

Château Laroque 2021

CSPC# 847783

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

99% Merlot, 1% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

St. Emilion

Classification

Grand Cru Classé

Website

<https://www.chateau-laroque.com/en/wines/>

Sustainability

At Chateau Laroque, the vineyard is managed using 100% organic techniques. But they choose not to be certified organic, allowing them to make a wider variety of choices. They are also biodiverse, meaning they are HVE certified.

General Info

Chateau Laroque has a very long track record and history in the Saint Emilion appellation. Chateau Laroque dates back to the 12th century. In fact, a small remnant remains of the original tower built in the 12th century. The estate as we know it today, with its magnificent chateau, was constructed in the 17th century by Marquis de Rochefort-Lavie.

The property remained in the hands of the same family until the depression struck in 1929. Like many families and companies at the time, the owners did not have the funds to maintain the estate and the vineyards. Wine ceased to be produced at Chateau Laroque for several years.

The modern era for Chateau Laroque starts in 1935, when the property was purchased by the Beaumartin family from the descendants of the Marquis de Rochefort-Lavie.

In 1962, the vineyards of Chateau Laroque were completely replanted and the wine making facilities were updated as well. The situation remained about the same for close to 50 years.

By that time, the chateau was in need of repairs, the cellars demanded updating and the vineyards required extensive replanting. Positive changes began taking place starting with the 2015 vintage as you will see. Today, Chateau Laroque is probably better known for the architecturally stunning chateau and its perfectly manicured gardens.

The vines of Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon are 40 years old on average and farmed using 100% *organic* techniques. They choose not to be certified organic, simply because they want the freedom to make a wider variety of choices. Château Laroque is also *HVE Certified*, which is a rigorous process granted to vineyards who focus on increasing biodiversity, decreasing the negative environmental impact of their vineyards, and improving water management. The wines at Château Laroque are known for their delicate, mineral-driven nuance. The 2018 vintage was their first entering the *en primeur* or *futures* marketplace, as they were previously distributed exclusively through one firm. At Laguna Cellar, we were one of the first to discover this and leapt at the opportunity to acquire this wine for our customers who were loyal fans of this producer. Given the excellence of their *grand vin*, it's fairly easy to see why

Winemakers

David Suire and Nicolas Thienpont

Vintage

After a wet December, January and February saw 108 mm/4.3 in and 99 mm/3.9 in of rain respectively and Bordeaux then had a dry March and April. They had some frost impact in April, and the frozen areas didn't produce any grapes, so yields were down by two-thirds, compared to 2020. After the early frost had slowed things down, May was colder than normal, and wetter. June was warmer thanks to some fine weather during the flowering period before the heavy rains. July and August were comparatively cool before a late summer surge in the first half of September.

Vineyards

The 61-hectare vineyard of Chateau Laroque is planted with 87% Merlot, 11% Cabernet Franc and 2% Cabernet Sauvignon. The terroir is clay with limestone soil. The vineyard is situated northeast of the Saint Emilion village in the commune of St. Christophe des Bardes. Chateau Laroque owns the largest vineyard in St. Emilion. However, only 40 hectares of vines are classified as Grand Cru Classe. The remaining 21 hectares vines are considered to be St. Emilion Grand Cru. Back to those 40 hectares, only 27 hectares of vines are used to



Vineyards	produce their top wine, Chateau Laroque. As you can see, selection is important here, especially since it's such a large vineyard. Their best 27 hectares are located in the deep, clay rich soils close to Chateau Troplong Mondot. They have another outstanding parcel of vines on clay, close to their neighbor, Chateau Rocheyron. The vines are on average 40 years of age. However, they have old vines. 14 hectares of vines are almost 55 years old. The vineyard of Chateau Laroque is planted to a vine density of 6,000 vines per hectare.
Harvest	The harvest took place October 1 - October 18.
Vinification/ Maturation	To produce the wine of Chateau Laroque, the wine is fermented in traditional, temperature controlled, cobalt blue, cement vats that vary in size to help with parcel-by-parcel vinification. The wine is aged in 50%-55% new, French oak barrels for 12 months before bottling. About 11,000 cases of Chateau Laroque are produced in an average vintage.
Tasting Notes	Dried flowers, forest floor, licorice, cocoa, wild cherries, black raspberries and strawberries define the aromatic profile. On the palate, the wine is supple, creamy, fresh, and most importantly, pure with the essence of its sweet, ripe, mildly salty, red fruits, and soft, silky tannins to make the lingering taste, and feel great.
Serve with	Chateau Laroque is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Laroque is also good when matched with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.
Production	Approx. 11,000 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2025 - 2040
Scores/Awards	<p>92+ points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - February 2024</p> <p>92-95 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p>91-93 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - May 2022</p> <p>93 points - Zekun Shuai, JamesSuckling.com - December 2023</p> <p>16.5 points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022</p> <p>93 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022</p> <p>93 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - November 2023</p> <p>93 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - May 2022</p> <p>93 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2024</p> <p>91-93 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022</p> <p>92 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2024</p> <p>91-93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p>94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2024</p> <p>93-95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p>93 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2024</p> <p>91-93+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022</p> <p>92 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022</p> <p>90 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022</p> <p>92-93 points - Vert de Vin - July 2022</p> <p>91-92 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - May 2022</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"The 2021 Laroque opens in the glass with aromas of dark, minty berries, orange zest and toasty oak, followed by a medium to full-bodied, fleshy, and layered palate with a sweet core of fruit, supple tannins, and a long, mineral finish. This has turned out very nicely in bottle, and given its low-pH profile, it's likely to reward some bottle age."</i></p> <p>- WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The 2021 Laroque is very promising indeed, and winemaker David Suire and I agree that it is likely to surpass the estate's 2018 vintage in quality. Unwinding in the glass with aromas of sweet berries, plums, and cherries, framed by a discreet patina of new oak, it's medium to full-bodied, seamless, and complete, with excellent concentration, lively acids and ripe, melting tannins. A blend of 99% Merlot and 1% Cabernet Franc, it represents 45% of the estate's production and derives from vines more than 50 years old."</i></p> <p>- WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The 2021 Laroque is composed of 99% Merlot and 1% Cabernet Franc. Yields were 41 hl/ha and it is aging in French oak barriques, 50% new. Medium to deep garnet-purple in color, it sails out with evocative notes of plum preserves and blackberry pie, followed by hints of star anise, lavender, fallen leaves and fragrant earth. The medium-bodied palate delivers taut, muscular black fruits with a grainy texture and a lively backbone, finishing long and earthy."</i></p> <p>- LPB, Wine Independent</p>

- Reviews** *“Spiced red cherries, plums, graphite, cocoa powder, and a touch of mineral. Medium-bodied palate with fine, silky tannins and a juicy, nuanced finish. Elegant and polished. Drink now but can hold, too.”*
- JS, JamesSuckling.com
- “A medium-bodied, elegant, and fresh red with fine and silky tannins. Fresh acidity. Balanced and perfumed already with vibrant raspberry, blackberry, and bark notes. Very citrusy. Linear and bright.”*
- JS, JamesSuckling.com
- “Deep crimson hue. Dark and racy on the nose. Good depth of succulent mid-palate fruit. Plenty of polished tannin providing drive and persistence. A little chalkiness but nothing abrasive. Ambitious and with potential. Drink 2027 – 2038.”*
- JL, JancisRobinson.com
- “Great aromatics on the nose. Supple and generous on the palate, this has a spring in its step with crushed velvet tannins, bright fruit that has a gentle roundness to it and such lifted freshness giving this a lovely cool effect from start to finish. I love the strawberry and raspberry fruit here, so clean, so pure, so delicate and long. It's not weighty but so well delivered. Lively and charming. Elegant, finessed, harmonious.”*
- GH, Decanter.com
- “Well-judged clove, sage and anise spice lifts this above the average in the 2021 lineup, and there are delicious black tea, spiced plum and blueberry fruits. Clear grip and limestone character. A success in the vintage, but that doesn't mean it escapes the cool vintage character. Beaumartin family, David Suire director, 61ha size, 41hl/h yield. 45% of production in the Grand Vin.”*
- JA, janeanson.com
- “This is juicy, mouthwatering, has a pumice-stone limestone texture and a slow unrolling of plum and raspberry fruits and smoked spices while maintaining grip. They have been making great wine here over recent vintages, and to keep the quality in 2021 is worthy of congratulations. One to look out for. Beaumartin family, David Suire director, 61ha size, 41hl/h yield. 45% of production in the Grand Vin.”*
- JA, janeanson.com
- “Dried flowers, forest floor, licorice, cocoa, wild cherries, black raspberries, and strawberries define the aromatic profile. On the palate, the wine is supple, creamy, fresh, and most importantly, pure with the essence of its sweet, ripe, mildly salty, red fruits, and soft, silky tannins to make the lingering taste, and feel great. The wine was made with 99% Merlot, and 1% Cabernet Franc. Drink from 2025-2040.”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “With nice color, the wine already shows flowers, licorice, dark red pit fruits, and just a hint of chocolate. Soft, polished, and fresh, with sweet, juicy, black cherries and silky tannins, and plenty of juicy, dark fruits in the finish, this should be simply delicious to enjoy on release. The wine was made with 99% Merlot and 1% Cabernet Franc, reaching 13.5% ABV. The harvest took place October 1 - October 18. Drink from 2023-2037.”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “The 2021 Laroque has a well-defined, complex bouquet with blackberry, raspberry, loam and tobacco scents, a touch of damp undergrowth emerging with time, The palate is medium-bodied with a rapid entry and fine acidity, slightly powdery in texture with a hint of Japanese nori on the finish. This is well worth seeking out.”*
- NM, Vinous
- “The 2021 Laroque has upped its game in recent vintages under David Suire. It was cropped between 1 and 15 October at 41hl/ha and matured in 50% new oak. It has a refined bouquet with brambly red fruit, light undergrowth, and mineral scents. The palate is medium-bodied with fine-grain tannins, poised and again, mineral-driven thanks to its limestone soil. This latest release continues that fine run of form but will be more approachable than recent vintages. Drink 2027-2040.”*
- NM, Vinous

Reviews *“The 2021 Laroque is classy, elegant, and polished. A wine of stature and breeding, Laroque is a quintessentially finessed Saint-Émilion. Silky tannins wrap around a core of dark cherry, plum, spice, new leather, licorice, and menthol. All the elements are nicely balanced.”*

- AG, Vinous

“The 2021 Laroque is a standout. Bright and racy, with tremendous persistence, Laroque stakes its claim as Saint-Émilion's brightest rising star. Bright limestone accents run through a core of red/purplish fruit, rose petal, mint, and white pepper. There is a linear intensity to Laroque that is hugely appealing. Technical Director David Suire fashioned a gem. Don't miss it.”

- AG, Vinous

“The 2021 Château Laroque is another seamless, elegant wine from this larger château that readers will love. Based on just about 100% Merlot (I think there's a small amount of Cabernet Franc) brought up in 50% new oak, its vivid purple hue is followed by a lively, fresh nose of cassis and berry fruit interwoven with spring flowers, violets, and obvious minerality. Coming from a cooler, limestone terroir, it's never the biggest or richest wine in a vintage, yet its purity of fruit is exceptional, and it has polished tannins and just a remarkable sense of finesse and elegance. Give bottles 3-4 years if you can and enjoy over the following 15+ years.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“From an estate that continues to fire on all cylinders, the 2021 Château Laroque checks in as just about all Merlot (there's a splash of Cabernet Franc) that's pulled from just 45% of the total production and spends 18 months in 50% new barrels. Beautiful black raspberry, cassis, white flowers, and chalky mineral notes all define the nose, and it's medium-bodied, with a supple, elegant mouthfeel, impressive tannins, and a great finish. It shows the cooler, fresher style of the vintage, yet I suspect the pH is solid, and it offers plenty of fruit. I'd be a buyer.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Opaque ruby core, purple reflections, subtle brightening on the rim. Fresh plums and hints of caramel with a touch of herbs and tobacco. Medium-bodied, red berries on the palate, finely woven acidity, and light tannins with a salty finish. Very good with food.”

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“The nose is aromatic, racy and reveals elegance, complexity, and racy power. There are notes of boysenberry, dense black berries, and a slight sense of place (local biotope) combined with fine touches of fleshy red berries and a subtle hint of camphor and pepper. The palate reveals accuracy, volume, roundness, a little airiness in the approach, a fine linear edge, some concentration, accuracy, a nice acidic background, energy as well as sapidity/fine iodine. On the palate this wine expresses boysenberry, tart/pulpy raspberry and more lightly purple plum notes combined with hints of herbs/black tea, crushed cherry, salinity, fine vanilla, sweet blond tobacco, chocolate, and a hint of crushed almond. Good length. The tannins are precise, racy, and straightforward. Some “infusion” character on the mid-palate.”

- Vert de Vin
