

Château L'Évangile 2017

CSPC# 891878

750mlx6

14.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

100% Merlot

Appellation

Pomerol

Classification

Bordeaux AOC (*Appellation d'origine contrôlée*)

Website

<https://www.lafite.com/fr/les-chateaux/chateau-levangile/>

Sustainability

Organic

General Info

Château L'Évangile has always been considered among the first great growths of Pomerol. Located on the noble part of the Pomerol plateau between Pétrus and Cheval Blanc, the vines grow on a soil and subsoil in which sand and clay alternate with layers of pure gravel. The resulting wine is powerful, distinguished, and has an incomparably fine bouquet. It is appreciated around the world. For many wine lovers, the hallmarks of L'Évangile are subtlety and elegance. In 2004, Château L'Évangile renovated their cellar to reflect the progress made in the vineyard (gradual replanting, plot-by-plot vineyard management, rigorous sorting of grapes, etc.) and aim for even higher quality. The new vat room makes it possible to ferment grapes from different parcels separately, and the circular underground cellar makes maximum use of gravity flow. Château L'Évangile produces approximately 3,000 cases of wine a year, all of which is aged in new oak barrels for 18 months.

Winemaker

Charles Chevallier

Vintage

Winter began with mild temperatures, slightly above normal, and January, colder than in 2016, favored good vegetative rest. After the first very dry months - a third of the usual water volumes - the rainfall in February and March guaranteed good water reserves and facilitated bud break. The beginning of spring was marked by a mild climate and normal rainfall, with rapid development of vegetation. However, nothing announced the terrible nights of April 26 and 27, during which all of Bordeaux was hit by the most disastrous frost since 1991.

Vineyards

L'Évangile's vineyard covers 22 hectares at the heart of the Pomerol plateau, sharing the appellation's best terroirs with two other prestigious properties. Here, through a mystery of geology, the heavy green clay soils are covered by a bed of gravel. These high-quality soils are the source of the estate's great merlot, and the secret of Chateau l'Évangile's extraordinary power and depth.

Harvest

This year, the frost forced us to carry out extraordinary selection within the plots, meticulously marking the vines affected by frost and those that had been spared, and this continued until the harvest, which required intricate sorting. A classic maceration of 30 days and promising blends in January have confirmed our impressions of a vintage with balance between great aromatic freshness, quality of tannins and length.

Maturation

Alcoholic fermentation takes place in temperature-controlled concrete vats and lasted for about 10 days. Pumping over and maceration times are adjusted for each vat, according to the terroir and the maturity of the tannins. Total maceration times are 27 days on average for the merlot and 28 days for the cabernet franc. After maceration, the wine is transferred in new oak barrels for malolactic fermentation, followed by 18 months of ageing. The barrels are made by the Tonnellerie des Domaines Barons de Rothschild (Lafite) in Pauillac.

Tasting Notes

Dark crimson-purple colour with hints of garnet. The nose is dense and powerful, initially presenting red fruit then becoming tinged with cedar and mellow notes such as sage.

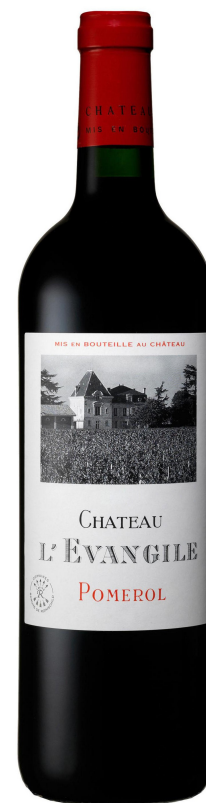
On the palate, the attack is well balanced between power and liveliness highlighting this vintage's tremendous freshness. The tannic structure is silky, typically Merlot, the only grape variety used in this vintage, giving the wine plenty of body and elegance. The complex aromatic palette finishes with some empyreumatic notes such as cocoa beans.

Winemaker's Notes

Dark, almost black colour, with hints of purple. Dense, powerful, expressive, very ripe, concentrated nose with notes of Morello cherries, raspberries, and toast. The attack is full, generous, and dense with very silky tannins and great depth. The palate is long, rich and concentrated with a very creamy finish, remaining supple due to a delightful freshness.

Serve with

Chateau L'Évangile is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Chateau L'Évangile is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.



Production 3,000 cases made
Cellaring Drink 2022-2040
Scores/Awards **97 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2020
95 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2020
93-95 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2018
94 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - December 2022
95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2020
94-95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2018
94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - January 2018
16.5 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2018
95 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2018
94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2018
90-92 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2018
97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2020
94-97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2018
96 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2020
18.5 points - Matthew Jukes - April 2018
96 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2020
95 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2018
95-96 points - Vert de Vin - January 2020
16 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - June 2018
18 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - June 2018

Reviews *"This is a breed apart, with a remarkably dense yet lithe core of braised fig, warmed plum sauce and steeped black currant fruit, coated with ganache, and melted licorice details and infused with incense and black tea notes. Incredibly lush through the finish but maintains cut and drive due to the well-embedded alder spine. Best from 2022 through 2040. 3,000 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"All of the Cabernet Franc was frosted in 2017, so L'Evangile is composed of 100% Merlot for the first time. Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2017 L'Evangile is a little closed to begin, offering glimpses at blueberry preserves, baked plums and black raspberries scents before revealing nuances of spice cake, cinnamon stick, dusty soil and garrigue plus a waft of incense. Medium to full-bodied, the palate has a lot of richness and depth, with firm, ripe, rounded tannins and just enough freshness, finishing long and spicy. The old-vine Cabernet Franc at L'Evangile was completely frosted in 2017. Unsurprisingly, it was the plots on the plateau that were relatively unscathed, but those near Cheval Blanc and Bon Pasteur were frosted. Thus, for the very first time this year, the grand vin is made with 100% Merlot. "We had to paint vines with different colors according to the amount of frost damage they received," operations manager Jean-Pascal Vazart informed me. "Overall yields were down to 20 hectoliters per hectare this year, which is a little misleading, because the unscathed plots gave 40 hectoliters per hectare and some affected plots gave three hectoliters per hectare." A long harvest ensued, beginning September 4th and ending at the beginning of October. In the end, the alcohol came out at 14.6% with an IPT of 76, which are pretty hefty numbers when you consider the purity and grace of this wine."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The 2017 L'Evangile is deep garnet-purple in color, featuring a profoundly scented nose of plum preserves, smoked meats, chargrill and cigar box with touches of licorice, tapenade, tar and truffles plus an earthy waft of underbrush. The palate is medium to full-bodied with a lovely purity of black and blue fruits, accented with baking spice notions and framed by plush tannins that offer just the right amount of provocative grip, finishing long and earthy. Sadly, the old vine Cabernet Franc at L'Evangile was completely frosted this year. Unsurprisingly, it was the plots on the plateau that were relatively unscathed, but those near Cheval Blanc and Bon Pasteur were frosted. Thus, for the very first time this year, the wine is made with 100% Merlot. "We had to paint vines with different colors according to the amount of frost damage they received," operations manager Jean Pascal Vazart informed me. "Overall yields were down to 20 hl/ha this year, which is a little misleading because the unscathed plots gave 40 hl/ha and some affected plots gave 3 hl/ha." A long harvest ensued, beginning September 4th and ending at the beginning of October. In the end, the alcohol came out at 14.6% with an IPT of 76, which are pretty hefty numbers when you consider the purity and grace of this wine."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

Reviews *“L’Evangile 2017 is 100% Merlot as the Cabernet Franc was lost to the frost. It has a deep garnet color and strolls out with open-knit notes of warm plums, black raspberries, and kirsch, plus suggestions of roses and charcoal, with a waft of cedar. Medium to full-bodied, the palate is soft and juicy with plenty of expressive black fruit flavors in the mid-palate, finishing with a red berry lift.”*
- LPB, Wine Independent

“The generosity in this wine is essence-like with black cherries, black truffles and wet earth. Full-bodied and deep with rich, creamy tannins and a long, intense finish. It goes on for minutes. Silky and fantastic. Extremely well done.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“Very fine and velvety tannins in the mouth with juicy fruit that gives dark-berry, chocolate and spice character. Medium to full body. Bright acidity. Harmonious and very pretty. Pure merlot. Reminds me of the 2012, but shows a little more ripeness and suppleness.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“93–95. Barrel Sample. This dense wine is packed with intense tannins. The secret to the wine, which is 100% Merlot, is not just the structure but the immensely ripe black-plum and -berry fruits that envelope the dry core, lending opulence and richness. The wine has a lift of freshness on the finish. It will age and should not be opened before 2024.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Very dark crimson. Dark, savoury and a touch meaty – beefy. A hint of oak char. Very ripe and spicy fruit flavours, even a hint of dried fruit. Structured and muscular. Compact tannins – smooth but a touch chewy. Savoury, rather than fruity, and firmly dry on the finish. Drink 2025-2035.”

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“This has a lovely silkiness to it, one of the real successes in the appellation in terms of the texture and the quality of the tannins. It's a fairly powerful 100% Merlot with 100% new oak - an unusual combination because the old vine Cabernet Franc was lost to frost in 2017. This is one of the few wines that gets close to the quality of 2016, even if it's not quite there in terms of its completeness. 30 days maceration at reasonable temperatures has brought out the heart of plump blackberry fruit, while delivering subtle tobacco and slate elegance. I like this a lot. 100% organic in the vineyard (2016 was 95% organic) but not certified. 60% grand vin this year, from 40hl/ha.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“Plum liqueur, chocolate, flowers, and truffle with Asian spice are at the heart of the perfume. The opulent finish offers sweet fruits with a cocoa and anise character, along with freshness and length. Full bodied, erotic, exotic and unique for the property.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The 2017 L’Evangile is picked from 4 September to 3 October. There is no Cabernet Franc since it was frosted over (50% of the vineyard) and so Jean-Pierre Vazart said it is missing some of its power. He marked all the vines with different colors to indicate those affected so that none of the second-generation fruit was used for the Grand Vin. Yields came in at 20hl/ha and it is matured in 100% new oak. It has a deep inky purple hue. The new wood comes over quite strongly as it often does, perhaps missing the Cabernet Franc component to support that level of wood? There are light floral scents: wilted iris and violet that spring up with aeration although I would still like to see more terroir expression. The palate is medium-bodied with grainy tannin, mocha and dark chocolate on the entry with a fine bead of acidity. But I have a nagging question of whether a more prudent approach to the new oak might have engendered a more endearing L’Evangile, I was a bit disturbed by the level of wood tannin on the finish. I will be more than happy to upgrade my score if the tannin will be absorbed during élevage and with bottle age and I will be more than happy to upgrade my score.”

- NM, Vinous

Reviews

"The 2017 L'Évangile, 100% Merlot for this first time, is just as impressive from a bottle as it was from barrel. Dark, sumptuous and wonderfully inviting, the 2017 has so much to offer. Dark fruit, spice, mocha, leather and licorice infuse the 2017 with notable depth. Time in the glass brings out lovely aromatic top notes that add freshness. A rapturously beautiful wine, L'Évangile is stellar. Frost wiped out half of the potential crop, including all of the Cabernet Franc, which means the Grand Vin is 100% Merlot. Technical Director Jean Pascal Vazart opted for gentle pump overs and longer extractions than normal."

- AG, Vinous

"The 2017 L'Évangile is a stunning wine. Frost wiped out half of the potential crop, including all of the Cabernet Franc, which means the Grand Vin is 100% Merlot. Rich, sumptuous and explosive, the 2017 possesses remarkable depth and stunning intensity in all of its dimensions. The purity, energy and textural resonance of the fruit is ravishing. The 2017 saw five days of cold soak followed by 30 days on the skins. Technical Director Jean Pascal Vazart opted for gentle pump overs and longer extractions than normal. Malolactic fermentation was done in 100% new oak, where the wine is presently aging. A massive, concentrated wine, L'Évangile is going to need a number of years to be at its very best, but it is magnificent, even in the early going. In a word: dazzling!"

- AG, Vinous

"Production was down 40% at Chateau L'Évangile due to the frost. The 2017 Chateau L'Évangile is 100% Merlot, and 2017 is the first time this cuvee has not included some other variety. Aged 16 months in 75% new barrels, it's a ripe, powerful L'Évangile loaded with chocolate-laced black fruits, mocha, toasted spice, and subtle oak. These carry over to the palate, where the wine is medium to full-bodied, has plenty of oomph and power, yet stays flawlessly balanced and even elegant. It's a stunning example from the vintage that's going to benefit from 4-6 years of bottle age and cruise for two decades."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"With 50% frost damage, this estate was very severely wounded by the conditions including all of the top Cabernet Franc and so Évangile is 100% Merlot for the first time ever. The plateau was not damaged but sections near Bon Pasteur, Gazin, Beauregard and Cheval Blanc were badly hit. They picked during the whole of September! With a much richer and more powerful feel to this wine it is refreshing but also flamboyant and there is a luxurious feel which other wines don't have. The tannins are spicy and bright and there is no astringency whatsoever. The summer was dry and not rainy, so this is responsible for the ripeness and also the maturity of the tannins. This will be a very forward-drinking vintage, but not because it is light or juicy, but because the balance is spot on."

- Matthew Jukes

"Deep, dark ruby with purple reflections, brightening at the rim. An inviting bouquet of fine nougat, ripe cherries, a touch of savoury herbs, and ripe plum nuances. Juicy, rounded, and powerful, with well-integrated, powerful tannins, and a chocolaty texture. It is full bodied, fruity, and persistent. Long, with a mineral finish. 100% Merlot this time."

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

"The nose is fruity and offers a small power, a fine grain as well as a fine richness/intensity. This wine needs to be put in a carafe. It reveals notes of ripe wild blackberry, ripe wild cassis and small notes of cornflowers, lily associated with touches of small blue berries, small crunchy red berries as well as hints of grey pepper, camphor, and spices. The palate is fruity, mineral, well-balanced and offers freshness, a juicy/acidulous frame, a good definition, tension as well as fat. On the palate this wine expresses notes of fleshy blackberry, fleshy blackcurrant and small notes of small juicy/fresh red berries associated with touches of cornflower, lily as well as hints of wild raspberry, small crunchy blue berries, Tonka bean/mocha and nutmeg. Tannins are well-built and structuring."

- Vert de Vin
