

Virginie de Valandraud 2019

CSPC# 771445

750mlx12

14.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

79% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc, 1% Carmenère

Appellation

St. Emilion

Classification

Grand Cru Classe B

Website

www.thunevin.com

General Info

In 1989, Jean-Luc Thunevin and Murielle Andraud bought a tiny 1.5-acre plot in Saint-Émilion near Châteaux Pavie-Macquin, Ausone, and La Clotte. Without the capital to build a full winery, a nearby garage was used...

Château de Valandraud was one of the first Garagiste wines with its inaugural vintage being the difficult 1991.

Created in 1992 as a second wine, Virginie de Valandraud since 1997 is its own wine, named after Jean-Luc Thunevin's daughter. The vineyard is the same as Château Valandraud, and the wine is made the same way, by the same team, under the supervision of Murielle Andraud, Jean-Luc's wife.

De Valandraud produces only about 400 cases a year and, not surprisingly, this very rich and concentrated St-Emilion is now one of the most sought-after wines in Bordeaux.

Valandraud was upgraded in the official 2012 St. Emilion Classification to Premier Grand Cru Classe B.

Winemaker

Murielle Andraud. Michel Rolland consults.

Vintage

Winter: very mild. Spring: cool. Summer: exceptionally hot and dry. Autumn: very fine start to the season, some rainfall end September.

Vineyards

The 9-hectare vineyard of Valandraud is planted to 65% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Franc, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Malbec 1% Carmenère for the red wine. The parcels are located in various areas in Saint Emilion. Valandraud produces red and white wine. For the red wine, the terroir varies, but the best soils consist of clay and limestone.

Virginie de Valandraud is comparable to Château Valandraud in some vintages and is an impressive stand-alone wine.

Harvest

Hand harvested

Vinification/

Maturation

After the grapes are harvested by hand, they are first sorted by the pickers, then undergo a second picking by density at the winery. Temperature-controlled vinification in stainless steel tanks, with manual punching down of the cap, pumping-over, and maceration of about 3 weeks. 18 to 24 months in 100% new barrels.

Tasting Notes

Purplish purple. Great finesse and authenticity in this bouquet with fruity and mineral notes. Chalky and peppery nuances to which are added scents of black berries. Fresh and dense character on the palate. The tannins are tight and well-integrated while that the structure is racy and lively. The result is a good harmony in which all the elements bring out their strengths. Fruity and persistent finish. A very fine success.

Serve with

Valandraud is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Valandraud is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.

Production

6,600 cases made

Cellaring

Drink 2021-2029

Scores/Awards

90 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2022

90 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022

90-92 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - June 2020

94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2022

93-94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2020

93-95 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2020

92 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2022

91 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - June 2020

92 points - Jane Anson, Insidebordeaux.com - October 2021



Scores/Awards **90-92 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - June 2020

93 points - Neal Martin, *Vinous* - February 2022

92-94 points - Neal Martin, *Vinous* - June 2020

94 points - Antonio Galloni, *Vinous* - February 2022

93-95 points - Antonio Galloni, *Vinous* - June 2020

95 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2022

93-95 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2020

89 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2020

93-94 points - Yves Beck (score only) - June 2020

92 points - Peter Moser, *Falstaff Magazine* - June 2020

93-94 points - *Vert de Vin* - April 2020

92-93 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - July 2020

Reviews *"Lush in feel, showing warmed plum and blackberry compote flavors laced with alder, plus a light savory hint. Offers more muscle than purity, but this is still on the seductive side overall. 6,600 cases made."*
- JM, *Wine Spectator*

"The 2019 Virginie de Valandraud has turned out nicely, delivering aromas of sweet berry fruit, pencil shavings and vanilla pod, followed by a medium to full-bodied, velvety, and seamless palate that's succulent, fleshy and gourmand. It's a giving, gourmand Saint-Émilion that will make friends on release."
- WK, *Wine Advocate*

"The 2019 Virginie de Valandraud drifts effortlessly out of the glass with classic notions of warm plums, baked black cherries and blackberry preserves plus hints of cloves, cedar chest, graphite, and bouquet garni. The vibrant, crunchy black fruits fill the medium to full-bodied palate, supported by just enough freshness and a firm backbone of chewy tannins, finishing savory."
- LPB, *Wine Advocate*

"Blackberry, chocolate, and hazelnut character on the nose, following through nicely to a medium body with integrated tannins and a fresh finish. Tight at the end, suggesting more to come with bottle age. Hints of mushrooms and earth. Second wine of Valandraud. Hint of wood at the end that will dissipate with age."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Another rich 2019 with lots of pure fruit and rich, polished tannins. Big wine but remains agile and framed. The tannins are melted into the wine. Lots of plum, citrus, and mushroom character."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This Merlot-dominated wine from the Valandraud vineyards is seriously structured and packed with black fruits. Its texture is full in feel, with chocolate flavors that are balanced by succulent acidity. Good for medium-term aging."
- RV, *Wine Enthusiast*

"Ripe and fragrant, smells so appealing. Rich and concentrated on the palate with a stony minerality that comes through straight away. Fine tannins are abundant but gently frame the wine that is clearly powerful but well presented. Plenty to come in time. Lovely wet stone minerality at the end with appealing graphite edges. Freshness with more savoury, spicy, minerals aspects than overt fruit at this point. Lots to like."
- GH, Decanter.com

"This is an excellent Virginie de Valandraud, far closer to the 1st wine than to its number three. Lovely austerity that is sappy rather than tart, and that suggests you could leave this for three to five years before opening to get the best of the fruit. Savoury edge, with delicate rosemary and white pepper spice. Mouthwatering finish, delicate and enjoyable but with a punch. A good 2nd wine. 1% Carmenère completes the blend. 100% new oak."
- JA, Decanter.com

"Powerful black fruits with plenty of depth, this is an excellent 2nd wine where you get chiseled and nuanced black cherry, coffee, cocoa bean, black olive paste and concentrated truffle notes. This is ambitious and you feel it at every step, but there is complexity here also. Stands out and provides a great runway to the main estate wine of Valandraud. 100% new oak."
- JA, *Inside Bordeaux*

Reviews *“Dark and smoky, with licorice, espresso and ripe black cherries on the nose, the wine is medium-bodied, round, soft, plush, and already approachable. You can drink this young and over its first decade or so of life.”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The 2019 Virginie de Valandraud has a delightful bouquet, quite refined and focused, featuring predominantly black fruit mixed with cedar and light touches of mint. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannins, gaining weight and concentration toward the structured finish. While not as Left Bank in style as it was in barrel, there is impressive backbone here. This deserves 3–4 years in bottle.”
- NM, *Vinous*

“The 2019 Virginie de Valandraud has a well-defined, quite reserved, and classic bouquet that needs coaxing from the glass. Eventually it offers enticing brambly black fruit and light iris petal scents. The palate is medium-bodied with fine grain tannins, superb structure and an almost Left Bank like density on the graphite-tinged finish. Excellent.”
- NM, *Vinous*

“The 2019 Virginie de Valandraud is wonderfully deep and super-expressive. Red plum, raspberry jam, espresso, crushed rocks, rose petal, lavender and tobacco build into the richly textured, resonant finish. This explosive, flavorful Saint-Émilion has a ton to offer.”
- AG, *Vinous*

“The 2019 Virginie de Valandraud is fabulous. Inky, rich, and dense to the core, the 2019 possesses tremendous creaminess and a feeling of intensity that builds with time in the glass. Blackberry jam, chocolate, cloves, leather, licorice, espresso, and dark spice give the 2019 striking depth as well as dimension. The 2019 finishes with a closing flourish of mineral- and floral-drenched overtones. It is such a captivating wine. Tasted two times.”
- AG, *Vinous*

“Mostly Merlot (there's roughly 20% Cabernet Franc), the 2019 Château Valandraud Virginie De Valandraud from the Thunevin team reveals a deep purple hue to go with a brilliant nose of spiced currants, black cherries, new saddle leather, Provençal herbs, and subtle floral nuances. It's rich, medium to full-bodied, and flawlessly balanced on the palate, with gorgeous tannins and a great finish. It's the finest vintage for this cuvée I've tasted, surpassing the 2015, 2016, and 2018. It's going to drink brilliantly for 20 years or more.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“The deep purple-hued 2019 Château Valandraud Virginie De Valandraud is another winner. Rocking levels of crème de cassis, tobacco leaf, chocolate, and distinct minerality all emerge from the glass, and this beauty is full-bodied, concentrated, and impeccably balanced on the palate. The purity of fruit is terrific, I love its tannins, and I'd certainly be happy to have bottles in the cellar. It's going to match or exceed the 2016.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“Dark ruby garnet, violet reflections, subtle lightening of the edges. Ripe plum fruit with a delicate nutty underlay, blackberry confit, candied orange zest, a hint of nougat. Medium-bodied, red berry nuances, not quite as close-knit, fine tannins, good freshness, already accessible.”
- Falstaff Magazine

“The nose is fruity and offers power, elegance as well as a fine concentration. It reveals notes of ripe cassis, ripe blackberry, small notes of small blue fruits, violet associated with small touches of crushed blueberry and grey pepper. The palate is fruity, racy and offers freshness, minerality as well as a fine grain. On the palate this wine expresses notes of cassis, fresh blackberry, small notes of violet associated with fine touches of crunchy plum as well as hints of crunchy raspberry and small red berries. Tannins are precise, fine, and well-built. Good length and persistence.”
- Vert de Vin