

Château Canon La Gaffeliere 2020

CSPC# 848991

750mlx6

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

50% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon

Appellation

Saint Emilion

Classification

Premier Grand Cru Classé B

Website

<http://www.neipperg.com/index.php?act=1,9,3,,,,,en>

Organic

Organic Certified by FR-BIO-10

General Info

The von Neipperg counts are descended from a noble line dating back to the Holy Roman Empire. This family has contributed great soldiers and illustrious diplomats throughout the centuries. Responsible for numerous military exploits, the family's long history is grounded in their attachment to their land. In fact, the Counts von Neipperg have been making fine wine there since the 12th century.

In 1985, Stephan von Neipperg was officially named estate manager and proceeded to make in-depth changes at Canon La Gaffelière. He started by making a complete analysis of data concerning his vineyard and then drew logical conclusions of what needed doing. His collaboration at a later date with e also contributed to Canon La Gaffelière's reputation around the world.

Winemaker

Stephan von Neipperg

Vintage

The year 2020 had harsh weather conditions that disrupted vine growth. The year started off with heavy rainfall that was beyond historical averages. A combination of rain and cold temperatures led to the widespread outbreak of mildew. Fortunately, the effects of mildew subsided when temperatures rose in April and May. In fact, there were a few estates that reported losing a significant number of grapes due to mildew (unlike in 2018.) There was no rain between mid-June and mid-August, and most estates (like Saint Emilion and Margaux) reported dehydration on the Cabernet Sauvignon vines. Additionally, the grapes were smaller in size, and the yield was very low. The Merlot grapes were harvested around mid-September, while the Cabernet grapes were picked about a week later.

Vineyards

The 19.5-hectare vineyard has a complex, outstanding terroir of clay-limestone and clay-sand soil. The topsoil is primarily sandy, increasingly so as one moves away from the slope. The vines, an average of 45 years old, are deeply rooted in the soil and absorb all the goodness in the terroir. They are mostly replaced individually rather than plot by plot (which maintains the average age). The last major replanting dates back to 1986. Mass selection is practiced. This is especially useful in order to perpetuate the precious old Cabernet Franc vines. It not only maintains the vineyard's genetic heritage, but also its unique balance

Harvest

By hand, into small crates to avoid bruising. A yield of 32.5hl/ha

Vinification/

Fermentation in wooden vats for 35 days. Extraction by pneumatic pigeage (punching down the cap) Ageing in new oak barrels (50%) on the lees for 16 months. No fining.

Maturation

Tasting Notes

A more modern style than most others among the *Premiers* but with a delectably juicy mid palate. Canon La Gaffelière (St Emilion; from a vineyard of 19.5 hectares at the foot of the slope, down the hill from Ausone on *argilo-calcaire* and *argilo-sableux terroirs*; 55% Merlot; 30% Cabernet Franc; 15% Cabernet Sauvignon; certified organic; final yield of 32.5 hl/ha; aged in French oak barrels, 50% of which are new; 13.5% alcohol). Lightly extracted and with a shimmering limpidity in the glass that seems to capture well the luminosity of the wine itself. The nose is a beautiful study in tension itself, between the fresh vertical lift of the pure almost crunchy berry and cherry fruit and the stony, gravelly, graphite and cedar minerality and wild herbs that are both so equally present.

Serve with

Serve with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.

Production

5,500 cases made

Cellaring

Drink 2025-2045



Scores/Awards **95 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2023
95 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023
96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2023
95-96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021
97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 2023
94-96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021
16.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021
94 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021
96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023
95-97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021
91 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021
93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2023
93-95 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021
97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2023
94-96+ points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021
95-97 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021
88 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2021
93-95 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021
98 points - Vert de Vin - May 2021
18 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2021

Reviews *"Ripe, fresh, and expressive, with beautiful mulberry, boysenberry, and blackberry puree notes that work well with light sanguine, black tea and singed apple wood details throughout. Merlot, Cabernet Franc, and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2029 through 2040. 5,500 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"A blend of 50% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc and 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, the 2020 Canon la Gaffelière offers up inviting aromas of dark berries, plums, burning embers, rose petals, incense and bay leaf. Medium to full-bodied, velvety, and layered, it's suave and perfumed, with melting, powdery tannins, and a vibrant core of fruit. As ever, the elevated percentage of Cabernet Franc lends it a singular and compelling style. Located at the foot of the Saint-Émilion's southern slope, Canon la Gaffelière's 20 hectares of vineyards are planted with some 40% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, the balance being Merlot. Farming is certified organic, with thoughtful use of cover crops, agroforestry initiatives, unhedged canopies, and late pruning. Macerations are long but gentle, and new oak is increasingly chosen for discretion over impact. The result is wines of textural sensuality and striking aromatic range, delivering all the fireworks that Cabernet Franc at full maturity can display."
- WK, Wine Advocate

"Deep and intense notes of plums and blackberries with dark chocolate, toasted spices, walnut, crushed graphite, and wet stones. Full-bodied with layers of ripe, velvety tannins that flow in a firm stream throughout the palate. Very structured. Delicious chocolate-wrapped black and blue fruit with spiced character and a really long finish. Drink from 2028."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Very refined and polished with minerally, almost salty character. Full body and beautiful, compact tannins. Racy finish. Excellent drive to this at the end."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"A richly structured wine, this shows great density. The blackberry flavors, layered with impressive tannins, are expressively ripe and promise considerable aging."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Intense, velvety, purple-fruited nose. Sweet and rich and smooth. Not the most persistent wine but it has lots of charm and savour on the end. The tannins are just a little rustic at the moment."
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

Reviews *“Concentrated and intense, with juicy liquorice and blackberry flavours dominant on the attack. This is an excellent wine showing beautiful tension with slate and crushed stone texture. Chocolate shavings, bitter and intense, give a kick on the finish. Even better after 24 hours of opening, which is an extremely good sign for an en primeur sample. A yield of 32.5hl/ha. 50% new oak.”*

- JA, Decanter.com

“In contention as one of the top vintages produced here, the wine is strong on its floral characteristics. Once past the opening bouquet of white flowers and dried roses you find plums, black cherries, black raspberries, mint, and cigar wrapper nuances. The palate provides a lush, opulent, as well as vibrant, energetic backdrop for its wealth of deep red fruits and oceanic influences. The finish has a touch of salty chalk that adds complexity to its wealth of silky, ripe, red fruits. Drink from 2025-2050.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The strong floral character is what you initially notice. From there you find mint, herbs, spice, smoke, tobacco, and red berries on the nose. The wine shows a beautiful vibrancy, with silky, elegant, flamboyant textures on the palate with a touch of chalk in the endnote. The wine lingers with all its ripe, sweet, plums and cherries in the finish. Blending 55% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc and 15% Cabernet Franc, if you can wait at least 5-7 years before pulling a cork, this is going to offer superb drinking for 20-25 years after that.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The 2020 Canon-la-Gaffeliere has a vibrant and energetic bouquet driven by the 30% Cabernet Franc (from a massale selection) and 15% Cabernet Sauvignon. This gives it a Left Bank slant in a positive sense, lending dimension. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannins, focused and saline, with a definite marine influence, undercurrents of brine and a touch of black olive compote. Beautifully composed on the finish, this is a delicious Saint-Emilion Grand Cru.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2020 Canon-la-Gaffelière is beautifully defined on the nose, featuring lavish black cherries, boysenberry, tobacco and cracked black pepper aromas. This is endowed with impressive precision and the oak is very well integrated. The medium-bodied palate delivers sappy black fruit, fine balance and poise and a lightly spiced, edgy, almost citrus-like finish. Packed to the rafters with vim and vigor, this is a superb Saint-Émilion.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2020 Canon La Gaffelière is heady, sumptuous, and totally exotic. A wine of depth and striking intensity, the 2020 possesses tremendous balance right out of the gate. Ripe red plum, blood orange, pomegranate, spice and leather all meld together effortlessly. There's real presence and depth here. Time in the glass brings out the purity of the flavors. The blend is 55% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc and 15% Cabernet Sauvignon. I can't wait to see how this ages.”

- AG, Vinous

“The 2020 Canon La Gaffelière is a strict, severe wine, almost unnaturally so. At this stage, the 2020 is all acid and tannin, and yet behind that lies a vibrant core of fruit. The big Franc aromatics, often such a signature, are nowhere to be found. Inky red berry fruit, blood orange, spice and star anise emerge with a bit of coaxing, all framed by a spine of serious tannins that are at once incisive and well-balanced. Readers should plan on being patient, as the 2020 is going to need years to come around. Despite its reticence, the 2020 appears to have significant potential down the line. (AG) 94-96+.”

- AG, Vinous

“Lots of blue fruits, leafy herbs, chocolate, and earthy goodness emerge from the 2020 Château Canon-La-Gaffeliere, a medium to full-bodied, dense, focused, elegant Saint-Emilion that needs plenty of air to show at its best. The purity of fruit is remarkable, and while it starts out tight and focused, it blossoms with air, showing a more expansive, layered, rich yet still fresh texture that keeps you coming back to the glass. It's a thrilling Saint-Emilion readers should snatch up.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

Reviews *“Dark ruby, purple reflections, faint brightening on rim. Dark wild berries underlaid with candied orange zest, fresh sweet cherry, tobacco savouriness, hint of noble wood. Juicy, fine fruit expression, finessed structured, fine, supporting tannins, salty minerality, red berry aspects on the finish, delicate herbal savouriness in the aftertaste, pleasantly chalky touch on the finish.”*
- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“On the nose, fruity, fresh, offering depth, a nice stretch, a nice finesse of grain as well as some richness and concentration in subtlety/balance. Notes of bright cassis, violet and more lightly rose with hints of lilac, bright blue fruits, fine hints of anise, aromatic herbs and a subtle hint of vanilla pod and Madagascar pepper. The palate is fruity, elegant and offers a beautiful freshness, a nice definition, precision, gourmandize, a little richness (in freshness and finesse), roundness, subtlety, plenitude, minerality and precision. On the palate it expresses notes of boysenberry, bright cassis and more lightly bright small blue fruits associated with hints of lilac, blueberry, subtle hints of saffron, black tea as well as discrete hints of tonka bean, toast, and a discrete hint of toasted hazelnut. The tannins are precise and finely mellow. Good length. The presence of a little chewiness and a subtle sapid point on the finish/persistence. A wine full of finesse, delicacy, and plenitude.”
- Vert de Vin
