

## Clos Fourtet 2016

CSPC# 813878

750mlx6

14.0% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety**

90% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Cabernet Franc

**Appellation**

St. Emilion

**Classification**

1<sup>st</sup> Grand Cru Classé

**Website**

<http://www.closfourtet.com/en/index.html>

**General Info**

Thanks to the geology of the Saint-Emilion plateau (chalk overlaid with aeolian sand), its fine wines boast a unique reputation, and Clos Fourtet, occupying a prime site, is among one of Saint-Emilion's oldest and most renowned estates. Medium in size (20 ha of vineyard), Clos Fourtet is built around an authentic private residence dating from the end of the Ancien Regime and itself stands at the very gates of the medieval city. It was in fact built over magnificent underground quarries where its wines are aged both in barrel and in bottle. The site itself is one of those most frequently visited and greatly admired. Throughout the 18th century, the Rulleau and de Carles families contributed largely to its growing renown, fully exploiting the land's potential. Here, thanks to the thin layer of arable soil, vines root easily, yet yield little, this "stress" being a fundamental prerequisite for the production of great wines. An exceptional terroir, the primary condition for production of a very great wine, associated with judiciously selected grape varieties cultivated in the time-honored fashion, traditional winemaking controlled by the latest techniques and finally aging in new barrels, ensure that Clos Fourtet takes its rightful place among the most highly esteemed growths in the appellation and in the region. In 1949, the Lurton family bought the château. They helped the vineyard to progress particularly the last 10 years. In 2001, Clos Fourtet has been repurchased by Philippe Cuvelier who continues the modernisation.

**Winemakers**

Jean-Claude Berrouet and Stéphane Derenoncourt

**Vintage**

2016 St. Emilion did not get off to a good start. Frankly, the initial part of the growing season started off wet, and cloudy. The massive amount of water in the vineyards and cooler temperatures set things back. Vignerons already knew 2016 Saint Emilion would be a late vintage. Bacchus must love Bordeaux because at the beginning of June, the rain stopped, the sun came out and the flowering took place during one of the few breaks in the rain. At least now, growers had a glimmer of hope. The quantity was going to be there, but would the quality come as well?

The official start of summer changed everything. The rains were gone and sunny, warm summer days with the all-important shift to cold, nighttime temperatures arrived. Now, growers needed to decide how much, or even if they should deleaf. The vignerons that were careful not to remove too many leaves, for fear of too much sun made the right choice. Indian summer conditions continued. But as the summer wore on, the extreme dryness of the 2016 Saint Emilion vintage began to have an effect on the vineyards. Young vines shut down or died. The older vines were in danger of shutting down their growth cycle as well, to avoid starvation. But September 13 and September 14 brought about 44mm of rain, the perfect amount of moisture was delivered to the thirsty vines, and at the exact, opportune moment! The continued cold nighttime temperatures kept everything in check and growers were able to wait as long as they wished, for the grapes to achieve full maturity. Another shot of rainfall took place the night of September 30, or the morning of October 1, (depending on your point of view) and it was off to the races! The 2016 St. Emilion harvest conditions could not have been better. Some growers reported 125 days of hang time. Other produces reported spending 4 weeks picking their fruit. And why not as conditions were perfect with warm sunny weather and an extended growing season.



**Vineyards** Thanks to the spare no expense attitude of the new owners, Clos Fourtet is doing what it takes to make the best wine possible. This effort begins in the vineyards. They practice sustainable, vine-growing methods. Grass is seeded between the rows to help reduce excess water. The soil between the vine plants is ploughed. The vines are pruned keeping two long canes, which are later de-budded to the required number of buds. De-leafing is done on the east-facing side at the end of June, and on the south-facing side at the end of August. Crop thinning is carried out at the beginning of the grape-colour change. As a result, the bunches are evenly spread out and well ventilated for good ripening. The 20-hectare Bordeaux vineyard of Clos Fourtet, situated a stone's throw from the village of St. Emilion right on top of the limestone plateau. The vines are planted to 85 % Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon with vines that average 30 years of age. The wine is aged for 18 months in 60% new oak barrels. There is a second wine, Closerie de Fourtet.

**Harvest** The harvest took place October 4 to October 20."

**Maturation** The alcoholic fermentations began within 24 hours of the berries being sent into vat. During the fermentation process, we carried out 10 pigeages (punching down the cap) during the middle part of the process, so as to gain a good extraction. The vatting period lasted on average 28 days. The wine is vinified traditionally and is aged in oak barriques (80% new) for 18 months. It is bottled unfiltered.

**Tasting Notes** The wines of Clos Fourtet, Premier Grand Cru Classé, embody the finest of Saint-Émilion. Smooth, intriguing and seductive, their pure natural aromas are delicately woven together in a charming display of the unparalleled potential of our terroir. Our wines mark the culmination of all of our efforts, unveiling themselves as time passes - alive, developing and maturing

**Serve with** Clos Fourtet is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised and grilled dishes. Clos Fourtet is also good when matched with Asian dishes, rich fish courses like tuna, mushrooms and pasta.

**Production** 4,583 cases made

**Cellaring** Drink 2023-2055

**Scores/Awards** **95 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2019  
**96-99 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2017  
**95 points** - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate Interim Issue - March 2019  
**95-97 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #230 - April 2017  
**97 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2019  
**95-96 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2017  
**96 points/Cellar Selection** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 2019  
**95-97 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 2017  
**16.5 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2017  
**96 points** - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2017  
**97 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2018  
**96 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2017  
**96 points** - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2017  
**16.5 points** - Farr Vintner - February 2017  
**87-90 points** - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2017  
**96 points** - Neal Martin, Vinous - January 2019  
**97 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - January 2019  
**93-96 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2017  
**97 points** - Jeb Dunnuck MW – February 2019

**Reviews** *"Lively, with a juicy, mouth filling mix of loganberry, black currant and bramble flavors pumping through, laced liberally with licorice snap and roasted apple wood notes. Tobacco and savory accents provide detail, while a beautifully fine chalky thread adds length. Best from 2022 through 2038. 4,583 cases made."*  
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"Gorgeous from the get-go, with plum sauce, cassis and violet notes streaming through, showing ample richness yet relying more on cut, while anise, black tea and chalky mineral flavors persist on the finish. A beauty in the making. Score range: 96-99"*  
- JS, Wine Spectator

## Reviews

*“Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2016 Clos Fourtet is a little closed to begin, slowly unfurling to reveal notions of warm black cherries, crème de cassis, blackberry compote and dark chocolate with hints of garrigue, bay leaves and cigar box. Medium to full-bodied, the palate has a firm yet beautifully ripe frame of fine-grained tannins with a lively line lifting the concentrated, multilayered fruit to a long finish.”*

- LPB, Wine Advocate

*“The 2016 Clos Fourtet is a blend of 90% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Cabernet Franc aged in 60% new oak. It has a generous, well defined licorice-tinged fruit that is very focused. The palate is medium bodied with fine tannin, blackberry and boysenberry fruit with that salted licorice theme continuing. This Clos Fourtet has impressive concentration, yet there is real elegance and persistence, fanning out wonderfully towards the finish. Mathieu Cuvelier has overseen another outstanding Clos Fourtet. Tasted twice, with a second bottle demonstrating a tad more backbone but equally admirable.”*

- NM, Wine Advocate

*“Love the dark-berry and intense black-olive and chocolate aromas that follow through to a full body and firm and chewy tannins that deliver a rich and delicious finish. Such polish and, at the same time, finesse. A blend of 90 per cent merlot, seven per cent cabernet sauvignon and three per cent cabernet franc. Try from 2022.”*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“This is a solid and structured 2016 with fabulous density and freshness. Full-bodied yet vibrant and exciting. Wow. We will see.”*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“This structured wine shows a classical Bordeaux balance between fruit and acidity on the one hand and tannins and firm structure on the other. It also offers generous black-currant fruit and a fresh aftertaste. Drink this wine from 2025.”*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“This wine is full of ripe fruit, starting on the nose and following through to the structured palate. It's an imposing wine from an estate that seems at the top of its form. It should age well for many years. (RV)”*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“Very sweet nose. Something a little dead about this sample. Not enough freshness. Smooth tannins but just a bit of lack of life on the mid palate. Obviously ambitious. I'd love to taste another sample. A saliva-sucker.”*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*“This showcases why Clos Fourtet is such a confident, powerful wine. It gets the balance right between the sappy, saline quality of its limestone terroir and yet reflects the ripeness and flashiness of Merlot that makes St-Émilion such a well-loved appellation. Excellent, serious quality, cerebral but sexy. Drinking Window 2027 – 2050”*

- JA, Decanter

*“This stunner keeps getting better and better. The wine has gained in richness and intensity. The ripe, sweet, luscious plums, licorice, smoke and dark chocolate notes are singing. Concentrated, silky and opulent, this should age for decades.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“Smoky with licorice, violets, lilacs, cigar wrapper and dark fruits, this wine is silky and structured, precise and polished, concentrated and fresh. The finish has all this great juice that moves from black to red fruits, to spice and then sweetness and back again. The wine was produced from a blend of 90% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Cabernet Franc, reaching 14% alcohol with a pH of 3.35. The harvest took place October 4 to October 20.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

## Reviews

*"The sample here was from a new barrel, whereas the finished wine will only have 50% new oak, so this is woodier than it will be in bottle. No matter, as it's a wonderfully polished wine, with lovely freshness, poise and structure, restrained alcohol, chalky minerality and very fine tannins. 2024-36"*

- TA, [timatkin.com](https://www.timatkin.com)

*"Situated in the heart of Saint Emilion, close to Canon, this is one of the great vineyards of the appellation. The 19 hectares of vines are planted with 87% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon and 3% Cabernet Franc. 70% new oak is used. Stephane Derenoncourt and J-C Berrouet are consultants here. The 2016 is a blend of 88% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. Creamy on the nose with sweet cherry and cassis fruit. The palate is ultra-refined with polished fruit flavours and highly glossy glycerol texture and very fine and ripe tannins. This is modern, and a little flashy, but it is sumptuous, sweet and hedonistic with star anise, plum and cherry fruit lingering on a long finish."*

- Farr Vintners

*"Depth on the nose the palate has sweet fruit ripe and fleshy. Integrated discreet tannins the mid palate has some fresh fruits but at the back there is breadth of flavour with supple richness on the finish. 2026-38"*

- Derek Smedley MW

*"The 2016 Clos Fourtet fulfills the promise shown out of barrel. It bursts from the glass with extremely well-focused, copious blackberry, licorice and undergrowth aromas. Medium-bodied on the palate, displaying finer tannin than the 2015. Beautifully balanced, but – as is typical of this estate – there is real weight and grip toward the finish, which fans out with confidence. Drink 2023-2048."*

- NM, Vinous

*"The 2016 Clos Fourtet is vivid, explosive and simply captivating. Inky blue/purplish berry fruit, lavender, spice and white flowers are all vivid in the glass, but it is the wine's silky, seamless personality that elevates it into a place among the wines of the vintage. In 2016, Clos Fourtet is stunningly beautiful and utterly compelling. This is a tremendous showing from proprietor Matthieu Cuvelier and consulting winemaker Stéphane Derenoncourt. (AG)"*

- AG, Vinous

*"Vivid, creamy, ample and explosive in all of its dimensions, the 2016 Clos Fourtet maintains striking aromatic freshness and tension despite its intensity. All the elements fall into place effortlessly. The final blend is 88% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Cabernet Franc. The 2016 spent about four weeks on the skins. New oak is around 60 percent. This is a superb showing from an estate that has been on a roll. Tasted three times."*

- AG, Vinous

*"One of the gems in the vintage that should be snatched up by readers is the 2016 Château Clos Fourtet. Coming from a magical 20-hectare vineyard located on the upper, limestone-driven plateau just outside Saint-Emilion and a blend of 90% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 3% Cabernet Franc from small yields of 38 hectoliters per hectare, it spent 16 months in 60% new French oak (and a small portion of the blend saw malo in barrel as well). Its saturated purple color is followed by a monster bouquet of ripe blackberries, cassis, graphite, and crushed rocks, and it picks up more blue fruits, truffle, and limestone minerality with time in the glass. This deep, full-bodied, powerful Saint-Emilion has some similarities to Canon yet is deeper and richer, with a more powerful yet still elegant style. It's a brilliant bottle of wine to hide for 4-5 years and drink over the following 2-3 decades."*

- Jeb Dunnuck

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