

# Château Gruaud Larose 2021

CSPC# 102864

750mlx6

12.5% alc./vol.

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| <b>Grape Variety</b>       | 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc   |
| <b>Appellation</b>         | Saint Julien  |
| <b>Classification</b>      | Second Cru Classé en 1855   |
| <b>Website</b>             | <a href="https://www.gruaud-larose.com/">https://www.gruaud-larose.com/</a>   |
| <b>Sustainability</b>      | The vineyard is managed with agronomic methods totally respectful of the environment. (Establishment of hedges, grass growing, pastures by sheep.   |
| <b>General Info</b>        | <p>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 soil provides excellent drainage, especially as the vineyards are on the highest plateau of Saint-Julien - though that is a mere 18 metres above sea level.</p> <p>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. Currently undergoing Conversion to Organic Farming.</p>   |
| <b>Winemaker</b>           | Stéphanie Lebaron-Bouchonnea. Eric Boissenot consults.  |
| <b>Vintage</b>             | <p>The mild and rainy winter awakens the vines in a homogeneous way with an early ripening.</p> <p>A few plots of merlot in the lowest part of the hilltops of the estate are impacted by the frost during the month of April. The spring was not sunny but rainy until the end of May. This imposes a slow pace of growth.</p> <p>At the beginning of June, the return of sunlight and the sudden spike in temperatures ensures the smooth flow of the flowering on almost the entire estate. Some merlots, the most sensitive ones, are affected by "couleure".</p> <p>Mid-June, from the fruit set, a capricious weather forecast punctuated by a number of rainy episodes will be installed until the end of the "veraison" at the beginning of August.</p> <p>It will be necessary to wait for the summer to be finally here with 4 weeks of magical weather which could permit us to catch up with the delay of the ripeness. The right ripeness of the plots only arrives the last week of September.</p> <p>At the beginning of October, the cabernet sauvignon expresses at last their full potential, the freshness and tension remind us of historical great vintages.</p> |
| <b>Vineyards</b>           | 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 <i>château</i> , 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 61% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot and 2% Malbec. The vines average around 46 years of age and are planted at a density of 10000 vines/ha.  |
| <b>Vineyard Management</b> | Integrated Pest Control (mechanical work, organic fertilisation). Weather Station (phytosanitary protection), Prophylaxis (thinning out the leaves, removal of excess buds and shoots, green harvest). Heightening of the trellis. Manual harvesting, selection on a belt in the vineyard and double sorting at the harvest reception. Manual harvesting, a first selection on sorting table directly in the vineyard follow by a double selection at the reception of the harvest. New vineyard objective with 70% of the vines in bio-dynamism for this vintage! The rest is controlled in conventional agriculture.  |
| <b>Harvest</b>             | Merlot: September 23-30<br>Cabernet Sauvignon: September 28 – October 7<br>Cabernet Franc: September 29 - October 1<br>Petit Verdot: October 1-7  |



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| <b>Maturation</b>    | The fruit is sorted then undergoes a cold soak prior to temperature controlled fermentation in a mixture of 50% wooden and 50% 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 <i>Alliers</i> and <i>Nevers</i> oak (up to 80% new) for 18-24 months, and there is a light fining and filtration before bottling.  |
| <b>Tasting Notes</b> | Purple red and deep, what a delicate scent, the cassis fruit is subtly combined with fine roasted notes, a beautiful minerality resonates. Firm, powerful, well-structured on the palate, the tannins are of high quality and envelop the fruit like a silk scarf. Long, delicately spicy finish, very, very fresh. Successful and with potential.  |
| <b>Serve with</b>    | 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.<br>Chateau Gruaud Larose is 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.   |
| <b>Production</b>    | 12,133 cases made.  |
| <b>Cellaring</b>     | Best from 2023- 2036  |
| <b>Scores/Awards</b> | <p><b>94 points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - February 2024</p> <p><b>94-95+ points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - January 2024</p> <p><b>91-93 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - May 2022</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - May 2022</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2023</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2022</p> <p><b>90-93 points</b> - Thomas Parker, Farr Vintners - April 2022</p> <p><b>90-92 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2024</p> <p><b>91 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2024</p> <p><b>18 points</b> - Matthew Jukes - August 2022</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022</p> <p><b>92 points</b> - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022</p> <p><b>94-95 points</b> - Terres de Vins (score only) - April 2022</p> <p><b>94-95 points</b> - Vert de Vin - July 2022</p> <p><b>95-96 points</b> - Bettane &amp; Desseauve (score only) - May 2022</p>  |
| <b>Reviews</b>       | <p><i>"The 2021 Gruaud Larose has turned out very nicely in bottle, unfurling in the glass with aromas of sweet wild berries, plums, violets, and cigar wrapper. Medium to full-bodied, fleshy, and velvety, it's polished and seamless, with good depth at the core, supple tannins, and lively acids."</i><br/>- WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The 2021 Gruaud Larose is very impressive, exhibiting deep aromas of wild berries, cherries and cassis mingled with hints of licorice, violets, and cigar wrapper. Medium to full-bodied, deep, and concentrated, it's impressively rich and layered, with lively acids and ripe tannins, it concludes with a pure and penetrating finish. Classically balanced and intensely flavored, it's an elegant, beautifully made wine that is well worth seeking out. Three beautiful parcels of recently planted Cabernet Sauvignon, situated on deep gravel ideally adapted to this variety but hitherto planted with Merlot, make a contribution to the blend this year; but that's only one of the factors that explain why Gruaud has produced a 2021 that looks set to rival or surpass even recent and more propitious vintages such as 2018. The blend is fully 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, complemented by 12% Merlot and 4% Cabernet Franc, and it checks in at 12.5% alcohol. Congratulations are in order for technical director Virginie Sallette and the entire team at Gruaud Larose! Tasted twice.</i><br/><i>In the last few years, Gruaud Larose has been transformed. This 92-hectare vineyard, occupying a single block on the plateau of Saint-Julien, has been extensively restructured: in the past, Merlot, susceptible to frost, had been planted in the highest parts of the vineyards for protection—but those just happened to be the sites best adapted to Cabernet Sauvignon. Now, varieties and soil types are better matched (50% of the vineyard has been replanted); yields are lower, and farming is better: 2019 marked the beginning of organic conversion, but beyond that, the aspiration is to create a durable ecosystem, with wildlife corridors, agroforestry (3,000 trees have been planted), insect houses and so on; soils are worked less often and less deeply and sowed with cover crops. In the winery, the fruit sees multiple sorting before macerations that are gentle but protracted, at comparatively low temperatures, and great attention is paid to selecting which lots of press wine to include in the blend. The results are compelling. This doesn't mark a return to the muscular, rich, rustic style of the Cordier</i></p> |

**Reviews** *era's heyday but nor does contemporary Gruaud Larose have anything in common with the rather lean, malnourished wines frequently produced in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Instead, we are learning that Gruaud Larose can produce wines that are both elegant and intense. When reviewing the 2019 earlier this year, I suggested that this château seemed to be on the cusp of a new golden era, and this immensely strong showing in the 2021 vintage tends to confirm that supposition."*  
- WK, Wine Advocate

*"The 2021 Gruaud Larose is composed of 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, and 4% Cabernet Franc. Deep garnet-purple in color, it springs from the glass with vibrant notes of kirsch, juicy raspberries, and fresh blackcurrants giving way to underlying scents of violets, licorice, and wild sage plus a touch of pencil lead. The light to medium-bodied palate delivers lovely harmony, with impressively sustained mid-palate fruit and lots of mineral and earth accents framed by fine-grained tannins, finishing with great purity."*  
- LPB, Wine Independent

*"The 2021 Gruaud Larose is made from 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, and 4% Cabernet Franc, harvested from 23 September to 7 October, and aging in 95% new oak for an anticipated 18 months. Deep garnet-purple colored, it needs a lot of coaxing to unlock notes of ripe blackcurrants, fresh blackberries, and mulberries, leading to wafts of pencil shavings, dried roses, and crushed rocks, plus a hint of tapenade. Light to medium-bodied, the palate has great tension and energy with a great backbone of ripe grainy tannins and loads of mineral and earth layers, finishing with a refreshing lift. It has an impressive quiet intensity that really works. 2025-2036."*  
- LPB, Wine Independent

*"Black peppercorns, tobacco, ash, vanilla, cinnamon, and cedar spice. A gorgeous mouthfeel straight away, the tannins so plump, not heavy, or opulent but filling and ripe. This has a charming gentle aspect - a smooth, sleek texture with concentration. Supple and agile, there is lots of energy here, filled with red fruit flavours that have a delicate, sweet liquorice edge. Acidity does not overtake the fruit at all, just lifts the palate all the way through. Excellent work, immensely pleasurable, well framed with promise for long ageing. More Cabernet in the blend than usual. Ageing 14 months in French oak barrels, 15% new, the rest one year old."*  
- GH, Decanter.com

*"Clearly Cabernet dominant, savoury with an attractive tannic frame. Should be accessible relatively early for a classified St Julien but will age for a good few decades as there are plenty of well-textured tannins. Attractive floral notes give a gentle aromatic welcome, and the feel is elegant and finessed on the opening beats, with rose stems, raspberries, loganberries, white pepper, slate, and liquorice. They have done a great job here, in the last year of organic conversion. 95% new oak."*  
- JA, janeanson.com

*"Deep in color, with a simple swirl you find wet forest floor, cigar box, licorice, spice, flowers, and currants in the perfume. On the palate, the wine is concentrated, rich and dense, but refined, round, and juicy. Even with all that weight, the wine is vibrant, energetic, long, and fresh. The finish builds in intensity, leaving you with layers of dark black, red, and blue fruits, chocolate, licorice, espresso, and spice. 2022 marks the first vintage Gruaud Larose was organically certified. The wine is a blend of 83% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Merlot, and 3% Cabernet Franc. 13.65% ABV, 3.8 pH. Picking took place September 7 - September 24. The yield was 30 hectoliters per hectare. Drink from 2027-2060. 95-97 Pts."*  
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"The yield was down to 30 hl/ha in 2021 and the blend is strongly Cabernet with 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Cabernet Franc and 12% Merlot. Bright ruby purple colour. Spicy black fruit and game on the nose in quite a unique expression of the vintage. The palate is lined with sappy wood and pithy tannins that frame fresh currants and hedgerow at the core. The riper cherry tones of the nose return on the focused and linear finish."*  
- TP, Farr Vintners

## Reviews

*“The 2021 Gruaud Larose was picked from September 23 until October 7, finishing with the Petit Verdot, and stopping several times to wait for ripeness in certain plots. It was matured in 95% new oak for a planned 18 months. The Cabernet Sauvignon clearly dominates the nose, the black fruit, graphite, and touches of tobacco lending it a Pauillac-like allure. The palate is medium-bodied with supple but quite firm tannins that frame the graphite-infused black fruit. Quite direct, and in some ways a no-frills Gruaud Larose, though that is not meant pejoratively. Classically styled claret – no more, no less. (12.55% alcohol)”*

- NM, Vinous

*“The 2021 Gruaud Larose is a wine of pure breeding and stature. Sepia-toned fruit, spice, new leather, licorice, gravel, dried herbs, pencil shavings and incense are beautifully amplified. Pliant and expansive in the glass, with terrific energy, the 2021 exudes class. Polished, supple tannins wrap it all together, before a final burst of vibrant acidity extends the finish.”*

- AG, Vinous

*“The 2021 Château Gruaud Larose checks in as 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, and 4% Cabernet Franc that spent 18 months in 95% new French oak. It's concentrated and medium-bodied, with a relatively closed, inward style in its black cherry and redcurrant fruit as well as subtle tobacco and graphite-laced aromas and flavors. I love its overall balance, as well as its mid-palate depth and polished tannins. It needs just 2-4 years in the cellar and is going to drink beautifully over the following decade or more.”*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*“The statistics for this wine are rather terrifying. The ultra-keen alcohol level coupled with an extremely dominant Cabernet recipe and a near-100% new oak regime suggests that this might be a relatively lean, mean, and oaky wine, but this is not the case. This is a singular song of Cabernet, and it resonates beautifully on the nose and palate. Pure, refreshing, direct and fascinating, this is a huge success wine in 2021.”*

- Matthew Jukes

*“Dark ruby, opaque core, fading to purple at the narrow rim. Fine herbal savouriness, notes of blackberries and cassis, fresh orange zest, tobacco nuances. Taut, fresh cherries, lively structure, integrated tannins, mineral, with redcurrants on the finish. A light-footed, uncomplicated food companion with a touch of fruit sweetness on the finish. Will be very approachable early.”*

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

*“The nose is fresh, elegant, racy and offers lovely finesse, distinction in its power, depth, fine grain, power but relatively delicate and multi-layered character. There are notes of boysenberry, strawberry and more lightly fleshy/pulpy berries combined with touches of racy gravel as well as fine nuances of blueberry, star anise, a subtle hint of peony, graphite, saltiness, vanilla, and chocolate. The palate is fruity, mineral, nicely racy and reveals a nice definition, an acidic backbone, tension, a fine infusion quality, a nice finesse in its tension, a nice expression of classicism in its elegance, much delicacy. On the palate, this wine expresses notes of pulpy/juicy blackberry, bright blackcurrant and, more lightly, red berries, combined with hints of wild strawberry, discreet hints of violet, a subtle hint of balsamic, a discreet hint of fresh blue berries, fine mocha, clove, a subtle hint of peony and graphite. A nice persistence that brings finesse. The tannins are supple, elegant, and fine. A nice impact, even if minimal, of Cabernet Franc which reinforces the elegance and underlines the fruit of Cabernet Sauvignon.”*

- Vert de Vin

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