

Château Fleur Cardinale 2017

CSPC# 831129

1500mlx3

14.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	45% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon
Appellation	Saint Emilion
Classification	Grande Cru Classe in 2006
Website	http://www.fleurcardinale.com/en/
General Info	The estate was bought in 2001 by Florence and Dominique Decoster, and it has benefited from major investments which have made Château Fleur Cardinale one of the top names of the appellation. It is located to the east of the village of Saint-Émilion, on one of the high points of the appellation and it extends over 20 hectares. With its great value for money, and showing great consistency in its quality, Château Fleur Cardinale was promoted to "Saint-Emilion Grand cru classé" in 2006.
Winemaker	Caroline Decoster
Vintage	Frost at the end of April throughout of 97% of our vineyard. Homogeneous flowering, climate quite warm and not too watered during spring: homogeneous maturity of the remaining grapes. Months of July, August and September were hot and dry.
Vineyards	The vineyard is planted in a clay-limestone soil in the middle of the plateau on a pleasant late producing terroir. The two properties owned by Florence and Dominique Decoster extend across a 23.5-hectare area for the Château Fleur Cardinale, and a 4-hectare area for the Château Croix Cardinale. The two vineyards are planted on clay-limestone soil in the middle of the hillsides and they enjoy an identical harvest, notable for its 75% dominance of Merlot together with 20% Cabernet Franc and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon. Surface area in production: 44.46 acres (18 ha); Density of plantation: 6000 vines/hectare Average age of vines: 35 years old; Yield after sorting: 30 hl/ha
Harvest	Harvest from 29 September-12 October 2017. Yields: 8 hl / ha.
Vinification	The first wine will come from only 8 barrels, and the final blend will be atypical. In fact, only the highest plots of the estate were spared by the frost (April 2017 the 27th) and produced very qualitative first-generation grapes which had the potential to produce our great wine. That represents only 8 barrels. The plots that were spared are calcosols sur calcaires à astéries and calcosols issus d'argiles vertes à nodules calcaires. The final blend will be different from our other vintages, with predominance of Cabernets: 35% Cabernet Franc, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon, 45% Merlot
Maturation	Considering the potential and the small quantity of production, we decided from the start of the harvest to vinify in 8 500-litre wooden barrels, as we showed you in our harvest video on the social networks. We think that Chateau Fleur Cardinale 2017 will be as good as our previous vintages. 2017 will be very qualitative, dense and structured, with a beautiful freshness, which will be a wine to lay down.
Tasting Notes	The vintage will be bottled in magnum only, in a numbered edition. This choice of format is very symbolic for us, who have done everything we could for the past months so that our 2017 vintage remains in our memory – and in your future tastings – as a great vintage for Fleur Cardinale, despite a very limited production. Fleur Cardinale did extremely well in 2017, despite losing 80% of vines because of frost. They will only produce 1000 magnums, individually signed, through their net of négociants/wine shops. Deep purple red with violet hue and black core. Excellent nose with expressive character, blackcurrants, black cherries and hints of sweet elderberries. On the palate elegant but well-structured with ripe tannins and pleasant length.
Production	1000 cases (Magnums) made.
Cellaring	Drink 2021-2050.



Scores/Awards **90-93 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - April 2018
92-94+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate #236 - April 2018
91-92 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2018
93 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2018
93 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2018
91-93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2018
94-97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2018
90-92 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2018
93 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - May 2018

Reviews *"This has a toasty profile, featuring ganache and warm tobacco notes surrounding a core of lightly steeped plum and blackberry fruit. Shows good flesh and depth, with a graphite accent buried through the finish. A very solid"*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Fleur Cardinale was hit very hard by the frost—nearly all the vineyards were wiped out. Potential production for 2017 is only around 1,000 magnums. The tentative blend of the 2017 Fleur Cardinale is 45% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc and 20% Cabernet Sauvignon. Very deep purple black in color, it has a nose of baked blackberries, black cherries and dried mulberries with touches of underbrush, truffles and Chinese five spice. The palate is medium to full-bodied, velvety and packed with black fruits, finishing long and spicy."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"A fresh and bright red with plum and currant character. Medium-bodied, tight and focused. On it."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"There's very little of this wine in 2017 due to the frost. Full credit to Fleur Cardinale for what they have achieved here, producing just eight barrels from an unusual blend and using only first-generation fruit. This is full of energy and extremely dark-fruited in expression, showing damson and black cherries alongside softly smoked and grilled almond notes. It has great tension, poise and minerality, and I love it, even if it remains an unusual creation and not typical of their usual style. It will eventually be bottled in just 1,000 magnums. (JA)" - JA, - JA, - JA, Decanter.com

"Due to heavy frost damage, only 1,000 numbered magnums were produced for this vintage. Blue-black dark with a faultlessly effective density of flavor, richness and length, the wine is round with impressive quantities of dark chocolate, licorice and juicy plums."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"The 2017 Fleur Cardinale, which was 50% affected by frost, has a flamboyant bouquet that is fortunately well defined and shows a little more composure than past vintages that I often felt were over-egged. This shows more linearity and focus. The palate is medium bodied with sappy black fruit, supple tannin, judicious touches of white pepper and Asian spice that enliven the sustained finish whilst all the time retaining a sense of freshness and drinkability. Hopefully a prudent barrel maturation will ensure this turns into a fine Saint-Émilion."
- NM, Vinous

"The 2017 Fleur Cardinale is extraordinary. Sumptuous and explosive, rich, deep, head spinning endowed with magnificent intensity. A rush of red cherry, raspberry, leather and floral notes lift from the glass. Even with all of its richness, the 2017 possesses remarkable freshness and energy. Sadly, frost lowered production from 60-70,000 bottles to what will be around 1,000 magnums. Tasted two times. (AG)"
- AG, Vinous

"The 2017 Château Fleur Cardinale is a tweaked blend of 45% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon that's aging in 100% new French oak. Unfortunately, due to the April frosts, there are only 1,000 magnums being produced, but it's a terrific effort that has more depth and length than most. Cassis, spicy oak, tobacco, and some graphite nuances give way to a medium-bodied, nicely concentrated, balanced 2017 that has rock solid mid-palate density, present, ripe tannin, and a good finish. Give it a few years."
- Jeb Dunnuck
