



CHÂTEAU LAFITE ROTHSCCHILD 2023



■ 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

Winter, with its 500 mm of rainfall, allowed for good replenishment of groundwater reserves. In March, the cold delayed budburst until between April 5 and 19. Spring was rainy, encouraging the onset of mildew. In May, the warmth greatly stimulated vine growth. Flowering took place around May 25 under good conditions. June turned tropical, requiring strict organic protection against downy mildew. The long-awaited veraison began in early August. Two heatwaves followed (from August 15 to 25 and from September 2 to 10), accelerating ripening and bringing beneficial stress. The great terroirs of Lafite — the Plateau, the Carruades, and the Caillava — withstood these late-season heats well. The grapes gained concentration, and ripeness was achieved. Harvest began earlier than expected, on September 7, and concluded on the 29th. Vinification went perfectly. During blending, our great plots came together in harmony to reveal the full energy of this vintage.

■ 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

The nose, already open and filled with fresh fruit dominated by raspberry, is delicately lifted by notes of white pepper. What strikes us beyond the whole palette of red fruits that unfolds after aeration is the warm, Provençal market atmosphere, with spices taking center stage.

The attack is direct, and fine, elegant tannins gently lead us toward a silky finish.

This finish is long, carried by lovely bitters that make the mouth water and entice us to bring the glass back to our lips for another sip. It is at this moment that the full complexity of the wine reveals itself. Our first impressions are enriched by a myriad of nuances we had not immediately perceived, which confer upon this 2023 the complexity, finesse, and elegance of a great Lafite.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Cabernet sauvignon 93%, Merlot 6%, Petit verdot 1%

Alcohol content : 12,5 % vol.

pH : 3,69

Total acidity : 3,73 g/l