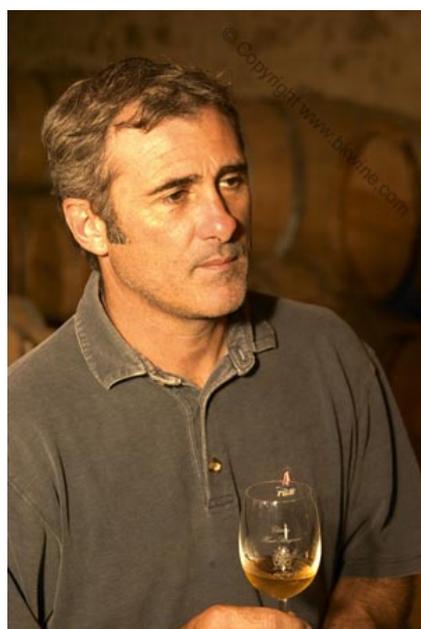
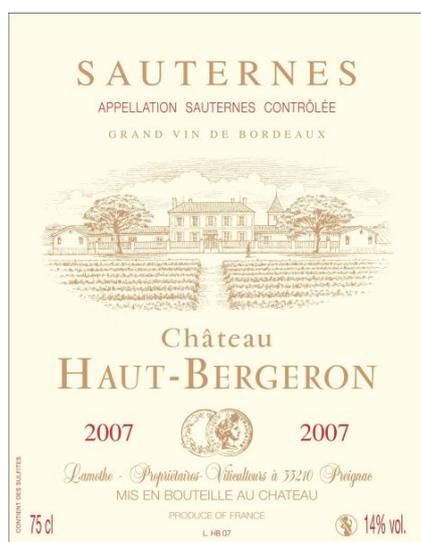




CHATEAU HAUT BERGERON

SAUTERNES

FACT SHEET



OWNER

Robert Lamothe

PRODUCTS

Sauternes, Château Fontebride

Sauternes, Château Haut Bergeron

SIZE OF THE VINEYARDS

A total of just under 25 hectares.

LOCATION OF THE VINEYARDS

The Château is located halfway between the villages of Preignac and Sauternes, with Châteaux Bastor-Lamontagne and Suduiraut as immediate neighbours. The vineyards are spread around the communes of Sauternes, Preignac, Bommès and Barsac in a selection of choice sites, including a parcel adjacent to Château d'Yquem.

SOIL

Limestone and clay, with some gravel.

GRAPE VARIETIES

Haut-Bergeron & Fontebride: 90% Sémillon

5% Sauvignon Blanc

5% Muscadelle

AVERAGE AGE OF THE VINES

The average is 60 years old, with some ancient Semillon vines over 100 years in age.

AVERAGE PRODUCTION

Tiny yields average just 15 hl/ha. Average total production is 45 to 50 000 bottles a year:

Château Fontebride: around 20 000 bottles

Château Haut-Bergeron: 25 to 30 000 bottles

VINIFICATION AND AGEING

Harvesting is by hand, with skilled pickers passing through the vineyards on up to 6 separate occasions looking for individual berries that have succumbed to noble rot. On arrival at the cellars, they are further examined on a sorting table to eliminate all but the very best. Following a very gentle pressing, the super-rich must is slowly fermented in tank at cool temperatures under the action of indigenous yeasts. Fermentation comes to an end naturally once alcohol levels become too high for these yeasts, leaving considerable residual sugar. The young wine is racked into barrel for 18 months ageing before fining and bottling. 50% of the Haut-Bergeron barrels are new oak. Fontebride is a second wine, made with the same care and dedication, but



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blended from lots which are judged not quite up to Haut-Bergeron's high standards.

Since 1996, the estate has vinified a small parcel of 100 year old vines separately. Fermentation is in 100% new oak barrels and can last up to 60 days. Ageing continues in new oak for 30 months before bottling.

TASTING NOTES

Haut-Bergeron displays an appealing deep amber gold colour, with good legs. The nose is intense, rich but fresh, combining apricot jam, overripe peaches, nectarines and pineapple with spicy, honey and floral notes. In the mouth, super-concentrated ripe stone fruit is held in place by crisp, spring-fresh acidity. There is a succulent honeyed viscosity, but the palate never cloys. Finishing with a drier, spicy complexity, the length is long and clean.

NOTES ON THE PROPERTY

It is a complete mystery why this superb Sauternes property is not better known. The vineyards are very well-located, the vines truly venerable, and the selection policy is as rigorous as for the 1ers Crus Classés (average yield 15 hl/ha !). The winemaking is attentive and intelligent, and the fruit is nicely complimented but not drowned in new oak. It appears that the Lamothe family have never had a problem selling their wine to a large and loyal following of private customers, and as a result have never sought international recognition or widespread publicity. With typically modest understatement - "récompenses obtenues" - they admit that Haut-Bergeron has won over 50 medals, including no less than 30 golds, but that is as far as they will go in 'blowing their own trumpet'.

The estate now produces three quality levels. Fontebrière is a second-label: beautifully-made, light and invigorating, but with deceptive complexity. Haut-Bergeron is rich and hedonistic, a luscious cocktail of ripe Mediterranean fruit, honey and fresh flowers. Just released is a new super-cuvée, from a parcel of 100 year old vines that yield 12 hl/ha of pure nectar. For the moment, the prices are criminally low given the quality of these wines, but the secret is out now and the inevitable supply-and-demand problems are sure to follow soon. Expect to hear a lot more about this first-rate property over the next few years.