

Château Leoville du Marquis de Las Cases 2018

CSPC# 813891

750mlx6

14.49% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Cabernet Franc, 9% Merlot.
Appellation	Saint Julien
Classification	Second Growth. Deuxième Grand Cru Classe in 1855.
Website	http://www.domaines-delon.com/en/leoville-chateau_leoville_las_cases_histoire.html
General Info	Chateau Leoville Las Cases is a second growth Bordeaux estate located on the northern end of the Saint-Julien appellation adjacent to the Gironde River. Leoville Las Cases is a perfect example of why the 1855 Bordeaux classification desperately needs to be updated. Although rated a second growth, Leoville Las Cases consistently produces wine of first growth quality. Like its next-door neighbor, Chateau Latour, Leoville Las Cases maintains a reputation for making stellar wine even in difficult vintages. It is the undisputed crown jewel of St. Julien, and unequivocally one of the best wines in Bordeaux.
Winemaker	Jean Hubert Delon
Vintage	On the Saint-Julien terroirs, budburst began slowly. This was followed by rapid vegetative growth, due to humid and hot conditions. After a hot and dry summer, the harvest was spread over three weeks, without any worry or precipitation, giving a perfect maturity. The wines of the 2018 vintage offer a beautifully accomplished maturity and stand as promises of a very long ageing potential. They are powerful, exceptionally structured, and full bodied, complex and opulent but perfectly balanced, with an outstanding freshness and a glorious finesse.
Vineyards	The vineyards of Léoville-Las-Cases lie in the northernmost tip of the St Julien appellation, abutting the Gironde, and only separated from those of Château Latour to the north by the <i>Juillac</i> , which drains into the <i>Gironde</i> . Whereas the other Léoville vineyards, those of Barton and Poyferré, consist of a patchwork of numerous plots, those of Las-Cases are largely concentrated in this single block. This is the <i>Grand Clos</i> , a walled vineyard, the stone wall contiguous with that running around Latour, the highlight of which is the stone archway surmounted by the lion of Las-Cases, which can also be found above the doorway to the tasting room at the <i>château</i> (above), and which also graces the label. Totalling over 200 acres, Leoville Las Cases vineyards are comprised of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14.5% Merlot, and .5% Cabernet Franc.
Harvest	18th September to 10th October 2018
Maturation	The fruit is harvested by hand, usually by a team of workers from Spain, before transport to the <i>chai</i> , where the berries are destemmed before a gentle pressing and then fermented under temperature-controlled conditions. The fermentation vessels include a fascinating mix of wooden, cement and stainless-steel vats. When finished the wine is pumped from the <i>chai</i> to the barrel cellar on the other side of the road through an underground pipe. Aged in 85% new oak barrels.
Tasting Notes	The Grand Vin is the product of exceptional terroirs from the former Léoville estate. These terroirs are located mainly in the Clos Léoville Las Cases, which you pass as you leave Saint-Julien village for Pauillac. They extend over nearly 60ha producing Cabernet Sauvignons and Cabernet Francs with a complex, polished expression and characteristics which are totally unique to the Grand Vin of Léoville du Marquis de Las Cases and have been widely recognized for years.
Serve with	Leoville Las Cases 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.
Production	10,000 cases made.
Cellaring	Drink 2028-2042



Scores/Awards **97 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2021
97-100 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2019
99 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2021
98-100 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019
99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2021
99-100 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019
96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2019
18.5 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2019
99 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2020
99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2021
98-100 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019
17+ points - Farr Vintner - April 2019
96 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - March 2021
95-97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - November 2019
97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2021
95-98 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2019
100 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2021
98-100 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2019
19.5+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2019
19.5 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - April 2019
100 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - May 2021
96 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com (score only) - March 2019
98 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2019
99 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - November 2020
18 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - June 2019

Reviews

“Reserved, even reticent, at first, but like a cold fireplace brought back to life it slowly reveals beautifully handcrafted notes of cassis, plum reduction and blackberry puree along with hints of charcoal, warm cast iron and sweet bay leaf. A violet note chimes on the seriously long finish, adding a tantalizing treble note. A precise, regal, terroir-driven wine. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2028 through 2042. 10,000 cases made,”
- JM, Wine Spectator

“This is backward and dense, with thickly layered plum, blackberry, fig and blueberry reduction flavors wrapped liberally in warm ganache and melted licorice notes. A long echo of smoldering charcoal emerges at the very end. There's a lot to resolve here as the rich and austere sides are still melding, but the extra amplitude doesn't distort anything; it just all goes to 11.”
- JM, Wine Spectator

“The 2018 Léoville Las Cases is composed of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Cabernet Franc and 9% Merlot, harvested September 15 to October 4 with yields of 35.5 hectoliters per hectare, it has 14.49% alcohol and was aged in 90% new barriques. Deep purple-black colored, it needs a fair bit of coaxing to reveal striking scents of blackcurrant pastilles, wild blueberries, and redcurrant jelly, giving way to notions of crushed rocks, lavender, Indian spices, unsmoked cigars and black truffles, plus a provocative waft of rose oil. The full-bodied palate is densely laden with black fruit preserves and earthy layers, accented by bright, lively red berry and floral sparks. It has a rock-solid frame of firm, ripe, grainy tannins, and bold freshness, finishing very long and wonderfully minerally. The tannins are so beautifully approachable even at this youthful stage, making it delicious to drink now, but afford it 5-6 years in bottle to allow those finer nuances to emerge and drink it over the next 40+ years. Drink 2026-2066.”
- LPB, Wine Advocate

“We produced great Cabernet Franc this year,” Directeur Général Pierre Graffeuille told me during my visit to Léoville Las Cases. Even though only 3% of the press wine was added back, he was also absolutely glowing about the quality of this too. And he should be—the finished blend for the 2018 Léoville Las Cases is yet another triumph for this great estate. Composed of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Cabernet Franc and 9% Merlot, harvested September 15 to October 4 with yields of 35.5 hectoliters per hectare, it has 14.49% alcohol and will be aged in barriques, 90% new. Very deep purple-black in color, it is a little closed to begin, slowly emerging from the glass to reveal subtle woodsmoke, violets, tilled soil and underbrush scents over a core of warm cassis, wild blueberries and redcurrant jelly plus hints of rare beef and iron ore. Full-bodied, rich, super concentrated

Reviews *and bursting with latent energy, this is an atomic bomb waiting to go off in your mouth. It has a rock-solid foundation of firm, very ripe, very finely grained tannins and bold freshness supporting the muscular fruit through the epically long, amazingly nuanced finish. Simply breathtaking.”*
- LPB, Wine Advocate

“An elegant, complex nose of blackberries, blueberries and herbal and spice notes with dark-chocolate and earthy undertones. Violets, flowers, and graphite, too. It’s full-bodied with firm, layered tannins and a crushed-stone undertone throughout the fresh, velvety and layered palate. Very complex, muscular and formed. The finish is endless. Lowest percentage of press wine ever in this. So deep. Try after 2027.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“OMG. This shows amazing depth of fruit and density. Full-bodied and so layered with incredible fruit and power. Blackberries. Blueberries. Violets. Hints of dried flowers. Fantastic fruit and tannins, yet agile and energetic. The château says 2016 plus, plus.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“It is the tannins that mark out this powerful wine, presenting a fine balancing act between a firm structure and rich dark fruit flavors. It is the epitome of elegant Saint-Julien, with a welcome mix of weight and freshness. Barrel Sample: 96-98”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Cabernet Franc, 9% Merlot. 90% new oak, pH 3.65. Barrel sample. Black core with narrow purple rim. A moment of hush needed here. So dark and so intense but also with incredible beauty in its restraint. Silky even with so many layers of tannin. pH 3.65 – quite a miracle in 2018. So dry but so not drying. The freshness from both the pH and the tannins. So fine, it just slides across the palate even if the tannin level is high. A wine of great power and restraint, and tannic finesse. Opens to a tiny note of wild herbs even though it is perfectly ripe, more aromatic as it opens. (JH)”

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“This has such a textured, ripe, plump and poised black fruit character that is clear from the aromatics alone. Mouth filling with huge texture and density, full of licorice root, black chocolate shavings and cocoa pod with crème de cassis edging. This is delicious and has chewy tannins that you can pick up with a shovel. One of the 'wines of the vintage'. Only 2% of press wine (unusually low, as it can go up to 15% in some years). It grips on tight to the finish - extremely impressive. 90% new oak. Drinking Window 2028 – 2050”

- JA, Decanter.com

“Stylistically different, but not far off from the level of quality found in the perfect 2016, this is a future legendary vintage of Leoville Las Cases. As you begin to nose the wine you find a boatload of crème de cassis, Cuban cigars, smoke, forest leaf, tobacco, blackberry, coffee bean, flowers, and earthy aromas. Full-bodied, rich, and dense, the wine meshes power with soft, supple, round, rich layers of fruit that feel just great as they coat your palate. Long and intense, comparing this with the 2016 and 2019 over the decades is going to be a lot of fun. The wine was made from a blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot and 9% Cabernet Franc, 14.5 ABV.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“With all its fresh fruits and leafy notes, this wine reminds me of walking into a forest after a massive rain fall. Add to that a bushel of ripe fruit, tobacco and a smoky campfire and you get the idea. The wine is powerful, dense, full-bodied, and intensely concentrated. The fruit has so much lift, it's hard to believe this is over 14% in alcohol! Mouth-filling, fresh and spicy, the peppery Cabernet Sauvignon melds strength with vigor, purity and length and the wine settles in for a finish of over 50 seconds. The tasting I cannot wait to experience in a few years pairs the 2018 with the 2016 in blind conditions! The wine was made from a blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot and 9% Cabernet Franc, reaching 14.49% alcohol with a pH of 3.65. The harvest took place from September 18 to October 10.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews

“Very deep and opaque in colour. The nose is toasty and spicy, with cloves, nutmeg, and cassis. The palate is heady and rich on entry with inky black fruit and monolithic, firm tannins. Full of spice, there are notes of roasted coffee bean, star anise and clove to complement the blackcurrant fruit. This is impressively rich but very dense in tannin at this stage. A long finish promises more to come, but this is another Leoville Las Cases that will require significant cellaring before reaching its peak.”

- Farr Vintners

“The 2018 Léoville–Las Cases, which was picked at 35.5hl/ha and matured in 90% new oak, still shows the exuberant floral bouquet that I remarked upon from barrel, featuring violets and (less so) lavender scents that complement the multilayered black fruit. On initial pouring, after a 60 minute decant, it blossoms and evolves greater delineation and poise. The palate is beautifully balanced with silky-smooth tannins that frame the plush, quite heady mixture of red and black fruit. Initially robust, over the ensuing hours it mellows nicely, though it retains the backbone and symmetry you expect from this redoubtable Saint-Julien. An exquisite wine that will age effortlessly over 25–40 years. Drink 2024-2050.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2018 Léoville Las-Cases was picked from 15 September and 4 October at 35.5hl/ha and then matured in 90% new oak. This has the lowest pressed wine in history at only two or three percent. This has one of the most floral bouquets that I can recall on a Léoville Las-Cases at this stage with lavender and violet scents combining with the pretty black fruit, gaining intensity all the time in the glass. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannins, a more rounded Las-Cases with plenty of plush red and black fruit and a silky finish that caresses the mouth. It is a lovely and comparatively more approachable Las-Cases that is charming from start to finish. It is not quite up there with the ethereal 2016, though it is not too far off. Drink 2024-2050.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2018 Léoville Las Cases is a very sensual wine. Silky and nuanced, the 2018 exudes extraordinary finesse from start to finish. The 2018 is a bit closed in on itself at first, but then again, that is Las Cases. At the same time, the tannins are nowhere as brooding as they once were. Inky dark fruit, crème de cassis, mocha and a whole range of savory Cabernet nuances run through a dense, packed Las Cases that is all class. The 2018 is 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Cabernet Franc, 9% Merlot and that spent 21 months in oak, 90% new. One of the recent developments at Las Cases has been a decrease in the use of press wine, about 2.7% for the 2018 versus the average of 5-10% and the 15% or so that was the norm in the 1980s. I imagine that, plus the ripeness that is common these days, goes a long way towards explaining the seductive quality of many recent vintages. This is a fabulous effort from proprietor Jean-Hubert Delon and his team. 2028 – 2058.”

- AG, Vinous

“The 2018 Léoville Las Cases is a rich, sumptuous, exotic wine in 2018. Plush fruit and suave, silky tannins give the 2018 a level of textural richness that is unusual for a young Léoville Las Cases. Crème de cassis, lavender, mint and sweet spice all build in this extraordinarily beautiful wine. I can't recall tasting a young Las Cases with this much immediacy and sheer allure. The 2018 Las Cases has a very bright future. It is also one of the unquestioned stars of the vintage. In 2018, the blend is 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Cabernet Franc and 9% Merlot.”

- AG, Vinous

“Pure magic and one of the finest expressions of this estate I could imagine, as well as a perfect wine, the 2018 Château Léoville Las Cases comes from a mix of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, and 9% Cabernet Franc that spent 19 months in (I believe) all new French oak. Its dense purple color is followed by a profound wine loaded with notions of crème de cassis, lead pencil shavings, melon, crushed stone, tobacco, and violets. Full-bodied, concentrated, and massive on the palate, yet also incredibly well delineated and precise, it has a wonderful mix of seemingly ripe, sunny fruit from a warm year yet the minerality, purity, and precision of a cooler year. This wine is going to be just about immortal; however, do your best to hide bottles for a solid 10-15 years.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“A candidate for the wine of the vintage is the 2018 Léoville Las Cases. My notes on this incredible wine are laced with expletives that I, unfortunately, can't repeat here. Safe to say, however, it's one of the greatest young Bordeaux I've been lucky enough to taste. Based on a blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, and 9% Cabernet Franc, from yields of 35.5 hectoliters per hectare, that will spend 19 months in barrel, it offers

a massive bouquet of crème de cassis, lead pencil shavings, crushed violets, tobacco, and a liquid rock-like minerality. Pure magic on the palate as well, with full-bodied richness, building structure, and a seamless, weightless, yet powerful mouthfeel, it has everything you could want from a wine. It has the purity and balance to drink well in 7-8 years (I wouldn't hold it against you if couldn't wait that long) and will keep for 50 years or more. For the tech geeks out there, this hit 14.49% alcohol, 3.65 pH, and an IPT of 80."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"(80 Cabernet Sauvignon, 11 Cabernet Franc, 9 Merlot) | 90% new oak | 14.49% alc | 80 IPT Las Cases manages, yet again, to make one of the most composed and complete wines of the year. Following on from a sensational nose, a super-complex initial burst of fruit hits the palate and it left me reeling, while I desperately tried to compute what was going on. There is a coolness here which balances the exuberance on the palate, and it is magical. In complete contrast to Ducru, this is a Zen-like wine with very fine length and serious definition. On the face of it the blend, the alcohol and oak look very similar to that of Ducru's but the flavour is the antithesis and I adore the fact that two great estates have made such exquisite but contrasting wines in this vintage. Already very complex, there is every sign that this will turn out to be one of the truly great vintages for Las Cases. I know that this is a relatively forward style of wine for this venerable Château, but I would still bet that patience rewards those who wait. There is so much depth and harmony in this wine it would be a shame to drink it before every nook and cranny can be fully explored."

- MJ, matthewjukes.com
