

Château Lynch Bages 2014

CSPC# 756596

750mlx12

13.45% alc./vol.

CSPC# 866105

750mlx6

13.45% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

69% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot

Appellation

Pauillac

Classification

Fifth Growth. Cinquieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855

Website

<http://www.jmcazes.com/en/chateau-lynch-bages/grand-cru-classe>

General Info

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.

Vintage

The key to the success of the 2014 vintage was the hot dry weather during September and October, with lovely sunny days and cooler nights. Nevertheless, one shouldn't forget that relatively cool, dry summer in Pauillac (rainfall below 30mm), which prompted the development of remarkable acidity.

Vineyards

Stretching over some 100 hectares in the commune of Pauillac, the vineyards of Lynch-Bages lie entirely upon the soil of choice for great wines, formed along the estuary by the alluvia from the gravel of Médoc. The property sits among favourably designed hillcrests located south and southwest of the city. This particular topography allows for both a natural drainage of soils to the river and, with help of the water table in shallow areas, a fine feeding of water for the vines.

The red wine vineyard of Lynch-Bages extends across a homogeneous soil and subsoil of deep Garonne gravel. Early yielding, scantily fertile and well drained, these soils are particularly favourable for Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot.

In the plots located along the river and the Gaët channel, the Garonne gravel soil is associated with clayey subsoil, more specifically suitable for Merlot.

There is also a small part of the vineyard of predominantly sandy gravel, ideally suited for growing Cabernet Franc, which helps to yield lighter, aromatic and nicely rounded wines. This analysis of the characteristics of the terroir, recorded during the planting of the varieties, has made it possible to identify an optimal planting. It is now composed of 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. The average age of the vines is about 30 years old, with the oldest vines over 60 years old.

Harvest

After five weeks of summery weather, harvesting began on 24 September with the Merlot plants over two consecutive days, followed by the old Merlots along with the young Cabernet Sauvignon. Following this initial phase, we decided on a break of 3 or 4 days to make the most of the exceptional weather to fine-tune the ripeness of the old Cabernets. Harvesting was then restarted on Monday 6 October, with only 3 teams this year, that is 180 harvesters to allow them time to pick with precision. Harvesting finished on 11 October after 12 days instead of the 13 initially envisaged. During harvest, all the indicators of a great wine were present: Generous sugar levels enveloping abundant tannins, an intense colour and all nicely balanced by a lovely acidity.

Maturation

Aged in French oak barrels for 18 months (75% new wood)

Tasting Notes

The wine has a deep colour and an aromatic nose; it is rich and unctuous on the palate, perfectly enveloped in silky tannins. This vintage is distinguished by a beautiful balance of power, freshness and elegance



**Cellaring
Scores/Awards**

Drink 2018-2040

- 94 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2017
- 93-96 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2015
- 92-94 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #218 - April 29, 2015
- 96 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - February 2017
- 95-96 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2015
- 95 points / Cellar Selection** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2017
- 94-96 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2015
- 17 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2015
- 92 points** - Decanter.com - June 2015
- 93 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - February 2017
- 92-94 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2015
- 93-95+ points** - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - March 2015
- 96 points** - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2015
- 17.5+ points** - Farr Vintner - March 2015
- 92-95 points** - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2015
- 93 points** - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com - March 2015
- 94 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2017
- 90-93 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2015
- 93-95 points** - Falstaff Magazine (score only)
- 17.5 points** - La Revue du Vin France (score only)
- 17 points** - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)
- 17.5 points** - Bettane & Desseauve (score only)
- 16.5 points** - Gault & Millau (score only)

Reviews

"This has beguiling hints of plum cake and melted licorice peeking out, while a core of cassis and blackberry confiture waits in reserve. There's ample grip, but this remains very polished and integrated, with lovely echoes of anise and fruitcake showing through the very lengthy finish. Will be hard to keep your hands off this while it ages. Best from 2019 through 2035."

- JM, Wine Spectator

"Offers lovely weight and feel, with a big core of plum, blackberry and black currant fruit that manages to show refinement, while ample charcoal and warm stone notes flow underneath. This is displaying terrific depth and purity today. Score range: 93-96"

- JM, Wine Spectator

"The Château Lynch Bages 2014 is a blend of 69% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot matured in 75% new oak. Yields were a respectable 40 hectoliters per hectare, although that figure is less than Jean-Charles Cazes predicted earlier in the season. The nose is well defined with veins of graphite infusing the black fruit: quite strict for Lynch Bages, a little reserved at this early stage. The palate is medium-bodied with chalky tannin, racy acidity although the pH is around 3.7, linear and a little austere on the finish. This is tightly coiled at the moment, gritty in the mouth but I like the Pauillac typicité here – not a million miles away from Grand Puy Lacoste in style. This deserves respect and I suspect it will age with the style of Jean-Charles's father, who turned 80 on the day of my visit."

- NM, Wine Advocate

"Aromas of currants, blackberries and blackcurrants with hints of chocolate and spices. Full body, firm and silky tannins and a long and flavorful finish. Juicy and muscular wine. Needs three or four years to open. Beautiful."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This has fascinating aromas already with blackcurrants and cassis. Hints of spices. It's full-bodied with ultra-fine tannins and a long, focused finish. Muscular but toned and beautiful"

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Fragrant and perfumed, this wine is the epitome of great Cabernet Sauvignon. It is fruity, juicy yet with serious concentrated tannins. There is spice from the wood aging along with a dash of pepper, all the while just bringing out the beautiful black-currant flavors. Drink this wine from 2024"

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

Reviews

"94–96. Barrel Sample. Pure Cabernet flavors are right at the front of this wine. It has fragrant fruitiness, with layers of black currant and fresh, juicy acidity on the palate. It's a bright wine, with just a touch of smoky wood flavors at the end."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Blackish crimson. Sweet and luscious and almost with black-cherry super-ripe aromas! A note of something charred here. Pretty interesting. Lots of work to overpower the tannins. Should make very good old bones to chew over. Long and glamorous. Tasting it blind, I guessed it was Lynch. Drink 2024-2040"

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Very well-expressed natural concentration of fruit, very ripe tannins and lots of complexity to come. A richly textured, firmly structured wine with the Lynch-Bages hallmarks for the future."

- Decanter.com

"Fans of this château, of whom there are many, should be delighted with the quality of its 2014 release, which is up there with the super second growths. It's a very complete, harmonious wine, even at this young age, with superb oak integration, noble tannins and impressive fruit density. A 20-year wine."

- TA, timatkin.com

"If you are looking for a classic Pauillac that delivers lead pencil shavings, cedar and spicy cassis, you came to the right place. Exuberant, yet classic and reserved, there is plenty of ripe, round tannins and ample raw material, to make sure this should age quite nicely."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Deep ruby in color with cassis, earth and blackberry in the nose which pops effortlessly. This wine is a full-bodied, ripe, concentrated mouth-filler loaded with sweet, black fruits, ripe, crisp tannins and a long, fresh, invigorating finish. Produced from 69% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, this wine is aging in 75% new, French oak barrels, reaching 13.73% alcohol, with a pH of 3.68. 92-94 Pts"

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"2014 Deep and dark; black and opaque at centre; saturated; lovely ripe cassis and fruit; very deep; open glossy blackcurrant aromatics; full blackcurrant tones on the palate; lots of extract here and matter but remains focused with a very central core of fruit; lots of chew and extract; tannins here but ripe by and large. Fairly long term but usually settles nicely. Deep and chewy. Potentially outstanding Lynch Bages. Real potential here. 69% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot. 75% new oak. Drink 2022-2035. Tasted UGC 2 April 2015. 93-95+"

- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

"Lynch Bages is one of the most popular and reliable Châteaux of Bordeaux. Release prices of this classic Pauillac are usually modest compared to those that consumers are happy to pay for mature vintages. This much-loved Chateau, owned by the Cazes family for nearly a century, consistently makes one of our most demanded and biggest selling wines. Jean-Michel Cazes' son Jean-Charles is now in charge here and recent vintages have been amongst the best ever. 69% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot, with 75% raised in new oak. Deep purple colour. Big, intense nose of brooding black fruits. Plenty of concentration here. Very Cabernet. Smoky and cedary with classic graphite and cigar box character and plenty of generous, opulent blackcurrant. Big, juicy and rich on the palate. Generous, velvety, layered. Some spicy, peppery notes. Balanced acidity lends freshness. Nice symmetry and precision on the long and ripe finish. Impressive."

- Farr Vintners

"Fresh, fragrant, violets, mint the nose has a floral charm the start of the palate fresh. Rich in the middle with sweet ripe fruit fine tannins suppleness and fleshiness. The rich mix of black fruits gives depth at the back the finish although full of rich black fruits has brightness and elegance. 2027-40"

- Derek Smedley MW

Reviews *“Lovely, lifted flavors of black currant and cassis. Beautiful freshness with layers of tobacco, cedar and black fruits. This is a focused, well-made Lynch-Bages with very good aging potential. Tannins were quite high and the acidity was good - pH was 3.68 so fresh, not too high or low.”*
- JCL, asianpalate.com

“The 2014 Lynch-Bages is just as powerful and dense from bottle as it was from barrel. Deep, powerful and bold, it possesses remarkable richness in all of its dimensions. Ripe red cherry, spice, leather, tobacco and rose petal all develop in the glass, but it is the wine's sheer amplitude today that is quite remarkable. It will need quite a bit of cellaring to be at its best, and is clearly built to age. This is a terrific showing from the Cazes family. (AG)”
- AG, Vinous

“A huge, dense wine, the 2014 Lynch-Bages rips out of the glass with layers of intense fruit. Huge swaths of tannin provide the framework for a decidedly extroverted, boisterous Pauillac. Hints of dark red and purplish-hued fruit, spices, new leather and cedar gradually open up, but it is the wine's explosive personality that speaks most loudly at this stage. I don't quite see the finesse of the very best Pauillacs. It will be interesting to see if that develops in the coming years. The blend is 69% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. At present, the 2014 is aging in 75% new barrels.”
- AG, Vinou
