

Château Leoville Poyferré 2016

CSPC# 814275

750mlx6

13.6% alc./vol.

CSPC# 749579

750mlx6

13.6% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, 2% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

St. Julien

Classification

Second Growth. Grand Cru Classe in 1855.

Website

<http://www.leoville-poyferre.fr/english/news.html>

General Info

With origins dating back to 1638, Léoville was the largest vineyard in the Médoc region at the time of the French Revolution. Léoville Poyferré springs from various divisions and successions in 1840. Its outstanding quality wines gained early recognition when it was ranked 2nd Growth in the 1855 classification. Château Léoville Poyferré was acquired in 1920 by the Cuvelier family. Château Léoville Poyferré was the Léoville that got left in the starting blocks in terms of reputation and in the quality of its wines.

Léoville Poyferré has been owned by the Cuvelier family (who also own Château Le Crock) since 1921, yet it was not until the 1970s, when Didier Cuvelier took control at the château, that quality began to improve. In the last 20 years, Didier, with the assistance of Michel Rolland since 1995, has turned Léoville-Poyferré into one of St-Julien's finest estates. Now up with the best of the St-Julien's but still selling at non-scary prices. Léoville Poyferré is classified as a 2ème Cru Classé.

Winemaker

Michel Rolland consults

Vintage

As the saying goes, "After the rain comes the sun". This rang true on June 21st, the first day of summer. Suddenly, as if by magic, the sun shone brightly and continued until harvest, bringing on a salutary dry spell after winter and a rainy spring. Sumptuous fruitiness, unctuousness of 2009, balance, and density of 2010... Such are the characteristics of 2016, with remarkable length on the palate, the seduction and elegance of one of the greatest vintages.

The 2016 winter was characterized by excessive rainfall: 513 mm, three times the average of the last 15 years. It was also exceptionally mild, with temperatures 2°C higher than the average of the last 15 years. A very early budbreak, observed in late February, was cause for concern.

A cool, damp spring ensued. Fortunately, temperatures dropped in March, slowing down the vegetative cycle. Flowering was homogeneous and rapid, over a 4-day period of beautiful weather with temperatures above 25°C. Fruit set was satisfactory and presaged a good volume for the harvest. Combined with humidity, conditions were conducive to the development of downy mildew. Absolute vigilance was required.

Everything changed on June 21st, the first day of summer, with the arrival of the sun and the return of normal seasonal temperatures. The months of July and August were particularly dry: just 20.4mm of precipitation, i.e., 5 times less than 2015 and 2014 and also, sunnier. The vines resisted the drought, yet the grape berries struggled to grow and complete an already late veraison. Fortunately, 41.4 mm of rain mid-September allowed the berries to resume the ripening process. The return of a persistent sun, accompanied by strong thermal amplitudes, refined the quality and the richness of the tannins. The grapes were harvested at optimum ripeness starting October 5th.

Vineyards

The various divisions throughout the history of the estate have split the vineyard of Léoville Poyferré into five large areas. They include all the main types of gravelly soil present in Saint Julien. This diversity contributes to the amplitude and complexity of the Léoville Poyferré wines. Léoville Poyferré has 80 hectares of vineyards planted with Cabernet Sauvignon (65%), Merlot (25%), Petit Verdot (8%) Cabernet Franc (2%).

Harvest

The harvest took place October 5 to October 20, 2016



Vinification	Léoville Poyferré traditionally produced the softest and most supple wine of the 3 Léoville's, yet in the last decade the wines have definitely put on weight and body. This is largely due to the grapes being harvested riper and later and because of the increased exposure to new oak in the maturation process. The wines are fermented in the 35 temperature-controlled stainless-steel vats of varying sizes, then macerated
Maturation	for three to four weeks, before selection is made. The <i>grand vin</i> is Château Léoville-Poyferré (20000 cases per annum), which goes into barrel where malolactic fermentation occurs. Typically, the oak is now 75% new each year.
Tasting Notes	Under outstanding climatic conditions, the important stages of the vegetative cycle proceeded very well. Our great terroir and the expertise of our winemaking team make 2016 an exceptional wine. Shining purple colour, this has extravagant aromas of dark chocolate and Moroccan spice. In the palate it is beautifully layered with the 33% Merlot in the blend creating a mouth-coating texture. A very layered wine, with lovely, sweet intensity. Flamboyant but poised and polished, this will give great pleasure.
Serve with	Leoville Poyferré 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 Poyferré is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted braised and grilled dishes. Chateau Leoville Poyferré is a perfect match with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms and pasta as well as cheese
Production	17,083 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2021-2050
Scores/Awards	<p>97 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2019</p> <p>95-98 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2017</p> <p>97+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate Interim Issue - November 2018</p> <p>95-97 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #230 - April 2017</p> <p>97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2019</p> <p>95-96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2017</p> <p>95 points/Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 2019</p> <p>17+ points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - October 2018</p> <p>17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - May 2018</p> <p>18 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2017</p> <p>98 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - October 2018</p> <p>96 points - Steven Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2017</p> <p>97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2018</p> <p>97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2017</p> <p>95 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2017</p> <p>17+ points - Farr Vintner - February 2017</p> <p>94-96 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2017</p> <p>96 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - January 2019</p> <p>97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - January 2019</p> <p>94-97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2017</p> <p>98 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2019</p> <p>95-97+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - November 2017</p> <p>18.5+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2017</p> <p>19-19.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - June 2017</p> <p>18 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - April 2017</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Richly layered, with a core of well-steeped plum, blackberry and black currant fruit flavors cruising through, flanked by ganache, sweet tobacco and warm tar notes. There's a plush, toasty coating but the wine's energy and nearly unbridled fruit will easily soak that up. A last echo of violet is further evidence of a lovely evolution ahead. Best from 2025 through 2040. 17,083 cases made."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"The deep well of gorgeous cassis, blueberry paste, and blackberry puree flavors will carry this for the long haul. Shows a terrific graphite underpinning and a flash of cold charcoal. This is a big one. Score range: 95-98"</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p>

Reviews *“Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2016 Léoville Poyferré hits the ground running with intense cassis, violets, dark chocolate, menthol and fragrant earth notions complemented by nuances of cigar box and smoked meats. Medium to full-bodied, the palate is charged with energetic, super intense black fruit and floral layers, beautifully supported with super firm, ripe, grainy tannins and seamless freshness. This liquid is simply alive in the mouth, culminating in an epically long finish that will leave your mouth practically tingling. WOW!”*
- LPB, Wine Advocate

“The 2016 Leoville-Poyferré is a blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 2% Cabernet Franc. Didier Cuvelier told me that color leached out naturally and he conducted an 8-day pre-fermentation maceration. Matured in 80% new oak with some malolactic in barrel, it has a typical bouquet for this estate with opulent but neatly controlled, billowing scents of black cherries, black plum, crème de cassis and violets. The palate is beautifully balanced with fine tannin, a killer line of acidity and perhaps one of the most harmonious Poyferré that I have encountered at this juncture. It just glides across the mouth and slips down the throat with consummate ease. Superb.”
- NM, Wine Advocate

“Wow. The power and depth to this wine is super with a full and fleshy palate, yet so tight and integrated with panache and energy. Chewy tannins yet seamless and melted in the wine. Extremely long and beautiful. This needs at least five to six years to resolve the steely tannins that run through this wine. Take a look from 2024. A blend of 61 per cent cabernet sauvignon, 27 per cent merlot, eight per cent merlot and four per cent cabernet franc.”
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“The buildup on the palate is impressive with blackberry and blueberry character. Plenty of currants, too. Full-bodied, linear and tight. Racy tannins and a long finish. Shows tension, depth, real raciness and pure finesse. A combination of the best from both 2009 and 2010.”
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“Ripe, bold fruits mark out this opulent wine. Its rich tannins are typical of the estate and of the vintage. Serious concentration is balanced with good acidity to give a generous wine that also has the structure for aging. Drink from 2025.”
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Dark crimson but slightly paler than the Ch Léoville Barton. Sweet, inky nose. But then good freshness on the palate. Neat and dry. Proper St-Julien.”
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 5% Petit Verdot. Lively and very fresh. Fine oak tannins but beautifully polished and refined. Perhaps just slightly too sweet for perfection but it should deliver a lot of pleasure! Great appetising, sweet, ink character on the end.”
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, 2% Cabernet Franc. Deep purple. Very deep. Really rich and winning. Much more mouth-filling than the other wines from this stable. Really fresh but broad and ripe. Great freshness. Long and beautifully balanced.”
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“Relatively closed right now, as are all the St-Juliens, this takes time to open in the glass but does so to reveal lots of northern Médoc character in the liquorice and brambly fruit puree, with touches of caramel and sweet cassis. It's hewn out of slate boulders with layers of tannin - a lovely construction that's deepened even further during ageing. 2% Cabernet Franc finishes the blend. Matured in 80% new oak. Michel Rolland consults. Drinking Window 2024 - 2040 (JA)”
- JA, Decanter.com

Reviews

"This is always a big, dramatic wine which does well in big vintages. Right through the palate you feel the beautiful architecture, and the beauty of 2016 means that the final impression is of a sophisticated but supremely balanced wine with a modern construction. Damsons and bilberries abound, with clear tension where the skin of the wine is pulled tightly over the drum. It is less of a 'classical' St-Julien than some this year, but it is entirely of itself, and excellent. The blend is 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 2% Cabernet Franc, with a full 55% of the overall production making it into the grand vin, which has 3.66pH. Michel Rolland has been consultant for many years, working closely alongside owner Didier Cuvelier. Drinking Window 2027 – 2050."

- SS, Decanter.com

"Deep in color, the wine is plush, rich, dense and sensuous. There is a purity of fruit that is easy to sense. The wine has vibrance, length and density, the tannins are supple and refined, allowing you to get the most out of the layers of fruit that just do not want to quit. I am tempted to add another point here, as this was so good. By the time the wine is in bottle, I just might!"

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Sophisticated and drizzled with opulence, these sexy, supple fruits and creamy tannins feel as good as they taste. This wine is endless in depth with a penetrating bullet of pure, silken fruit in the finish. Blending 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, the wine reached 13.6% alcohol with a pH of 3.66. The harvest took place October 5 to October 20, the Grand Vin representing 56% of the harvest."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"More than half of the production went into the Grand Vin in 2016, and the quality of the wine more than justifies it. Lively, perky and refreshing, it's the best Léoville-Poyferré since 2010, with plenty of structure, granular tannins, smoky oak and a core of crunch, dark berry fruit. 2026-36"

- TA, timatkin.com

"Like its neighbour Léoville Barton, Poyferré is always good value for money when first offered en primeur. Consultant oenologue Michel Rolland produces wines with a smoother, more fleshy character than the seriously structured wines of its neighbours. The result is a delicious St Julien that can usually charm early in its life and can stand the test of time. Plantings in the 80-hectare vineyard are 61% Cabernet Sauvignon, 27% Merlot, 8% Petit Verdot and 4% Cabernet Franc. The wine is usually a little more plump and exotic than the other two Léoville's. This year 55% of the total production will make the Grand Vin. 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 2% Cabernet Franc, the 2016 shows a very deep colour for the vintage. Rich with damson, almond and wood smoke on the nose. The palate is powerful and dense, with the ripe black fruit core frame by chunky, rich tannins. The firm and mouthcoating structure bring a spicy wood smoke but the fruit intensity adds notes of cream and sweet vanilla. Lifted by fresh acidity, the concentration and ripeness find notes of bramble fruits and clove on a long finish."

- Farr Vintners

"The black fruits on the nose are sweet the palate fleshy with ripe tannins mid richness. Fresher towards the back bramble and bilberry balance the rich black cherry and chocolate the finish has depth of fruit sweet and ripe. 2026-40"

- Derek Smedley MW

"The 2016 Léoville-Poyferré has a pH of 3.66 and an IPT level of 88. It seems to have tightened up since en primeur, now offering intense blackberry, bilberry and veins of blue fruit; there's a little gloss here but the terroir comes through. The smooth, sensual palate is medium bodied with ripe tannin, very well-judged acidity and great substance and style on the finish. Undoubtedly, this is one of the most sophisticated Poyferré in recent years. 13.6% alcohol. Drink 2023-2048."

- NM, Vinous

Reviews *“The 2016 Léoville-Poyferré is fabulous. Rich, ample and dramatic in bearing, the 2016 possesses striking intensity and vertical lift. The tannins certainly need at least a few years in bottle to soften, but there is so much to look forward to. Graphite, menthol, lavender and licorice complement the inky blue/purplish fruit beautifully. The bottled wine has a bit more Cabernet Sauvignon and less Merlot than the en primeur sample. I tasted the 2016 three times. Its least favorable showing was at the château. For readers and proprietors who think wines always taste better on site...they don't. Drink 2026-2046”*
- AG, Vinous

“A huge, soaring wine, the 2016 Léoville-Poyferré is powerful, vivid and captivating. Vertical tannins and massive concentration belie the wine's 13.6% alcohol. The more virile, brooding side of Saint-Émilion comes through in this decidedly potent wine. In 2016, many Saint-Julien possess incredible richness and voluptuousness. Léoville-Poyferré is arguably the most tannic and brooding of the wines of the appellation. I suspect the 2016 will take many years to be at its very best. A rush of dark fruit, leather, smoke, tobacco and chocolate add the final shades of nuance.”
- AG, Vinous

“Tasted on four separate occasions where this wine rated 97+, 98, 98, and 99, the 2016 Château Léoville-Poyferré is a brilliant bottle of wine and is certainly in the same league as the 2000, 2003, 2009, and 2010. Made from 62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, and the balance Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc, aged in 80% new oak, this brilliantly concentrated, full-bodied, opulent beast of a wine offers a heavenly bouquet of crème de cassis, blackcurrants, smoked earth, tobacco leaf, and ample crushed rocks. It's certainly one of the most flamboyant and opulent wines in the vintage, yet it remains perfectly balanced, with masses of polished tannins, no hard edges, and a fabulous finish. It will be drinkable in 3-4 years yet keep for 3-4 decades.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“Looking at the 2016 Leoville Poyferré from barrel, this deep, inky-colored Saint-Julien doesn't pull any punches and boasts serious amounts of ripe currant, blueberry, and cassis-like fruits, liquid violets, crushed rocks and graphite on the nose. A rich, full-bodied, prodigious barrel sample that has a stacked mid-palate, ripe, sweet tannin and a blockbuster finish, it's going to need a decade to shed its baby fat, but it has thrilling purity of fruit and is an awesome wine. 2026 – 2066.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“A stunning wine made from a 'sunny vintage with cold nights', Didier Cuvelier also explained that, '2016 is like 2005 and 2010, but different'. I love this description because it is spot on in so many ways. This is a suave Poyferré with epic tannins and masses of life. The counterbalance between freshness and intensity is thrilling and the fruit is briary and lively and not stewed or porty. Amazing throughout, this is a succulent refreshing, focused and dynamic wine. Didier finished by saying that 2016 was a 'miracle vintage because the rains filled the water table, missed flowering and refreshed the vines before harvest'. A miracle indeed.”
- MJ, matthewjukes.com
