

GRAND ENCLOS DU CHÂTEAU DE CÉRONS, GRAVES BLANC

BORDEAUX, FRANCE 2008

FRUIT



EARTH



BODY



TANNIN



ACID



ALCOHOL



Every time a Bordeaux Blanc crosses my desk is a bittersweet moment. This category mostly falls on deaf ears, despite being 1) an enduring wine classic; 2) repeatedly praised by the world's greatest wine minds; and 3) crafted by A-List châteaux like Haut-Brion, Domaine de Chevalier, and Smith Haut Lafitte. While I'd love to sell wines from these kingpin producers, pricing and availability aren't typically on our side, so we decided to introduce you to this category with a truly unforgettable, shockingly affordable aged wine. **—Ian Cauble, Master Sommelier**

Today's offer will completely shift your views on Bordeaux—and don't worry, it's good news all the way. Consider the following specs: iconic 'Left Bank' terroir; sustainably farmed old vines; barrel-aging with new oak; 10 years of quiet cellaring...on paper it sounds like a Bordelais force to be reckoned with. And it is, just not the shade of wine you're imagining! This is a richly layered, bone-dry white that possesses all the ingredients a connoisseur checks off when tasting elite wines of the world. Incredibly rounded and startlingly fresh, with an indelible terroir stamp, this 2008 Graves Blanc will single-handedly open your eyes to a wine that has been the backbone of Bordeaux for centuries.

Today's label isn't some obscure producer in the backwoods (swamps?) of Bordeaux, either: Grand Enclos du Château de Cérons is one of the prominent names in Graves, as noted in a number of top Bordeaux publications. Graves is one of the most ancient appellations of Bordeaux, and it is thought that vines were first planted here over two millennia ago! It's primely situated too, beginning at Pessac-Léognan's southern border and continuing past the jewel box that is Sauternes.

Not to be confused with Château de Cérons, Grand Enclos du Château de Cérons gained its independence after an older estate was divided up and Grand Enclos came away with 10 hectares of vines surrounded by a towering wall of stone. And what a piece of land this is: Some of their Sémillon plantings exceed 80 years of age. Run by a powerhouse trio since the turn of the 21st century, the estate strives to create top-tier wines—and to do so at a rock-bottom price. This means crafting a Bordeaux Blanc with heavy proportions of Sémillon, aging with judicious oak, and not rushing the final product out to market. It's a blend of 60% Sémillon and 40% both Sauvignon Blanc/Gris aged 12+ months in 50% new French oak.

Today's 2008 pours a deep yellow-gold and immediately erupts with heady and exotic fragrances. From citrus to stone to tropical fruit, you'll find it all in this wine. Aromas of white peach, apricot, yellow apples, grapefruit, tangerine, citrus blossoms, melon skin, honey, white flowers, wet gravel, herbs, and integrated baking spices all unfold from the glass, becoming more pungent with oxygen exposure. After 15 minutes in the glass, it was firing on all cylinders. The medium-plus bodied palate is rich, ripe and rounded, but most impressive here is the level of freshness: this effortlessly holds its 11 years of age and I imagine it drinking at a high level for 5-7 years to come. It finishes dry with mouthwatering freshness that is juxtaposed by the waxy goodness of quality Sémillon and lingers with a savory/honeysuckle interplay. This is one amazing bottle of wine for \$29, easily the best white Bordeaux value I've had in years. Serve it in all-purpose white stems around 50 degrees alongside a hearty fish preparation incorporating halibut or turbot. This Bordeaux has both the texture and acidity to make magic happen!

“Who said all of our mature Bordeaux values need to be red? Grand Enclos’ dazzling, age-worthy blanc sec (dry) is one of the superior labels of Graves. It’s an incredible experience worth much more than its modest price tag.”

SOMM SELECT



COUNTRY
France

REGION
Bordeaux

SUB-REGION
Graves

VARIETAL
Sémillon 60%, Sauvignon Blanc
30%, Sauvignon Gris 10%

ALCOHOL
13%

OAK
50% New French

SOIL
Gravelly Sand

FARMING
Lutte Raisonnée

SERVICE TEMPERATURE
55°F

GLASSWARE
All-Purpose White

DRINKING WINDOW
Now-2023

DECANTING
n/a

PAIRING
[Halibut w/ Lemon Butter & Shallots](https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/giada-de-laurentiis/halibut-with-lemon-butter-and-crispy-shallots-recipe-2124933)
(<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/giada-de-laurentiis/halibut-with-lemon-butter-and-crispy-shallots-recipe-2124933>).