, in Bordeaux, Cabernet Sauvignon is always used as part of the blend. It can be over 90% of the blend in some vintages at select estates in the Left Bank. At other properties, it might be as low as 50%, or even a little less. In the Right Bank, not much Cabernet Sauvignon is grown. Some properties use up to 25%, for example Chateau Figeac in St. Emilion has almost one third of their vines devoted to Cabernet Sauvignon. Chateau Cadet Piola has 28% of their vines planted to Cabernet Sauvignon. Chateau Troplong Mondot also in Saint Emilion has slowly increased the amount of Cabernet Sauvignon in their vineyards over the past two decades. They are currently close to 15%. Chateau Pavie is experimenting with some plots of Cabernet Sauvignon as well. But across the board, not many Right Bank Bordeaux estates use that much of the variety in their blends.

In California, many wineries produce wine from 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, although blends are common as well. Cabernet Sauvignon based wines are the most expensive wines produced in California, with prices for Screaming Eagle hitting well over \$1,000 per bottle! Harlan Estate is not far from that price point either.

At its best, Cabernet Sauvignon produces wines with deep, dark colors that offer complex scents and concentrated flavors ranging from The actual Cabernet Sauvignon berries are small. They have dark colored, thick skins and can, under the correct conditions, become intensely, concentrated with flavor. It is the ability to offer concentrated flavors, refined textures and complex aromatics, along with high levels of tannin allowing the wine to age and evolve that make this an ideal grape for producing wine.



**Cabernet Sauvignon** is one of the classic four claret varieties, originating from France but now grown throughout the world, this really is well worth growing and should not be treated just as a novelty.

Apart from in the warmest parts of the UK it is unlikely that the fruit will ripen fully before the onset of Winter, and so growing under protection is recommended.

Dark purple-black fruits produce a rich red juice that can be sweetened for drinking, or fermented to make fine red table wines with that characteristic blackcurrant overtone. The grapes themselves are fairly small in size whilst the vine has a good resistance to disease.

- Originally from France.
- Late-Season fruit ripening (probably too late for most of the UK outside).
- Winter wood ripening is good - so can be grown both outdoors or under protection (greenhouse, polytunnel or conservatory) - though to guarantee fruit ripening we recommend protected growing.
- Can be trained using either the cane replacement method or spur pruning.

**Cabernet Sauvignon:** If you live in a climate that can grow good Cabernet, you are the envy of many backyard vineyardists that can't. For name recognition and sales in the US, Cabernet is unrivaled as a variety for growing complex reds with the capacity to age. The bones of Cabernet are fruit and structure — and the structure of Cab Sauv is clearly tannin. Even though the clusters are rather large, the berries of Cab Sauv tend to be quite small, which produces dark, tannic wines as a result of the low juice to skin ratio. From a growing perspective, Cabernet's biggest challenge is removing vegetal/green pepper character and promoting dense and aromatic black fruits. Canopy management is key to removing the veggie, so do your best to remove as many leaves on the morning side (after bloom and set) without exposing the fruit to sunburn. Full ripeness is another key to eliminating the green character — if the veggie character persists, you can go ultra-ripe in the vineyard (26–28 °Brix), then water back to high 23s and acidulate to around 3.5 pH before fermentation starts.

**Warm climate** regions tend to have more consistent temperatures throughout the season. The slow drop off from summer into fall gives grapes ample opportunity to become fully ripe but the negative is that more natural acidity in the grapes is lost. You can generally assume that warm climates produce grapes with more ripe fruit flavors and less acidity.

**Cool climate** regions definitely get just as hot as warm climates in the peak of the season. However, it is the fact that the temperatures drop off so quickly towards harvest that make the wines taste different. Lower temperatures preserve the acidity but they also make it difficult for grapes to ripen. You can generally assume that cool climate wine regions tend to produce tart fruit flavors and have more acidity.

Of course, the vintage plays a major role in the outcome. You can have a cool vintage create incredibly ripe tasting wines and vice-versa. This is why vintage matters so much, particularly if you tend to prefer cool climate wines.

## Cabernet Sauvignon Food Pairing

Cabernet Sauvignon is one of the more complex and layered wines out there. It has higher tannins and a savory character often described as black pepper and tobacco. Because of Cab's traits, look for foods high in fat and umami flavors for Cabernet Sauvignon food pairing.

Try Cabernet Sauvignon with a **charred gruyere burger**, a **mushroom pizza** with tomato sauce or some **marinated ribeye steak**. To champion the fruit flavors in Cabernet Sauvignon, *don't pair it with chocolate*. Instead, pair wine with **braised short ribs** or **mushroom stroganoff**. The powerful umami flavors overcome the savory quality of Cabernet Sauvignon leaving the berry flavors out in the open to shine.

Great Pairings:

- Game, Duck, Beef, Rabbit, Roasts, Strong cheeses

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# Guide to Cabernet Sauvignon Red Wine

## Cabernet Sauvignon Wine Profile

**MAJOR REGIONS:** France (~124k acres), Chile (~100k acres), United States (~95k acres), Australia (~65k acres), Italy (unknown), South Africa (~41k acres), Argentina (~16k acres)

**Over 650,000 acres worldwide\***

## Cabernet Sauvignon Characteristics

**FRUIT:** black cherry, black currant and blackberry

**OTHER:** black pepper, tobacco, licorice, vanilla and violet

**OAK:** Yes. Usually 9-18 months French oak. Some American & Hungarian oak

**TANNIN:** Medium (+)

**ACIDITY:** Medium (+)

**ABV:** 13.5-15.5%

**COMMON SYNONYMS:** In France, Bordeaux wines often blend with Cab. In Italy, it's common to see Supertuscan wines containing Cab. In Spain, Priorat wines often use Cab.

**OTHER NAMES (rare):**

Bouchet, Bouche, Petit-Bouchet, Petit-Cabernet, Petit-Vidure, Vidure, Sauvignon Rouge

## What does Cabernet Sauvignon Taste Like?

Since Cabernet Sauvignon is grown in a wide range of climates and regions throughout the world it has varied flavors. Fundamentally speaking, Cab is a full-bodied red wine with dark fruit flavors and savory tastes from black pepper to bell pepper. Let's take a look at two regions that make two very different styles of Cabernet Sauvignon to understand how the flavors differ.

### From Bordeaux and the Old World

A 100% Cabernet Sauvignon from the Old World is rare because Old World winemakers are awesome at blending varieties together. That said, Cabernet Sauvignon from Bordeaux tastes more like the herbal/floral flavors of **graphite**, **violets** and **tobacco** than fruit. When you smell a Bordeaux, you'll often get hints of black cherries and licorice along with the earthiness. Imagine you've filled a new leather bag with a pound of black cherries and held it to your chest while rolling down a hill.



## 2000 Peele Island Cabernet Sauvignon, Ontario, Canada

Due to its southerly location and the moderating effect of Lake Erie, it has a slightly milder climate than inland areas. Its climate is one of the mildest in Canada, and the island has long been used for vineyards and wine making. The wine industry was started here in 1860 and died out in the early twentieth century, but was restarted in the 1980s. The island is an agricultural based community which grows about 2,000 hectares (5,000 acres) of soybeans, about 400 hectares (1,000 acres) of wheat, 200 hectares (500 acres) of grapes, and a few hectares of specialty corn.

### TASTING NOTES

COLOUR: \_\_\_\_\_

NOSE \_\_\_\_\_

TASTE: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2000 Graham Beck, South Africa

They say great wines are made in the vineyard. Nothing could be truer of the superb calibre of fruit from our two premier Stellenbosch sites – highlighting our aim to constantly raise the bar in terms of quality and consistency.

Our Skoongesig and Vredenhof vineyards are situated in Firgrove in the prime wine growing region of Stellenbosch's Helderberg area. The farms are located along the False Bay rim, no more than two kilometers from the ocean. This proximity to the sea ensures a constant cooling breeze, allowing even ripening of the fruit and exceptional quality. The gentle slopes, ideal elevation and granite based soils provide perfect conditions for a variety of premium varieties. These meticulously tended vineyards benefit from the prevailing Mediterranean climate of long sunny days, cool evenings in summer and wet winters. This winning combination of terroir characteristics produce the building blocks with which we create wines that continue to wow palates from Cape Town to Copenhagen.

### TASTING NOTES

COLOUR: \_\_\_\_\_

NOSE \_\_\_\_\_

TASTE: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2001 Domaine A. Australia

Domaine A is set in one of the most pristine natural environments in the world.

Established in 1973, the historic Stoney Vineyard is the oldest in Tasmania's Coal River Valley. Just half an hour's drive from the city of Hobart, the 11ha single vineyard domaine is owned and operated by H. Peter and Ruth Althaus. It is the culmination of a long and exhaustive world-wide search for terroir ideally suited to cool-climate viticulture. Peter Althaus personally selects the fruit for harvesting. During the cool days of Autumn when the fruit is at the point of optimum ripeness and flavour it is hand-picked and crafted with minimal intervention. The wines are made without compromise in the spirit of the finest traditions of winemaking

### TASTING NOTES

COLOUR: \_\_\_\_\_

NOSE \_\_\_\_\_

TASTE: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2004 Santa Carolina Reserva Colchagua Valley, Chile

Viña Santa Carolina was founded by Luis Pereyra Cotapos. He named the winery after his wife, Carolina Iñiguez. He hired a French winemaker Germain Bachelet to order to make top quality wines from Chile.

Santa Carolina is part of Carolina Wine Brands, one of Chile's main winemaking groups. It is currently owned by the agro-industrial group Watt's S.A., property of the Larraín family. With over 135 years of history, it is one of Chile's oldest vineyards.

Viña Santa Carolina is Carolina Wine Brands' emblematic brand, with strong presence worldwide. Its main markets are: Chile, Canada, and Brazil. In 2013, sales exceeded 1,6 million 9-liter cases, with a total income of over US\$ 40 million.

Santa Carolina has a diverse portfolio, offering its consumers excellent quality wines in all price ranges.

### TASTING NOTES

**COLOUR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOSE** \_\_\_\_\_

**TASTE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 2010 Ramey Napa, California

David Ramey spent his early career creating benchmark wines for such wineries as Matanzas Creek, Chalk Hill, Dominus and Rudd. With that impressive resume, David and his wife Carla founded Ramey Wine Cellars in 1996.

They have been producing critically acclaimed, award-winning wines ever since, committed to Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Syrah as their primary varietals.

Located amidst the natural charm of Healdsburg, Ramey Wine Cellars embodies the balance that is the essence of California wine:

- Absolute attention to the tiniest detail, balanced by a willingness to trust nature's sometimes unpredictable impulses.
  - A philosophy rooted in traditional methods combined with an eagerness to explore exciting innovations in the industry.
- The belief that life is for living, wine is for sharing, and harmony is essential to both.

### TASTING NOTES

**COLOUR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOSE** \_\_\_\_\_

**TASTE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 1998 Chateau du Tertre Margaux, Bordeaux, France

The Chateau du Tertre is a thousand-year-old estate whose vineyard, stretching over 52 hectares, remains unchanged since 1855. During the 19th Century, the Chateau de Tertre wines rose to worldwide fame, especially thanks to the 1855 classification which established the Chateau as a Margaux Grand Cru Classe. In 1997, a Dutch businessman, Eric Albada Jelgersma bought the estate and invested in the large-scale overall restructuring, thus returning its former noble personality to the Chateau du Tertre.

### TASTING NOTES

**COLOUR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOSE** \_\_\_\_\_

**TASTE:** \_\_\_\_\_



## 2004 Osborne Solaz. Spain

Osborne is one of Spain's most distinguished wine and Sherry producers. They are family owned and operated and place an extremely high value on quality and consistency to offer consumers exceptional wines with equally attractive pricing.

Their vast company portfolio encompasses the well reputed Bodegas Montecillo wines from Rioja, Solaz wines from Tierra de Castilla and Dominio de Malpica wines also from Tierra de Castilla.

Osborne Sherry, Brandy, Port and other distinguished spirits as well as delicious Iberian pork products, bottled water and TOROXL energy drinks, round out the comprehensive portfolio.

### TASTING NOTES

COLOUR: \_\_\_\_\_

NOSE \_\_\_\_\_

TASTE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Chateau Camensac, Haut-Medoc, Bordeaux, France

**Château Camensac** is a winery in the Haut-Médoc appellation of the Bordeaux region of France. Château de Camensac is also the name of the red wine produced by this property. The wine produced here was classified as one of eighteen *Cinquièmes Crus* (Fifth Growths) in the Bordeaux Wine Official Classification of 1855.

The vineyards of Château Camensac are in the commune of Saint-Laurent-Médoc, just beyond the boundary of the Saint-Julien-Beychevelle appellation. As such it is entitled to only the Haut-Médoc appellation for its wines. The estate's 65 hectares of vines (60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot) are planted at a dense 10,000 vines per hectare and have an average age of 35 years. The estate limits yields to 45 hectoliters per hectare and grapes are picked and sorted by hand.

### TASTING NOTES

COLOUR: \_\_\_\_\_

NOSE \_\_\_\_\_

TASTE: \_\_\_\_\_





  
V E R I T Y

**Menu**

***Appetizers with Tasting:***  
**Duck Breast with Freekeh  
and Horseradish Vinaigrette**

**&**

**Cornish Hen, Goat Cheese Mousse, Olive  
Muffuletta**

***Optional Dinner Afterwards:***

**Beef Tenderloin, Sweet Potato  
Shallot Fondant**

**&**

**Pistachio Friand White Chocolate Mousse**

