

## Château La Gaffelière 2005

CSPC# 764172

750mlx12

14.5% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety**

80% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Cabernet Franc

**Website**

<http://www.chateau-la-gaffeliere.com/?lang=2>

**Appellation**

St. Emilion

**General Info**

With the Malet-Roquefort family at the helm for four centuries, Château La Gaffelière is one of the oldest family-owned chateaux in St Emilion. Nestled between the Ausone and Pavie hills, their south-orientated single vineyard has an average vine age of 35 years producing elegant wines with entrancing aromatics and pure fruit character. Historically La Gaffelière was a reference point for many of the great St Emilion chateaux. During the 1970s and 80s La Gaffelière lost some of its direction, but since consulting for the chateau Stephane Derenoncourt has woven his magic and Parker believes that the wine *"has gone from strength to strength over the last decade"* returning to past glory: *"one would have to go back to the 2005, 1947 or 1961 to find this level of quality"*.

**Vintage**

From start to finish, the conditions were perfect! While dry, there was just enough moisture at the right times to nourish the vines. The flowering took place at the beginning of June. During the late summer months, some vines had become stressed from the drought, but the rains which fell August 17 in the Right Bank and August 25 in the Medoc was just what the doctor ordered! This was followed by another dose of rain at the perfect moment, which gave more nourishment to the dry Bordeaux vineyards on September 8 and September 25. October was sunny and warm, with cool nights. This allowed the grapes to be harvested under picture perfect conditions and gave the growers the opportunity to wait until the fruit achieved phenolic ripeness. The combination of warm days, cool nights and just enough rain at the right time, produced extraordinary 2005 Bordeaux wine!

**Vineyards**

The Château La Gaffelière vineyard enlarges upon 25 hectares and gazes its 22 hectares vineyard all-in-one parcel between the Ausone hill and the Pavie one. The whole favourably south oriented, receives an ideal sunshine which benefits to the 35 years old vine. 65% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Cabernet Franc Hillsides are clayey and calcareous, whereas hill-feet are more siliceous.

**Harvest**

Hand harvest, meticulous grapes picking and full destalk.

**Vinification/**

The fragmented vinification (plot by plot) is made according to a method both modern and traditional.

**Maturation**

- Some days of cold maceration then seeding and fermentation.
- Vats are pumped-over and the cap is punched.
- The vatting time in thermo-regulated tanks, then maceration at 28°C until the running off deadline determined thanks to tasting.
- The malolactic fermentation allows to reduce acidity and to soften the wine. It is carried out in new barrels and stainless-steel tanks.

**Tasting Notes**

Intense nose, fresh, open and jammy-ripe. Blackberry, licorice, vanilla, black cherry, chocolate, cinnamon, pine forest and with hardly any traces of oak. First sip awakes the significant, yet ripe tannins. This wine is all about good fruit. No over-extraction on the palate and behind the wall of youth lies a beautiful elegance. Notch of greenness (10% cabernet franc) adds to the complexity. Acidity is perfect. The wine is mouth filling, but never heavy-handed, despite the 14.5% ABV. Long finish with licorice and maybe a tad of heath, that probably will integrate more in due course. This is gorgeous and has a good future ahead.

**Production**

4500 cases made

**Cellaring**

Drink 2014-2030



**Scores/Awards** **93 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2008  
**92-94 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - June 30, 2006  
**96 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #176 - April 2008  
**92-95 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #170 - April 2007  
**92-95 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #164 - April 2006  
**88 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 2013  
**88 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 2009  
**90 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June1, 2008  
**90-92 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June1, 2006  
**91 (+?) points** - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2008  
**16.5 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2012  
**15.9 points** - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com – June 2008  
**18 points** - Michael Bettane, Decanter.com - April 2006  
**93 points** - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)  
**94 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - August 22, 2010  
**16 points** - Farr Vintner - April 2006  
**16 points** - Vinum Wine Magazine - Jan/Feb 2008 (score only)  
**17.5 points** - La Revue du Vin France - June 2006 (score only)  
**18 points** - Gault & Millau - April 2008 (score only)  
**86 points** - Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wine (no review)

**Reviews** *"Has a fabulous, opulent nose of crushed blackberry, wild licorice and flowers. Full-bodied, with velvety tannins, lots of fruit and a long finish. A flavorful young red. Best after 2013. 4,500 cases made."*  
- JS, Wine Spectator

*"Incredible aromas of crushed raspberry and blueberry. Full-bodied, with firm and chewy tannins and a long finish. Lovely already. Score range: 92-94"*  
- JS, Wine Spectator

*"The finest La Gaffeliere I have ever tasted, the prodigious 2005 boasts a dense ruby/purple color in addition to a flamboyant bouquet of lead pencil shavings, creme de cassis, blackberries, smoked meats, incense, and Asian spice. Fabulously deep and full-bodied as well as ethereal and exceptionally elegant for its explosive richness and intensity, its lightness of being reflects the vineyard's sensational terroir. This succulent beauty appears to be approachable, but that belies some significant tannins. Anticipated maturity: 2014-2030+."*  
- RP, Wine Advocate

*"Clearly the finest wine made at this estate since the 1961 and 1947, La Gaffeliere's superb 2005 offers up notes of graphite, black cherry and blackberry liqueur, smoke, licorice, and barbecue spice. Possessing stunning elegance along with superb depth, brilliant precision, and moderately high tannin, this medium to full-bodied wine is a phenomenal effort from a exceptional site that appears to be ready to join St.-Emilion's elite estates. Anticipated maturity: 2014-2030."*  
- RP, Wine Advocate

*"This vin de garde is potentially the finest La Gaffeliere I have ever tasted. Its dense purple color, huge tannin, gorgeous ripeness (blackberries, cherries, creosote, graphite), medium to full body, stunning elegance and purity, and expansive texture suggest this dazzling St.-Emilion will be at its finest between 2013-2030+."*  
- RP, Wine Advocate

*"The La Gaffeliere '05 has an extrovert, rather alcoholic bouquet with black cherries, kirsch, incense and sloes, a touch of alcohol just smudging the overall effect. The palate is medium bodied with dense, chocolate tinged black fruit and a rather brutish dry finish. It is not a terrible St. Emilion by a long shot, but I must say that its inadequacies are shown up amongst illustrious company. Tasted December 2012."*  
- NM, Wine Journal

*"Tasted single blind at Southwold. This is demonstrating a degree of mustiness on the nose. Boysenberry and damson jam. Gains definition with time. Tannic, backward, lots of stuffy – grippy tannins – fresh but rather dry on the finish. Drink now-2015. Tasted January 2009."*  
- NM, Wine Journal

**Reviews** *“The roughness that was apparent at the en primeur tastings in 2006 have gone. In its place is a lean, rather dry wine, firm and hard. It has a peppery edge from alcohol, which is off-putting, but the acidity promises some good aging.”*

*RV, Wine Enthusiast*

*“90-92 Barrel sample. This is packed with huge tannins and sweet, super-ripe fruit. It's tough at first because it is so powerful and alcoholic, but there is also a certain rough grace to it.”*

*RV, Wine Enthusiast*

*“Lively maroon. Very little nose. Treacly/molasses-like and very hard work. Tannins dry the mouth long before any flavour can be discerned. A real sandpaper on the inside of the mouth! There were obviously some very ripe little grapes in here but it's a devil of a job to get at them through the layers of winemaking. Bread, please!*

*- JR, JancisRobinson.com*

*“Medium ruby-red. Pure aromas of dark berries, graphite, licorice and spices. Spicy, very dark flavors of cassis, blackberry, minerals and spices, complicated by a musky espresso note and a whiff of smoked meat. Given lovely definition by a firm tannic spine that calls for patience.”*

*- ST, International Wine Cellar*

*“Hidden depth here. Beautifully crafted, succulent, smooth and long. Has a gliding quality. Builds to a confident finish. Drink 2012-16.”*

*- SS, Decanter.com*

*“A very big wine for the vintage, with impressive body, intense tannins and precise truffle aromas. Will certainly make a great bottle, even if a touch less elegant than some of the others. Drink from 2017.”*

*- MB, Decanter.com*

*“Tight, but with air and extensive swirling, notes of boysenberry, blackberry and blue fruit, along with licorice, spice and minerals begin to show. Fat, concentrated and filled with juicy ripe, fruit, this plush, powerful wine ends with a blast of spicy, chocolate covered black raspberries. This wine needs at least another 5-7 years before everything comes together.*

*- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com*

*“This is a superbly situated vineyard on the best slope of Saint Emilion just below Ausone, alongside Pavie and above Canon la Gaffeliere. Winemaking here in the past has not been great and Canon La Gaffeliere has, for many years, made superior wines from a less good terroir. In 2005 Stephane Derenoncourt has taken over the winemaking and the transformation in quality is remarkable. This is a huge, powerful Saint Emilion with impressive depth.”*

*- Farr Vintners*

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