



CHÂTEAU LAFITE ROTHSCHILD 2011

■ 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 weather conditions for the 2011 vintage were unusual and required all of our technical teams' vigilance and expertise.

This was a very early vintage, with an exceptionally hot spring, low rainfall at the beginning of the year, but then more in the summer, and a persistent threat of powdery mildew (a vine disease that is usually quite rare in the Bordeaux region).

Finally, just as we were getting ready to harvest, a huge hail storm in the north of Pauillac and Saint Estèphe on 1 September obliged us to reorganize the schedules. The plots that had been affected had to be picked first; fortunately, as a result of the conditions, the grapes had ripened early, and quality was not compromised.

■ 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

Intense, deep crimson colour.

Dense nose, aromas of red and black fruit, boxwood and spicy notes.

Very dense on the palate with fine intensity.

Very complex finish.



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Cabernet sauvignon 80%, Merlot 20%

Yield : 52 hL/ha

Alcohol content : 12.5 % vol.

Total acidity : 3.63 g/l