

Château Lynch Bages 2005

CSPC# 709055

750mlx12

13.0 % alc./vol.

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13.0 % alc./vol.

SOLD OUT

Grape Variety
Appellation
General Info

72% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Merlot, 12% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot
Pauillac

Château Lynch Bages, a 5ème Cru Classé, is one of the best-known Médoc estates and has always had a particularly strong following on this side of the English Channel. Château Lynch-Bages was owned by the Lynch family for three quarters of a century. They descended from John Lynch, a young Irishman from Galway who was chased out of his country in 1691. In the 18th century, Count Jean-Baptiste Lynch, mayor of Bordeaux, inherited the estate and handed over management to his brother Michel Lynch, who was also mayor of Pauillac during the French Revolution. Jean-Charles Cazes, highly respected in the Médoc for his experience in viticulture and winemaking, bought the property in 1934. With his son André, he devoted all his energy to Lynch-Bages for more than 35 years. In 1974, his grand-son Jean-Michel Cazes set about restructuring and managing the estate and recently, in 2006, handed over the running of the property to his son Jean-Charles. Often described as a poor man's Mouton, Lynch Bages can be surprisingly soft and approachable when young. However, when fully mature, it develops a succulent richness and a heavenly bouquet of minty blackcurrants and cigar boxes. As Oz Clarke says "Lynch Bages is impressive at five years, beautiful at ten years and irresistible at twenty."

Vintage

The 2005 vintage is one of our greatest vintages of recent decades. 2005 vintage characteristics in a nutshell: A warm summer; Near-drought conditions; Harvest remained largely free of rainfall, and the fruit was brought in by relaxed and happy workers. The potential of the vintage was already clear, even before the first fermentations were finished.

Vineyards

Lynch Bages's vineyards are superbly sited on a plateau west of Pauillac town, in the small village of Bages. The 90 hectares of vineyards (Red: Cabernet Sauvignon 75%, Merlot 15%, Cabernet Franc 10%) lie on deep gravel beds over limestone. Soil: Garonne gravel of Günz (early Quaternary); Area: 90 hectares; Average age of the vines: 30 years; Density of the vines: 9000 feet per hectare:

**Vinification/
Maturation**

The winemaking process is tailored precisely to the terroir's characteristics and to the distinctive features of each vintage. A huge vat room of 35 vats of different sizes allows for separate treatment of each plot or each uniform batch of grapes. Once the vats are filled, a specific vinification is applied to every single one of them, designed to extract the best colour and flavour from the fruit. This programme consists of ideally defined, diversified operations, which depend on the specificities of the batches of grapes involved and the on the character of the vintage. Like a doctor issuing his prescriptions, the cellar master sets down a daily worksheet for each vat, in an effort to avoid any unnecessary handling of the fermenting musts. The macerations are long and spread out over a course lasting more than three weeks. Running off and de-vatting processes are carried out gently: for instance, gravity flow avoids unnecessary pumping. One third of the malolactic fermentation is done in barrels and two-thirds in vats. Lynch-Bages 2005 was aged in 80% new oak for 15 months which is the most we have ever used, feeling it necessary to cloak the exceptional fruit and powerful tannins.

Tasting Notes

A sublime masculine heavyweight Lynch. It is Pauillac personified with an impenetrable but incredibly ripe nose bursting with pure, minerally cassis. Mouth filling creamy black cherry and blackcurrant fruit is phenomenally smooth and boasts great structure with hints of tobacco, coffee, leather, and mint. The tannins are rich and silky with a rare freshness. The wine is aged in 80% new oak which is the most they have ever used, feeling it necessary to cloak the exceptional fruit and powerful tannins.

Production

35,000 cases made

Cellaring

Drink 2015-2030



Scores/Awards **93 points** - James Suckling, Spectator - March 31, 2008
92-94 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - June 30, 2006
94+ points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #196 - August 2011
91 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #176 - April 2008
90-92 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #170 - April 2007
91-93 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #164 - April 2006
94 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 2012
94+ points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2010
95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 2009
95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - Jan 2009
95-97 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - April 2006
96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 1, 2008
94-96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 20, 2006
91 points - Stephen Tanzer, ST's International Wine Cellar - July/Aug2012
17 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - February 2009
17 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2006
16.5-17+ points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - November 2011
17.5+ points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - October 2007
5/5 stars - Medoc 2005 Decanter Magazine Award Winner - July 2008
17 points/4 stars - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2006
93 points - Jean Marc Quarin - March 2008
92 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - June 20, 2008
94 points - Jamie Goode, wineanorak.com - October 2007
93 points - Tom Cannavan, wine-pages.com

Reviews *"Displays very beautiful aromas of crushed blackberry and dark chocolate, with a hint of coffee. Full-bodied, with a tightly wound palate of ripe tannins. Long and caressing. Best after 2015. 35,000 cases made."*
 - JS, Wine Spectator

"Currant, blackberry, cherry and hints of licorice. Full-bodied, with silky and refined tannins and a fresh finish. This is racy and pretty. Very refined. Very structured. Score range: 92-94"
 - JS, Wine Spectator

"As one might suspect, the dense purple-hued 2005 is still tannic, firm and young, with concentrated blackberry and cassis fruit, beautiful ripeness, a full-bodied mouthfeel and undeniable youthfulness. Tasting like a 2-3-year-old wine rather one that has passed its sixth birthday, it is potentially one of the longest-lived Lynch Bages since the remarkable 1989 and 2000. Anticipated maturity: 2017-2030+"
 - RP, Wine Advocate

"This outstanding effort is slightly lighter, more streamlined and delicate than followers of Lynch Bages have come to expect after such great vintages as 1982, 1989, 1990, 1996, and 2000. A deep ruby/purple hue is accompanied by a classic Medoc nose of tapenade, roasted herbs, licorice, cedar, black currants, and damp earth. Medium-bodied with moderate tannin, sweet fruit, and surprising softness as well as forwardness for a 2005 northern Medoc, it can be drunk now and over the next 20+ years."
 - RP, Wine Advocate

"I have long been an admirer of this estate (having purchased their 1982, 1989, 1990, 1996, and 2000), but the 2005 is not one of their most profound efforts. While certainly outstanding, Lynch Bages appears to have lightened its style dramatically over the last 4-5 years. Sweet black currant fruit intermixed with cedar, dried Provencal herbs, licorice, olives, and earthy notes lead to a sexy, medium-bodied, surprisingly elegant, lighter-styled wine. It may put on more weight with additional age, but at present it is a soft, forward, easy-going Pauillac. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2025."
 - RP, Wine Advocate

Reviews *"This dense inky/purple-hued, elegant Lynch Bages will not make tasters forget the 2000, 1996, 1990, or 1989, but it is a big improvement over some recent indifferent efforts. Although lacking the massiveness expected in a vintage such as 2005, it possesses copious quantities of creme de cassis, licorice, smoke, and minerals. With good precision, lively acidity, wonderful purity, and elegance, it may represent a modern-day clone of the brilliant 1955 fashioned by charismatic proprietor, Jean-Michel Cazes', father. The 2005 will require 3-5 years of cellaring*

and should evolve for 20-25 years.”

- RP, Wine Advocate

“Tasted single blind at Farr’s 2005 dinner in Hong Kong. The Lynch Bages 2005 is crisp and full of guile on the nose, aloof at first, but then opening up like a old friend who suddenly realizes who you are. Blackberry, cedar and here, just a suggestion of Hoi Sin sauce. The palate is full-bodied and very well structured with firm backbone. Like previous bottles, it is sulky at first, but it soon opens up and the tannins are more resolved towards the finish that is sweet and seductive. Excellent. Tasted November 2011.”

- NM, Wine Journal

“Ex-cellar bottle tasted blind at the Lynch Bages vertical. This has a compelling and complex nose that lures you in. The immediate sensation is of ripe blackberries, cedar, and wild hedgerow on the nose with sparkling definition, then with aeration offering smoke and pinecones. The palate is medium-bodied and just missing a little tension and liveliness, although when I discover the vintage, I am reminded that some of the 2005s are amidst a rather sulky period of their evolution. However, the finish is very natural, although vestiges of unresolved tannins on the weighty finish suggesting that it needs considerable cellaring despite its comeliness. Drink 2014-2030+ Tasted September 2009.”

- NM, Wine Journal

“Tasted single blind at Southwold. This is lacking the same level of fruit intensity as the other wines in this flight. Blackberry, bilberry, a touch of fig, but lacks a little harmony. The palate is very concentrated, tight grip, quite toasty with blackberry, briary, a touch of melted tar and cedar with a nice austerity coming through on the long-understated finish. Awesome. Drink 2015-2035. Tasted January 2009.”

- NM, Wine Journal

“The nose is very closed at the moment – in fact the 2006 seems more attractive on first acquaintance. Very tight and introverted. The palate is medium-bodied, good acidity, surly and backwards with thick chewy tannins. Blackberry, tar, graphite and briary leading to an assertive, tannic finish. Unresolved on the finish, coats the mouth though with great persistency. There are faint hints of wild mint and even soy on the aftertaste. Leave this alone for 8-10 years as you will be rewarded. Drink 2015-2030. Tasted September 2008.”

- NM, Wine Journal

“Tasted twice (yet again, the UGC bottle questionable) so this note was taken at the chateaux about 12-hours after drinking the Lynch Bages 1899. Deep, limpid purple colour. A beautiful cedar nose. Ripe raspberry, black cherries and a touch of vanilla. Beautiful balance, black toasty fruit, firm grip. Good acidity, very cohesive. Touch of mint on the finish. A top Lynch-Bages, much more authoritative and bold than recent vintages. Tasted April 2006.”

- NM, Wine Journal

“Classic Lynch-Bages with just a bit of extra power and richness. While the tannins are structured, it is the velvety fruit that rolls around the mouth that is the most dominant character. It is coming together into a wine that will be big and dense, but never over the top”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“94-96 Barrel sample. A wine that seems to revel in richness. The tannins are certainly structured, but the fruit is just bursting out. The dryness and the acidity, though, promise that the fruit will be tamed, and the wine will age well”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Bright ruby-red. Expressive, classic aromas of currant, mocha, smoke and camphor. Rich, broad and ripe but impressively young, offering flavors of dark berries, chocolate, spices, and smoke enlivened by firm acidity. This coats the palate nicely on the long finish, with tannins that are riper and sweeter than those of the 2006.”

- ST, International Wine Cellar

Reviews *"Quite open and developed on the nose. Easy and round and very easy to appreciate. Already quite evolved with fine tannins on the finish. Even a hint of something reminiscent of whisky on the finish! Not the densest but pleasing"*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Intense crimson. Lightly fragrant. Soft, spicy, slightly tarry start and then iron hand in that appealing velvet glove. Very nicely done wine but I could do with just slightly more freshness. Competent certainly... A little bit of a fade on the finish. When I tasted it non-blind next to its second wine Haut Bages Averous, I was surprised not to see a greater difference in quality between them. It is certainly denser and drier - in fact the tannins are currently pretty inky on the finish."

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"A gently composed palate, elegant, with a gentle presence of fruit, good structure beneath, perhaps a slight coarseness to it but the tannins are at least ripe. Soft but with grip, slightly prominent alcohol at one point, and a touch of heat too, but there are certainly some good points here. It would be good to reassess in a few years to see where this goes; I suspect it will be very good though. From a 2005 Bordeaux tasting at four years of age. 16.5-17+?/20 (November 2009)"

- CK, The Wine Doctor

"This has a slightly smoky nose, with a wealth of pure, nicely directed, quite fine fruit. There is a similarly high quality of dense but nicely composed fruit on the palate, with well covered tannins at the core, which show through a little on the mid palate. It has a rather large, chewy style, belying its big, structured character. But there is a decent frame of acidity too. Very good indeed, with fine potential. From my tasting of 2005 Bordeaux at two years of age. 17.5+/20 (October 2007)"

- CK, The Wine Doctor

"Black-red, quite massive, meaty wine, lots of extraction of floral, violetty fruit, very rich, voluptuous, marvelously ripe tannins, very successful. Drink 2010-35."

- SS, Decanter.com

"There is depth here to the fruit, and hidden power too. A complete wine with splendid middle palate, dense and packed. And a long, ripe finish."

- Decanter.com

"This is lighter, brighter, softer and more approachable than I expected, considering the vintage. The wine offers notes of cassis, cedar, tobacco, and forest floor, finishing with cassis and blackberry flavors. For Lynch Bages, this wine should drink well younger than many top vintages"

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Fine aromatic nose of pure dark fruit. The palate is dense and full, with a bit of oak. Lovely focus and richness. 94/100"

- JG, Wineanorak.com

"Really lovely fruit quality, with fine, supple, ripe black fruit and an elegant, quite cedary wood. Again, the oak is a touch raw, but this has such lovely fruit and plum-skin savoury tannins, with crisply-defined acidity into the finish playing against pure fruit. Very promising. 93/100"

- TC, wine-pages.com
