

Château Haut-la-Péreyre, Haut-Benauge



NBA-tall Olivier Cailleux makes this delicious wine from vineyard parcels in the small appellation of Haut-Benauge. This appellation is reserved for whites—Haut-La Péreyre is AC Bordeaux Supérieur—but the zone is one of the best in Entre-deux-Mers for both red and white varieties. The vineyards grow on the high ground inland from the historic river town of Cadillac, and drainage and exposure are excellent. On the other side of the Garonne River lies the appellation of Graves.

A little over 4,000 cases of this wine are made each year from a blend of roughly 55% Merlot and 45% Cabernet Sauvignon. Unlike the vast majority of petits châteaux, Haut-La Péreyre is not filtered. Its flavors are consequently broadly dense and richly concentrated. It is, however, this wine's graphite aromatics that really set it apart, followed by its depth and length, all balanced by refining minerality.

The château also bottles a tiny amount of white wine from six acres of vines. The blend is 10% Semillon, 30% Muscadelle, and 60% Sauvignon Blanc, all harvested by hand and made with extensive lees contact. The Semillon and Muscadelle are old plantings. The parcel of Semillon was planted by Olivier's great-grandfather in 1921 after he returned from the trenches. The Muscadelle, a variety noted for its fruity aromatics, grows in two parcels, one planted in 1938 and the other in 1965. This wine is a fragrant, bone-dry, thirst-quenching white.

Haut-La Péreyre is one of the finest values in our book.