

Château Smith Haut Lafitte

white 2009

Grand Vin de Graves



Yield: 30 hl/ha, before selection of the wines: Chateau Smith Haut Lafitte and Les Hauts de Smith.

Blend

90 % Sauvignon blanc
5 % Sauvignon gris
5 % Semillon

Vinification: grapes are hand-picked into small crates and pressed in an oxygen-free environment (to preserve the aromatic potential of the berries) and fermentation takes place in French oak barrels (50% new oak) after a cold settling of the juices.

Ageing 12 months on the lees with bâtonnage in barrels (50% new and 50% used for one previous vintage) made at the Chateau onsite cooperage.

Vine age: 38 years

The 2009 growing season benefited from beautiful summer and autumn weather (warm and sunny in the daytime, cool at night) conducive to good vine development and, later on, ripening. Accumulated temperatures were similar to 2005 and the water balance resembled 2000... In short, weather conditions were very favourable to making great wine.

Our non-interventionist approach to viticulture, maintaining shadow above the fruit by removing unproductive side shoots proved its efficiency in a year such as this by protecting the fruit from excessive heat while ensuring good ventilation and healthy ripening. The grapes were picked in excellent condition: ripe, aromatic, and complex.

The white wine harvest began with Sauvignon Blanc on 7 September. Sugar levels were good (13.5% potential alcohol) as was acidity (pH of 3.3). We picked the grapes in several passes, helped in part by satellite photos that gave us a very useful overview of ripening patterns: The harvest is now even more finely-tuned. We only harvested in the morning because the cool temperatures helped to retain our white wine grapes' full aromatic potential. The harvest came to an end on 23 September 2009 with the picking of beautiful Sémillon grapes.

Comments by Fabien Teitgen, Technical Director

Château Smith Haut Lafitte white 2009 has an attractive brilliant yellow colour.

The nose is quite delicate with floral overtones. Its full aromatic potential is released with aeration, revealing hints of yellow fruit (vineyard peaches, apricot), flowers (honeysuckle, broom flowers), and a touch of flint.

The wine starts out straightforward on the palate, filling out to become rich and powerful (this is undoubtedly a food wine). The aftertaste is delightfully flavoursome, with yellow fruit (mango, apricot, and candied pineapple), sweet spice, and gunflint. The finish is quite long and delicious, and the wine is altogether rich and savoury.

Tasting Notes

Robert Parker	98
Wine Spectator	93
Bettane & Desseauve	18
La Revue du Vin de France	17,5
Jancis Robinson	17
Telecran (C François)	19