

Château Clerc Milon 2012

CSPC# 742339 750mlx12 13.5% alc./vol.
CSPC# 756593 750mlx12 13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot,
1% Carmenere

Appellation Pauillac

Classification Fifth Growth. Cinquieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.

Website <http://www.chateau-clerc-milon.com/>

General Info Chateau Clerc Milon, classified a Fifth Growth in 1855, is located in an exceptionally favorable situation adjoining Lafite Rothschild and Mouton Rothschild, both First Growths. Now owned by Baroness Philippine de Rothschild and her children, Chateau Clerc Milon was bought in 1970 by her father, Baron Philippe de Rothschild, at a time when the estate had become very much run down. The property was entirely reorganized and renovated and, under the expert guidance of its new owners, Chateau Clerc Milon has become one of the most sought-after wines both in Bordeaux and throughout the world. The Chateau Clerc Milon label is illustrated with a pair of dancing clowns made of precious stones (the work of a 16th century German goldsmith) from the Museum of Wine in Art at Chateau Mouton Rothschild.

When the Rothschilds purchased this Fifth Growth estate in 1970, they began pumping money into the property, and Clerc-Milon now consistently outperforms its rank. With its fairly substantial percentage of Merlot, the result of a recent gradual shift away from Cabernet, this Pauillac often displays an exotic aromatic character, with rich if sometimes rather medicinal-scented fruit and smooth tannins. These wines are ultimately closer in style to its big brother Mouton-Rothschild than to Armailhac, which is also owned by the Rothschild family. Baroness Philippine de Rothschild passed away in August 2014 at the age of 80 years, from the effects of a serious operation.

Vintage 2012 was a year of contrasts. The winter was cold and very dry. The average temperature in February was the lowest for fifty years. April brought cool weather and abundant rainfall, while the weather in May and June was in-between. The flowering and veraison dates were the same to the day as the average dates for all the vintages since 1962.

Exceptionally dry conditions prevailed from 20 July to 20 September, concentrating sugar and tannins in the grapes. The month of August was the fifth driest in the last fifty years. By the end of September, the aggregate amount of rainfall was 26% lower than the average since 1962 (435 mm compared with 589 mm).

Picking at Château Clerc Milon began on 1 October and ended on 16 October. The conditions of the vintage favoured superb expression of the Merlot, here mostly planted on clay-limestone parcels.

Soil The soils are a mixture of two-thirds sandy gravel, with a deeper seam of clay-limestone. This clay comes to the surface towards the east, nearer the river, accounting for the remaining one-third. The slope of the land aids drainage, as well as improving the aspect of the vines.

Vineyards 43.6 hectares, with 8450 feet of vines per hectare. Average vine age 40 years.

Harvest October 1-16

Maturation 30% in new barrels during 16 month/s



Tasting Notes The wine has a deeper reddish-purple colour. Concentration on the nose is revealed with great refinement and complexity. Black cherry and vanilla aromas give way to deeper, smoky, peaty notes along with blond tobacco and dried flowers. Refinement is everywhere on the palate as the lush and creamy attack expands over well-integrated tannins to mingle with generous and varied flavours reminiscent of morello cherry and almonds, with a slightly marine cast. The finish, flavourful and fresh with great tension, displays dark chocolate, saline and mineral notes.

Cellaring 20-25 years. Drink 2018-2038

Scores/Awards **90 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2015
91-94 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2013
92 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #218 - April 2015
87-89 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #206 - April 2013
91-93 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2013
92-93 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2013
94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 1, 2015
93-95 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 11, 2013
88-90 points - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - April 2013
16.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - October 2014
16.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2013
17.5 points - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2013
93 points - Jane Anson, The New Bordeaux - April 2013
90 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)
89 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only)
90 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 11, 2015
90-92 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 23, 2013
87-99 points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - April 2013
16 points - Farr Vintner - March 2013
87-89 points - Derek Smedley, MW - May 2013
92 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - January 4, 2014
16.5 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)
16.5 points - Gault & Millau - April 2012 (score only)
90-92 points - Falstaff Magazine - April 2012 (score only)
16 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only)
91-93 points - Gilbert & Gaillard - April 16, 2013

Reviews *"Tightly wound, but with an ample core of blackberry and black currant fruit waiting in reserve, accented by lively briar and singed spice notes. Reveals good, graphite-edged grip through the finish, with a hint of cassis bush at the very end. Should unwind nicely in the cellar. Best from 2017 through 2022."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Juicy and round in feel, with a core of fleshy plum and blackberry fruit. A light briary edge frames the core, revealing enticing savory and chalk notes on the finish. Shows a touch more range and floral lift in the end than the d'Armailhac. Tasted non-blind. Score range: 91-94"
- JM, Wine Spectator

"This is another strong effort from the Mouton Rothschild stable and its excellent administrator Philippe Dhalluin. The 2012 Clerc Milon has an almost blackish-blue opaque color, soft tannins, ripe notes of blackcurrants, licorice and subtle background oak. There is an attractive floral, licorice quality to the fruit. The wine is medium to full-bodied and beautifully pure with ripe tannin. It is soft enough to be approachable in several years and should drink well for 20."
- RP, Wine Advocate

"This attractive, medium-bodied Pauillac reveals tough tannins as well as hints of herbs and underbrush. A blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc and the rest Carmenere and Petit Verdot, it was angular when I tasted it in March, and, like many Medocs, it seems to err on the side of austerity and the lack of mid-palate charm. Its upbringing in barrel will help somewhat, but just how much remains to be seen."
- RP, Wine Advocate

Reviews

"The Clerc Milon 2012 was tasted on two visits to the property, several days apart. It is a blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon (the highest percentage for 15 years and picked ten days later than the usual date), 29% Merlot, 1% Petit Verdot, 1% Carmenere and 9% Cabernet Franc picked between 1st and 16th October. It is matured in 40-45% new oak. Immediately, the aromatics are much more convincing than the d'Armailhac with ebullient ripe blackberry, raspberry and tobacco aromas that are well defined and vigorous. The palate is medium bodied with fine, supple tannins and well integrated new oak that is in synch with the fruit. This is a superb Clerc-Milon for the vintage with a silky smooth, harmonious finish. Excellent. Tasted April 2013."

- NM, Wine Journal

"This has a savory and juicy character to it that many wines in the Medoc lacked in 2012. Full body, with creamy tannins and a rich finish. Pretty finish too. 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 9% Franc, 1% Petit Verdot, and 1% Carmenere."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Now firmly in its new cellars, Clerc-Milon's wine is performing at the top of its form. This is a dense wine with juicy acidity as well as sweet tannins and ripe blackberry fruits. They give a ripe wine that is finely structured. The juicy aftertaste, typical of this vintage, is appealing although it does not detract from its power and longevity. Drink from 2022."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"93-95. Barrel sample. While fully ripe on the palate, this wine also boasts acidity and a black-currant freshness. It shows the quality of Cabernet from Pauillac in 2012."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"(60% cabernet sauvignon, 29% merlot, 9% cabernet franc, 1% petit verdot and 1% Carménère): Bright ruby-red. Red berries and sweet spices on the perfumed, open nose, complicated by cocoa and coffee nuances. Bright and fresh on the palate, with a spicy mineral overlay to the red and dark berry flavors. Finishes sweet, supple and long, with smooth tannins. This potentially outstanding Clerc Milon comes across as fleshy and rich; I would have guessed it contained a lot more merlot than 29%. Very good stuff in the context of the vintage."

- ST, International Wine Cellar

"Dark-fruited, and spicy on the nose and palate. Cool, fine tannins. Elegant. Mouthwatering with a long finish."

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Dark purple. Sappy and urgent on the nose. Leafy without being underripe. Quite plump but certainly not fat. Lacks the extra dimension of a 2009, and without the super ripe tannins of 2010. A good fist of it."

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Vibrant depth of colour, very good purity and precision of fruit."

- SS, Decanter.com

"Blend here is 29% merlot, 60% cabernet sauvignon, 9% cabernet franc, 1% petit verdot, 1% Carménère, lovely vibrant colour, comes from the pH as well as the colour extraction on the skins, lovely spicy edge even on the nose, coulis of black fruits. This is far more successful than Armailhac. In this corner of Pauillac, merlot was the least homogeneous this year. Dhalluin says he has 50 years of precise harvest data, and this year ripening dates for cabernet at Mouton were exactly average (i.e. less inconsistency in the cabernet than many of their neighbours) – but they waited an extra 10 days to ensure full maturity. Touch of cold soak, 18 days maceration, some cultivated yeasts to start off the fermentation and ensure things moved swiftly and smoothly. There was 20% less overall yield than 2011, but a full 66% of that has gone into the grand vin. This is definitely successful. 93 /18. Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2040."

- JA, The New Bordeaux

Reviews *"With a floral, cassis, earth and black cherry nose, this soft styled wine will deliver tasty, early drinking pleasure."*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"This vintage represents the highest percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon used in the blend over the past several decades at 60%. The rest of the blend includes 29% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot and 1% Carmenere. The wine reached 13.6% alcohol. Graphite, jammy black cherries, licorice and coffee bean scents open to a soft, fresh black raspberry-filled wine that should drink well with just a few years of bottle age. 90-92 Pts (18-Apr-2013)"

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Mid depth; pretty, some perfume and blackcurrant cassis; blackcurrant fruit on the palate but a little hardness; fresh but a little angular on the finish. Tasted UGC Thursday April 11, 2013 87-88+ [Earlier] Glossy and dark; ripe pure blackcurrant and cassis; some wet rock; elegant palate; blackcurrants; fruit here more plushness on this sample than at the UGC. Nice length. Good and pure. Tasted at Mouton, Tuesday April 9, 2013. 90-92 [Earlier at UGC] Mid depth; perfume, rose petal; blackcurrant; some lift; similar tones on the palate; bit chewy on the finish. Lean. Tasted UGC Tuesday April 9, 2013. 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 1% Petit Verdot, 1% Carmenere. 87-88."

- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

"Like Armailhac, this is made by the Mouton Rothschild team. Always a serious Pauillac, it has been much improved in recent vintages and usually represents good value for money. Intense, ripe red cherry fruit on the nose with an attractive plump texture with hints of mocha, tobacco and juicy black fruits. Nicely balanced with good flesh for the vintage."

- Farr Vintners

"The nose is herbal spicy black fruited, and the palate starts with fresh flavours. The tannins are quite obvious and although there is some rich black cherry towards the back the finish is slightly dry and lacking in depth. 2018-28"

- Derek Smedley MW

"Lovely plum and cassis flavours with good intensity and supple tannins. One of the most successful wines at this price point in the vintage. Tasted in Bordeaux, France. Maturity: Young. (04-Jan-2014)"

- JCL, asianpalate.com

"Lovely fruit with subtle oak. Wonderful dense, expressive palate with racy oak that is already melted. Successful effort. (16-Apr-2013)"

- en.gilbertgaillard.com
