

# Château Lafite Rothschild 2020

CSPC# 848128

750mlx3

13.3% alc./vol.

<b>Grape Variety</b>	92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, 1% Petit Verdot
<b>Appellation</b>	Pauillac
<b>Classification</b>	First Growth. Premier Grand Cru Classe in 1855.
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lafite.com/eng">http://www.lafite.com/eng</a>
<b>Analysis</b>	pH : 3.94      Total acidity : 3.35 g/l
<b>General Info</b>	Château Lafite Rothschild is one of the most renowned wine properties in the Médoc. Owned by Baron Eric de Rothschild and Lafite Rothschild is also one of the largest Médoc estates.

The vineyards of Ch. Lafite are found at the northern tip of the Pauillac appellation, just below the boundary with St. Estèphe. There is evidence of an estate on this site as far back as the 14th century, and of exports of wine to the UK in the early 17th century. The current owners, the Rothschilds of the famous banking dynasty, bought the property in 1866, but this is a different brand of the family from that which purchased Ch. Mouton-Rothschild. For many years, the Rothschilds' control of Lafite was very much exercised at a distance, compared to the hands-on influence of Baron Philippe at Mouton, but since the Second World War this has changed somewhat, with the current owner, Eric de Rothschild, presiding over an extensive programme of investment in both vineyard and cellar. Throughout the 20th century Lafite was dogged by periods of inconsistency, often producing sublime wines but also failing to live up to its billing in other years. Since 1994, however the estate has been under the control of Charles Chevalier, and he has brought about not just an admirable level of consistency but has also been responsible for some truly brilliant wines often vying for the title of "Wine of the Vintage".

**Winemaker** Oenologist and winemaker: Christophe Conge

Winemaker: Régis Porfilet

**Vintage** The vintage was so early in all its stages that we prepared all year to harvest early, that is, from the end of August. The harvest was the last stage of a year of constant concern, in which we went from monitoring temperatures at the weather station to watching the vines closely to detect any development of powdery mildew. The last test we had to face was the storm of August 15 and its 100 mm of rainfall, which caused us great concern. Little did we know then that it would become a blessing. By the end of August, both growth and ripeness seemed normal, but when we tasted the grapes, their extremely expressive aromas were a great surprise. The rain in mid-August boosted the ripening process! The harvest was excellent, and fermentation progressed very well. The musts reveal a young monster in the making, restrained, incredibly elegant, but disciplined.

**Vineyards** 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 Estèphe appellation, count amongst the oldest vines of the property and provide year after year grapes of outstanding quality for the Grand Vin.

**Harvest** The harvest took place September 14 - October 4.

**Winemaking** For Lafite's terroir to produce its magic, the vinification process must be carried out with extreme precision. The distribution of the grapes between wooden, stainless steel and concrete vats is determined on the basis of the characteristics of each plot and the grapes' degree of maturity. Alcoholic fermentation takes place at a controlled temperature with regular pumping over to gently extract all the phenolic compounds. The maceration period is around 22 days. After malolactic fermentation, the wines are transferred to French oak barrels. The wine is then aged in new oak barrels for 15 months.



<b>Tasting Notes</b>	Deep black color. The nose offers a broad palette of intense and well-defined aromas, with spicy black fruits like blackberries and black cherries on a background of subtle notes of cocoa and tobacco that accentuates the aromatic richness of this wine. On the palate, the attack is frontal, dense, and velvety, accompanied by fleshy and powerful tannins that result in a very complex, long, and extremely tasty structure. A wine of superb balance and subtlety that embodies this vintage at best.
<b>Serve with</b>	Chateau Lafite Rothschild is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2027 - 2055
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>97 points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - March 2023</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2023</p> <p><b>99-100 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 2023</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021</p> <p><b>19 points</b> - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021</p> <p><b>99 points</b> - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2023</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - January 2023</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Farr Vintners - May 2021</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2023</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Andreas Larsson, Tasted - May 2021</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>"The 2020 Lafite Rothschild opens in the glass with a deep bouquet of cassis, black truffle, pencil shavings and violets. Full-bodied, fleshy, and layered, its broad attack segues into an ample core of fruit framed by supple, melting tannins. Seamless, layered, and complete, it's richer and deeper pitched than the 2019, and its notably high pH of 3.94 likely means it will never shut down. It's a blend of 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot and 1% Petit Verdot, incorporating just a touch more Merlot from the plateau of Carruades than the 2019. 2027 – 2055."</i></p> <p>- WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"Displaying a deep purple-black color, the 2020 Lafite Rothschild takes a little swirling and coaxing to unlock scents of freshly crushed blackcurrants, boysenberries, and spiced plums, followed by emerging nuances of red roses, raspberry preserves, underbrush, and unsmoked cigars, with a waft of cedar chest. The medium-bodied palate is an exercise in elegance and finesse, featuring tightly wound layers of red and black berries and loads of mineral sparks, framed by finely grained tannins and well-poised tension, finishing with fantastic length and the most stunning perfume. Magnificent achievement.</i></p> <p><i>Saskia de Rothschild, chairwoman of Domaines Barons de Rothschild, began by saying, "We had to do a lot of reorganization with the pandemic. It was a very precocious vintage. In mid-March, we had to plan ahead and control the vegetative cycle that had already started. The warm spring and the bouts of rain meant there was a lot of organizing to control the mildew. We had to train the cellar teams to learn which shoot to choose in shoot thinning." The mildew situation early in the 2020 growing season coupled with the unprecedented COVID lockdown restrictions posed a challenge. Although Lafite is not certified organic, they have been practicing organic methods and are planning to enter into the official organic conversion period (a period of three years) from this year. "We want to consider each vineyard an ecosystem," Saskia said. "We want to be able to do more. Even with cover crops, for example, or massal selection—it is a collection of practices that give the best expression of terroir." Like everywhere in Bordeaux in 2020, Pauillac entered a period of extreme drought from mid-June to mid-August. "In mid-August, we finally had a lot of rain in Pauillac," Technical Director Eric Kohler explained. "One hundred millimeters (about four inches) came down. It was a godsend. We</i></p>

**Reviews** *had lower alcohol, but we had very intense flavors. The wine is a paradox: it is powerful, but not heavy. We would rather have a lack of ripeness than over-maturation. I think this is the first time we have had such contrasts—wines so different from the climate. The rains meant we kept the balance and freshness.”*  
- LPB, Wine Advocate

*“The 2020 Lafite Rothschild is a blend of 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, and 1% Petit Verdot, with a pH of 3.94. Deep garnet-purple in color, it slowly unfurls to offer very pure, intense scents of crushed blackcurrants, fresh plums, and blackberries, plus suggestions of violets, cinnamon stick, fertile loam, and tapenade with a touch of tar. The light-bodied palate is very tightly knit with many black fruit, mineral, and fragrant earth layers and a firm backbone of grainy tannins, finishing long and earthy. A bright, bright, shiny Lafite! It needs a good 12-15 years!”*  
- LPB, Wine Independent

*“Amazing aromas here with tobacco, crushed stone, cigar box, currants, tar, and lead pencil, as well as spices, iron, and dried ginger. Medium- to full-bodied, with a density and tightness. Very compact and complex. Racy. Delicacy with strength. Orange peel undertones. A wine to contemplate. You must understand it to understand the great Lafite’s of the past and those of the future. Only 12.8% alcohol. 92% cabernet sauvignon, 7% merlot and 1% petit verdot. Best after 2030 but drink it if you have the chance taste it.”*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“Rather ethereal and so refined with finesse, focus and brightness that provides incredible energy and pedigree. It’s full-bodied with ultra fine tannins that go on and on. Superb presence with tannins that melt into the wine. This is 12.8%. I love the wine. Lots of dark fruit and fresh tobacco. Lead pencil, too.”*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“Structured, dense and with great concentration, this wine is magnificent. Its black fruits and density indicate the power of the wine and its longevity. At the same time, the wine has the elegance that is always associated with this estate. Drink from 2028.”*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“This is a complete wine, with its layers of fruit and tannin in total harmony. Concentration comes easily backed by a palate that shows salinity, as well as impressive black currant fruits. The wine is certainly destined for long-term aging.”*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“A very masculine Lafite with a powerful tannic frame (bigger than 2019 and 2018). Deep, intense, and stately on the nose with mineral-graphite notes to the fore. Palate rich but with a massive charge of fine-grained tannin and lingering freshness. Enormous length on the finish. Incredible potential. (JL) 12.8%.”*  
- JL, JancisRobinson.com

*“An utterly brilliant Lafite - a sense of understated charm, it’s certainly not shouting but delivers a bright, sharp, joyous sensation. Almost subtle in its presentation with delicacy and refinement on show yet such clear power underneath. An incredible aromatic display with ripe black fruits, pepper, liquorice and crushed stones - calm, controlled and contained with beautiful tannin integration and a chalky, salinity on the finish. Supremely complete with mass appeal.”*  
- GH, Decanter.com

*“This is pretty much as close to entirely Cabernet Sauvignon as Bordeaux gets (92%) and yet it has an incredibly fine, gentle richness to the tannins. They build up pretty quickly though, so that by the end of the palate you start to feel the closing in and tightening, deftly underscoring how well this will age. The kaleidoscope of flavours and aromatics that Lafite does so well is fully on display, nothing trying too hard, a velvety texture to the tannins where the cassis fruit, earth, crushed stone, and graphite is held in from beginning to end. Impressive that even in dry vintages like 2020 with the real concerns over global warming, the top Bordeaux estates can still produce wines of this quality.”*  
- JA, Decanter.com

## Reviews

*"Delivers classic sculpted Lafite architecture, where everything builds slowly and carefully, step by step, nothing out of place. This is a delicious wine with pencil lead and crushed mint leaf from mid palate through to the close of play, elegant and understated power, brimming with estate signature. The tannins are elongated, finely balanced against the acidity, with slate scraping texture. Fine and long but with a ton of understated power, uncompromising. Eric Kohler technical director, 100% new oak."*

- JA, [janeanson.com](http://janeanson.com)

*"The compelling nose, with its showy notes of lead pencil, tobacco leaf, cedar, cigar box, currants, spice and wet forest leaf comes through easily. The palate is pure silk in texture. Seamlessly moving from the beginning, middle and end, the wine is fresh, bright, long, and intense. The purity in the fruit, paired with its energy and lift lingers for more than 50 seconds. Refined, elegant, complex, and compelling, if you have the patience to wait for 15-20 years before opening a bottle, this is going to be one of the great vintages for Lafite Rothschild. The wine is a blend of 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot and 1% Petit Verdot 12.8% ABV. The harvest took place September 14 - October 4. With yields of 37 hectoliters per hectare, the Grand Vin represents 45% of the harvest. 97-99 Pts."*

- JL, [thewinecellarinsider.com](http://thewinecellarinsider.com)

*"The harvest here was completed by 29th September, yielding a final wine with a very modest 12.8% abv. The blend is typically Cabernet Sauvignon heavy at 92%, with 7% Merlot and 1% Petit Verdot. Deep ruby colour. Superb precision and refinement on the nose - full of cool blackcurrant fruit that is laced with fresh tobacco, cedar, camphor, and pencil shavings. The palate follows, with all the fruit intensity required while retaining a savoury elegance. Driven with fantastic fruit delineation, this is a wine of restrained power and depth. The rich tannic structure builds subtly but brings a mouthcoating chewiness by the finish. This is long and refined with each element perfectly balanced and in place. A wine of unforced harmony."*

- Farr Vintners

*"The 2020 Lafite-Rothschild, which contains the highest proportion of Merlot since the 2016, hit the bull's eye from barrel. Revisiting the wine in the bottle since July, it still bursts from the glass with copious blackberries, touches of blueberry and juniper, pencil lead and a hint of crushed stone. Wonderful delineation. The palate is medium-bodied with finely-chiseled tannins, quite linear and "correct" - a quintessential Lafite-Rothschild in many ways. It gently builds in the mouth while keeping a restraint on things, finishing with fine sapidity yet a little more juiciness than you would have found a decade or two earlier. This has the potential to evolve beautifully over several decades. Drink 2028-2065."*

- NM, *Vinous*

*"The 2020 Lafite-Rothschild is much more intense, and complex compared to the Carruades this year. This First Growth bursts from the glass with beautifully defined blackberry and wild strawberry scents laced with sprigs of wild mint and juniper berries. The palate is medium-bodied with pliant tannins that frame the pixelated black fruit. This is quintessential Lafite in that it is not a powerful or immensely structured wine, but rather a First Growth with unerring balance and harmony, one that is unashamedly classic in style. There is just the right amount of dryness on the finish to urge you back for another sip. So Lafite it has its name tattooed onto its DNA. It will begin to soar after 10 years in the cellar."*

- NM, *Vinous*

*"The 2020 Lafite-Rothschild is a super-classic wine, just as it was en primeur. Bright acids and expressive saline notes give the 2020 its shape. The 2020 represents a sort of hypothetical blend of cooler and warmer years in terms of its overall feel. Today, it is surprisingly austere, but time in the glass brings out classic Lafite red/purplish fruit, lavender, and graphite notes. Readers will have to be patient."*

- AG, *Vinous*

*"The 2020 is a super-classic Lafite-Rothschild of grace and finesse. A reticent introvert, Lafite impresses with its vertical lift and palpable energy. It is a wine of regal bearing that does not feel the need to say much, and yet everything is very clearly there. Bright acids and strong, saline notes come alive in the glass as the long, persistent finish unfolds with remarkable grace. The 2020 is simply exquisite. It's a fabulous showing from the team led by Technical Director Eric Kohler."*

- AG, *Vinous*

## Reviews

*“Looking at the Grand Vin, the 2020 Château Lafite-Rothschild is a sensational effort checking in as 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot that hit 12.8% natural alcohol and a pH of 3.94. As Lafite as Lafite gets, this ultra-classic reveals a dense ruby/plum hue as well as a tight, yet layered bouquet of ripe blackcurrants, smoked tobacco, freshly sharpened pencils, graphite, and subtle spice. Flawlessly balanced, deep, concentrated, and layered, it has an incredible mid-palate, building, perfect tannins, and a finish that leaves you salivating. Refined, elegant, and perfection are the buzz words here. Unfortunately, it's not for the instant gratification crowd, and I wouldn't be surprised to see this require 15 years to hit the early stages of its prime drinking window. It will probably hit its 100th birthday in fine form.”*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*“The 2020 Château Lafite-Rothschild checks in as 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, and 1% Petit Verdot brought up in roughly 90% or more of new French oak. It's a deep, inky-hued Lafite boasting incredible notes of crème de cassis, lead pencil shavings, graphite, crushed stone, and gravelly earth-like minerality. Full-bodied and beautifully balanced, with terrific purity of fruit, it has ripe tannins, a layered, seamless mouthfeel, and a great, great finish. It should surpass the 2015 and 2017 and be in the same realm as the 2018 and 2019. Despite its richness and depth, it hit just 12.8% alcohol, with an IPT of 72 and a pH of 3.5. It's going to be just about immortal.”*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*“Dark ruby, opaque core, purple reflections on the narrow rim. Fine oak notes, black berries, tobacco, nuances of liquorice, ripe blackcurrant, delicate spices, and ginger. Full-bodied, ripe red cherries and cassis, lovely fresh acidity, well-integrated, ripe tannins, salty terroir touch on the finish, powerful yet elegant and very long lasting. Great ageing potential.”*

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

*“On the nose, elegant, offering power (in delicacy/fine), delicacy, subtlety as well as nice definition, freshness, and fine power. Notes of bright boysenberry, bright cherry and more lightly bright cassis combined with hints of plump little red fruits combined with hints of tonka bean, sweet spice, and a discreet hint of saffron, tea and toasted hazelnut. The palate is fruity and offers juiciness, freshness, good definition, gourmandize, a tangy frame, a nice airy character, aromatic purity, precision as well as finesse, nice precision, elegance, and harmony. On the palate it expresses bright cherry, boysenberry and more lightly red fruit notes combined with touches of cornflower, blueberry, star anise as well as nice hints of racy minerality/fresh grapes, gunflint, saffron, chocolate/mocha, fine hints of blond tobacco, caramelization, and a discreet hint of vanilla (in the background). Good length. The tannins are precise, elegant, and racy. A fine chew on the finish/persistence.”*

- Vert de Vin

*“Exotic and ripe nose, almost sweet fruit with prune, cassis, raspberry, chocolate, violet and a gentle toast underneath. Very dense and powerful palate without heaviness, classically built yet with another dimension of ripeness and purity, chewy and very powdery tannin paired with layers of unctuous dark fruit, a hint of some oak derived butterscotch and roasted coffee notes with a bright fresh backbone and a great persistency.”*

- AL, Tasted.com

*“(92% CS, 7% M, 1% PV; 45% harvest; 12.8% ABV). Dense, mineral, gently oaky to smell, as always so subtle, fine, demanding of attention; fresh, concentrated, superfine in tannin texture, a gloriously harmonious balance; sweet, succulent, aromatically complex and refined, gently fleshy yet so fresh tasting, very long across the palate, softly mouthcoating, so full of delicate perfume, and intense yet so subtle cassis fruit, and with a terrific farewell of fruit and mineral aromas. A seductively complete and classic beauty, a discreet power, an effortlessly serene and polished performance, a top Lafite. Remarkable at under 13% ABV! 2036–60+.”*

- MS, The World of Fine Wine