



2025 VINTAGE NOTEBOOK

BETWEEN STONE AND SKY
A vintage of Measure and Balance
Shape by Terroir, Time, and Precision

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2025

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A Vintage of Measure and Balance
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KEY POINTS FOR 2025 SUCCESS

A Precocious and Naturally Regulated Cycle

Early budbreak, flowering and véraison set the tone for a rapid growing season. Careful vineyard management, guided by terroir, combined with Ducru-Beaucaillou's gravel soils to moderate water stress throughout the summer, allowing the vines to progress without blockage and reach maturity under stable conditions.

Concentration Driven by Structurally Low Yields

Limited cluster numbers, coulure during flowering, and sustained dry conditions naturally restricted yields. Small berries with high skin-to-juice ratios delivered concentration and strong phenolic potential, while timely late-season rainfall refined balance without diluting the fruit.

Balance Preserved Under Dry Conditions

Prolonged hydric constraint was tempered by timely late-summer rainfall, refining skins and moderating sugar accumulation. Adaptive canopy management, the use of cover crops, and attentive soil stewardship preserved freshness and aromatic clarity despite the rapid pace of maturation.

Early Maturity Requiring Precision in Harvest Timing

One of the earliest harvests in the estate's history required swift, parcel-by-parcel decision-making. With skins and pips already fully mature, preserving freshness became the key objective.

Concentrated Fruit Requiring Adapted Vinification

Extraction and fermentation parameters were adjusted to respect the natural concentration of the fruit. Gentle handling preserved aromatic expression and tannin finesse, resulting in wines defined by clarity, structure and elegance.

WINTER

Following an exceptionally wet 2024 season, the winter of 2024–2025 was mild and comparatively dry. November and December recorded temperatures above seasonal norms, alongside marked rainfall deficits, allowing soils to progressively rebalance while retaining adequate water reserves. Pruning began early in the least frost-sensitive parcels, while later pruning on Merlot was deliberately delayed to limit spring frost risk. Soil work progressed smoothly, ensuring a balanced and well-prepared start to the 2025 growing season.

SPRING

Spring was marked by early and homogeneous vegetative development under generally mild conditions. Budbreak occurred early and evenly across the vineyard, setting the tone for a precocious cycle. However, the legacy of the difficult 2024 season was already evident: reduced bud fertility resulted in low cluster numbers, while high inoculum pressure carried over from 2024 led to very early and intense mildew pressure.

Thanks to favourable working conditions and rigorous, plot-by-plot protection strategies, sanitary conditions were fully controlled by the end of April. Flowering was rapid and homogeneous. Cool night-time temperatures limited fertilisation, resulting in coulure that compounded an already low yield potential linked to reduced bud fertility, structurally fixing yields early in the season while preserving qualitative potential.

RIPENING

From May through July, weather conditions were largely favourable. Temperatures remained above seasonal averages in May and June before returning closer to normal in July, while rainfall deficits persisted over three consecutive months. This established a clear and sustained hydric constraint, reinforced by several heat episodes between mid-June and mid-July, totalling 27 days above 30 °C and 12 days above 35 °C.

Véraison followed early, with the first coloured berries observed on July 9 and mid-véraison reached by July 24 on the Plateau de Beaucaillou and adjoining terroirs, before extending across the remaining parcels by late July.

Moderate to strong water stress, combined with controlled canopy management, ensured balanced ripening and optimal fruit exposure. Deep root systems and healthy soil structure allowed the vines to maintain steady physiological activity, with no vine shutdown observed despite sustained dry conditions. Leaf removal was carried out progressively — first on the north-facing sides of the rows and subsequently on the east-facing sides — in order to improve aeration and light penetration while protecting the fruit from excessive heat and sunburn. Despite the rapid pace of late-summer maturation, targeted vineyard interventions safeguarded acidity and prevented excessive sugar accumulation.

HARVEST

The 2025 growing cycle culminated in one of the earliest harvests in the estate's history. The first Merlot parcels were harvested on September 2.

With skins and pips already fully mature, preserving freshness became the key objective. Daily tastings at the parcel level confirmed ripe berries with pure, vibrant fruit expression—dominated by black cherry and dark berry notes—with supple textures and no green or vegetal characters. Pips tasted clean and nutty rather than bitter, signalling complete phenolic maturity.

Late-August rainfall proved beneficial, easing excessive water stress and refining grape skins without compromising aromatic intensity. Harvesting concluded on September 23. Yields were historically low, averaging around 20 hl/ha in Saint-Julien.

Harvest dates

In Saint-Julien:

- Merlot: Sept 2 - 15
- Cabernet Sauvignon: Sept 11 - 23
- Petit Verdot: Sept 20 & 23

In Haut-Médoc:

- Merlot: Sept 10 - 20
- Cabernet Sauvignon: Sept 18 - 23
- Petit Verdot: Sept 22

IN THE CELLARS

Vinification of the 2025 vintage was guided by precision and restraint. The fruit's natural concentration, combined with a finely calibrated harvest, called for a gentle and highly controlled approach to extraction.

Because harvesting decisions were driven by precise ripeness criteria, careful parcel selection and combinations at vatting resulted in more homogeneous lots within each vat. This coherence allowed extraction regimes to be adapted with great accuracy to the character of each lot.

Fermentations were conducted in the estate's state-of-the-art wooden Smart Vats, enabling real-time tracking of fermentation metrics and minutely controlled, vat-by-vat extraction. Fractionated pump-overs over a 24-hour cycle favoured very gentle, progressive macerations, allowing precise control of structure while preserving aromatic purity.

Macerations lasted approximately three weeks, delivering ripe, finely textured tannins and vivid aromatic expression. Barrel ageing has been adapted to preserve freshness while supporting structure and ageing potential.

THE PRIVILEGE OF TERROIR

Our great terroirs played a decisive role in regulating the dry and precocious conditions of 2025. Thanks to our well-aerated slopes rising from the Gironde and the vitality of healthy, well-structured soils, the vines maintained steady physiological activity and avoided hydric blockage throughout the growing season. The deep Günzian gravel soils moderated water stress during the summer months, helping to control vegetative growth and support even, progressive ripening. Cool nights, combined with the proximity of the Atlantic Ocean and the Gironde estuary, tempered climatic extremes and helped preserve freshness during the rapid approach to maturity.

The vineyards of Ducru-Beaucaillou are planted predominantly to Cabernet Sauvignon, the king of Saint-Julien. Here, grape varieties are chosen according to the terroir. In a vintage such as 2025, Cabernet Sauvignon once again proved particularly well adapted to our maritime conditions: resilient under dry stress, less sensitive to sanitary pressure, and ideally suited to completing full phenolic maturity within an early harvest window.

A COMMITTED AND SKILLED TEAM

Under the leadership of Bruno Borie and technical directors Emmanuel Bonneau and Cécile Dupuis, the team managed a fast-moving and demanding growing season with precision and composure. The estate's commitment to rigorous viticultural monitoring, disciplined execution in the vineyard, and finely tuned decision-making throughout harvest enabled Ducru-Beaucaillou to guide the vintage through its challenges and deliver wines of clarity, balance, and distinction.

RESULT: AROMATIC CLARITY AND STRUCTURE IN BALANCED TENSION

Precision and Balance: The 2025 wines are shaped by natural concentration resulting from low yields and an early growing cycle. Alcohol levels remain controlled, with a clear sense of tension and finely textured tannins that frame the fruit without heaviness, bringing lift, freshness, and definition to the overall structure.

Aromatic Definition: On the finest terroirs, the wines show a highly expressive aromatic profile, combining ripe black cherry and dark berry notes with floral nuances. This definition reflects full phenolic maturity achieved under dry, stable conditions and carefully managed ripening.

Each vintage adds a new facet to the Ducru-Beaucaillou expression. The 2025 vintage demonstrates the estate's ability to translate precocity and constraint into wines of precision, structure, and harmony, true to the identity of the terroir.



SAINT-JULIEN
2025