

## Château Les Carmes Haut-Brion – Primeur 2025 Notes de dégustation / Ratings

Critiques	Note
The Wine Advocate	95 – 98
James Suckling	99 – 100
Vinous / Antonio Galloni	96 – 98
Vinous / Neal Martin	95 – 97
Weinwisser / Tjark Witzgall	99 – 100
Beckustator / Yves Beck	100
Vinum / Adrian Van Velsen	98 – 100
Falstaff	100
Jean-Marc Quarin	100
The Wine Cellar Insider	98 - 100
Tastingbook / Markus Del Monego	98
Decanter	97
Jeb Dunnuck	96 – 98
The Wine Palate / Lisa Perrotti Brown	96 - 98
The Wine Independent	94 – 97+
Vinifera / Mathieu Quetglas	98 - 100
Alexandre Ma	98 – 99
RVF	97 – 98
Bettane & Desseauve	96 – 97
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The Drinks Business	96 – 98+
The Wine Doctor	95 – 97
Jane Anson	96
Le Figaro	97 – 99
Jancis Robinson	17.5

 *Yohan Castaing*  
**95 - 98 / 100**

The 2025 Les Carmes Haut-Brion is a blend of 54% Cabernet Franc, 29% Cabernet Sauvignon and 17% Merlot, one of the highest proportions of Cabernet Franc at the estate and comparable to 2016. It was vinified with 65% whole clusters and matured in 70% new oak. It reveals a complex, harmonious bouquet of pomegranate, iris and peony, intertwined with cassis, mulberries and dark berries. Medium- to full-bodied, dense and structured, it's deep and layered, its concentrated core of fruit framed by velvety structuring tannins, concluding with a long, mineral-inflected finish. Combining tension with an ethereal profile, it delivers remarkable clarity, freshness and elegance. While slightly more overtly structured at this stage than the prodigious 2022, it remains impeccably balanced.

 *James Suckling*  
**99 - 100 / 100**

The precision is so seductive and intellectual, with aromas of fresh flowers, iron, graphite, cedar, blood oranges and black fruit. It's medium-bodied with a compact palate of intense tannins that melt into the wine. Rather weightless in nature. It kicks in at the end with incredible intensity and focus. 13% alcohol. 65% whole cluster. 54% cabernet franc, 29% cabernet sauvignon and 17% merlot, mostly co-fermented.


 *Antonio Galloni*  
**96 - 98 / 100**

The 2025 Les Carmes Haut-Brion is a huge, powerful wine that is going to need many years to come into its own. Dark red/purplish fruit, lavender, incense, melted road tar and licorice make a bold entrance. Fertility in the Merlots was low. As a result, the 2025 has the highest amount of Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon ever, 83% in total as opposed to the more typical 70% or so. Whole clusters, always a part of the approach here, are 65%. Time on skins was 45 days at 27°C (80.6°F) compared to the 35 days at 30°C (86°F) that is more typical. Readers will find an especially deep, potent Carmes, a wine that will need the better part of a decade to shed some of its considerable baby fat. It's a telling example of the vintage, with 1% less alcohol than in most recent years. Today the 2025 is a mere infant. It's another exceptional wine from Technical Director Guillaume Pouthier and his team.

 *Neal Martin*  
**95 - 97 / 100**

The 2025 Les Carmes Haut-Brion comes from clay-limestone soils and was picked from September 7 to 19, with a high level of Cabernet Franc (54%) and lower Merlot (17%). This vintage has 65% whole cluster, similar to 2022, raised in 70% new oak barrels, 19% in 18hl foudres and 11% amphoras. This takes time to open on the nose: blacker, darker fruit than The C, black plum and touches of iris flower. Very pure, very well defined. The palate is medium-bodied with slightly chalky tannins on the entry, crunchy in the mouth, black fruit interlaced with Earl Grey, subtle ash-like notes. Linear toward the finish but very sustained in the mouth, there is plenty of energy in this Les Carmes Haut-Brion and it should age with style and grace. More sapidity on the finish than the Dead Sea. 13.1% alcohol.

 *Tjark Witzgall*  
**99 - 100 / 100**

 *Beckustator - Yves Beck*  
**100 / 100**

La subtilité de l'intensité est à elle seule déjà un paradoxe. Cela rappelle, simplement, que l'un n'empêche pas l'autre ! Au-delà de l'intensité, c'est l'aptitude de ce bouquet à dévoiler la personnalité de Carmes dès les premières secondes et d'immédiatement appeler à mon souvenir de très grandes bouteilles, comme le 1949 par exemple, avec l'évidente nature du terroir qui se place devant les cépages et les personnes qui l'ont vinifié. C'est un lieu qui s'exprime, irréfutablement. Les notes de cerises noires s'allient à des parfums de pivoines, de torréfaction, de cassis, d'écorce d'orange, de malt et de menthe poivrée. L'attaque légèrement crémeuse annonce un vin méthodique, qui se révèle progressivement. Un véritable tacticien qui gagne en largeur au fil de son cheminement, qui brille de l'énergie qu'il parvient à stigmatiser au bon moment, au bon endroit (cela s'appelle Kairos en grec...), en apportant une touche tonique au milieu de bouche ! Les tannins, eux, se manifestent tardivement (le contraire m'eût surpris) et brillent de leur puissance silencieuse, de leur message clairvoyant et de leur prudence : aussi vite que possible, mais aussi lentement que nécessaire ! Ils ont pour effet de consolider, de cautionner la profondeur et la fraîcheur et d'emmener la structure acide avec eux afin qu'elle puisse faire honneur à sa mission essentielle, outre le fait de contribuer à une longue garde, soit de rafraîchir et de plébisciter le côté juteux du vin. Un Carmes Haut-Brion qui parvient aisément à encadrer sa puissance en l'entourant d'éléments tout autant percutants qu'elle ! Il est brillant dans son aptitude à se positionner avec vigueur et tension en revendiquant le droit de ne pas tout dire, mais aussi d'en dire bien assez pour que l'on comprenne qu'il viendra compléter l'époustouflant Hall of Fame de la propriété. Le message est clair : il faudra attendre, mais si l'on s'aventure à ouvrir une bouteille dans sa jeunesse, la notion de cru d'excellence sera déjà explicitement projetée. Carmes Haut-Brion entre dans une nouvelle ère ; s'il s'est toujours assumé, il a aujourd'hui l'avantage de bénéficier de tout ce que les équipes qui s'appliquent jour après jour à maintenir leur focus sur le moindre détail qu'ils ont su investir ces dernières années. Cela s'appelle récolter le fruit d'un travail de longue haleine. Cela permet à Carmes de ne plus avoir à convaincre, il peut enfin se suffire à lui-même. Pas par arrogance, mais simplement parce que le fait d'être grand n'a ni besoin de justification, ni de classement, ni d'évaluation. Quand on est grand, on est grand. Et il n'y a même pas besoin de notes potentielles. 2032-2080





*Adrian Van Velsen*

**98 - 100 / 100**

(54% Cabernet Franc, 29% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot, 65% whole bunches, 80% new oak, pH 3.59) Dark, almost black at the core; on the nose, a picture-perfect Cabernet bouquet: radiant, fresh, delicately spicy and Burgundian in character, fascinatingly floral with hints of violet blossoms, complemented by exotic spices; focused on the palate, firm on the attack, expanding to fill the mouth without being heavy; even as a barrel sample, this wine makes it difficult to spit out; immensely juicy, full of energy, character and joie de vivre; a delicate hint of bitterness, combined with outstanding acidity, lends a freshness that is second to none; the finish is of excellent length. A highly complex Les Carmes Haut-Brion that will be accessible early on yet is built to last for a small eternity. (Drink from 2030 to 2070)

**falstaff**

*Falstaff*

**100 / 100**

Deep dark ruby garnet, violet reflections, delicate edge brightening. Ripe dark berry fruit, a hint of plums, floral touch, pleasant herbal spice, some nougat and orange zest. Complex, yet lively, ripe cherries and cranberries, fine, ripe tannins, literally opens up in the mouth, delicate extract sweetness, lingers for minutes, already very convincing in its youth, cassis and ripe cherries on the finish, delicate and multifaceted, great future potential.



*Jean Marc Quarin*

**100 / 100**

Couleur noire. Nez profond sentant les fruits noirs, les fruits rouges (framboise), la fumée. Ample à l'attaque, de suite volumineux et puissant avec un déroulé majestueux, ce vin fondant et noble avance doucement, lentement, très opulent, avant de se détendre en finale, plus aérien, tout en se tramant, remarquable d'équilibre, d'étrangeté, de complexité. Il s'achève sur un grain de tannin fameux et une extraordinaire longueur envahissante qui laisse sans voix ! Wow ! Magnifique ! Gouté 2 fois depuis l'assemblage !

Il durera cent ans.

2039-2125 !



*Jeff Leve*

**98 - 100 / 100**

Almost opaque in color, it takes no effort to dig into the floral display. From there you encounter black cherries, licorice, spice box, menthol, cigar wrappers, blackberries and crushed rocks in the aromas. The palate is what steals the show with its vivid display of black, with red fruits, elegant, silky textures, and most importantly, purity of fruit. The velvety finish spreads all over your palate with touches of sea-salt, cocoa, Indian spices and lingering, dark fruits. Clearly, this is in competition with the best vintages the estate has ever produced. The ability to manage the potential of hydric stress, due to their terroir is a large part of what helped make 2025 such a success. The wine was made using 65% whole bunch clusters, blending 54% Cabernet Franc, 29% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 17% Merlot. It is interesting to note this is the highest percentage of Cabernet ever included in the blend. I think it really works here. 13% ABV, pH 3.59. The wine is aging in a combination of 70% new, French oak, 19% foudres, and 11% amphora. Picking took place September 7- September 19. Drink from 2029-2065.



*Markus Del Monego*

**98 / 100**

54% of old Cabernet Franc vines and 29% of Cabernet Franc are complemented by Merlot. The vinification is made with 65% whole grape fermentation. The result is a rich and layered nose with hints of graphite, pencil shavings, fine floral hints of violets, backed by ripe blackberries and elderberries, excellent spiciness and subtle oak. On the palate well balanced with excellent structure, depth and length, rich fruit quoting the note, elegant spiciness, fine minerality and graphite in the background. An excellent Carmes, maybe the best ever tasted en primeur?



*Georgie Hindle*

**97 / 100**

Gorgeously fragrant on the nose with so many perfumed scents – violets, iris, peonies, cinnamon, exotic spices, black chocolate, something slightly sweet and aromatic with blackcurrant and dark bramble berries. Succulent and juicy with a powdery element to the tannins that fills the mouth straight away. I love the integration of the acidity – this has brightness but is also quite calm and charming, softer than expected. Sleek, sophisticated, full of complexity and nuance yet with real depth, intensity, concentration and integrity. Very true to place and to Guillaume Pouthier's style. Succulent and floral Cabernets, aromatic all the way through, super long, graceful and full of width and flavour while staying clean. Ripe with tannins that fill the mouth – fleshy, grippy but wide and lifted – giving a gorgeous texture. A little citrus tang to the acidity but overall full of life and focus. Brilliant. 3.59pH. A yield of 38hl/ha overall (29hl/ha Merlot, 45hl/ha Cabernet Sauvignon). 65% whole bunch fermentation.

**JEB DUNNUCK**

*Jeb Dunnuck*

**96 – 98 / 100**

Deeper-hued than the C des Carmes cuvée, with a gorgeous perfume of red, blue, and black fruits intermixed with graphite, leafy herbs, iris, and subtle floral, minty, and almost peppery nuances, the 2025 Château Carmes Haut-Brion is based on 54% Cabernet Franc, 29% Cabernet Sauvignon, and the rest Merlot, vinified with 65% whole clusters. On the palate, it's wonderfully textured and medium to full-bodied, with a round, layered, expansive mouthfeel and ultra-fine tannins. I love its overall balance, it has no hard edges, and while there's plenty of tannins here (IPT 82), they're perfectly integrated and polished. It checks in at 13% alcohol with a pH of 3.59, and this is just loaded with charm and character.



CHÂTEAU  
LES CARMES  
HAUT-BRION



*Lisa Perrotti-Brown*  
**96 - 98 / 100**



*Ivar Bjurner*  
**94 - 97+ / 100**

Deep and interesting, inky nose of jammy fruit, cherries, violets and dairy products. Very well composed, round, subtle taste. A bit lighter for Carmes than previous vintages, but very subtle, fragrant and fresh. This will be drinkable earlier than normal and is a very fine, fresh and seemingly elegant Carmes.

*Vinifera - Mathieu Quetglas*  
**98 - 100 / 100**

Le nez s'exprime sur des notes de bulbe et de fleurs violettes, ouvrant sur une attaque marquée par le racinaire. C'est un vin intellectuel aux multiples facettes. Le grain de tannin, d'une grande délicatesse et d'une granulométrie fine, s'accompagne d'une densité profonde. La bouche prend de l'envol et se dévoile progressivement, portée par une rétro-olfaction qui redonne de l'allant. Ce cru fait preuve d'une grande élégance, offrant une lecture macro-précise de son terroir tout en restant affable.



*Alexandre Ma*  
**98 - 99 / 100**

With 65% whole-bunch fermentation, a delicate note of rose tea lingers gracefully in the air. Layers of salted plum, sour plum juice, red date cake, and goji candy rise one after another, with each swirl, the aromas surge like a fountain of shifting colors across the palate. Yet this is only the surface. What truly runs through the wine is a clear and persistent thread of salinity. Discreet at first, it gradually reveals itself as the fruit unfolds, gaining presence until it gently but firmly takes hold of the palate. As I taste, I find myself picturing Yu Ji and Xiang Yu dancing together. Yu Ji's softness is the movement of aroma, the delicacy of texture, the trace of unspoken emotion; Xiang Yu's strength is the structure, the tension, the depth of salinity, and a power held in quiet reserve. In this moment, I can only offer my admiration to the team at Château Les Carmes Haut-Brion for crafting such an emotional experience.



*Olivier Poels*  
**97 - 98 / 100**

Fidèle à son style singulier, Les Carmes Haut-Brion 2025 confirme son identité avec un assemblage dominé par le cabernet franc (54 %) et une forte proportion de vendange entière (65 %). Le vin séduit par sa texture poudrée, presque tactile, et par une dimension saline et minérale très marquée. Les amers élégants et les nuances d'umami enrichissent la palette, apportant profondeur et complexité. L'ensemble, intense et vibrant, exprime avec force la signature calcaire du terroir, dans un registre racé et contemporain.



*Bettane & Desseauve*  
**96 - 97 / 100**

Raffinement suprême et précision aromatique définissent ce grand Carmes, dominé par le cabernet franc. Dense mais d'une grande finesse, le vin impressionne par sa texture veloutée, sa fraîcheur et son immense potentiel. Priorité dans le millésime.



*Terre de vins*  
**98 - 99 / 100**

Un Carmes plongeant, à la densité sensuelle et intense, dont le parfum subtil et zesté exprime les 54% de cabernet franc et les 65% de vendange entière. Une fraîcheur iodée se diffuse, qui exalte la dimension florale de l'aromatique. En bouche, une définition tactile incroyable, un tannin ultra-poudré qui vient emplier la bouche de façon satinée et saline, accompagnant chaque millimètre de la chair séveuse. C'est à la fois aérien, plein, riche mais lumineux, plein de saveur, long et – c'est important – réjouissant. Un vin qui donne le sourire et qu'on a envie de boire ! Une grande réussite de 2025.



*Colin Hay*  
**96 - 98+ / 100**

(Pessac-Léognan; 54% Cabernet Franc, 29% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot; a final yield of 38 hl/ha; pH 3.59; 13% ABV; 65% whole-bunch fermentation). The highest Cabernet proportion here ever. Nutty and salty again. Rich, plump, plush but oh so refined. Aerial and ethereal with so much vertical lift. Very floral too from the Cabernet – iris, lily of the valley, a little peony, even a touch of violet. A little blood orange, as ever here. Graphite first, cedar second. Ample on the attack but the immediate work of the tannins and the acidity pulls this back towards the spine. It doesn't entirely succeed, and the effect is that the external parameters of the wine undulate over the palate, producing a delightful rippling effect. Crystalline,

impressively so given the amplitude and depth of the wine. The tannins that shape the finish are particularly powdery, with the vines searching for water from the limestone subsoil here and hence bringing more of that chalky, tannic signature to the wine. A more intellectual Carmes. The Cabernet signature is gorgeous, reminding me aromatically of Jean Faure, and texturally of Angélu's Bouchet.

**WINEDOCTOR** *Chris Kissack*  
95 - 97 / 100

The colour in the glass is a vibrant black tulip hue, and the aromatics are dominated by the Cabernet as you might expect, with violets, currants, blackcurrant and griottes, all very Franc-ish. The palate is gorgeous, supple and textural, the palate filled out with seams of violets, blackcurrants and crushed rocks, with a tense backbone of fresh tannin. It maintains a supple and velvety substance through to a defined finish, with a salted mineral touch and a flourishing of ripe grip which fades slowly in the length. This is a super Les Carmes, distinctive and filled with personality and future potential. The blend is 54% Cabernet Franc, 29% Cabernet Sauvignon (the highest percentage of the Cabernets combined ever) and 17% Merlot, with 65% whole-bunch vinification (reflecting the ripeness of the stems), with no second wine. The yield here was 38 hl/ha. The alcohol is reported to be 13%, even though the potential at harvest was closer to 14.2%, which the team here put down to whole-bunch vinification and yeast selection – I certainly buy the first of those two explanations.

 *Jane Anson*  
96 / 100

I was a little nervous to be honest about Carmes Haut-Brion, worried that this would be too sliced-through with steel acidity this year with the high Cabernet Franc, but I was worrying unnecessarily. It's totally beautiful, sleek, grilled campfire, a ton of momentum and there is a spherical feel through the mid palate, expanding and deepening the fruit flavours. High floral as you would expect, a crush of peony, iris, violet right on the first nose, chalky and slate edge to the tannins, full of energy, 14%abv at picking then whole cluster brought it down to 13%, 3.6ph, 65% whole bunch during fermentation. 38hl/h yield (compared to 24hl/ha yield last year after selection), 70% new oak. 3.59 pH. Harvest September 7 to 19, this is highest levels of Cabernet Franc to date.

 *Ella Lister*  
97 - 99 / 100

Quelle profondeur ! Presque noire, la robe est opaque et intense. Mais le nez fait preuve de limpidité avec des arômes d'orange sanguine, de quinine, de tige de lavande et de menthe. Un bouquet d'une classe absolue. Cette élégance se retrouve dans une matière sphérique, caressante, en lévitation. À l'image de la capsule Orion de la mission Artemis II vers la Lune, la bouche est un espace en apesanteur. Le fruit raffiné est presque plus salé que sucré, débordant de saveur, de succulence, de salinité et surtout de notes florales. Époustouflant.

 *Jancis Robinson*  
17.5 / 20

54% Cabernet Franc, 29% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot. 38 hl/ha. 65% whole bunch. Cask sample. Poised, precise and perfumed. Resonates with aromatic fruit on the palate. Lovely texture, the fine-grained tannins silky and fresh. A little sweetness of ripe fruit but the finish lively and long.