

Château Cos d'Estournel 2020

CSPC# 772104

750mlx6

13.46% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 38% Merlot

Appellation

Saint- Estèphe

Classification

Second Growth. Deuxieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.

Website

<http://estournal.com/cos/cos-destournal-red/?lang=en>

General Info

In the old Gascon language, the word Cos means the hill of pebbles. Between Pauillac and Saint-Estèphe, separated from Château Lafite by the stream known as La Jalle du Breuil, the hill of Cos dominates the Gironde from the height of almost 65 feet. Born in 1762 during the reign of Louis XV and died in 1853 under Napoleon III, Louis Gaspard d'Estournel, who inherited a few vines near the village of Cos, had one sole passion: Cos. Louis Gaspard d'Estournel became known as the Maharajah of Saint-Estèphe. To celebrate his distant conquests, he had exotic pagodas erected over his cellar. In 1852, overwhelmed by debts he had accumulated in order to extend and beautify the estate, he was obliged to sell Cos to a London banker called Martyns. In 1855, the work of Louis Gaspard d'Estournel was consecrated by the imperial classification of 1855 placing Cos d'Estournel at the head of Saint-Estèphe. In 1869, the chateau was sold to the Errazu, an aristocratic Basque family, then to the Hostein brothers in 1886 and to Fernand Ginestet, one leading Bordeaux wine merchant, in 1917. The chateau has been belonging to Michel Reybier since 2000. In 2002 was constructed a new winery with a liquid CO2 cooling tunnel, small 19 to 115 hectoliter isothermal stainless-steel cone-shaped tanks and four 100 litre used to replace the traditional pumping over process. Cos d'Estournel has become, in the eyes of lovers of fine wines, the archetype of a certain style of masculine elegance in which immense power is combined with grace and smoothness. Impressive when young for the intensity of its structure and explosive fruit, Cos d'Estournel evolves slowly to arrive, when completely mature (after ten to thirty years) at an admirable smoothness and aromatic complexity. Great vintages can be exceptionally long-living, exceeding a century.



Winemaker

Aymeric de Gironde

The 2020 Label

This 2020 vintage celebrates the 200th anniversary of Cos d'Estournel, but also the 20th anniversary of its owner, Michel Reybier, at the head of this second classified growth. This year will be packaged in screen-printed bottles in all formats.

Vintage

The winter was mild and the spring very rainy. The soil became waterlogged, and mildew threatened the vines of Cos d'Estournel. However, summer quickly arrived with very hot temperatures that fried the rest of potential illness. The vines drew all the water they found from the soil, and the storms in August helped revive the plant and the ripening of the grapes. The manual harvest during the month of September allowed a first sorting of the grapes before making a new one in the cellar before putting them in vats. They started on September 10 and ended on September 24. Yields were correct with 39 hectoliters per hectare on the vines of the great red wine of Cos d'Estournel.

"On February 3rd, it was over 20 degrees Celsius (68 Fahrenheit)," said Dominique Arangoits of Cos d'Estournel. "And also, in March. This explained the early bud burst. The precocity is an important point of the vintage. The first part of rain—60 millimeters on May 10th—it was dangerous, for mildew and for the quality of the flowering. We have some vines between 80 and 100 years old; they are very sensitive. Fortunately, the second part of May was dry. Flowering occurred between May 21 and 24. It was like 2005's flowering conditions—very good! The old vines had a lot of healthy bunches. There were many seeds per berry—this is a good sign. Ripe seeds contribute a different type of tannins, which we like. Afterward, from June 18 to August 12, we had 55 days with almost NO rain! On August 7th, it hit 39 degrees Celsius. We needed water. The vines were starting to suffer." Like others in the Médoc, Cos d'Estournel finally received a fair amount of water in mid-August, helping to replenish the vines and see them through to harvest. "On 10th September, we began to harvest the Merlot at Cos d'Estournel, said Dominique. "We could have waited, but we wanted to keep the freshness. We had days more than 34 degrees Celsius during harvest—it was hot! We finished the Cabernets on 24th September. We were happy with the ripeness and wanted to finish before the rains that arrived at the

Vintage	end of September. We have a higher pH this year—3.9 as opposed to 3.75. The lower alcohol makes a good balance. So, the wines seem more fresh.”
Vineyards	The vineyard of Cos spreads around the château on 91 hectares. The Cabernet Sauvignon vines (60% of the vineyard) find the soil of their choice in the thin layers of gravely soil situated on the top and on the southern slopes of the hill. On the other hand, the Merlot vines (40% of the vineyard) excel on the eastern slopes and on the slopes where the Saint-Estèphe limestone bed shows on the surface. The percentage of Cabernet and Merlot varies from one vintage to another according to the year weather conditions, benefiting successively to the one or the other. Plantation is extremely dense (8000 to 10000 vines per hectare) and the average age of the vineyard is high (35 years old on the average) in order to enable the roots to extend excessively and to obtain a very slender yield per vine that will create the "Grand Goût" Only the wines coming from over 20 years old vines will have the name of Château Cos d'Estournel.
Harvest	Harvested between 10th and 24th September with a yield of 39hl/ha.
Winemaking	The grapes were small with thin yet robust skins. A rapid extraction of anthocyanins was noted during the pre-fermentation macerations. The use of the gravity proved to be even more useful this year for the merlots with a high tannic potential. It also enabled better control of components of the musts due to much gentler
Winemaking	extractions, producing smoother tannins, while at the same time preserving the vintage’s freshness and fruity character. Aged 50% in new barrels during 18 month/s.
Tasting Notes	<p>The 2020 vintage of Cos d’Estournel offers a stunning balance between extraordinary richness and surprising freshness. Its nose offers powerful aromas of blackcurrant, blackberry, nutmeg, black tea, and spices alongside vivacious mineral notes. The vintage’s opulence finds excellent balance against an uncommon verve, making Cos d’Estournel 2020 a quintessential expression of our terroir.</p> <p>The call of faraway lands. As mysterious and intriguing as a lone adventurer returning from a solitary sail, Cos d’Estournel is slow to reveal itself. Little by little, it evokes stories of distant places, market stalls brimming with unfamiliar fruits, spices and wares, village festivities warmed by the joy of revelers and the setting sun, and sumptuous visions of ladies and their voluptuous curves. A myriad of scents, colors and tastes appeal to the senses. The Grand Vin of Cos d’Estournel is both demure and deliberately sensuous, a fascinating and elegant nectar.</p>
Serve with	Chateau Cos d’Estournel is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Young vintages can be decanted for 2-4 hours. This allows the wine to soften and open its perfume. Chateau Cos d’Estournel is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted braised and grilled dishes.
Production	13,000 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2025- 2045.
Scores/Awards	<p>94 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2023</p> <p>94 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023</p> <p>96-98 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021</p> <p>98 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - March 2023</p> <p>98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2023</p> <p>97-98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021</p> <p>96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 2022</p> <p>96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021</p> <p>18.5 points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021</p> <p>18 points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - December 2022</p> <p>97 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2023</p> <p>97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p>97 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - January 2023</p> <p>99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023</p> <p>97-99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021</p> <p>96 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021</p> <p>Review Only - Farr Vintners - May 2021</p> <p>97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p>95-97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021</p> <p>99 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023</p> <p>95-97+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021</p> <p>96 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2023</p> <p>98-100 points - Yves Beck (score only) - June 2021</p> <p>95 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - February 2022</p> <p>94-96 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021</p>

Scores/Awards **99 points** - Terres de Vins (score only) - September 2021
98-99 points - Vert de Vin - May 2021
96 points - Andreas Larsson, Tasted - May 2021
97-98 points - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021
98-100 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2022
96-97 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - July 2021
18 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2021

Reviews *"A broad, rich, enticing wine, built on a core of exotic mulberry and loganberry notes laced with black tea, spices and incense. Rounded through the finish, with the fruit cruising through under a suave gloss of toast. A real crowd-pleaser, with a luxurious feel that makes this hard to lay off now. Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Drink now through 2038. 13,000 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"The 2020 Cos d'Estournel is a bold, demonstrative wine, bursting with aromas of cassis, dark berries and plum liqueur mingled with exotic spices, burning embers and petals, framed by a generous application of creamy new oak. Full-bodied, broad, and low acid/high pH in style, it's rich and extracted, with a layered, mid-palate and a long, clove-inflected finish. While it isn't anywhere near as extreme as the 2009, the 2020 does appear to mark a move back toward a more turbo-charged style after Cos d'Estournel's shift toward elegance, exemplified by the brilliant 2016—but perhaps that's merely an illusion created by the vintage?"
- WK, Wine Advocate

"The 2020 Cos d'Estournel is composed of 62% Cabernet Sauvignon and 38% Merlot. The harvest took place September 10–24 with a yield of 39 hectoliters per hectare. The alcohol weighs in at 13.46% with a pH of 3.9 and an IPT (total phenolic index) of 80. It is being aged in French oak barrels, 55% new. Deep purple black in color, it pops with explosive scents of ripe red and black currants, black cherry preserves and black raspberries, followed by sparks of violets, wild sage, pencil lead and clove oil, with emerging hints of iron ore and damp soil. The medium-bodied palate has amazing elegance and grace contrasted by jaw-dropping energy, featuring a firm frame of finely grained tannins and just enough freshness, finishing with a whole firework display of mineral nuances. I love the way this Cos d'Estournel shimmies and shines—a unique vintage signature expressed so beautifully at this estate!"
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The 2020 Cos d'Estournel has a deep garnet-purple color. It is very closed at this youthful stage but with much shaking it opens out to vivacious notes of crushed blackcurrants, juicy blackberries, kirsch, and cinnamon stick, plus suggestions of star anise, lilacs, and crushed rocks. The medium-bodied palate shimmers with energetic black fruit and mineral layers, supported by fine-grained, beautifully ripe tannins and seamless freshness, finishing very long and fragrant. A very elegant expression of Cos, and absolutely beguiling!"
- LPB, Wine Independent

"A brooding and deep wine just on the nose, with blackcurrants, redcurrants, spices such as cardamom and nutmeg, as well as black truffles with earth. Complex. Full-bodied with fine yet chewy tannins, that are wonderfully interwoven. Very structured and long. Needs five to six years to come around. 62% cabernet and 38% merlot. Try after 2028."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This is a very refined, polished Cos with superb finesse and length. Medium-to full-bodied, very fine and persistent. Really long with beautiful tannins. Rich, but fresh and linear."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This wine's complex structure and powerful tannins are shot through with freshness. It is already impressive, the spice and black fruits in harmony with the texture. The wine will age well. Drink from 2027."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Powerful, ripe fruits show exceptional quality and a velvety character that's allied to a ripe structure. With the freshness so typical of the vintage, the wine seems open and fruity but surprises with its density."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

Reviews *“Purple-black colour to the rim. Deep and dense (like an endless pool) but aromatically restrained. Some cassis with aeration. Big and bold with marked tension and supercharged but finely hewn tannins. Enough fruit to provide unctuousity. Fresh, dry, and saline through to the finish. Powerful but sculpted. 2030 – 2055.”*

- JL, JancisRobinson.com

“Deep, purple-black colour. Profound wine with a mass of fruit and tannin. Gives little away at the moment. Broad and full on the palate then tightens to a long, persistent finish. Powerful but contained. Clearly loads of potential.”

- JL, JancisRobinson.com

“Dark chocolate, milk chocolate, mocha, tobacco, and vibrant blackcurrant aromas on the nose. This is a sultry, seductive wine, smooth, ripe, round, and voluptuous but also sleek and kept in check that it gives layers of fruit, acidity, and freshness but also a spiced frame from which the flavours are contained. Tons of liquorice, almost too much, but giving nuance, style, and complexity. It’s broad and muscular, there is power, heft, concentration, and intensity, but it’s expertly delivered. Tightly packed, tense and verging on austere but you just know this will be sublime in time. Carefully constructed and a no doubt hit.”

- GH, Decanter.com

“You need to take a little time to let the concentrated flavours seep out, this is a long hauler. The tannins build slowly but surely through the palate, sombre and serious right now, particularly for an estate that is known for its exuberance. The opulence is there if you give it time, and as the tannins elongate and relax, richer notes of bilberry fruits, toasted cedar, salted chocolate, turmeric, and black pepper spice arrive. Harvest September 10 to 24. A 3.9pH is the highest since 2003, but any threat of low acidity is balanced by high tannins, and relatively low alcohol. A yield of 39hl/ha (43hl/ha in 2019). Drinking Window 2027 – 2044.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“Brilliant, just so much complexity and depth. The serious tannic heft means this is not the most exuberant Cos d’Estournel, but it is such good quality, with edges of violet and peony alongside black tea, turmeric, cloves, blueberry, raspberry, waves of confident tannins, and sea-salted bitter chocolate.”

- JA, janeanson.com

“A gorgeous, stylish wine, here you find a series of waves packed with blackberries, black plums, black cherries, smoke, licorice, dark chocolate, soy, and an array of spices. Rich, deep and intense, the wine hits all the right notes as it melds power, fruit, freshness, and elegance to create an opulent, velvety, silky finish that builds and expands as it hangs with you. This is so good now; it will be hard to wait to pull a cork. But its best days are all in the future. So, wait a bit and you will be amply rewarded with an incredible wine. Drink from 2028-2060.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Deep garnet in hue, the wine shoots from glass with tobacco leaf, currants, spice box, cigar wrapper, blackberry, and cassis. Elegant, fresh, and vibrant, the wine is silky, long, and precise. There is a cool spicy note that rides along with all the layers of soft, polished fruits on the mid-palate and in the finish. This is a refined vintage for COS. You find lower ABV, and the wine feels more energetic on the palate and in the finish, even though the pH is high at 3.9. Let it sleep for at least a decade before popping a cork. Produced from a blend of 62% Cabernet Sauvignon and 38% Merlot, 13.46 % ABV, the harvest took place September 10 to September 24. Here is a tip for you. To celebrate 20 years of ownership, 2020 will be produced in a one-time-only bottling with a special, black, and gold, engraved label.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Harvested between 10th and 24th September with a yield of 39hl/ha, the blend is 62% Cabernet Sauvignon and 38% Merlot and will be aged in 55% new French oak. We were unable to taste this wine En Primeur. 2020 Cos d’Estournel will celebrate 20 years of Michel Reybier’s ownership with the production of a special black bottle with gold design.”

- Farr Vintners

“The 2020 Cos d’Estournel, which was bottled in July, has lost some of the exoticism that it showed out of barrel. Within five minutes of aeration, it develops a complex bouquet: black fruit laced with graphite and subtle cedar aromas, a charcoal back-note and later pressed iris flowers. I foresee this gaining more nuance with bottle age. The palate is taut, lean, and precise. Lightly spiced on the entry, with finely-chiseled tannins,

Reviews *again, not quite as precocious as it showed in barrel, allowing the terroir to come through more. There is something almost understated about this vintage vis-à-vis others, razor-sharp precision with just the right amount of salinity on the finish. This is a classy offering that will mature beautifully in a bottle. A keeper.”*
- NM, Vinous

“The 2020 Cos d’Estournel is a very different proposition to the Les Pagodes, more so than in other years. Much more intense on the nose of intense black fruit, it is beautifully defined, with enticing scents of blackberry, Dorset plum and top notes of blueberry and briar. After 30 minutes in the glass, it develops more Saint-Estèphe-like traits: freshly tilled soil, cigar box and touches of warm gravel. There is an openness to these inviting aromatics. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins (so different from the "iron girders" of yore). There is freshness and a sense of light in this Cos d’Estournel, though the backbone remains in situ on the cedar and mint finish (a nod to neighboring Pauillac, perhaps), then a lingering marine/seaweed note on the aftertaste. This is a finely crafted, very succinct Cos d’Estournel that may well be hiding something up its sleeve for after bottling, and I suspect it will gain more spine during its barrel aging.”
- NM, Vinous

“Based on 62% Cabernet Sauvignon and 38% Merlot, the deep purple-hued 2020 Château Cos D’Estournel has, dare I say, an almost Lafite-like sense of elegance and class, offering gorgeous cassis and darker currant fruits as well as tobacco, lead pencil, acacia flowers, and graphite. Hitting 13.46 alcohol, with a pH of 3.9 and an IPT of 80, this flawless, full-bodied, incredibly elegant Saint-Estèphe has silky tannins, perfect balance, and a great, great finish. It will need a decade of cellaring to hit its prime drink window. Of the trilogy of 2018, 2019, and 2020, it's clearly my favorite (that’s splitting hairs), with a similarity to the 2016, and will most likely merit another point at maturity.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“An inky-hued, concentrated, yet flawlessly balanced wine, it has gorgeous cassis and dark currant fruits, medium to full-bodied richness, ripe, building tannins, and just a wonderful sense of purity and elegance backed up by ample concentration. It stays tight, focused, and seamless, and is a brilliant example of the vintage. The 2020 hit 13.4% natural alcohol with a pH of 3.9 and an IPT of 80. Barrel.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“Deep garnet, purple reflections, opaque core, discreet brightening on the rim. Hints of blueberries and chocolate, inviting bouquet with a fine oak nuance in the background, a hint of orange zest. A deep palate, juicy, ripe cherries, lively acidity, fine tannins, subtle minerality, leafy on the finish, lemony-vegetal and leafy on the bitter finish. Very disappointing.”
- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“Deep dark ruby, opaque core, purple reflections, narrow bright rim. Wild dark berry fruit, blackberries, a hint of plums, candied orange zest, delicate nougat, all underlaid with fine noble wood spices. Juicy, intense ripe fruit core, black cherries, elegant, ripe, integrated tannins, mineral texture, fine nougat on the finish, very persistent. Masses of ageing potential.”
- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“On the nose, racy and offers a beautiful elegance, finesse in its intensity, delicacy in its concentration and a nice multi-layered side. It reveals notes of fresh/fleshy cassis, wild strawberry and hints of crushed small red berries combined with touches of morello cherry, plum blossom, star anise, black tea as well as fine graphite, crushed mocha as well as nuances of sweet spices and an imperceptible hint of Cuban pepper. On the palate, fruity, balanced and offers minerality, juiciness, freshness, generosity, good definition, gourmandise and an acidic/very delicate/thin texture, depth and an airy side in its richness, a subtle tight side, a high color/very precise yet complex side, a nice control and a good structure (all in finesse). The wine expresses notes of pulpy/fleshy blackberry, small black fruits and hints of dark plum combined with touches of raspberry, strawberry as well as wafts of mocha, tonka bean, camphor as well as fine hints of fresh vanilla bean, black tea as well as discrete hints of toasted/fortified hazelnut. Good length. The tannins are precise, elegant, structured, discreetly tight, and justly firm.”
- Vert de Vin

Reviews *“Nice purity, darker and denser than the Pagodes – black cherry, cassis, finely melted oak and some graphite and stony notes. Dense palate showing concentration and power, yet with a very nice sense of freshness, layers of finely grained tannin, crushed dark berry fruit, a fine toastiness present with a very long, pure, and fresh finish. A very classic style yet with plenty of muscles and freshness.”*
- AL, Tasted.com

“(62% CS, 38% M; 39hl/ha; 13.5% ABV; 55% new). Subtle black fruit, and a lovely, insistent gravel impression, already a nose that really tempts one to linger; rich, medium-full, beautifully, imperceptibly defined by its acidity and with superfine, velvety tannin; here is a mouthcoating, sweetly ripe Cabernet core, but a ripeness absolutely without excess, and remaining so fresh; subtle, flattering, prolonged, quietly aristocratic, the very essence of grand vin, and with terrific persistence. Great Cos, providing the sort of sensory satisfaction and appeal you get in a rich, detailed, sustained mezzoforte chord from a prime orchestra. A most complete and refined claret of first-growth quality. There is such polish in all the Cos wines—a great tribute to the team, led by Dominique Arangoits. 2030–60+.”
- MS, The World of Fine Wine
