

# Château Fleur Cardinale 2019

CSPC# 814410

750mlx12

14.5% alc./vol.

## Grape Variety

71% Merlot, 24% Cabernet Franc, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon  
(This is the blend info on FC's website despite what all the reviewers say)

## Appellation

Saint Emilion

## Classification

Grande Cru Classe in 2006

## Website

[https://fleurcardinale.com/en/les\\_vins/chateau-fleur-cardinale-2019/](https://fleurcardinale.com/en/les_vins/chateau-fleur-cardinale-2019/)

## 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

Michel Rolland consults.

## Vintage

The year 2019 has been a year of extremes. At the beginning of May we lost 1.5 hectares due to the frost. Then the following weeks were very dry and the temperatures very high.

Finally, the rainfall in July and August was satisfying and will allow the grapes to reach maturity at the end of September.

## 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

The vineyard is farmed using organic, self-sustainable farming techniques. In 2013, Fleur Cardinale was awarded their certification by the Environmental Management System (S.M.E.).

## Harvest

Picked from 2 to 14 October 2019. Yields: 44hl/ha. Production: 105 000 bottles of first wine. In the vineyard, de-leafing and crop thinning are handled with no chemical products or pesticides of any kind. Only organic fertilizers are used. After a first selection in the vineyard, the grapes are harvested manually and placed into small boxes so that the ripe grapes are not crushed.

The grapes are sorted twice by hand, before and after the destemmer. To aid in the sorting process, the estate uses the Tribaie sorting machine, which sorts the grapes by the desired level of density.

## Vinification & Maturation

To produce the wine of Chateau Fleur Cardinale, it is a very labor-intensive process. For the vinification, the juice undergoes a cold maceration at 5 degrees Celsius for 5 or 6 days. This is followed by alcoholic fermentation and a warm maceration for 2 to 3 weeks. All the pumping over is done by gravity, which avoids stirring the musts.

Vinification takes place in 25 small, thermo regulated, stainless steel vats. The number of vats is equal to the various parcels of vines. This allows the vinification to be done by on a parcel-by-parcel basis. The vats range in size from 25 hectoliters up to 90 hectoliters. However, most of the vats are 70 hectoliters. Made in a mix of tanks and wooden vats. Malolactic fermentation takes place in 100% new oak barrels and in tank. Aged for 13 months in all-new barrels

## Tasting Notes

From the Decoster family, this property displays classic eastern plateau features, with a dark, brooding, and glossy appearance in the glass, and an expressive nose filled with griddled fruit, dried blackcurrants, smoke, tobacco, and toast. The palate is richly formed, filled to the brim with supple black fruits, and laced with dark chocolate, crushed slate, and sage. This all sits within a plush but tightly restrained texture and is balanced by a



<b>Tasting Notes</b>	shimmering vein of acidity. Dark, slightly mysterious, nevertheless cohesive, ripe, and structured, this surely has cellar potential. I would like to see how this looks in five or ten years; my suspicion is that it would be a good experience.
<b>Serve with</b>	Chateau Fleur Cardinale is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Fleur Cardinale is also good when matched with Asian dishes, rich fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.
<b>Production</b>	105,000 bottles made (8,750 cases made).
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2024-2037.
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>92 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2022</p> <p><b>92 points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p><b>93-95 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - June 2020</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2022</p> <p><b>95-96 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2020</p> <p><b>90-92 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2020</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - June 2020</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jane Anson, Insidebordeaux.com - January 2022</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2022</p> <p><b>92-94 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - June 2020</p> <p><b>92-94 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - June 2020</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2022</p> <p><b>93-95 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2020</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2022</p> <p><b>93-95 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2020</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - February 2022</p> <p><b>90 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2020</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - February 2022</p> <p><b>95-96 points</b> - Vert de Vin - April 2020</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Yves Beck (score only) - June 2020</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Terres de Vins (score only) - June 2020</p> <p><b>17 points</b> - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2022</p> <p><b>92-93 points</b> - Bettane &amp; Desseauve (score only) - May 2020</p> <p><b>15.5 points</b> - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2020</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>“Richly textured, with currant and fig paste notes rolling through slowly, laced liberally with humus, alder, and tobacco. A touch burly, but the fruit has an unctuous hint as a counterbalance. This is for fans of the bigger style. Merlot, Cabernet Franc, and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2024 through 2037. 8,750 cases made.”</i> - JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>“The 2019 Fleur Cardinale derives from a late-ripening site on the north-facing side of Saint-Émilion's limestone plateau. Revealing aromas of jammy cherries, spices, dark chocolate, and mocha, it's full-bodied, broad and velvety, with powdery tannins and a generous core of lively fruit, concluding with a chalky finish. This is a fleshy, front-loaded wine in a contemporary style that will please consumers who favor power and richness, but which will leave purists wondering if less might be more. Best after 2021.”</i> - WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“Deep purple-black in color, the 2019 Fleur Cardinale exudes opulent scents of cinnamon stick, star anise, plum preserves, and chocolate-covered cherries with a seducing undercurrent of lilacs, mulberries, allspice and black truffles. Medium to full-bodied, the palate is already tantalizingly delicious, revealing layer upon layer of black fruits, exotic spices, and earthy sparks, finishing with great freshness and depth. This year's blend is 76% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc and 4% Cabernet Sauvignon.”</i> - LPB, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“Beautiful clarity of crushed red berries with dried flowers and sliced oyster mushrooms on the nose. Full-bodied with layers of ripe tannins and juicy fruit. Chocolate and walnut character comes through, together with hints of vanilla bean. Beautifully curated. Try after 2025.”</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p>

**Reviews** *"This is a wine that has a broad brush of tannins that give energy and subtle texture to the palate. Beautiful blue fruit and terracotta. Really fine-grained tannins. Beautiful, sweet fruit at the finish. One of the best I have had from here. Really want to drink it. 76% merlot, 20% cabernet franc and 4% cabernet sauvignon."*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"A rich and smoothly textured wine, this is juicy with black currant fruits and ripe tannins. It has weight and plenty of dense fruit flavors along with tannins that have a fine potential for softening. Barrel Sample: 90-92."*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"Really smoky, coffee bean aromas on the nose with ripe blackcurrants. Great texture and flavour here, it's full of herbs and liquorice-tinged black fruits (cherries mainly) but really well integrated so that no one aspect sticks out. Tannins are super fine and smooth, and the acidity is well balanced carrying the density of the fruit as well as the freshness. It's a big, shouldered wine there's no question, power but also poise. Harmonious, charming, and elegant. A very complete wine that is balanced with generous fruit, tannins, acidity, and mineral freshness. Feels well-handled and just excellently executed. Has a real purity to it with sculpting and refinement? Great stuff and still so juicy and appealing at the end. A top buy."*

- GH, Decanter.com

*"Always one of the bigger more powerful St Emilions, and this has plenty of estate signature. Excellent presence, it heads downwards, carving out a space for itself and settling in for the long haul. Clear oak character but not overdone and has the glamour and sense of fun that I love about this property. Clear spice also, sage and rosemary alongside liquorice and black chocolate. This is well handled, definitely a bigger framed wine but delivered with confidence and appeal - you're going to want to try this. Tasted twice three weeks apart. 100% new oak. A yield of 44hl/ha. Every case sold this year will see one tree planted, with the hope of planting 10,000 trees."*

- JA, Decanter.com

*"Though barely getting going at two years old, you already see what a great wine this is. Juicy plum and damson fruits, shot through with richly textured raspberry coulis, all kissed by smoky oak without going over the top. A deft mix of tension and balance. One of my real stars of the vintage in St Emilion, and an up score from En Primeur. 100% new oak, with every case sold seeing one tree planted, with the hope of planting 10,000 trees in total"*

- JA, Inside Bordeaux

*"Dark in color with a nose that sports espresso bean, smoke, licorice, crushed stone, and chocolate-covered plums. There is richness, freshness and balance and layers of black and red fruits liberally coated with cocoa, licorice, and coffee. I am really liking how this is developing."*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"Medium/full-bodied with a real sweetness and soft, lush quality to the fruit, this wine delivers more freshness than you usually find here in all the gorgeous black, red, and blue fruits. The wine is a blend of 76% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc and 4% Cabernet Sauvignon."*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"The 2019 Fleur Cardinale has a very composed bouquet, perhaps more so than its sibling, Croix Cardinale. It offers black cherries, black olive, and light cassis aromas, all nicely integrated with the oak. The palate is medium-bodied with sappy black fruit mixed with graphite and cedar, almost Left Bank like towards the structured finish. Excellent."*

- NM, Vinous

*"The 2019 Fleur Cardinale is a real head-turner. Lush and voluptuous in the glass, the 2019 offers up copious dark fruit, along with hints of chocolate, spice, new leather, menthol, and licorice. There is no shortage or richness or lushness. While the 2019 is certainly a very, very good wine it is not quite as expressive as it was in barrel. Tasted two times"*

- AG, Vinous

**Reviews** *“The 2019 Fleur Cardinale is ripe, bold, and luscious, with striking depth and resonance. Inky dark fruit, graphite, lavender, spice, menthol, and blueberry jam all race out of the glass. Even with all of its obvious intensity, the 2019 has terrific freshness and vibrancy. In 2019, the blend is 80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc and 4% Cabernet Sauvignon. Tasted two times”*  
- AG, Vinous

*“Stunning stuff, the 2019 Château Fleur Cardinale might be the finest vintage of this wine I've tasted. Deep purple-hued, with awesome notes of ripe red and black currants, tobacco, chocolate, and spring flowers, it hits the palate with full-bodied richness, a plush, seamless texture, polished tannins, and a great finish. This is a killer 2019 that shows the class, balance, and purity of the vintage while backing it up with depth and richness. Tasted twice. Barrel Sample:93-95.”*  
- Jeb Dunnuck

*“A consistently impressive Saint-Emilion, the 2019 Château Fleur Cardinale shows the vintage beautifully, with a medium to full-bodied, elegant style as well as classic darker cherry and mulberry fruits, notes of dried herbs, loamy earth, and incense, supple yet present tannins, and a great finish. It's one classy, balanced 2019 to drink over the coming two decades.”*  
- Jeb Dunnuck

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- Jeb Dunnuck

*“Dark ruby garnet, violet reflections, delicate ocher rim lightening. Fine nuances of ripe cherries and plums, delicate herbal spices, candied orange zest are underlined, rather reserved bouquet. Juicy, sweet texture, ripe heart cherries, round, supporting tannins, chocolaty and adherent, mineral notes on the finish, an elegant accompaniment to food, already approachable, sure aging potential.”*  
- Falstaff Magazine

*“The nose is elegant, racy, intense and offers finesse of the grain, power as well as intensity and deepness. It reveals notes of ripe cassis, crushed blackberry, small notes of black plum associated with fine touches of raspberry, blueberry, small wild berries as well as hints of toasted, camphor, liquorice, and Sichuan pepper. The palate is fruity, juicy, elegant, beautifully defined and offers deepness, a beautiful finesse of the grain, a “sense of the place” (terroir), a “well mastered” power as well as an acidulous frame. On the palate this wine expresses notes of juicy/ripe cassis, blackberry, small notes of raspberry associated with small touches of blueberry, plum as well as hints of cocoa, caramelization, cardamon, toasted hazelnut and cornflowers. A persistence on dark chocolate. Tannins are elegant, precise, fine, racy and offer suppleness.”*  
- Vert de Vin

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