



CARRUADES DE LAFITE 2013

■ 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 Pauillac appellation, bordering Saint-Estèphe. The vineyard consists of three main areas : the hillsides around the Château, the adjacent Carruades plateau to the west, and 4.5 hectares in Saint Estèphe appellation. The vineyard covers 112 hectares with soil made up of fine deep gravel, mixed with aeolian sand on a subsoil of tertiary limestone. It is well-drained and benefits from optimal sun exposure.

■ VINTAGE SUMMARY

The very wet, cold winter resulted in work in the vineyard being considerably delayed; bud break was late, and flowering was three weeks later than the average for the last 50 years; the changeable weather resulted in some flower abortion and uneven grape size, and therefore in lower potential yields than usual. Then at the end of June, the weather suddenly changed, and it was if we were in the middle of the summer with no transitional period; there were however several localized storms (on 27 July and 2 August, depending on location).

The situation became somewhat challenging from 15 September: there was rain, sun and a long wait for the grapes to fully ripen, even though they had partially caught up from the late start; things then became more delicate at the end of September, when it became clear there was a risk of "explosive" growth of botrytis! It was like a race with no time to warm up, and we had to find all the pickers we could to go as quickly as possible. Fortunately, the sorting teams were very efficient despite the difficult harvest. The usual picking sequence for the red wine grapes had to be adjusted in order to minimize the impact of the botrytis and to take into account the potential to make the first or second wine.

■ WINE MAKING SCHEME

Carruades de Lafite is made according to the traditional Bordeaux method. Alcoholic fermentation is conducted in wooden, concrete and stainless steel vats. Gentle pumping-over helps to ensure a soft extraction and is carried out according to the specific characteristics of each tank. Total maceration time lasts for about 20 days.

After malolactic fermentation, wines are transferred into French oak barrels made by the Tonnelleries des Domaines in Pauillac for a period of 16 months approximately.

■ TASTING NOTES

After bottling, the nose is closed, and will require a few months to gain a little more expression. On the palate the fruit is well-expressed and has a roundness that counterbalances the lively finish.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Cabernet sauvignon 64%, Merlot 29%, Cabernet franc 4%, Petit verdot 3%

Yield : 33 hL/ha

Alcohol content : 12.5 % vol.

Total acidity : 3.89 g/l

