



CHÂTEAU LAFITE ROTHSCHILD 2014

■ 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

Significant rainfall from November to February restored groundwater reserves, which had already been substantially replenished by average or higher than average rain in 2012 and 2013.

Temperatures remained above normal and the vines missed the hearty winter frosts; what we really wanted were about two weeks of crisp mornings with beautiful sunshine, dry cold and no wind. But you cannot control nature! Bud break was early, followed by uniform flowering during the first week of June, spurred on by a rise in temperatures.

As always, the impact of the weather on the vineyard was our primary concern, and our teams worked throughout the year to ensure that the grapes reach maturity in perfect health. The onset of ripening occurred over two periods, first in late July and then again after 15 August, creating differences in the ripeness of the bunches on the same vine.

Some "juggling" was therefore necessary when it came to the harvests, in order to make the best choices; the pickers and sorters were under strict orders to only keep the very best quality red grapes, suited to the production our Pauillac grand vins.

■ 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 varies for each tank but is around 20 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 20 months in barrels, primarily of new oak.

■ TASTING NOTES

Beautiful, intense red garnet colour.

The nose is complex and fruity, characteristic of 2014, with beautiful floral notes. There is a light toasted note, but the wood is already well integrated. In the mouth, the wine is massive, displaying power and elegance at the same time. Blackberries and blackcurrants again declare a strong presence, and are complemented by the notes of violet and cedar so often found in Lafite's wines.

The palate is fresh, harmonious and very long. There is a pleasant balance between richness and finesse. To enjoy this wine at its peak, one will have to manage to wait about ten years.





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TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Cabernet sauvignon 87%, Merlot 10%, Cabernet franc 3%

Yield : 44 hL/ha

Alcohol content : 12.5 % vol.

Total acidity : 3.91 g/l