

Château Pichon-Longueville Baron 2016

CSPC# 764173

750mlx12

13.3% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Merlot

Appellation

Pauillac

Classification

Second Growth. Deuxième Grand Cru Classe in 1855

Website

<http://www.pichonlongueville.com/>

General Info

Château Pichon-Longueville Baron, a leading Pauillac 2ème Cru Classé estate, is one of Bordeaux's most illustrious "super seconds". In 1987 it was bought by the AXA Millésimes Group, who also own Cantenac-Brown, Petit-Village, Suduiraut. AXA built a state of the art cuverie and chai at Pichon-Longueville Baron, while, in 2000, Christian Seely took over from Jean-Michel Cazes as general manager. The Cabernet-dominated Pichon-Longueville Baron is a more muscular, tannic and full-bodied wine than that of its neighbour across the road, Pichon-Longueville Comtesse de Lalande. The *grand vin* is Chateau Longueville au Baron de Pichon-Longueville. The second wine is Les Tourelles de Longueville, introduced with the 1986 vintage.

Jean-Rene Matignon started with the Left Bank Bordeaux property in 1985. In three short years, Pichon Baron once again began producing wines of world class quality. The first vintage that brought this historic estate back to prominence was the sublime 1989 followed by the even better 1990. When Jean-Michel Cazes retired from Pichon-Baron in 2000, Christian Seely was asked to take over the management of Pichon Baron as well as the other seven properties of the wine group including Château Suduiraut in Sauternes, Château Petit Village in Pomerol, Chateau Pibran in Pauillac and Quinta do Noval in Portugal. AXA also maintains and interest in Burgundy with Domaine de l'Arlet. Christian Seely has managed many of these estates since 1993. AXA also owns one of the larger Bordeaux wine négociant companies, Compagnie Medocaine.

Winemaker

Jean-Rene Matignon

Vintage

In 2016, there were two main trends in the weather as we experienced it in Pauillac:

- a very wet winter and spring: more than half of the annual rainfall came in the first four months of the year, including a record 240 mm in January.
- an extremely dry summer and autumn without any significant rainfall, resulting in a water deficit at the end of the year.

As a consequence of the summer drought, the grapes were numerous but remained rather small, making for density and concentration. High temperatures in August and September allowed for slow ripening and excellent maturity, so that the harvest started with the Merlot on 26 September and continued in perfect conditions until 14 October.

In the vat house, each grape variety and each plot were, as usual, vinified separately in order to let their intrinsic character shine through. The wines, which have now been blended, offer remarkable colour, intense fruit and spice aromas and a dense texture of very rich and well-rounded tannins. Its density and substance make the 2016 vintage comparable with the finest so far this century.

Vineyards

The 73 hectare vineyards of Chateau Pichon Baron are planted to 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. However, the Cabernet Franc and the Petit Verdot are reserved exclusively for the second wine. This marks a change in the makeup of the vineyard with the addition of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. The vineyard is planted to a vine density is 9,000 vines per hectare using a double Guyot training. The average age of the vines is 30 years. However, the estate has old vines. The oldest vines date all the way back the 1930's. While the vineyard occupies 73 hectares of vines, the grapes used for Pichon Baron come from the 40 best hectares in the vineyard. The vineyards of



Vineyards	Pichon Baron are situated at the southern end of Pauillac, across the street from Pichon Lalande, not far from Chateau Latour and close to the St. Julien border. The soils are mostly deep gravel.
Harvest	Hand picked between 3 and 18 October
Vinification/ Maturation	Malolactic fermentation takes place in tank. The wine of Chateau Pichon Baron is aged in an average of 80% new, French oak barrels for 18 months. Of course, the percentage of new oak and the time in barrel varies, depending on the character of the vintage. Production of Pichon Baron averages 18,000 cases per year. The estate also produces a second wine, Les Tourelles de Longueville, which made its debut in 1986. They also own and produce Chateau Pibran, a value priced, Pauillac wine.
Tasting Notes	It's a deep, dark purple in colour and a little more reserved on the nose than some, with more of that pencil-lead and slate character. The texture is almost as important as the flavour, and it shows its quality. This is all cassis, wet stone, and loganberry, and conveys heft rather than sinew. It tightens through the mid-palate to the point that it contracts - a serious wine.
Serve with	Chateau Pichon Baron is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
Production	13,500 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2022-2057
Scores/Awards	<p>96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2019</p> <p>96-99 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2017</p> <p>97 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate Interim Issue - November 2018</p> <p>96-98 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #230 - April 2017</p> <p>99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2019</p> <p>98-99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2017</p> <p>97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 2019</p> <p>96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 2017</p> <p>18.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - October 2018</p> <p>18.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2017</p> <p>96 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2017</p> <p>99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2018</p> <p>99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2017</p> <p>96 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2017</p> <p>17.5+ points - Farr Vintner - February 2017</p> <p>95-96 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2017</p> <p>96 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - January 2019</p> <p>96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - January 2019</p> <p>93-96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2017</p> <p>97 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - November 2017</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"This gushes with dark fig and black currant compote flavors backed by lively sweet tobacco and singed alder edges. Very fleshy in feel, though there's ample grip to keep this red grounded, echoing with tar and humus accents through the finish. A thumper. Best from 2025 through 2040. 13,500 cases made."</i> - JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Has the pure, fresh, racy feel of the vintage, which is even more admirable considering the depth of the red currant, plum and cherry preserve flavors at the core and the power of the structure on the back end, pulling in accents of graphite and loam. A thumper of a Pauillac. Score range: 96-99"</i> - JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2016 Pichon-Longueville Baron offers a suave and seductive nose of warm red and black currants, black plum preserves, truffles, tapenade and rose hip tea with touches of sandalwood and Chinese five spice plus a waft of iron ore. Medium to full-bodied, firmly structured and packed with mineral and exotic spice-laced black fruits, it finishes very long with compelling herbal sparks."</i> - LPB, Wine Advocate</p>

Reviews

"The 2016 Pichon-Longueville Baron is a blend of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot picked between 3 and 18 October at 39 hectoliters per hectare for estate (therefore the Grand Vin will be less). It is matured in 80% new oak and 20% one year old for 18 months. It has a very intense, extremely pure bouquet with blackberry, bilberry, cedar, and graphite notes; it is a straight-down-the-fairway Pauillac. The palate is medium-bodied with a very tensile opening, that seam of graphite penetrating the black fruit. There is a wonderful structure here, unapologetically classic in style with just the right amount of austerity on the aristocratic finish. The aftertaste is incredibly long, lingering after two or three minutes in the mouth. This is a majestic Pichon-Baron, and it may well to surpass both the 2009 and 2010."

- NM, Wine Advocate

"The concentration and largesse of the 2016 Pichon Baron is apparent from the get-go with incredibly alluring, ripe and expansive fruit aromas in the blackberry, dark-cherry, mulberry and plum zone. Espresso and cedar, as well as a slate-like, stony mineral edge add complexity. The palate has incredible depth, drive, and detail. Fine and plush tannins stretch the palate in every direction. So fresh and vivacious, this is the greatest Pichon Baron since 1989 and has a long future. Try from 2024."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"I have been waiting for this for a long time. It's a remake of the legendary 1990 Pichon Baron. Full body, ultra-polished yet powerful tannins and a glorious finish. They will evolve beautifully. The core of fruit and tannins are great. A truly great Pichon Baron."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"As often with this estate, this wine combines opulent richness and an elegant structure. It is a bold wine, ripe and full of black fruits. But it holds together impressively, with nothing in excess. The wine will age well."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"This is a sumptuous wine, its black fruit tones surrounding ripe tannins. It is generous in acidity as well as an open ripe-fruit character. It is concentrated and obviously designed to age well; drink from 2024."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Very deep healthy crimson. Really very luscious and gorgeous on the nose. A winning formula here, clearly – for the mid-term anyway. Really gorgeous, polished tannins and ripe fruit. What the heck is not to like?! Sweetness, inkiness, and sufficient tannin. Clean, refreshing finish."

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Merlot. 80% new oak. 45% of total production. Dense, dramatic, splashy wine with great balance and lift. Lots of energy and masses of old Cab in here. Really snazzy. Long."

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"This has some rich liquorice and gingerbread flavours, drawing deeply on the cassis fruits. This is incredibly dense and yet feels almost light across the palate. It doesn't have the upfront sexiness of the 2009, this is a more cerebral vintage. Neither does it have the architecture of the 2010, although the technical numbers are quite similar with high tannins and a pH of 3.6. It floats and builds up power slowly, with slightly chalky tannins on the finish. Less of a 'wall' than some recent years, an excellent wine. 45% of the estate's production from 73ha. To be aged in 80% new oak for 18 months."

- JA, Decanter.com

"The Cabernet was just so pure in 2016," says Christian Seely, explaining his decision to use less Merlot. The result is a sturdy, structured Pauillac with plush berry and liquorice fruit, racy acidity and layers of tannin and concentration. 2025-40"

- TA, timatkin.com

"Inky black in color, the level of concentration is equally dense. The depth of fruit and flavor impresses and entertains your palate with all its finesse, freshness, and purity. There is a definite wall of tannins, but they are so refined and ripe, it's easy to enjoy the layers of dark, perfectly, deep red fruits. The finish seems

Reviews *endless. This is so good, even at 9 in the morning, I took a sip!"*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Astounding color, it's impossible to see though the wine in the glass. Rich, concentrated, multi-layered and multi-faceted, this is a powerful attention grabber. But it's also a wine of finesse, freshness, and purity. There is a force of flavor and meticulousness that has not been produced in previous vintages. This is one of those wines that coats your palate with precision, fruit, and flavor. The tannins are there but they are so ripe and there is such a wealth of fruit, you just do not notice it. The finish, with opulently textured boysenberry, tobacco, dark chocolate, cigar and plum, lasts for a full minute or more! Blended from 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot, this wine reached 13.3% alcohol with a pH of 3.8. The Grand Vin represents only 45% of the harvest, which took place between October 3 and October 18."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"The grand vin is now made only from fruit produced in the original vineyard that is opposite Latour and next to Las Cases. Latour-like in style, Pichon Baron has been a star performer in our recent blind vintage tastings. Two second labels are now produced - Les Griffons (from the younger vines) and Les Tourelles de Longueville (from a specific parcel of mostly Merlot vines). 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot in 2016. A deep purple colour with a rich nose of cassis, marzipan, cedar, and toast. The palate continues the fruit concentration and ripeness but picks up restraint of graphite and tobacco to bring focus and savouriness to the balance. The tannins are chewy, powerful and Medocain - ripe but mouthcoating - and will give this wine superb longevity. In a string of high-quality performances of late, the 2016 is another impressive effort here."

- Farr Vintners

"Brooding richness, the nose has depth of fruit a mix of black fruits ripe black cherry and cassis. The tannins are fine and discreet the back-palate velvet smooth lighter and fresher on the finish stylish and elegant."

- Derek Smedley MW

"The 2016 Pichon-Longueville Baron electrifies the olfactory sense with a stunning bouquet of intense blackberry, cedar and graphite aromas that are quintessential Pauillac. Over a few minutes, it blossoms in the glass, gaining more and more depth. The palate is medium-bodied with slightly tarry black fruit, cedar, and truffle, dovetailing into a saline, peppery finish that leaves the tongue tingling. Christian Seely and his team have imbued recent vintages of this Pauillac with unerring symmetry, and the 2016 can be added to the canon of triumphs. Drink 2023-2055."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2016 Pichon Baron is seamless and racy from start to finish. Sensual and super-expressive, with soft contours, silky tannins and exceptional finesse, Pichon Baron is one of the more accessible wines in its peer group today. Plum, mocha, leather, spice, and chocolate all build effortlessly. As outstanding as Pichon Baron is, the 2016 gives the impression it is playing things safe. It would be nice to see a little more daring and risk. Drink 2026 - 2041."

- AG, Vinous

"The 2016 Pichon-Longueville Baron is fabulous. In fact, the 2016 is one of the best recent Pichon-Barons I can remember tasting. Smoke, gravel, chocolate, graphite, licorice, leather, black cherry, and grilled herbs open up first as the wine shows off its extraordinary aromatic palette. Like so many wines in this vintage, the 2016 delivers serious flavor intensity, but with no excess weight. The richness of the Cabernet, at 85% of the blend, is palpable, as is the quality level. Vivid and deep to the core, the wine finishes with notable density, yet retains its midweight structure."

- AG, Vinous

"Tasting like a hypothetical mix of the 2009 and 2010, its deep purple color is followed by a powerful yet sensationally pure bouquet of crème de cassis, blackberries, lead pencil shavings, and graphite, and is just about as quintessentially Pauillac as it gets. Full-bodied, fleshy, and even a touch flamboyant, it has sweet tannins and a monster texture that coats the palate. Count me in as a huge fan. This fabulous wine will be relatively approachable in just 3-5 years but will age for 30 years or more."

- Jeb Dunnuck
