



CHÂTEAU LAFITE ROTHSCHILD 2019

■ VINEYARD ATTRIBUTES

Appellation : AOC Pauillac, Bordeaux, France

Pauillac is located on the left bank of the Gironde estuary, approximately 40km North of Bordeaux. With the tempering influence of the estuary and a great diversity of soils originated from both the Massif Central and the Pyrenees, Pauillac boasts exceptional climatic and geological conditions to make outstanding wines.

Terroir : Chateau Lafite Rothschild is located to the north of the appellation, bordering Saint Estèphe. Lafite's best terroirs stretch on the 50ha Plateau des Carruades to the west of the Château. This plateau, which is the highest point of the Pauillac appellation, is well-drained and enjoys optimal sun exposure. Its clayey gravel soils offer excellent water regulating abilities, and provide optimal ripening conditions for the Cabernet Sauvignon.

Some 4.5 ha planted in the neighbouring Saint Estephe appellation, count amongst the oldest vines of the property and provide year after year grapes of outstanding quality for the Grand Vin.

■ VINTAGE SUMMARY

The vintage began well with a mild, dry winter. The fine weather continued into the beginning of spring, resulting in an early bud break.

In April and May, colder and above all drier-than-usual weather slowed the vines' growth, and they quickly lost their early start. The first flowers appeared on our vines in Pauillac on 28 May. This key stage of the cycle was somewhat capricious with rainy spells in the second half of the flowering period leading to some coulure (flower abortion) and millerandage (mixed size berries).

After a relatively cold, rainy start, June suddenly changed, bringing an early summer heat wave the likes of which had not been seen since 2003. Fortunately, it was short-lived and the vines, which were catching up, seemed better equipped than in previous years to cope with the heat.

Miraculously, some rain arrived on 26 July: 45 millimetres fell in Pauillac, perfect for triggering the véraison when the grapes change colour and start to ripen.

Temperatures in August remained very mild, with no temperature spikes and a few scattered showers, creating a threat of botrytis, but the drier weather at the end of the month, which continued into mid-September, allowed us to start the harvests without any worries.

■ WINE MAKING SCHEME

For Lafite's terroir to produce its magic, the vinification process must be carried out with extreme precision. The distribution of the grapes between wooden, stainless steel and concrete vats is determined on the basis of the characteristics of each plot and the grapes' degree of maturity. Alcoholic fermentation takes place at a controlled temperature with regular pumping over to gently extract all the phenolic compounds. The maceration period is around 22 days. After malolactic fermentation, the wines are transferred to French oak barrels. Lafite has its own cooperage in Pauillac, the Tonnellerie des Domaines, a factor that contributes to its unique style. Every barrel is tasted and only the best are selected for the final blend. The wine is then aged in new oak barrels for 15 months.

■ TASTING NOTES

A wine with an intense dark colour. The nose is characterized by freshness, combining depth and complexity. All the aromatic markers of a future great Lafite in its youth are there. On the palate, the attack is delicate, gradually increasing in power. The wine quickly develops volume, completely filling the mouth, but without ever being aggressive. 2019 is one of those years in which the Lafite terroir has demonstrated its capacity to produce opulent, silky wines with a well-balanced finish. A strikingly harmonious Lafite that is already accessible, but of course well-equipped to continue ageing for many more years. It will undoubtedly be superb in 10 to 15 years but, like the greatest vintages, will continue for much longer and still be enjoyable in 2050 and beyond.



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Cabernet sauvignon 94%, Merlot 5%, Petit verdot 1%

Yield : 38 hL/ha

Alcohol content : 13 % vol.

pH : 3.92

Total acidity : 3.30 g/l