

Château Lynch Bages 2020

CSPC# 756474

750mlx6

13.41% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, 4% Cabernet Franc
Appellation	Pauillac
Classification	Fifth Growth. Cinquieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855
Website	http://www.jmcazes.com/en/chateau-lynch-bages/grand-cru-classe
Analysis	Acidity: 4.0 g/l of H2SO4; pH: 3.73; TPI: 93;
General Info	<p>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.</p>
Winemaker	Jean Michel Cazes
Vintage	<p>2020 marks the beginning of a “new era” as this is the first vintage for the new winery at Lynch-Bages. Winter 2019-2020 was marked by mild temperatures and heavy rain. After a particularly dry summer, the 525 mm of rain that fell between October and December 2019 replenished the soil’s water reserves. The mild winter conditions caused an early – by about 15 days – and generally homogeneous bud break: on 20 March for the Merlot and 26 March for the Cabernet Sauvignon.</p> <p>The first flowers appeared on around 10 May (almost fifteen days earlier than normal), with mid-flowering between 23 and 26 May depending on the grape variety. After a particularly rainy spell in early May, hot and dry weather conditions allowed perfect flowering over the space of ten days, suggesting a beautiful harvest. The rain dried up from 19 June and a gradual increase in temperatures completely transformed the moisture profile of the vintage. The dry, sunny weather and temperature ranges ensured optimal grape maturation.</p>
Vineyards	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 varietals, 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.</p>
Harvest	Harvesting began on 14 September with the fully mature Merlot plants and continued over five days. It finished with the four plots of Cabernet Franc. The pickers then harvested the Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot over the space of nine days. Picking ended on 29 September.
Vinification/ Maturation	Malolactic fermentation took place in the new malolactic fermentation cellar, one third in vats and two thirds in barrels. At the end of November, we began our first blends. 18 months in French oak barrels (75% new wood).



Tasting Notes	Lynch-Bages 2020 is beautifully sun-ripened, with freshness and, good acidity. This is underpinned by very ripe but powerful tannins, matching the levels found in '18 and '19. (May 2021).
Serve with	Chateau Lynch Bages is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
Cellaring	Drink 2030-2065
Scores/Awards	<p>96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2023</p> <p>95+ points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023</p> <p>94-96 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021</p> <p>99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - December 2022</p> <p>98-99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021</p> <p>96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 2021</p> <p>17 ++ points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021</p> <p>17+ points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021</p> <p>96 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p>98 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - February 2023</p> <p>96 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - April 2022</p> <p>97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023</p> <p>95-97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021</p> <p>95 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021</p> <p>95-98 points - Farr Vintners - April 2021</p> <p>96 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p>94-96 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021</p> <p>96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p>93-95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021</p> <p>95-97 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021</p> <p>94 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2023</p> <p>96 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021</p> <p>98 points - Vert de Vin - May 2021</p> <p>92-94 points - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021</p> <p>96-97 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - July 2021</p> <p>95-96 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - July 2021</p>
Reviews	<p><i>“Gorgeous from the start, with cassis and violet notes leading off, followed by additional waves of black cherry and blackberry fruit as well as sweet tobacco and iron. Shows subtle savory and cedar hints that stay in the background, as the iron note pierces through the fruit on the finish. Almost approachable for the fruit but wait if you can. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2040.”</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>“The vintage that inaugurated the estate's new state-of-the-art winery, the 2020 Lynch-Bages has turned out very nicely, offering up aromas of crème de cassis and blackberries mingled with notions of pencil shavings, spices, and classy new oak. Medium to full-bodied, deep, and layered, with good concentration, ripe, powdery tannins and a seamless, integrated profile for such a young Lynch-Bages, it shows considerable promise. The blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 5% Petit Verdot incorporates more Merlot than usual, reflecting relative yields in the vintage more than any stylistic shift. Lynch-Bages's new winery came into effect for the 2020 vintage, permitting precision winemaking, with smaller tanks for parcel-by-parcel selection. And given that Lynch-Bages comprehends more or less 250 different parcels that were recently the subject of an in-depth soil study, that must be a real advantage. The same studies, incidentally, are informing work in the vineyards, with parcels cultivated differently depending on their properties, and organic trials are underway in holdings near dwellings. If the 2020 exhibits a touch more polish than might have been the case in a year like this in the past, however, Lynch-Bages's DNA remains unchanged, delivering robust, dark-fruited wines, carrying a generous patina of new oak in their youth but which age with remarkable consistency. A 20-vintage vertical is forthcoming in these pages.”</i></p> <p>- WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“The 2020 Lynch-Bages is a blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 5% Petit Verdot, aging for around 18 months in French oak barriques, 75% new. It has an alcohol of 13.41%, a pH of 3.73 and an IPT (tannin index) of 93. Opaque purple-black in color, it leaps from the glass with notes of crushed blackberries, cassis, and boysenberries, plus touches of garrigue, red roses and cedar chest with hints of graphite and black olives. The medium-bodied palate has a rock-solid frame of ripe, grainy tannins and</i></p>

Reviews *plenty of freshness supporting the tight-knit black fruit and earthy flavors, finishing long and mineral laced. “*
- LPB, Wine Advocate

“A beautifully layered red with blackcurrant, hazelnut and lead-pencil character and fine, velvety tannins. Full-bodied and reserved. It’s like a tightly knit ball of polished tannins that are cashmere in texture. So very long and impressive. Give this time. A terrific Lynch.
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“Blackcurrants, orange peel, flowers, and tar with hints of graphite. Full-bodied with a creamy texture of exquisitely polished tannins. It goes on and on. Intense flavors at the end, too, with lead pencil and lots of blackberry. Very classic and precise.”
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“Bold black fruits and dense, textured tannins are very much in the style of the estate. What is new in this vintage is the extra precision that lifts the wine, bringing together the beautiful black currant flavors of ripe Cabernet Sauvignon with a refined texture of sophisticated tannins. This is an impressive wine, sure to age over many years.”
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Very deep, dense blackish purple. Suave, flattering nose with good freshness and precision. Marked tannins underneath (more so than its stablemate Haut-Batailley). This is less the old, spicy, comfortable pair of slippers Lynch-Bages and seems to be heading in a deliberately purer, 'cooler' direction. Impressive undertow and persistence, but with interesting top notes such as tobacco leaf. Very ambitiously dry on the finish. 17++/20 points.”
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“Full bottle 1,315 g. Cask sample taken 16 April. 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 4% Cabernet Franc. Merlot was picked from 14 September (nine days earlier than in 2019) over five days. Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot were picked 21 to 29 September. This is the first vintage to be made in Lynch-Bages' new winery. 18 months' ageing in barrel (75% new) is envisaged. Very deep, dense blackish purple. Suave, flattering nose with good freshness and precision. Marked tannins underneath (more so than its stablemate Haut-Batailley). This is less the old, spicy, comfortable pair of slippers Lynch-Bages and seems to be heading in a deliberately purer, 'cooler' direction. Impressive undertow and persistence, but with interesting top notes such as tobacco leaf. Very ambitiously dry on the finish. 13.4%. Drink 2031 – 2049.”
- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“One of my favourite wines of the vintage, this is a wonderful example of high-definition winemaking but still offering plenty of Pauillac swagger. Smells dark and slightly savoury, full of black fruit and toasted aromas. Bright and lively on the palate with clarity and precision to the berry fruit, shining and clear with juicy, mouthwatering acidity - so much energy in the glass. Chalky, graphite-laced tannins fill the mouth, giving structure and clear terroir markers with a lingering minerality on the finish. Perfectly weighted with incredible delectability and drinkability. Persistent with a long finish. Superb effort.”
- GH, Decanter.com

“The lowest amount of Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend on recent record but the signature of Lynch Bages is very much in play here - tons of liquorice, grippy and charismatic cassis and blueberry fruit with a velvety texture layered with blackcurrant pastilles and rich dark chocolate. This is easily one of the best Pauillac’s that I have tasted in the vintage, totally gorgeous. The 33hl/ha yield meant I was worried that it would be too concentrated, but it pulls it off, although you’ve got to assume that they will need to be careful over ageing. Lower alcohol than both 2018 and 2019, a more classical balance in fact. 4% Cabernet Franc completes the blend. 3.73pH, 75% new oak, 18 months in barrel.”
- JA, Decanter.com

Reviews *“A superb Lynch Bages that grabs you and carries you through the palate, slowly edging forward. Poised with a ton of slate and pencil lead on the finish, this is pure Pauillac, just so precise and full of character, so much grip, it's classic with a mouthwatering finish, feels profound but thoroughly approachable. 75% new oak, 3.73pH. First vintage in new winery.”*

- JA, janeanson.com

“Rich, deep, powerful, pure concentrated blackberry, and cassis puree with liquorice, espresso and a firm tannic core. 3.73pH, 75% new oak, a 33hl/h yield, and the lowest amount of Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend for several decades, but still delivers plenty of Pauillac punch.”

- JA, janeanson.com

“The first vintage made in their brand new, state-of-the-art cellars pops with its showy display of peppery spices, mint, cigar box, cassis, blackberries, cedar, and creme de cassis. The wine is full-bodied, fresh, long, deep, intense, powerful, and chewy, leaving you with an ocean of sweet, ripe, pure cassis to chew on. This refined styled vintage of Lynch Bages will age for decades. Drink from 2027-2060.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The first vintage made in their brand new, state-of-the-art cellars is deep garnet in color. The wine rapidly opens with notes of Cuban cigars, cedar, creme de cassis, flowers and forest leaf aromas. On the palate, the wine is full-bodied, soft, round, and fresh. The elegant tannins allow the wine to gently unfurl, revealing its sweet red currants, kirsch liqueur and creamy-textured, rich finish. This refined styled vintage of Lynch Bages blends 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 4% Cabernet Franc, 13.4% ABV. The yields were only 33 hectoliters per hectare. Something else, 2020 Lynch Bages will sport a one-time-only change to the label commemorating their new cellar.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“2020 is the first vintage to be made in the new, state of the art winery. Harvest started 9 days earlier than in 2019, taking place from the 14th-29th September. The blend is 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 5% Petit Verdot and will be aged for 18 months in 75% new French oak. The abv is a moderate 13.4%. Deep ruby purple in the glass. The nose is deep and dark, full of rich cassis and savoury, earthy spices. The palate has great attack, with rich dark fruit and mouthcoating ripe tannins intense in equal measure - this is a vin de garde. Piercing blackcurrant fruit cuts through savoury spices from the oak. There is a real vibrancy and precision to the fruit core this year. Chewy and dense through to a very long and impressive finish. An excellent 2020.”

- Farr Vintners

“The 2020 Lynch-Bages, the first vintage vinified at the new winery, has a beautifully-defined bouquet with a strong estuarine influence, brine and seaweed infusing the black fruit. It's almost understated at first, but it opens wonderfully in the glass - quintessentially Pauillac. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins, quite concentrated that is counterbalanced by a fine bead of acidity. The saline note on the finish is superb, lingering in the mouth. What an absolutely delicious Lynch-Bages for the long-term.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2020 Lynch-Bages contains proportionately more Merlot in the blend this year (31%) and will be aged for 18 months in 75% new oak. It has an intriguing bouquet, quite complex and classic in style, featuring tightly wound black fruit mixed with cedar, mint, and touches of the estuary. One sniff and you know that the vines are in close proximity to the sea. The palate is medium-bodied with impressive weight on the entry, the tannins almost immediately coating the mouth (the IPT is 93, fairly high). But everything remains balanced thanks to the fine acidic thread, and it begins to firm up, becoming quite structured and, dare I say, reminiscent of Latour toward the finish. This is a Lynch-Bages that clearly will deserve long-term aging because there is real substance to this wine, and that will only increase during élevage. This is a great Lynch-Bages. The Cazes family should build a new winery to celebrate.”

- NM, Vinous

Reviews *“The 2020 Lynch-Bages is a real powerhouse. Élevage appears to have amplified the virile, brooding qualities that were present in barrel. In so many vintages, Lynch-Bages is a wine of elegance and finesse. Those qualities may emerge here too, in time. Black cherry, plum, espresso, licorice and lavender add to an impression of brooding intensity. Formidable tannins will take years to soften. The 2020 is a gorgeous wine, but it is also a very atypical Lynch.”*

- AG, Vinous

“The 2020 Lynch-Bages is deep, polished, and so sensual. Dark cherry fruit, lavender, spice, leather, and pipe tobacco fill out the layers. In 2020, Lynch-Bages is a bit darker and more virile in feel than is typically the case. There is plenty of weight and substance, though. I can't wait to taste it from the bottle. My impression is that the 2020 will be a very long-lived wine.”

- AG, Vinous

“Ultra-classic notes of blackcurrants, freshly sharpened lead pencil, damp earth, and crushed stone emerge from the 2020 Château Lynch-Bages, which checks in as 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, and the rest Petit Verdot, all hitting 13.4% natural alcohol and a pH of 3.73 and a massive IPT of 93, which might be the highest in the vintage. Full-bodied and concentrated on the palate, it has brilliant purity of fruit, a layered, building sense of structure, and a great finish. While not austere or closed, this serious Lynch-Bages will need 10-15 years of bottle age to hit maturity and have 40-50 years of overall longevity. 95-97+.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Deep dark ruby, opaque core, purple reflections, bright narrow rim. Fine aromas of cassis and liquorice, black wild berries, a hint of cedar with a mint background. Juicy, elegant, fine cherry fruit, ripe, supporting tannins, touch of nougat on the finish, mineral, very good length; certainly, has potential.”

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“Deep dark ruby garnet, opaque core, violet reflections, delicate edge lightning. Fine nuances of cassis and liquorice, black wild berries, a hint of cedar high, notes of mint underlaid. Juicy, elegant, fine cherry fruit, ripe, carrying tannins, delicate nougat on the finish, mineral and long-lasting, sure smell potential.”

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“The nose is fresh, fruity and offers concentration, a fine grain, concentration (elegance) as well as a fine straightness as well as complexity. It reveals notes of small bright/fresh black currants, sour cherry, violet, small notes of wild strawberry associated with touches of wild red ripe fruits, blueberry as well as fine hints of cardamom, dark tea, cherry flower, graphite, a discreet hint of dark chocolate, toasted and an imperceptible hint of cumin. The mouth is fruity, fresh, balanced, all-in precision and offers juiciness, minerality, a nice definition, a certain darkness as well as gourmandize, a nice energy, a discreetly tight structure, an aromatic purity, plenitude/harmony, a nice complexity, a multi-layer side and energy. On the palate this wine expresses notes of juicy/pulpy cassis, bright Boysen berry, small notes of wild strawberry associated with touches of violet, juicy/fresh blueberry, purple bright plum, racy minerality (nearly discreetly iodized), cornflower, star anis, zan as well as a discreet hint of tabaco, cardamom and liquorish stick. The tannins are elegant, precise, massive but delicate and mellow. A very nice/good bitterness in the finish/persistence. Notes of chocolate and a hint of caramelization/ ginger sugar in the background/persistence. A very rich wine, in freshness, all in subtlety and harmony.”

- Vert de Vin

“(60% CS, 31% M, 5% PV, 4% CF; 65% harvest, 13.4% ABV; 75% new). Immediately a very seductive nose of blackcurrant Cabernet, cedar, gravel; full, fresh yet supple, refined in tannin, a beautiful, harmonious, classy balance; deep, sweet, flattering, cassis-cored flavor, long and gently mouthcoating, mineral-infused, vitally defined, close-grained, complex, gently Pauillac sinewy, and with lovely, sweet length. Classy, classically proportioned Lynch-Bages. 2030-50+.”

- MS, The World of Fine Wine