

Château La Gaffeliere 2020

CSPC# 866099

750mlx6

14.15% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	60% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Franc
Appellation	St. Emilion
Classification	1er Grand Cru Classé
Website	http://www.chateau-la-gaffeliere.com/?lang=2
Sustainability	Certified High Environmental Value (HEV)
Analysis	AT 3.39, pH 3.47, IPT 73
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 Stéphane Derenoncourt has woven his magic and Parker believes that the wine <i>"has gone from strength to strength over the last decade"</i> returning to past glory: <i>"one would have to go back to the 2005, 1947 or 1961 to find this level of quality"</i> .
Winemaker	Stéphane Derenoncourt and Simon Blanchard consult.
Vintage	This 2020 vintage was quite early. Growth in the vineyard was very fast due to a wet, rainy spring and mild temperatures. The heavy rainfall led to extraordinary pressure from downy mildew, at a level never before seen by winegrowers! Until June, the extraordinary climatic conditions made work in the vineyard difficult. Nevertheless, flowering was uniform and took place in good conditions. The hot and dry summer greatly accelerated ripening. In some parcels, water stress led to a slight loss of yield, while in the areas with more clay and clay-limestone soils, ripening was very slow. The harvest began on 10 September, about a fortnight ahead of a so-called "normal" year, still under strong heat. The rain did not come until the end of September...Just in time to finish harvesting the last Cabernet Franc.
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. Hillsides are clayey and calcareous, whereas hill-feet are more siliceous. Area: 38 hectares, of which 22 hectares of 1er Grand Cru Classé. Soil: limestone plateau, clay-limestone hillsides, more siliceous at the foot of the slopes. 75% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Franc
Harvest	Merlot: From 10 September to 29 September Cabernet Franc: From 24 September to 28 September
Vinification/ Maturation	The grapes are kept for 12 hours in a cold room at 7°C before passing through the optical sorter. Vinification by parcel in stainless-steel temperature-controlled tanks, filled by gravity without sulfur. Alcoholic fermentation with pumping over and punching down. Malolactic fermentation in tanks (75%) and barrels (25%). Maceration during 30 days for Merlot and 32 days for Cabernet Franc. 14-16 months in barrel. 60% in new barrels (French oak). Three rackings
Tasting Note	Purplish purple. What intensity and complexity in this bouquet, which is marked by notes of peonies, raspberries, for the freshness, blackcurrant, for the maturity, and spices. Juicy and delicious attack. The wine has character, race and is endowed with tight and carrying tannins, in phase with the temperament of the structure. A wine which continues its march forward and which confirms its greatness!
Serve with	Chateau La Gaffeliere is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Chateau La Gaffeliere is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted braised and grilled dishes. Chateau La Gaffeliere is also good when matched with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.
Production	7,500 cases made.
Cellaring	Drink 2028-2040



Scores/Awards **95 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2023
95 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023
96-98 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021
97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2023
96-97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021
95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021
17+ points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021
95 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021
95 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - January 2023
92 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021
96 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2023
96-98 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021
96-98 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021
94 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023
95 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2023
95-96 points - Yves Beck (score only) - June 2021
93-95 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021
96-98 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - July 2021
96-97 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - July 2021
18 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2021

Reviews *"Here's a winner in this heat-influenced vintage, showing remarkable purity and focus, with a gorgeous beam of cassis, cherry paste, and violet cruising through, inlaid with subtle chalky minerality and backed by a broad stroke of mouthwatering tobacco on the finish. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2028 through 2040. 7,500 cases made."*

- JM, Wine Spectator

"A worthy follow up to the excellent 2019, the 2020 La Gaffelière bursts with aromas of plums, sweet berries, licorice, mint, and loamy soil. Medium to full-bodied, seamless, and concentrated, with lively acids and vibrant fruit flavors, it's built around powdery, fine-grained tannins. Cabernet Franc represents fully 40% of the blend. As I wrote last year, this estate, in many respects Saint-Émilion's sleeping giant, is awakening."

- WK, Wine Advocate

"Deep purple-black colored, the 2020 La Gaffelière gallops out of the glass with exuberant scents of crushed black plums, boysenberries, and fresh blackberries, plus hints of eucalyptus, dark chocolate, crushed rocks, and iron ore, with a waft of lavender. The medium to full-bodied palate shimmers with compelling energy, delivering layers of black and red berries with fantastic tension and finely grained tannins, finishing very long and wonderfully minerally."

- LPB, Wine Advocate

"Deep and intense notes of plums and blackberries with dark chocolate, toasted spices, walnut, crushed graphite, and wet stones. Full-bodied with layers of ripe, velvety tannins that flow in a firm stream throughout the palate. Very structured. Delicious chocolate-wrapped black and blue fruit with spiced character and a really long finish. 60% merlot and 40% cabernet franc. Drink from 2028."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Blackberry and black-olive aromas and flavors. Full-bodied with layers of fine tannins that fill the mouth. Expansive finish. The tannins are very fine, but abundant. Really impressive."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Incredibly perfumed from the rich Cabernet Franc that gives this wine its real identity. A fine smoky character shines through the firm tannins. This and the wine's delicious fruits promise great things as it develops."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Cask sample. Licorice, soy, black cherry, and a touch of floral character too. Succulent and bright, appreciably light touch for this concentrated vintage. Surprisingly drinkable even now, with fine tannins and appetising acidity. Long finish with noticeable but not intrusive oak spice. Very tempting. Possibly even GV?"

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

Reviews

“A run of successful vintages at La Gaffeliere, and this again proves why it is an estate to watch, striking an expert balance between power and finesse. Offers a ton of cassis, blackberry, black cherry and damson fruits, licorice root and crushed stone, just gorgeously juicy and stretches out across the palate. Austere tannins at this point, plenty of limestone character, a little tight on the finish but with a velvety texture and promises to age with grace. Barrel Sample: 95.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“Limestone dominance from the first moment, with saffron and oyster shell along with juicy and well-controlled blueberry and raspberry fruit, and white pepper spice. Cabernet Franc is dominant in the aromatics of savoury tomato leaf, peony, and heather, this is sleek, silky, and excellent quality. First vintage without the Grand Cru Classé on the label, as it withdrew from the ranking, and a clear loss to the classification. 42hl/ha yield.”

- JA, janeanson.com

“The 2020 La Gaffelière was a knockout out of barrel and so expectations were high broaching the wine in bottle. It delivers a sumptuous yet beautifully-defined bouquet with pure black cherry and red plum aromas, an underlying mineralité that keeps it on its toes. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins, quite saline, perhaps still a little closed post-bottling but with plenty of tension running from start to finish. It's a Saint-Émilion that says bugger off and come back (a lot) later.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2020 La Gaffelière has an intriguing, complex nose, a mélange of red and black fruit, cigar box, undergrowth, and mint, quite mercurial in the glass as it opens with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with lithe tannins, a beautiful seam of acidity and perhaps the most satin-like texture I have encountered in a young La Gaffelière. It sashays to a harmonious and precise finish and lingers with wonderful mineralité. This is a magnificent prospect. 2028 – 2060.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2020 La Gaffelière is simply magnificent. Soaring, regal aromatics are immediately alluring. Deep and beautifully layered in the glass, the 2020 is vibrant and packed to the core. In 2020, the tannins are especially fine and silky for a Saint-Émilion that often shows a bit more tension in its youth. Bright red cherry, blood orange, mocha, spice, dried herbs, and leather envelop the palate effortlessly. I imagine the 2020 will provide readers with many decades of exceptional drinking. It is another superb effort from a property that continues to impress. Drinking window: 2032-2050.”

- AG, Vinous

“The 2020 Chateau La Gaffelière checks in as a 60/40 split of Merlot and Cabernet Franc that saw 50% new barrels. This medium to full-bodied, pure, elegant, seamless Saint-Emilion has lots of cassis and darker raspberry-like fruits, good mid-palate depth, ripe tannins, and solid complexity in its notes of graphite, sandalwood, and Asian spices. It doesn't bring the depth and richness of the top wines in the vintage, but it certainly shines for its complexity and balance. Best After 2025.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Wild plum and iris fragrance then chocolate, intensely herbal, herbal bitters, black pepper. Robustly built on the palate; grainy, fleshy, exceptionally well extracted, rich matter, a pinch of greenness heightens the tension without disrupting the harmony, well integrated alcohol, ripe macerated fruit, tobacco finish. A firm, very powerful wine with an aromatic lift of freshness; an exceptional prospect.”

- PM, Falstaff Magazine