

Château Clerc Milon 2020

CSPC# 866062

6x750ml

13.3% alc./vol.

Grape Variety 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36.5% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot. 0.5% Carmenère

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.

Winemaker Jean Emmanuel Danjoy

The 2020 Label The 2020 vintage marks the 50th anniversary since Château Clerc Milon came into the fold of the Baron Philippe de Rothschild family. To celebrate this special occasion, each bottle is adorned with a unique label. Portraying a circular arc composed of 50 stars, the design surrounds two dancers that are clad in gold and pearls. Inspired by the Commedia dell'Arte, these characters are a reproduction of a piece of silverware that belonged to Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia.

Vintage A particularly mild winter and significantly higher than normal temperatures in early spring encouraged early budbreak, about ten days earlier than the long-term average. A snow flurry in late March fortunately had no effect on the vines.

Spring continued to be warmer than usual, with spells of heavy rain, especially in early May. Anticyclonic conditions returned in mid-May, bringing warm and dry weather, and significantly accelerating the vegetation cycle, especially during flowering, which occurred 12 days earlier than the average. Contrasting weather in June gave way to early-summer heatwaves and drought, especially noticeable in July. However, spells of rain in August set off the veraison process and helped the berries to ripen evenly. The grapes were in perfect condition as picking started. The 2020 harvest was among the earliest on record, favoured by exceptional anticyclonic weather and rising temperatures which brought all grape varieties to full ripeness sooner than usual.

Picking at Château Clerc Milon took place between 9 and 28 September in ideal weather. The grapes were in perfect condition, producing beautifully balanced wines that are very full on the palate, underpinned by powerful yet seamless tannins and displaying great freshness.

Although yields were less than generous, the quality of the wines suggests that the 2020 vintage will be one of the great successes of the decade.

Soil The soil is 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	From 9 to 28 September
Maturation	50% in new barrels during 16 month/s
Tasting Notes	The wine is a deep cherry red with garnet highlights. The nose reveals an intense and complex array of aromas on which macerated black fruit mingles with liquorice and cedarwood. On the attack, the creamy, silky mouthfeel combines depth, density, and supreme elegance, leading into a rich and smooth mid-palate on blackcurrant and bilberry flavor illuminated by attractive freshness over a rounded refined tannic structure. The harmonious finish is distinguished by lingering fruit flavors and mineral notes.
Serve with	Chateau Clerc Milon is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Clerc Milon is also good with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.
Cellaring	Drink 2026-2038
Scores/Awards	<p>94 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2023</p> <p>94+ points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023</p> <p>92-94 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021</p> <p>92 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - March 2023</p> <p>95-96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021</p> <p>97 points/Editors' Choice - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 2023</p> <p>94-96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021</p> <p>17 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021</p> <p>17.5 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - December 2021</p> <p>93 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2023</p> <p>94 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p>95 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - January 2023</p> <p>94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023</p> <p>94-96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021</p> <p>94 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021</p> <p>91-93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021</p> <p>94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p>90-92 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021</p> <p>95 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023</p> <p>93-95 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021</p> <p>94 points - Wilfred Wong, Wine.com - April 2021</p> <p>92 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2023</p> <p>93-95 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021</p> <p>95 points - Vert de Vin - May 2021</p> <p>95 points - Andreas Larsson, Tasted - May 2021</p> <p>95-96 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - July 2021</p> <p>18 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2021</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Sleek and refined, with a very fine-grained structure supporting a core of black currant and black cherry reduction notes along with hints of chalky minerality and sweet tobacco. The long finish has cut and energy, thanks to savory nuance. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot and Carmenère. Best from 2026 through 2038."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Aromas of dark berries, cigar wrapper, exotic spices and burning embers introduce the 2020 Clerc Milon, a medium to full-bodied, fleshy and layered wine that's seamless, concentrated and refined, with lively acids and a long, saline, violet-inflected finish. A blend of 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc and the balance Petit Verdot, it's a terrific effort from this clay-limestone terroir that has benefited from so much investment in recent years."</i></p> <p>- WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The 2020 Clerc Milon has a deep garnet-purple color, opening with notes of tar, unsmoked cigars, bouquet garni and graphite, giving way to a core of ripe black and red currants, boysenberries, and tree bark, plus a touch of black olives. The medium-bodied palate delivers fantastic tension and impressively ripe, fine-grained tannins to support the crunchy, energetic black fruit flavors, finishing with a lively herbal lift.</i></p> <p><i>"The vintage went quite well—not as extreme as 2018," said Jean-Emmanuel Danjoy, the new estates manager, formerly the winemaking director at Clerc Milon, now overseeing winemaking for Mouton</i></p>

Reviews *Rothschild, Clerc Milon and d'Armailhac, following the retirement of Philippe Dhalluin last year. "There was no excessive heat, no sunburn damage, no blockage on the vines. It was an extremely early vintage, but, because of the earlier budbreak, it was also a long growing season—180 days. Usually, it is around 178 days." I asked Danjoy about the slightly lower alcohols this year, given the overall heat of the vintage. "I don't know why—the sugars never went up toward the end. The vines appeared fine. The tannins were getting more and more polished. We also don't have really high acidity." As for the styles of the 2020's, Danjoy commented, "We have cool wines from a hot vintage. There was no heat spell just before the harvest—no cause for jamminess." Philippe Sereys de Rothschild, chairman and CEO of Baron Philippe de Rothschild, commented, "This vintage is freshest compared to the other two (2018 and 2019). And there is a great complexity of tannins. What's happening in the barrels with the wines—there is a multilayered, complexity to the tannins. These wines handle the barrels—they are like an oxygen sink. Usually, it's the more structured vintages that behave like this. It's incredible."*
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The 2020 Clerc Milon is deep garnet-purple in color. Quite shut down on the nose, it offers glimpses at notes of black and red cherries, blackcurrant jelly, and forest floor, with suggestions of charcoal and bay leaves. The medium-bodied palate is soft and refreshing, with delicate red and black fruit layers and a lifted finish."
- LPB, Wine Independent

"Very pure character to this wine with crushed fruit and round tannins. It's really transparent and delicate, yet bold at the same time. Super tannins. Vivid. Very primary and berry-like. May well turn out to be even better than this in bottle."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Rich and smoky, this wine has great presence. Tannins are almost sweet with their roundness, the wine enveloping the structure with the jammy black fruits. The wine will age well. Drink from 2027."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Rich black fruits shine through this densely structured wine. Held in suspension, the tannins will develop beautifully over the years. With its acidity and firm core, the wine has great aging potential."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Deepest crimson. Gorgeously perfumed with ripe yet fresh black fruit and a hint of violets. The tannins are big but so smooth they are almost creamy, like milk chocolate. Generous in fruit, with a bite of freshness on the finish. A gentle giant. 17/20 points."
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Dense and profound with layers of fruit and tannin. Subdued nose with a floral note. Tannins are powdery but very finely layered. Exudes power but is harmonious at the same time."
- JH, JancisRobinson.com

"Perfumed, raspberry and strawberry fruit, red and floral, pretty on the nose, roses, and sweet strawberries. Lithe and supple, this has a nice bounce to it, plump, super-juicy and fun, gorgeous sweetness, and plushness to it, round and friendly. Lovely push of red fruits with a hint of herbal medicinal edges at the back and some very soft spicing. You can't help but smile when you drink this. Approachable, very complete, and full. A great glass of wine here."
- GH, Decanter.com

"Powerful, a little austere with tight black fruits that will benefit from adding flesh over ageing, as the tannins are a little angular right now. The freshly crushed mint leaf finish is beautiful, and this is ripped with powerful nuanced fruit, tobacco, and earthy flavours, followed by waves of violet flowers. Good quality, not as exuberant as some years of Clerc Milon. First year of Caroline Artaud to oversee the entire vintage, as Jean-Philippe Danjoy has headed over to Mouton. 2% Petit Verdot completes the blend. 50% new oak. There is also 0.6% of Carmenère in the blend."
- JA, Decanter.com

Reviews *“Opulent damson and spiced chocolate, graphite, fresh acidities, crushed mint leaf and eucalyptus, restrained but vibrant precision. This is well structured, extends outwards and upwards, showing chewy tannins with grip. Harvest September 9 to 29. New director Caroline Artaud arrived for the harvest in this year, and has overseen a hugely successful wine, 60% new oak.”*
- JA, janeanson.com

“The nose opens with a display of flowers, cherry pipe tobacco, spices, and currants. Medium-bodied, elegant, fresh, crisp, and clean, there is a nice sense of purity to the array of red fruits along with a touch of spice, and vibrancy in the refined, soft, mildly, dusty finish. This is going to be gorgeous to enjoy in its youth, although it clearly has the ability to age and improve for 2-3 decades with ease. Drink from 2025-2050.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“With a floral, spicy, tobacco leaf, currant and chocolate filled perfume, the wine is elegant, fresh, supple, and silky. There is a beautiful sweetness to the currants, cherries, and plums in the mouth. The sensation of the Merlot comes through the blend more than usual as you find a touch of dark chocolate gently coating your palate in the finish, adding length, texture, and complexity. This is so good now. But it is going to be even better with 7-9 years of age. 13.3% ABV.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The 2020 Clerc Milon has a crisp, well-defined bouquet that you might suspect derives from a cooler growing season. Mainly black fruit here, along with cedar and light sea spray/estuarine scents, unfolding nicely in the glass but always keeping something back. The palate is medium-bodied with fine-grained tannins. An elegant rather than powerful Clerc Milon, with a slightly ferrous, well-structured but never grippy finish and a saline aftertaste. Give this 4–5 years in bottle. Classic Pauillac through and through.”
- NM, Vinous

“The 2020 Clerc Milon is a total knock-out. The 2020 has come together impressively with élevage. It offers up a heady mix of blueberry jam, crème de cassis, chocolate, new leather, spice, and crushed rocks, with a ton of Cabernet Sauvignon character driving the overall feel.”
- AG, Vinous

“The 2020 Clerc Milon is soft, fruity, and supple. Inky red fruit, plum, lavender, rose petal and spice all meld together in the glass. The 2020 is not terribly complex, but it is open-knit, radiant, and incredibly appealing, even in the early going. I suspect it will offer quite a bit of pleasure right out of the gate. The proportion of Merlot is a bit higher in this year's blend, which no doubt contributes to the wine's appeal. Tasted two times.”
- AG, Vinous

“The 2020 Chateau Clerc Milon brings another level of finesse and is a big step up over the Pastourelle. Kirsch, blackberries, graphite, lead pencil shavings, and a crushed stone-like sense of minerality give way to a full-bodied, nicely concentrated, tannic 2020 that's balanced and has terrific purity, followed by a great finish. A serious Pauillac, it warrants 7-8 years of bottle age and will have 20-25+ years of overall prime drinking. Best After 2030.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“The top wine 2020 Château Clerc Milon checks in as 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 37% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc, and the balance Petit Verdot and Carmenère, and it's another beauty, offering both richness and elegance. Ripe currants, cassis, damp earth, graphite, and crushed stone-like minerality define the bouquet, and it's medium to full-bodied, with a more focused, pure texture, plenty of expansive richness on the mid-palate, and ripe, building tannins. This beautifully layered, pure wine shows the style of the vintage nicely.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“Deep ruby colour with an opaque core and purple reflections. The floral nose of cassis and blackberry, subtle orange zest, mineral touch, still somewhat restrained. Juicy with good complexity, ripe cherry, pronounced fruit, ripe tannins, nougat on the finish, good length, and a certain ageing potential.”
- PM, Falstaff Magazine

Reviews *“On the nose, fruity, bright and offers some controlled/finesse concentration, depth, and a nice, elegant, gourmet fruit. Notes of bright blackberry, raspberry and more lightly cherry combined with hints of small ripe red fruits, as well as hints of Cuban pepper, nutmeg, graphite, discreet hints of green cardamom, bergamot, cornflower, licorice, and an imperceptible hint of citrus zest/timut pepper. The palate is fruity, balanced and offers juiciness, freshness, a very nice delicacy, gourmandize, an airy character, a discreetly tight grain, power in precision, tension (in finesse), depth and roundness. On the palate, it expresses notes of pulpy/sparkling cassis, bright cherry and more lightly of small pulpy/juicy red berries combined with touches of bright blackberry as well as hints of cherry blossom, violet, a discreet hint of green cardamom, star anise, chocolate, and a subtle touch of hazelnut. Very discreet hints of eucalyptus/variatal on the finish that add liveliness. One of the best Chateau Clerc Milon tasted at Primeurs. The tannins are fine and elegant.”*
- Vert de Vin

“Floral, dark fruity, perfumed with violet, crème de cassis and a great purity. Dense but not opulent palate with bright freshness, exemplary tannin with some graphite and coffee bean notes leading to a very long finish. A classically structured and pure Pauillac with excellent polish. The best young Clerc-Milon I ever tasted.”
- AL, Tasted.com

“Sleek and refined, with a very fine-grained structure supporting a core of black currant and black cherry reduction notes along with hints of chalky minerality and sweet tobacco. The long finish has cut and energy, thanks to savory nuance.”
- WW, wine.com
