

Château Gruaud Larose 2016

CSPC# 813912

750mlx12

13.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

69% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

Saint Julien

Classification

Grand Crus Classé

Website

<https://www.gruaud-larose.com/>

General Info

The prestigious Bordeaux property of Gruaud-Larose, a 2nd growth in the 1865 classification, lies in the commune of Saint-Julien, a single vineyard of 80 hectares composed of gravels from the Gironde estuary. The poor soils provide excellent drainage, especially as the vineyards are on the highest plateau of Saint-Julien - though that is a mere 18 metres above sea level.

Gruaud was one of the first Bordeaux estates to abandon synthetic pesticides and herbicides in the vineyard during the late nineties, turning to mechanical and organic solutions to protect and nourish the vines. Though not biodynamic, they do employ natural homeopathic treatments such as organic compost made from seaweed to protect against mildew and rot.

In 1997 Gruaud Larose was purchased by Jacques Merlaut. Jacques Merlaut owns numerous other Bordeaux vineyards under the name of the Taillan Group including; Chateau La Gurgue, Chateau Haut Bages Liberal, Chateau Citran, Chateau Ferriere and Chateau Chasse Spleen among others.

Winemaker

Eric Boissenot.

Vintage

The year 2016 started off with the water tables full, thanks to the heavy rainfall from January to March. Three difficult months for the vineyard workers but which saved the day for this vintage! The mild temperatures in March ensured an early budburst but the colder, rainy mornings in April slowed down the growth cycle. From mid-June to mid-October, rainfall was well below the seasonal average. During the first two weeks of August, the colour change was short and even on each of the properties. The grapes developed in radiant, dry weather conditions. Light showers appeared in mid-September to re-boost the ripening process on the terroirs offering less water retention, thus perfecting the maturation of the tannins. The absolutely perfect weather conditions during harvest time allowed us to pick grapes boasting remarkable quality.

Vineyards

The Gruaud-Larose estate amounts to 150 hectares of the St Julien appellation, of which 82 hectares are planted to vines; the bulk of the estate lies around Baron Sarget's *château*, separated from the Gironde by the small village of Beychevelle, and sandwiched between the vineyards of Branaire-Ducru and Lagrange. The terroir is typical for the region, deep Quaternary gravel, planted with 57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot and 2% Malbec. The vines average around 45 years of age and are planted at a density of 10000 vines/ha.

Harvest

Picked between 29 September until 15 October

Vinification/

Maturation

The fruit is sorted then undergoes a cold soak prior to temperature controlled fermentation in a mixture of wooden and concrete vats, with pumping over of the fermenting must twice a day. Then up to a third of the vintage undergoes malolactic in oak barrels, before ageing the entire wine in *Allier's* and *Nevers* oak (80% new) for 18 months, and there is a light fining and filtration before bottling.

Tasting Notes

The 1982 and 1986 vintages are close to 1st Growth in quality and the 1990 and 2000 are both brilliant wines. The 2016 is certainly the greatest wine produced by this estate since their 2009 and 2010.

The balance in the 2016 is impeccable, incredibly silky, it glides across the palate and has a wonderful freshness on the finish. In the best vintages Gruaud has a special quality that allows it to age gracefully and improve in bottle for many years.



Serve with	Gruaud Larose is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised and grilled dishes. Chateau Gruaud Larose is a perfect match with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms and pasta as well as cheese.
Production	12,200 cases made
Cellaring	2021-2043
Scores/Awards	<p>93 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2019</p> <p>91-94 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2017</p> <p>94 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate Interim Issue - November 2018</p> <p>93-95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #230 - April 2017</p> <p>95-96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2017</p> <p>94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 2019</p> <p>92-94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 2017</p> <p>16.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - October 2018</p> <p>17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2017</p> <p>95 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - October 2018</p> <p>95 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2017</p> <p>92 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - February 2019</p> <p>92 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2017</p> <p>91 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2017</p> <p>16 points - Farr Vintner - February 2017</p> <p>90-93 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2017</p> <p>93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - January 2019</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"This has a wide range of red currant, blackberry, black cherry and açai berry fruit flavors forming the core, with a very sleek iron note lurking underneath it all. The finish uses a fine singed wood stitching to pull the fruit and minerality together. Lovely. Best from 2023 through 2038. 12,200 cases made."</i> - JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"This delivers a pure beam of cassis and cherry preserves, underscored by a layer of warm dark earth. Stays polished in feel, with lovely freshness on the relatively open-knit finish. Score range: 91-94"</i> - JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Medium to deep garnet-purple colored, it leaps from the glass with notes of red and black cherries, warm plums and freshly crushed blackcurrants plus hints of violets, oolong tea, aniseed and tilled soil with a waft of garrigue. Medium-bodied, the palate struts tons of elegantly fragrant red and black fruit flavors with a firm backbone of ripe, grainy tannins and loads of freshness, finishing long and perfumed."</i> - LPB, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The alcohol is a modest 13.02%. It has a generous bouquet with scents of blackberry, briary, a touch of sandalwood and tobacco, gaining more precision as it aerates in the glass. The palate is medium bodied with fine tannin, certainly one of the most finessed Gruaud Larose in recent years, with perfectly judged acidity. I love the focus here, a little understated at first but you cannot deny the intensity and precision on the finish. Moreover, this seems to be a slightly more detailed Gruaud, nuanced and long in the mouth. Excellent—and I suspect it might be a little more approachable than some of its peers."</i> - NM, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"Full-bodied, layered and juicy young wine. Very tannic yet ripe and intense. Powerful finish. This will be excellent. Better than the 2015."</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>"This is a dense, smoky wine with powerful tannins. It follows the line of richness set since the 2014 vintage and balances rich black fruits and concentrated tannins cut with final acidity. Drink from 2025."</i> - RV, Wine Enthusiast</p> <p><i>"This wine is rich and juicy, with fine tannins that come as much from the fruit as from the wood aging. It shows great promise for positive development. (RV)"</i> - RV, Wine Enthusiast</p>

- Reviews** *"Mid garnet. This suffers a little from being tasted immediately after the soaring Ch Branaire Ducru. Lacks a bit of focus and concentration. Sweet and a tiny bit inconsequential though there's a nice persistent finish."*
- JR, JancisRobinson.com
- "Initially there's a whiff of sweet oak, and then underneath there is the vineyard and real savour. Ripe but not forced. Good stuff with a 'mineral' whiff. Not a blockbuster but very well balanced with lovely length"*
- JR, JancisRobinson.com
- "This is well built and powerful, not exactly subtle, but then none of these wines are. Instead you get complex, layered and concentrated inky fruits, with some aniseed too. The balance and elegance of St-Julien comes in through the tailored and fine tannins on the finish, but while these tannins may be fine, there are lots of them. 80% new oak. Drinking Window 2024 - 2040 (JA)"*
- JA, Decanter.com
- "A balanced, measured, incredibly tight delivery of the triumvirate of tannins, fruit and acidity. The architecture hits the level of the 2010, fairly unusual in a year where the tannins have such a deft brush stroke in the main. This is a great Gruaud that is going to run and run. Aged for 18 months in 80% new oak. As of 2017, half of the vineyard (approximately 40ha) is being worked biodynamically. Drinking Window 2027 – 2050"*
- JA, Decanter.com
- "The tobacco, espresso and dark cassis nose hits the spot. Medium/full bodied with soft, polished regal textures and a bright, dark red berry, cedar and tobacco finish, this should really hit the spot in 12-15 years or so."*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- "Cassis, tobacco and espresso with a good hit of cedar to arouse the olfactory system. A fresh, red berry side of the style range, there is a softness to the tannins that brings out the best in the crunchy currants and blackberry fruits in the finish. This will require time in the bottle to come around. Good girls don't come easy. I mean good things take time."*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- "It's a pleasure to see this winery producing clean, well-made wines without any of the farmyards notes of the past. The blend is still quite serious and austere at the moment, with a carapace of firm tannins and plenty of supporting acidity, but the dark berry fruit is there too. 2026-36"*
- TA, timatkin.com
- "This famous and historic Saint Julien 2nd growth is popular throughout the world and is usually released at the most reasonable price of all the so-called "super-seconds". Significant smoky oak gives a nose of coffee, nutmeg and cassis. The palate is pure, fresh and clean with soft, ripe tannins allowing the elegance of the fruit to shine through. Smooth and long on the finish, this is a subtle, classically styled wine of great typicity."*
- Farr Vintners
- "Under the fragrances the fruit is rich and ripe a mix of black fruits the palate fleshy and supple. The tannins are rounded well integrated rich fruit in the middle but towards the back there is freshness the finish long but quite firm. 2026-42"*
- Derek Smedley MW
- "The 2016 Gruaud-Larose has quite a fruit-driven, generous bouquet of layers of black and red fruit laced with graphite and tertiary aromas. Is there just a slight touch of Brettanomyces here? The medium-bodied palate is earthy and a little ferrous, with rounded tannin, and quite approachable compared to its peers. Slightly smudged toward the finish, but it shows great persistence. Very fine, very Gruaud. Drink 2023-2050"*
- NM, Vinous
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