

Les Griffons de Pichon Baron 2018

CSPC# 864283

750mlx6

14.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	52% Cabernet Sauvignon, 48% Merlot
Appellation	Pauillac
Classification	Second Growth. Deuxième Grand Cru Classe in 1855
Website	https://www.pichonbaron.com/en/vin/3/les-griffons-de-pichon-baron/2018
Watch	https://vimeo.com/494166901
General Info	<p>Château Pichon-Longueville Baron, a leading Pauillac 2ème Cru Classé estate, is one of Bordeaux's most illustrious "super seconds". In 1987 it was bought by the AXA Millésimes Group, who also own Cantenac-Brown, Petit-Village, Suduiraut. AXA built a state of the art cuverie and chai at Pichon-Longueville Baron, while, in 2000, Christian Seely took over from Jean-Michel Cazes as general manager. The Cabernet-dominated Pichon-Longueville Baron is a more muscular, tannic and full-bodied wine than that of its neighbour across the road, Pichon-Longueville Comtesse de Lalande. The <i>grand vin</i> is Chateau Longueville au Baron de Pichon-Longueville. The second wine is Les Tourelles de Longueville, introduced with the 1986 vintage.</p> <p>Jean-Rene Matignon started with the Left Bank Bordeaux property in 1985. In three short years, Pichon Baron once again began producing wines of world class quality. The first vintage that brought this historic estate back to prominence was the sublime 1989 followed by the even better 1990. When Jean-Michel Cazes retired from Pichon-Baron in 2000, Christian Seely was asked to take over the management of Pichon Baron as well as the other seven properties of the wine group including Château Suduiraut in Sauternes, Château Petit Village in Pomerol, Chateau Pibran in Pauillac and Quinta do Noval in Portugal. AXA also maintains and interest in Burgundy with Domaine de l'Arlet. Christian Seely has managed many of these estates since 1993. AXA also owns one of the larger Bordeaux wine négociant companies, Compagnie Medocaine.</p> <p>Les Griffons de Pichon Baron is the second wine from the estate.</p>
Winemaker	Jean-René Matignon - Technical Director
Vintage	<p>2018 was characterised by moderate winter temperatures with no extremes. There was regular rainfall from early December to the end of March. The total rainfall was significant, exceeding 500 mm, that is to say approximately 180 mm above average. Spring was mild, followed by a very hot, dry summer. Bud break, which started in early April, was consistent. However, more heavy rainfall and optimum temperatures favoured the development of cryptogamic diseases, leading to very significant crop losses in places. Flowering started at the end of May and continued smoothly. Great care was taken to protect the health of the vines up until the end of July. Then a phase of water stress, unfavourable to grape growth, gradually increased leading up to the harvest. Average and maximum temperatures were very high between bunch closure and the end of veraison, lower than in 2003 but slightly higher than in 2005. Veraison began in the early sectors in the last week of July and mid-veraison in early August.</p> <p>Moderate temperatures resulted in very good ripening conditions. 2018 was comparable to 2005, with earlier development than in 2015. This early tendency for sunny weather continued until the end of the harvest. High temperatures and water stress were optimum for the anthocyanic richness of the skins and early ripening of the tannins. At the same time, the potential alcohol content increased rapidly, total acidity and malic acid levels were low and pH high.</p>
Vineyards	The 73 hectare vineyards of Chateau Pichon Baron are planted to 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. However, the Cabernet Franc and the Petit Verdot are reserved exclusively for the second wine.



Harvest	The Merlot were harvested from 24th September to 1st October, and the Cabernet-Sauvignon from 3rd to 8th October.
Vinification/ Maturation	<p>Les Griffons de Pichon Baron is one of the second wines of the property. Created since the 2012 vintage, it has a pure and direct character. The grapes which make up this wine's blend come primarily from gravelly plots of land near to the Gironde estuary, a good environment for Cabernet-sauvignon.</p> <p>Les Griffons offers a vigorous and fresh tasting experience, full-bodied and clean, overflowing with energy.</p> <p>Plot-by-plot and intra-plot selection are the foundation of our approach. This year, sorting ensured consistent vatting quality. The temperature increase was gradual in order to favour extraction. Alcoholic fermentation soon started at a moderate rate, enabling progressive extraction during the fermenting phase to suit each variety and each terroir. Temperatures were kept at 25 to 29°C.</p> <p>Maceration lasted from 18 to 23 days. The wine was transferred to barrels by the end of November. Aged 60% in new barrels, 40% from barrels of one vintage for 18 months.</p>
Tasting Notes	<p>It can be laid down in the cellar for over 20 years or enjoyed right away.</p> <p>Deep, almost black color. Delicate aromas of black fruits and a hint of subtle, well-integrated wood. On the palate, is generous and full, with powerful and luscious tannins. The balance is rich and harmonious with tension. The finish is racy and refreshingly long. Pair this wine with game, grilled meat, and aged cheeses.</p>
Winemaker's Note	<p>Les Griffons de Pichon Baron 2018 reveals a deep, almost black colour. The nose is delicate, with notes of black fruits and a hint of subtle, well-integrated wood. The palate is generous and full, with powerful and luscious tannins. The balance is rich and harmonious with tension. The finish is racy and refreshingly long. A wine for laying down, which reflects the terroir and expresses the year's full potential.</p> <p><i>Jean-René Matignon - Technical Director - July 2020</i></p>
Serve with	Chateau Pichon Baron is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
Production	7,650 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2022-2036
Scores/Awards	<p>89 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2021</p> <p>90-93 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - June 2019</p> <p>91 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2021</p> <p>90-92 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019</p> <p>92 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2021</p> <p>92-93 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019</p> <p>94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 2021</p> <p>17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2019</p> <p>90 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2020</p> <p>90 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2019</p> <p>93 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2021</p> <p>92-93 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019</p> <p>92-94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019</p> <p>92 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p>90-92 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - November 2019</p> <p>91-94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2019</p> <p>93+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2021</p> <p>91-93 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2019</p> <p>93 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2019</p> <p>92 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com (score only) - March 2019</p> <p>93 points - Falstaff Magazine - February 2021</p> <p>17.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2021</p> <p>94 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - April 2019</p> <p>16 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - June 2019</p> <p>93-94 points - Vertdevin.com - April 2019</p>

Reviews *“Direct, with fresh and pure cherry, damson plum and raspberry flavors laced with subtle cedar and savory notes through the slightly taut finish. Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Best from 2022 through 2028. 7,650 cases made.”*

- JM, Wine Spectator

“Solid, with a core of cassis and dark cherry flavors flanked by iron and sweet tobacco notes. A solid, singed cedar frame wraps around it all. Very Cabernet-like in feel.”

- JM, Wine Spectator

“The 2018 Les Griffons de Pichon Baron is composed of 52% Cabernet Sauvignon and 48% Merlot, aged for 12 months in barriques, 30% new and 70% one year old. Production of this label represents 20% of the harvest this year. Deep garnet-purple colored, the nose opens with wonderfully pure cassis and ripe black plums notes, leading to hints of clove oil, chocolate-covered cherries and tobacco leaf, with a waft of bay leaves. The palate delivers a firm, rugged texture and soft acidity, framing the mouth-coating black fruits nicely, finishing on a savory note.”

- LPB, Wine Advocate

“The 2018 Les Griffons de Pichon Baron is a blend of 52% Cabernet Sauvignon and 48% Merlot, to be aged 12 months in barriques, 30% new and 70% one year old. Production represents 20% of the harvest this year. Very deep purple-black in color, it comes bounding out of the glass with frisky cassis, chocolate-covered cherries and boysenberries scents followed up by notions of dried Provence herbs, moss-covered bark, charcuterie, and tapenade. Full, rich and opulent in the mouth, it has bold black fruit and savory expressions, with firm, grainy tannins and a long, meaty finish.”

- LPB, Wine Advocate

“Structured yet very fine-tannined with lovely integration and depth of blackberry and blueberry character. Medium to full body. Vivid finish.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“Blackberry, plum, cocoa and gravel aromas. It’s medium-to full-bodied with firm, fine tannins framing a solid core of spiced black fruit. Tight, mineral finish. Very fine and balanced. Try from 2024.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“Dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon, this is one of a pair of second wines from this estate. With its classic Pauillac black-currant flavors and dense tannins, the wine is a slow developer. By 2025, it should show great fruits and a balanced texture.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“[...] Gorgeous Cabernet aroma: upright, a touch spicy and such pure non-sweet cassis. Slightly chary on the palate, but the tannins are so fine, you don’t see their density. More chewy than the Tourelles on the finish, more structured but still supple and generous on the finish. A very impressive Griffons.

Dans l’article : “[...] I would also single out Ch Pichon Baron’s Les Griffons, which revealed the glory of perfectly ripe, slowly ripened Cabernet Sauvignon [...]”.

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“Gentle redcurrant, raspberry and soft woodsmoke. Bushed tannins and less closed-off in feel, although there is the characteristic Pauillac bite on the finish.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“This is a concentrated Griffons this year, with claws (I’ll get my coat). It’s intense with lots of power and layers up quickly with inky tight cassis notes and akin to 2010 in feel. [...] it certainly makes you feel the link to the first wine [...]”.

- JA, Decanter.com

- Reviews** *“Cigar box, dark red and black fruits, hints of bitter chocolate and tobacco leaf fill the perfume. On the palate, the wine is full-bodied with depth and richness, finishing with round textures, soft, ripe tannins, loads of sweet, ripe, dark red fruits, freshness and another nice bite of Cabernet in the endnote.”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “With a strong floral character, the wine needs a bit of coaxing to bring out its deep, dark red fruits. Graceful, agile and fresh with the tannic bite of the Cabernet Sauvignon and the roundness from the sweet Merlot, this wine was made from blending 52% Cabernet Sauvignon and 48% Merlot and will age in 60% new, French oak barrels.”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com
- “The 2018 Les Griffons de Pichon Baron is matured in 60% new oak, and I must comment that I still feel the wood component is just a little vociferous now that the wine is in bottle. The palate is dense and structured, delivering intense black fruit laced with graphite and cracked black pepper, and tightening up toward the classically styled finish. Those tannins are still a little abrasive, so I maintain my view that this deserves 3-4 years in bottle. Good potential but be patient.”*
- NM, *Vinous*
- “The 2018 Les Griffons de Pichon Baron is matured in 60% new oak, and at the time of my tasting the wood is dominating the fruit. Christian Seely remarked that it has “pulled ahead” in the months since en primeur. That will be subsumed with time – wood and fruit seem proportionate to each other. The palate is quite dense and powerful, offering layers of toasty black fruit laced with white pepper and sage. This is one of the most intense Les Griffons that I have tasted, and it will need several years to temper those slightly abrasive tannins. In a word: big.”*
- NM, *Vinous*
- “The 2018 Les Griffons de Pichon Baron is a **powerful**, dense wine bursting at the seams with Cabernet Sauvignon savouriness and structure. Crème de cassis, plum, licorice, lavender and grilled herbs are beautifully delineated in a brisk, vibrant Pauillac loaded with class. **I very much like the sense of energy in the 2018.** This is a very serious Pauillac. The blend is 52% Cabernet Sauvignon and 48% Merlot. New oak is 60%.”*
- AG, *Vinous*
- “The 2018 Les Griffons De Pichon Baron is normally a more Cabernet Sauvignon dominated cuvée, but Merlot excelled in 2018 and the blend is closer to an even split of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. It's a much more focused, tight, backward wine compared to the Les Tourelles and has a terrific nose of spiced blackcurrants, tobacco leaf, chocolate, and lead pencil. This gives way to a medium to full-bodied wine with ripe yet firm tannins, impressive overall balance, and outstanding length. It's certainly a more classic, focused Pauillac and will benefit from 2-4 years of bottle age and drink nicely for a decade.”*
- Jeb Dunnuck
- “A blend of close to equal parts Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon (it was a great vintage for the Merlot in this cuvée), the 2018 Les Griffons De Pichon Baron is aging in 60% new French oak barrels, where it will stay for 18 months. Deeply colored, with a rocking bouquet of crème de cassis, lead pencil, black cherries, earth, and flowers, it's more finesse-driven and structured than the Les Tourelles de Longueville, with a straight, focused, yet still layered and ripe personality. It's another beautiful wine.”*
- Jeb Dunnuck
- “My best mark given to this cru en primeur. Dark, intense, and beautiful color. Medium aromatic nose, with smoky and creamy fruitiness, with an unusual depth. Mellow on the attack, bursting with fruit from the mid-palate, the wine evolves powerful, juicy, and fat on the finish, with taste and a very good tannic envelope. This is delicious.”*
- JMQ

Reviews *“Dark ruby garnet, deep core, violet reflections, delicate ocher edge lightening. Nuances of cassis and cherries underlined with fine herbal spices, a hint of precious wood, some nougat, inviting bouquet. Juicy, elegant, ripe cherries and plums, round tannins, good freshness, lingers, a mineral companion to food with an extract-sweet finish.”*
- Falstaff Magazine

“The nose is fresh, elegant and offers intensity, a beautiful richness, freshness, deepness, finesse and a beautifully controlled power. It reveals notes of pulpy/bright cassis, bright/ripe redcurrant and small notes of garrigues strawberry associated with touches of small black fruits, cornflower, violet, vanilla as well as discreet hints of saffron/vanilla. The palate is elegant, fresh, mineral, delicate, racy (gravels) and offers gourmandize, a beautiful definition, a beautifully controlled power as well as a fine straightness, deepness. On the palate this wine expresses notes of fleshy/juicy blackberry, fresh/fleshy raspberry and small notes of cassis associated with touches of violet, pulpy/fresh plum as well as hints of lily, gravels, tonka bean, fine hints of saffron, toasted/toasted oak and a very discreet hint of crushed almond. Tannins are elegant, precise and finely chewy. Sweetness and gourmandize on the finish/persistence.”
- Vert de Vin
