

## Leoville du Marquis de Las Cases 1988

CSPC# 766137

Gift pack: 750mlx6 (various vintages)

13.0% alc./vol.

### Grape Variety

Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc

### Appellation

Saint Julien

### Website

<http://www.domaines-delon.com/en>

### 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.

### 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 *Juillac*, which drains into the *Gironde*. 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 *Grand Clos*, 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 *château* (above), and which also graces the label. Totalling over 200 acres, Leoville Las Cases is comprised of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14.5% Merlot, and .5% Cabernet Franc.

### Maturation

The fruit is harvested by hand, usually by a team of workers from Spain, before transport to the *chai*, 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 *chai* to the barrel cellar on the other side of the road through an underground pipe. Here it is transferred into oak *barrique*, between 50% and 100% new for the *grand vin*, Château Léoville-Las-Cases.

### Tasting Notes

Bricked medium dark red color; very aromatic, tobacco, cedar, tart currant nose; mature, tart currant, cedar, tobacco, mineral palate with medium acidity; medium-plus finish.

### Serve with

Roast lamb, red meat in general, duck or goose, game.

### Cellaring

Drink 1997-2020

### Scores/Awards

- 95 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2009
- 90 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - May 31, 1999
- 92 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - November 30, 1988
- 95 points** - HS, Wine Spectator - February 15, 1992
- 89 points** - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - October 31, 1991
- 93 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #109 - February 1997
- 92 points** - Robert Parker, Bordeaux Book 4<sup>th</sup> Edition - January 2003
- 92 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #101 - October 1995
- 92 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #88 - August 1993
- 92 points** - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #85 - February 1993
- 90 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 2011
- 90 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - March 2008
- 92-94 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 1999
- 92 points** - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar (score only)
- 17.5 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2011



**93 points** - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, [asianpalate.com](http://asianpalate.com) - March 27, 2014

**89 points** - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)

**19 points** - La Revue du Vin France (score only)

**Reviews**

*"Wow. Really youthful on the nose, with currant, blackberry and hints of vanilla bean. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and lots of mint and fruit. Goes on for a long time. Surprisingly youthful. Give it a couple of years. So focused and beautiful. —'88/'98 Bordeaux blind retrospective (2008). Best after 2010."*

- JS, Wine Spectator

*"Very fresh aromas of dried cherries, blackberries and wet earth. Full-bodied, with extremely well-integrated, silky tannins and a fresh blackberry and mint aftertaste. Slightly dry and funky on the finish. Try it a bit later. A Las Cases that's rather rustic. --1989 Bordeaux horizontal. Best after 2003."*

- JS, Wine Spectator

*"An outstanding Las Cases, though completely forgotten by many people. Full-bodied, with velvety tannins and lovely tobacco, violet and berry aromas and flavors. Extremely fruity finish. --1988 Bordeaux horizontal. Best after 2000\_\_."*

- JS, Wine Spectator

*"Firm, focused and full of brilliantly articulated red currant, raspberry and vanilla aromas and flavors that extend into a very long finish, echoing fruit and cedar. Tannins are well integrated. --Léoville Las Cases vertical. Best from 1998 through 2005"*

- HS, Wine Spectator

*"Smells wonderful, with layers of ripe, rich currant, black cherry, tobacco and spice flavors shaded by toasty vanilla notes that add complexity and dimension. The tannins are tight and biting, but the flavors manage to peek through. Needs until at least 1996. Tasted twice."*

- JS, Wine Spectator

*"This wine continues to show brilliantly and is certainly a more successful effort than the more renowned and expensive 1989. The color is a dark, murky garnet/purple. The wine shows notes of underbrush, fruitcake, cedar, black cherries, and currants. The wine still shows some moderate tannins in the mouth, but the fruit is sweet, the wine is expansive, and the overall impression is a very symmetrical, medium to full-bodied, rather classic Medoc. Anticipated maturity: Now-2020. Last tasted, 12/01."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*"This tasting consisted of each of the varietal components of Las Cases, followed by the final blend for Leoville-Las Cases. The weedy 1988 Merlot reveals a light ruby color with some lightening at the edge. Aromas of herbal tea clash with sweet fruit in this medium-bodied, high acid wine. The elegant Cabernet Franc is outstanding. It offers a medium dark ruby color, followed by a super-intense, penetrating fragrance of minerals, blackcurrants, spice, and a subtle mint note, as well as finesse. This was an impressive showing for a varietal component. The tough, backward Cabernet Sauvignon is tannic and closed, revealing muscle and strength. Tasted alone, it is nothing more than a building block for the final wine. The disappointing Petit Verdot possesses a vegetal character, astringent, harsh tannin, hollowness, and a lack of fruit and charm.*

*Remarkably, the 1988 Leoville-Las Cases has always been one of the most successful wines of the vintage. In this tasting it clearly outshone all its component parts. With a rich, spicy, fruitcake, cedary, cassis-scented nose, this medium-bodied, moderately tannic Las Cases offers attractive sweetness and suppleness on the palate, a well-delineated and focused personality, and a moderately tannic finish. The wine is just beginning to reveal some aromatic development. It will benefit from another 2-5 years of cellaring and will keep for 20+ years."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*"The 1988 is a star of the vintage. The full-intensity bouquet of pure black-cherries and toasty new oak represents the classic aromatic profile of Las Cases. Beautifully balanced, medium-bodied, concentrated flavors exhibit wonderful ripeness and excellent tannins. The 1988 Leoville-Las-Cases avoids the harsh, dry astringent tannins and vegetal taste of many 1988s. Today, the 1988 looks under-valued. Anticipated maturity: 1995-2020. Last tasted, 5/93."*

- RP, Wine Advocate

**Reviews** *“The 1988 is one of the true stars of the vintage. The full-intensity bouquet of black-cherries and toasty new oak is high class. Beautifully balanced, medium-bodied, concentrated flavors exhibit impressive ripeness and high tannins. The rich and full 1988 Leoville-Las-Cases avoids the harsh, dry astringent taste of many 1988s. Anticipated maturity: 1995-2020.”*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*“Tasted at the Las-Cases off-line at The Square. The 1988s are drinking beautifully at the moment and the Las-Cases is no exception. It has an exuberant nose of blackberry, brambly bushes, woodland, cedar and a touch of crushed stone with very fine precision. The palate is not powerful but very focused with a powdery texture, good acidity and crisp blackberry and raspberry fruit interlaced with cigar box, thyme and cedar. Although it does not have great length or great complexity, it is a lovely Saint Julien that should hold up well for another decade.”*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“A noticeably deep garnet core with thin brick rim. The nose is very attractive: dry, leafy with notes of cedar, smoke, green pepper and forest floor. Just a touch of greenness but that merely complements the aromatics. The palate is medium bodied with noticeable acidity, perhaps just a little lean and linear, with notes of sour cherry, redcurrant and cedar. But it a very natural sense of balance, great poise on the finish and would serve as an ideal wine with a simple meat dish. Moderate length. Very fine. Drink now-2015. Tasted December 2007.”*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“Dark ruby with slight pink rim. Opulent rich blackcurrant/cassis nose. A lot of class and finesse on the palate. Very supple. Great depth and complexity with some well-integrated new oak giving a vanilla edge on the finish. Very classic Bordeaux. Wonderful Tasted July 1999”*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“Just mellowing ruby. Served immediately after a Pichon Lalande 1996 and seemed slightly lighter bodied and definitely had more acidity. But for a Las Cases from a slow-maturing vintage, this is surprisingly ready to drink. Lots of minerals and a dry St-Julien finish with fully dissipated tannins. 17.5/20 points.”*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*“A beautiful Las Cases vintage that is at its peak. There is freshness and firm tannins despite being 26 years old. Wonderful array of flavours from tobacco and cedar to earth and dried plums. The wine is in fine shape with ability to age for another decade. Tasted in Bordeaux, France. Maturity: Drink.”*

- JCL, asianpalate.com