

## Clos de L'Oratoire 2010

CSPC# 749564

750mlx12

14.5% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety**  
**Appellation**  
**General Info**

95% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc  
St Emilion

Clos de l'Oratoire is located on Saint-Emilion's north-east slope. The origins of Clos de l'Oratoire lie in the Peyraud estate, which was established by the Beylot family, a firm of *négociants* based in Libourne, in the middle years of the 19th century. This was a substantial estate which required extensive planting by the proprietors, who were also responsible for the construction of the *château* which still graces the vineyards today. Its division, in which some of the best parcels were cleaved off to create Clos de l'Oratoire, occurred following the first classification of the St Emilion vineyards in 1955. The Beylot family made the split in good time for the 1969 reclassification, seeing the smaller of the two classed as *Grand Cru Classé*. The larger part, by then known as Château Peyreau, remained unclassified, and both parts stayed under the tenure of the family.

Just a few years later, however, came a significant change in ownership with the arrival of the Neipperg dynasty. Today the property is owned by Stephan von Neipperg, although it was in fact his father, Joseph-Hubert, Graf von Neipperg, a descendant of Franconian nobility, who acquired the property. Joseph-Hubert was one in a long line of successful winemakers in his homeland, Württemberg, which is now part of Baden-Württemberg, a southwest German state. He had made his first investment in Bordeaux in 1971, with the purchase of Canon-la-Gaffelière, and it was only the following year that he added Clos de l'Oratoire to his portfolio. Nevertheless, it is Stephan, his son, who is today the driving force behind Clos de l'Oratoire, as well as Château Peyreau, which also came under the direction of the Neipperg family. Contrary to what is sometimes said, the plots comprising Clos l'Oratoire were not acquired in 1991, but in 1971 (at the same time as the von Neipperg's four first vineyards in Saint-Emilion).

During the 2nd revision of the Saint-Emilion classification, in 1969, the owner at the time had already selected the best plots of Château Peyreau and submitted them for classification. His request was accepted, and Clos de l'Oratoire was born in that year. However, major efforts undertaken to achieve Clos de l'Oratoire's full potential date from 1991.

**Vineyards** The 10.32 hectares of vines grow on Fronsac molasse covering a layer of sand with a clay subsoil. Average vine age is 35 years. This terroir is ideally suited to the blend of Merlot (90%), Cabernet Franc (5%), and Cabernet Sauvignon (5%) grapes. Merlot contributes roundness and opulence to the wine, whereas Cabernet Franc is responsible for power, aromatic complexity, and length.

**Harvest** The entire crop picked over just 2 days from 14-15 October 2010. By hand, into small crates to avoid bruising Yield 20hl/ha. Sorted before and after destemming No crushing. The grapes arrive on a conveyor belt.

**Maturation** In temperature-controlled wooden vats for 28 days. Extraction par pneumatic pigeage (punching down the cap). Malolactic fermentation and barrel ageing: In new oak barrels (75%) on the lees Fining and filtering as necessary, depending on the vintage. 15months barrel ageing.

**Tasting Notes** Ripeness and power: a clean, intense front presents beautiful red fruit and spice, with a touch of minerality. The silky tannin structure provides a long finish of exotic fruit flavors.

**Production** 2,250 cases made

**Cellaring** Drink 2013-2028

**Scores/Awards** **94 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2013  
**92-95 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2011  
**94 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #205 - February 2013



**Scores/Awards** **92-94 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #194 - May 2011  
**90-91 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2011  
**94-95 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2011  
**87-90 points** - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2011  
**16 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2011  
**16.5 points** - James Lawther, Decanter.com - April 2011  
**88 points** - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)  
**92 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - February 8, 2013  
**14 points** - Farr Vintner - April 2011  
**Review only** - K&L Wine Merchants - February 2013  
**15.5 points** - La Revue du Vin France (score only)

**Reviews** *"Very solid, with a dark black fruit profile of currant, blackberry and fig framed by roasted alder wood and backed by bittersweet ganache and mouthwatering briar notes on the long finish. This has the tarry grip of the vintage and should cellar nicely as there's lively acidity behind all the fruit and grip. Best from 2015 through 2030."*

- JM, Wine Spectator

*"A ripe, mouth filling style, with lots of roasted spice, dark fig, currant confiture and mulled plum notes. The juicy, fleshy finish still has some toast to soak up, but there's great underlying acidity. Score range: 92-95"*

- JM, Wine Spectator

*"It displays loads of Christmas fruitcake, licorice, incense, black cherry and black currant liqueur with some smoky barbecue notes as well as hints of coffee bean and chocolate. Sexy, full-throttle and impossible to resist already, it should continue to drink well for 15 or more years, and I don't anticipate this particular wine closing down.*

*On a north-facing hillside overlooking Chateau Dassault (that chateau owned by a French aircraft manufacturer), this 25-acre property is another one of the von Neipperg estates, which essentially guarantees high quality, given his commitment to excellence. The 2010 blend of 95% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Franc was produced under the consultancy of Stephane Derenoncourt. The wine was picked very late, in mid-October, resulting in beautiful ripeness as well as the precision that is part of 2010's trademark style."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*"This has been a wonderfully consistent, satisfying wine since the estate was acquired by Stephan von Neipperg over a decade ago. The 2010 looks to be one of the most powerful and concentrated wines ever made here. Yields were a very modest 30 hectoliters per hectare, and the final blend 95% Merlot and 5% Cabernet France achieved a whopping 14.8% natural alcohol. Huge notes of licorice, incense, blackberry and cassis liqueur intermixed with smoke and toast are all present in this full-bodied, opulent, fleshy wine, which has an unctuous texture, super purity, and a long finish. This is a broad, juicy, and savory St.-Emilion that will be drinkable early on and evolve for 12-15+ years."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*"A blend of 95% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Franc, the Clos l'Oratoire has a very opulent bouquet of macerated black cherry, bilberry and a touch of crushed raspberry. The palate has a very sweet entry, a lot of extract here, real grippy tannins, just missing a little tension and freshness towards the masculine finish. Tasted March 2011."*

- NM, Wine Journal

*"Love the finish to this. It really kicks in with bright acidity, citrus and blackberries and minerals too. This is complex. Full and super silky. Loving it!"*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"(95% merlot and 5% cabernet franc; 75% new oak) Deep violet-ruby. Black cherry, licorice and minerals on the nose, plus an intriguing grapey quality. Sweet and pliant on the palate, with soft flavors of dark fruits, sweet pipe tobacco and herbs. Silky in texture, with a persistent, expanding finish. This should drink well relatively early."*

- ST, International Wine Cellar

*"Not picked until 14/15 Oct (after Canon La Gaffelière). Very dark. Very ripe and lacking a bit of freshness and vitality. Austere and dark but without real zip. Rather bitter."*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

**Reviews** *“One of the best from this Stephan von Neipperg cru. Round, full-bodied with velvety texture and tannins. Lovely fruit underpinned by ripe tannins. Drink 2016-2025.”*

*- JL, Decanter.com*

*“Licorice, stone, floral, earth and fresh blackberry scents work well with the round textures and the long, fresh, fennel and plummy liqueur finish. 91-93Pts”*

*- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com*

*“Clos de l’Oratoire. From low yields of 30 hectoliters per hectare and a biodynamic approach, the property produced a wine from a blend of 95% Merlot and Cabernet Franc that will be aged in 75% new oak. Vanilla, fennel, black cherry, fresh herbs, lush textures, silky tannins, sweet licorice covered jammy berries and chocolate. 92-94 Pts”*

*- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com*

*“This is produced by the same team as Canon La Gaffeliere, but the vineyard is not quite as well placed and has a higher percentage of Merlot. This seems to be a lot less sophisticated than Canon la Gaffeliere in 2010. It is an impressive black colour and is clearly a very concentrated wine. However, on the palate it is over-jammy and seems a touch volatile. The finish is rather dry and rasping. Too much aggression here. To us, this tastes like it was picked too late and over-extracted.”*

*- Farr Vintners*

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