

Château Laville,
Sauternes 2022
Sauternes, Bordeaux, France



Grape Varieties	85% Semillon 15% Sauvignon Blanc
Winemaker	Jean-Christophe Barbe
Closure	Natural Cork
ABV	13%
Residual Sugar	140g/L
Acidity	7.48g/L
Wine pH	4.04
Bottle Sizes	37.5cl, 75cl
Notes	Vegetarian, Vegan

PRODUCER

The 14 hectare Château Laville in Sauternes is Jean-Christophe Barbe's family property. Jean-Christophe is also a Professor of Oenology at the University of Bordeaux, where his particular area of expertise is 'noble rot' which, as a producer of Sauternes, he has had plenty of opportunity to study at first hand. A frequent recipient of awards, including several golds and most recently a DWWA Trophy, Château Laville Sauternes is one of our best kept secrets.

VINEYARDS

Chateau Laville has 14 hectares of vineyard in Sauternes on gravel soils underpinned with limestone. The best plots are used to make the Grand Vin of Laville. The vines are approximately 35 years old and the vineyards are farmed following sustainable practices. These include using a herd of 'landais' sheep (an endangered local breed from the Landes Forest) who graze in the vineyards from November until March/April and provide natural fertilizer to enrich the soils. Jean-Christophe and the team make several passes through the vineyard during harvest to handpick the botrytised berries.

VINTAGE

The 2022 vintage proved exceptionally challenging in Sauternes, marking what may have been the region's driest year on record. By July, the vineyards displayed unprecedented aridity, with grass turning brittle underfoot—a sight unfamiliar even to lifelong residents. Summer temperatures soared, with Sauternes briefly becoming France's hottest location during peak July and August heat waves.

Despite grapes reaching ripeness by late August, the extreme drought prevented botrytis development, yielding merely 1-2 hectoliters per hectare during mid-September's initial harvest attempts. Following weeks of anxious waiting, late September rainfall triggered rapid and complete noble rot formation. The transformation proved dramatic: approximately 90% of the vintage was gathered within ten days between October 15th-25th, salvaging what initially appeared to be a lost season.

VINIFICATION

The grapes were gently pressed using pneumatic and vertical hydraulic presses. Fermentation took place at controlled temperatures between 20 and 22°C, in stainless-steel tanks. The wine was then aged in new 400-litre oak casks for 30 months prior to bottling.

TASTING NOTES

A bright golden yellow in colour. On the nose aromas of fresh citrus, candied fruit and marmalade leap out of the glass and are married with subtle hints of rye bread spice. The palate is intense and layered, with flavours of dried fig, orange blossom and sweet spice. A mouthwatering acidity perfectly balances the sweetness and carries the flavours onto the remarkably long finish.