

Bordeaux Supérieur 2016
Graves, Bordeaux, France



Grape Varieties	80% Merlot 20% Cabernet Sauvignon
Winemaker	Jean-Christophe Barbe
Closure	Natural Cork
ABV	14%
Residual Sugar	2g/L
Acidity	4.35g/L
Wine pH	3.75
Notes	Sustainable, Vegetarian, Vegan

PRODUCER

The 14-hectare Château Laville in Sauternes is Jean-Christophe Barbe's family property. Professor of Oenology at Bordeaux University, he is mostly famous for his outstanding Sauternes (Decanter 2015 Sweet Bordeaux Trophy over £15), but also produces some stunning reds, albeit on a fairly small scale.

Although the domaine is mainly planted with white grapes, Jean-Christophe has set aside a 1.3 hectare vineyard of red varieties, which is sold as 'Château Mahon-Laville'. Thanks to the team of pickers that are constantly on hand at Château Laville (to perform the various passes through the vineyard required to make top Sauternes), Jean-Christophe is able to wait and pick the Merlot and Cabernet grapes when they are ripe (which can be an issue in this part of Bordeaux), rather than when he has pickers available.

VINEYARDS

Jean-Christophe's original 1.3 hectares of red grape varieties are located at Laville on a plot of land called Mahon, hence the name. Soils are predominantly clay and the average age of the vines is 15 years. The work that goes into it - leaf stripping to expose the fruit, crop thinning before véraison to lower yields and aid ripeness - all add to this great value wine.

VINTAGE

Bordeaux had a wet spring, which proved to be helpful given the drought that was to follow. The flowering in early June was remarkably successful, with almost 12 weeks of hot summer weather. 2016 was a later harvest and in keeping, in terms of timing, with what are called 'classic' Bordeaux vintages.

VINIFICATION

The grapes were hand picked then spent three to four weeks on skins fermenting at 28°C-30°C. Malolactic fermentation took place in stainless-steel tanks at temperatures of 22°C followed by ageing for 12 months in barrel.

TASTING NOTES

This wine has a classic Bordeaux nose with ripe, supple fruit on the palate and a grip on the finish that reminds you that you are drinking a claret.