

# Château Léoville Barton 2020

CSPC# 811820

750mlx6

13.6% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety**

85.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14.5% Merlot

**Appellation**

Saint Julien

**Classification**

Second Growth. Deuxieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.

**Website**

<http://www.leoville-barton.com/en/>

**General Info**

In 1725, ex-pat Irishman Thomas Barton founded what was to become Barton & Guestier in Bordeaux. It was, however, his grandson, Hugh Barton, who cemented the family's fortunes in Bordeaux. Under Hugh's custodianship, the business thrived. Even while living in exile during the French Revolution, with loyal local partners assisting him, the business flourished. In 1821, he purchased Château Langoa and, in 1826, a portion of the Léoville estate, renaming it Château Léoville-Barton. Hugh's great-great-grandson, Ronald Barton, was the first Barton since Hugh to live in France. From 1924 until 1940, leaving only during World War II, he ensured both properties flourished. He returned in 1945 and, with boundless optimism, managed to restore the estates to their former glory. Ronald Barton inherited the property in 1927. He in turn donated it to his nephew Anthony in 1983. Today the vineyards are jointly owned by Anthony Barton, his daughter Lilian Barton-Sartorius and her children Mélanie and Damien, thus making eight generations of Barton family at Léoville Barton. Traditional methods of wine making are maintained to produce a typical Saint-Julien of elegance and distinction.

**Winemaker**

Anthony Barton - owner/winemaker; Melanie Barton - Assistant winemaker.  
Technical Director: François Brehan.

**Vintage**

2020 - a year of more than the usual challenges. In a few words, 2020 is a high-quality vintage of less than normal quantity. The mild and wet spring led to early flowering which in turn turned into a hot summer including over fifty days of drought, and a heat spike during the summer. The diminished yields of the year resulted from mildew pressure in the spring and a few hail-producing thunderstorms, and in fact is one of the lowest yield vintages in the last decade. The heat throughout but particularly at the end of the summer led to concentrated fruit. And of course, COVID 19 led to most critics' inability to travel to the various Chateau or en premiere events to taste, most were able to taste from home. Not an ideal circumstance but given the year's weather and the expertise of these top producers, critics are overall excited and pleased with the prospects of the 2020 vintage.

**Harvest**

14 and 15 September then from 21st to 28 September.  
Yield: 34hl/ha. Manual harvest.

**Vineyards**

Léoville-Barton's 50ha of vineyard is located in the central part of the appellation along the Gironde river. The soil composition is mostly gravel with a subsoil of clay. The plantings are 74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, and 3% Cabernet Franc with the vines averaging 38 years of age

**Winemaking**

The wines are fermented in 35 temperature-controlled stainless-steel vats of varying sizes, then macerated for three to four weeks, before selection is made.  
60% new oak barrels.

Aged 16-18 months in French oak barrels in a cellar kept at a constant temperature of 15°C.

**Tasting Notes**

Intense purple color. The nose is complex revealing aromas of black fruits, currant, and blackcurrant. On the palate, the wine is incredibly smooth and juicy while being subtly spicy. It reveals raspberry and plum notes with elegant acidity and fine tannins.

**Serve with**

Leoville Barton is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Chateau Leoville Barton is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.

**Production**

9,100 cases made.

**Cellaring**

Drink 2027-2055



**Scores/Awards** **96 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2023  
**95+ points** - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023  
**93-95 points** - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021  
**96 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - December 2022  
**96-97 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021  
**96 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 2022  
**97-99 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021  
**18 points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021  
**95 points** - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2023  
**94 points** - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021  
**95 points** - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - January 2023  
**96 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023  
**95-97 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021  
**94 points** - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021  
**94-97 points** - Farr Vintners - May 2021  
**95 points** - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2023  
**94-96 points** - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021  
**96 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2023  
**94-96 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021  
**97+ points** - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023  
**95 points** - Wilfred Wong, Wine.com - January 2023  
**94 points** - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2023  
**94-96 points** - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021  
**96-97 points** - Vert de Vin - May 2021  
**96 points** - Andreas Larsson, Tasted - May 2021  
**95-98 points** - Ian D'Agata, Terroirsense.com - May 2021  
**93-94 points** - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021  
**18 points** - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2021

**Reviews** *"A bold, strapping young wine, with vivid plum, cassis, kirsch, and black licorice notes that meld steadily as they cruise through, carried by a bolt of graphite and finishing with a flourish of violet, anise, and apple wood. Mouthwatering in the end. Built for the cellar. Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Best from 2030 through 2045. 9,100 cases made."*  
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"A superb wine, the 2020 Léoville Barton exhibits generous aromas of blackberries and crème de cassis mingled with hints of licorice, pencil shavings and classy new oak. Medium to full-bodied, broad, and fleshy, with a concentrated core of fruit, sweet tannins, and a nicely defined finish, it bears some similarities with the estate's demonstrative 2000 vintage, even if the two growing seasons were quite different. I suspect it will tighten up with more time in bottle, hence the plus sign next to my score, but right now, the 2020 is unusually accessible out of the gates."*  
- WK, Wine Advocate

*"The 2020 Léoville Barton reveals a deep purple-black color, springing from the glass with vivacious scents of crushed black cherries, cassis, and black raspberries, plus hints of cinnamon toast, wild sage, red roses, and saffras. The medium to full-bodied palate is packed with muscular black fruits, framed by grainy tannins, and loads of freshness, finishing long and perfumed."*  
- LPB, Wine Advocate

*"Aromas of dark berries, ash, tar, blackcurrants, and lead pencil, following through to a medium to full body, with firm and integrated tannins and a medium, chewy finish. Needs four to six years to soften and come together. Very tight and nicely structured."*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"A full-bodied red that builds on the palate with lots of blackberry and blueberry character, as well as chocolate. Mineral and graphite undertones. Chewy, yet very integrated. Excellent, as expected."*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

**Reviews** *“Dense and with velvety tannins, this wine has great structure and concentration without being too weighty. This solid wine is sure to age. Drink from 2027.”*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“The wine shows both elegance and great richness. It is a poised and ripe wine, full of impressive black fruits and generous tannins. The fine structure gives considerable potential for the long term.”*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“Full bottle 1,345 g. Cask sample taken 6 April. 85.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14.5% Merlot. Aged 18 months in barrel (60% new). Lustrous purple. Minerally, stony, saline nose. Really remarkably opulent on palate entry which almost distracts from those massive tannins underneath. There's just a suggestion of vintage port tannins here (not the sweetness). Very fine winemaking indeed. I have to admit I was tempted to swallow this; it was so majestic. I don't remember being as bowled over by a Léoville Barton at this early stage before. Lovely, confident, persistent finish. Such grace! 18/20 points.”*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*“Liquorice on the nose with blue fruit aromas - cool and expressive. Quite tight on the palate, the tannins making the impact right now and the style still very much on the savoury edge. Good acidity here, but it's coming off a little sharp, giving angles to the palate though given some cushioning by ripe tannins. I do love the red and black berry elements alongside pine notes, cedar, coffee, liquorice and tobacco, the wood flexing its muscles. Softly classic with nice St-Julien character.”*

- GH, Decanter.com

*“Packed full of black chocolate shavings, liquorice, cocoa bean, concentrated cassis, and bilberry fruits. Good quality will bed down and age extremely well, with depth and character but also classicism. As with many in this corner of the Médoc peninsula in this vintage, the austerity to the tannins is very much to the fore right now. May be up scored when in bottle. Drinking Window 2029 – 2045.”*

- JA, Decanter.com

*“Silky tannins, quiet classicism, juicy black fruits, crushed rocks, liquorice and mint, beautiful definition. What an example of how good St Julien can be in this vintage, with rose petal and tomato leaf aromatics also. Brilliant. Right up alongside their excellent 2019. Good old Leoville Barton, a reliable old friend that never lets you down. 60% new oak.”*

- JA, janeanson.com

*“Deeply colored, this is a powerful wine with all the fresh, ripe, black, and dark red fruits you could hope for, along with nuances of tobacco leaf, cedar, flowers, cigar box, espresso, smoke and creme de cassis to boot. This is the perfect blend of classy and classic, with ripe, elegant, tannins, length, purity, vibrancy, and complexity that insures this is going to offer fabulous drinking for decades. Drink from 2027-2060.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“Inky in color, it takes only one sniff to see how much ripe fruit is packed in here. Blackberry, currants, smoky cherries, tobacco leaf, cedar, flowers and creme de cassis aromas come on strong. The wine is full-bodied, bold, powerful, tannic, balanced, and fresh. The palate filling finish is long, energetic, rich, and expansive. This is a superb vintage of Leoville Barton that will need at least a decade in the cellar and will age and evolve for another 2-3 decades after that.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“The 2020 is a blend of 85.5% Cabernet Sauvignon and 14.5% Merlot that will be aged for 18 months in 60% new French oak. Harvest took place from 14th-28th September. Yields are low at 34hl/ha. Deep purple in colour. A dense, brooding nose of cassis, menthol, and cedar with a little savoury cedar. The palate is brambly and rich, full of cassis, liquorice, and toasted spice. The tannins are grippy and full, offering ample structure for long-term ageing. Pure dark fruit lingers on the finish of this impressive, dense wine.”*

- Farr Vintners

## Reviews

*"In some ways, the 2020 Léoville Barton has become more serious than when I encountered it from barrel. It's lost its puppy fat and delivers quite intense blackberry, blueberry and incense aromas, a little oak to be assimilated yet still very focused. The palate is medium-bodied with a "coolness" on the entry, taut yet deep with a core of black fruit that lacquers that mouth. It's like a Bentley purring on the finish that is very persistent - an outstanding Léoville Barton."*

- NM, Vinous

*"The 2020 Léoville Barton was picked September 15–16 and matured in 70% new oak. It is one of the best vintages that I have encountered in barrel. Wow! This shoots from the glass with beautifully defined black fruit, mineral-rich aromas, pixelated with laser-like focus. The palate is medium-bodied with chiseled tannins, a perfect line of acidity, layers of vibrant, vivacious black fruit and a very persistent finish that is pure class. If you don't have this in your cellar, then there will be a Léoville Barton-shaped hole to fill. Drink 2028-2055."*

- NM, Vinous

*"The 2020 Léoville Barton is compelling. It offers up a gorgeous mix of vintage 2020 intensity married to the classicism Léoville-Barton have come to expect. Blackberry, graphite, dried herbs, menthol, and dark spices abound. Whereas so many Saint-Julien are exuberant in 2020, Léoville-Barton is very much buttoned up, showing just a twinkle of mischief that lets you know the best is yet to come."*

- AG, Vinous

*"The 2020 Léoville-Barton marries the richness of the vintage with the classically restrained style that is so typical of Léoville-Barton. Graphite, licorice, and dark spices are all laced throughout a core of inky dark fruit. The 2020 is powerful and linear, with tons of depth lying in reserve, just waiting to emerge. I won't be surprised if Léoville-Barton is one of the last Saint-Julien to enter its prime."*

- AG, Vinous

*"The flagship from this great château, the 2020 Château Léoville Barton checks in as 85.5% Cabernet Sauvignon and 14.5% Merlot that saw 60% new French oak. It has fabulous aromatics of crème de cassis, graphite, liquid violets, spring flowers, and background oak. Full-bodied and concentrated on the palate, its purity of fruit is just about off the chart, it has a great mid-palate, and enough tannins to warrant 7-8 years of bottle age. This is another sensational wine from this team that will have 30-40 years of overall longevity. 97+"*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*"Deep dark ruby, opaque core, purple reflections, narrow rim. Fine herbal spices, tobacco and noble wood aromas lie beneath black wild berry fruit, cassis, and a hint of liquorice. Juicy, pronounced fruit, ripe cherries, ripe, supporting tannins, good freshness, chocolaty touch on the finish, good length, certain ageing potential."*

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

*"The 2020 Chateau Leoville Barton shows up with style, richness, and staying power. This wine—one of the chateaux's best to date—offers an excellent combination of ripe fruit, spice, and oaky notes. Pair it with pan-fried flank steak topped with minced shallots."*

- WW, Wine.com

*"On the nose, elegance with good complexity, richness (in control) and depth. Notes of fleshy blackberry, creamy strawberry and slightly brighter cassis combined with hints of graphite, spice, ripe/pulpy small fruits, racy minerality as well as discreet hints of nutmeg, saffron, a subtle hint of Cuban pepper and an imperceptible hint of salinity. The palate is fruity, fresh, elegant and offers delicacy (like a velvet glove), precision, a nice airy character, a tangy frame, subtlety, and a very fine/discreet tight grain. On the palate, expressing juicy/fresh blackberry, raspberry and more lightly ripe berry notes combined with hints of fresh vanilla, bright small red fruits, bright plum, fresh blond tobacco as well as a discreet hint of nutmeg, tonka bean, racy minerality/fresh gravel, fresh hazelnut, sweet spice, and bourbon vanilla (in the background). The tannins are fine, elegant, precise, racy and offer a little mellow. A nice persistence. A very fine texture on the finish/persistence. A gourmet taste on the finish/aftertaste."*

- Vert de Vin

**Reviews** *“Very dark and inky fruit, ripe blackberry, cassis, fine oak, and tobacco. Very nice density and weight with great proportions, a fine tannic freshness, layers of crunchy fruit, layered spiciness, and a long dense finish really classic Bordeaux at its best.”*

- AL, Tasted.com

*“(85% CS, 15% M; 34hl/ha; 13.6% ABV; 60% new). Inky purple; dense, closed, raw blackcurrant and subtle gravel; concentrated, medium- to full-bodied, muscular wine, firm in acidity and firmly tannic, a clear long-term prospect, but without the sinews of 2010, for example, crisply ripe blackcurrant in flavor, long to taste across the palate, with a notable tenacity rather than sheer size. Elegance, complexity, finesse, and length. A sort of 1996 with more matter? This will probably need a decade and a half to really mellow and “bouquet.” 2030–50+.”*

- MS, The World of Fine Wine

*“There can be no doubt that 2020 is an outstanding vintage for Château Léoville Barton. Inky-ruby. Brooding, massive wine that combines aromas and flavours of roasted plum, framboise, blackberry, minerals, espresso, and oak-derived spices. Big, full-bodied, and extremely powerful, this displays great intensity and the sappiness of fruit while managing to convey an air of refinement. Really chewy with a ton of extract, but with plenty of ripe underlying fruit that outdistances the firm, massive but noble tannins. Closes very long with a savory quality and boatloads of energy and focus.”*

- ID, terroirsense.com

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