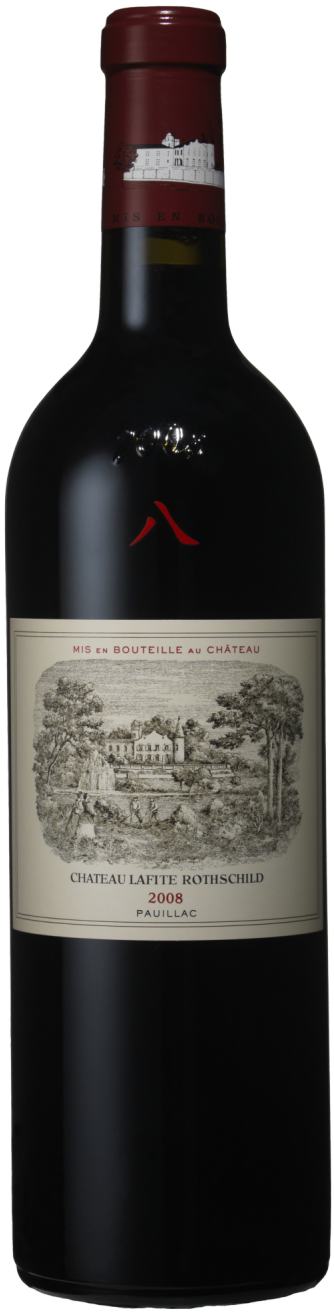


CHÂTEAU LAFITE ROTHSCHILD 2008



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 growing season was closely monitored, coming after a severe winter and some spring frost. Flowering was not very productive, constant humidity favoured disease and the summer was moderately warm. Fortunately, September was fine and so it was possible to wait for the grapes to fully ripen, with late harvests. The harvest took place from the 1st to 7th October for the Merlot, & from 7th to 14th October for Cabernet Sauvignon, 9, 10 & 14 October for the Cabernet Franc & 16th October for the Petit Verdot.

WINE MAKING SCHEME

In order to reveal the magic of Lafite's terroir, every step of the wine elaboration is carried out with the greatest precision. Depending of their provenance and level of ripeness, grapes will be transferred into either wooden, stainless steel or concrete vats. Alcoholic fermentation is conducted at controlled temperature, with regular pumping over to gently release all the phenolic compounds in the grapes. Each vat is carefully monitored and tasted daily in order to determine the best racking time. The maceration period variesfor each tank but is around 22 days in total.
After malolactic fermentation wines are transferred into French oak barrels. Lafite has its own cooperage in Pauillac, la Tonnellerie des Domaines, which contributes to its unique style. The selection for the grand vin is made in March, once the wines have settled and start revealing their full potential. Every barrel is tasted individually and only the best ones are set aside for the final blend. Once blended, the wine is aged for a further 15 months in barrels, primarily of new oak.

TASTING NOTES

Dominated by red fruit, the nose remains clear, precise and complex. In the mouth, the strength and classic style of this wine become apparent. There is fruit, substance, and tannins that are supple and tight at the same time.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Cabernet sauvignon 83%, Merlot 13%, Cabernet franc 4%
Yield : 46 hL/ha
Alcohol content : 12.5 % vol.
Total acidity : 3.5 g/l