

Château Latour 1994

CSPC# 742357

750mlx6

13.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 27% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Petit Verdot
Appellation	Pauillac
General Info	If Lafite is renowned for elegance, Latour is prized for power. Vines were first planted on the site in the fourteenth century, but Latour's reputation stems from the late part of the seventeenth century, when the estate was inherited by Alexandre de Ségur. In recent years, no finer wine has been made in Bordeaux, for Latour displays an uncanny combination of deep color; Cabernet-dominated flavors of dark berries, licorice and minerals; the finest oak that money can buy; and great length on the aftertaste. Typically, the blend is 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot
Vintage	A mild, rainy winter followed by a very warm, dry March led to an early budbreak on March 15 for the Merlot. Summer temperatures at the end of April and a damp but mild May brought early flowering: full bloom was recorded on 2 June (10 days ahead of a normal year). June and July were very hot with a few thunderstorms in late August; conditions were ideal for producing an exceptional vintage. However, a cold rainy period began on 7 September accompanied by some thundery showers. But the grapes remained in perfect health and there was virtually no dilution.
Vineyards	Many have called this the best vineyard in the world and the dynamic Director of Chateau Latour, Frédéric Engerer, is determined to make the greatest wine possible. He has the confidence of owner, François Pinault, to do all that it takes to achieve this aim. Production levels have been slashed in recent vintages with only the best parcels of vines now producing grapes for the Grand Vin. Latour has always had a fantastic terroir and now has a wine-making team working with state-of-the-art modern equipment under inspired leadership. The Latour vineyard covers around 78 hectares of the Pauillac appellation, of which 47 hectares surround the chateau, these being referred to as l'Enclos. Only the grapes from these 47 hectares make the "Grand Vin de Château Latour";
Harvest	September 22- October 5
Maturation	100% in new barrels for 18 months.
Tasting Notes	Concentrated, with powerful, delicious tannins, this wine achieves a good level of quality and has character. The tannins are pronounced and spicy, but not aggressive.
Cellaring	Drink after 2012
Scores/Awards	91 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - August 2000 90 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - December 15, 1997 90 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - January 31, 1997 94 points - Robert Parker, Bordeaux Book 3 rd Edition - January 1998 93-95 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #104 - April 1996 93-95 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #98 - April 1995 92 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 2012 93 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 2009 92-94 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - December 2004 16 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - October 2005 16.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - August 2005
Reviews	<i>"Classic Cabernet style. Intense aromas of plums and cherries, with hints of new wood. Full-bodied, with juicy and ripe tannins and a long finish. Very well-structured. --Latour vertical. Best after 2003."</i> - JS, Wine Spectator <i>"Still spicy with new oak flavors, this round, moderately structured wine has plenty of ripe plum notes for balance. Try in 1999. --Latour vertical."</i> - JS, Wine Spectator



Reviews *“Vivid aromas of cassis and vanilla, followed by a bounty of fruit flavors and fine, silky tannins, all building on the palate. A fine, elegant Latour that's unusually approachable now, though better in 1999.”*
- JS, Wine Spectator

“This is an interesting as well as great vintage for Latour. As indicated in my barrel tasting report, Latour's 1994 possesses an atypically high percentage of Merlot (27%) in the final blend. Because of this, the wine appears to have a sweeter, more fleshy texture than is typical for a young Latour, but do not make the mistake of thinking this will be a commercially styled, easy to drink wine. It exhibits an opaque dark ruby/purple color, and a backward, intense textbook nose of walnut and cassis scents complemented by smoky pain grille notes that build in the glass. This full-bodied, powerful, layered Latour reveals high tannin, but no bitterness or astringency. The superb purity, fabulous precision, and remarkable length should ensure 35-40 years of longevity. Readers will find more fat, flesh, and glycerin than usual for a young Latour (save for such great vintages as 1982 and 1990), but don't be deceived, this wine requires 8-10 years of cellaring. Anticipated maturity: 2005-2035. Last tasted 1/97”
- RP, Wine Advocate

“Under the inspiring leadership of its new owner, Francois Pinault, Latour appears to be returning to the old style, classic, blockbuster, massive wines that were meant to last 40-50 years. As I indicated last year, the 1994 Latour is the top first growth, as well as a leading candidate for the wine of the vintage. It includes an atypically high percentage of Merlot in the blend. My enthusiasm from last year was renewed when tasting it in March 1995. It is a superbly rich, concentrated, full-bodied Latour with remarkable intensity. The opaque purple color is followed by a flattering, open nose (Latour's black walnut/mineral-like character is well-displayed) with tons of fruit that bury any evidence of new oak. The wine exhibits fabulous intensity, excellent richness, a sweet inner core of fruit, and a powerful, tannic but brilliantly well-defined, long finish. Although extremely unevolved and backward, it is not revealing any of the harsh astringency and tough tannin exhibited by some 1994 Medocs. This wine will shock many tasters who have not given the 1994 vintage much consideration. It is immensely superior to what Latour produced in 1989, 1986, 1985, and 1983. Look for it to be close to full maturity in a decade and last for at least 30-35 years. All of the wines in this segment were tasted between March 19 and March 28 in Bordeaux. Most of the important wines from both the 1994 and 1995 vintages were tasted three separate times during my ten-day stay in Bordeaux.
- RP, Wine Advocate

Latour's 1994 is clearly the top first growth among the Medocs, in addition to being an early candidate for the "wine of the vintage." Only 52% of the harvest was utilized, and the blend may shock those readers used to the high percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon Latour routinely employs. The 1994 is composed of 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, a whopping 27% Merlot (the highest quantity used this century), 4% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Petit-Verdot. The superb maturity of the Merlot, and the difficulties experienced with some of the cuvees of underripe Cabernet Sauvignon were the reasons behind the selection process. It was a daring but brilliant move. The 1994 Latour is an opaque purple-colored, remarkably powerful, rich, old style wine that, despite the high Merlot content, is one of the most backward and richest wines of the vintage. Latour appears to have everything together in this wine, which possesses gorgeously well-delineated, sweet, highly extracted, concentrated fruit, noticeably ripe tannin, and an explosively long, authoritative finish. It will unquestionably develop into one of the larger scaled, more massive wines of the vintage, but 10-15 years of cellaring will be required as it is a 40-50-year wine. Administrator Christian Le Sommer and new proprietor, Francois Pinault, were both thrilled with what they achieved in 1994. Chills go up my spine at the thought of what the 1994 Latour would have tasted like had it not rained in September. Bravo!
- RP, Wine Advocate

“The Chateau Latour 1994 is one of the better wines of the vintage, although not as good as Margaux. It has a typical, austere nose of blackberry, tobacco, mint and cedar, that coffee bean element less tangible on this occasion. There palate is compact at first but opens to reveal an austere First Growth with good weight considering the vintage, foursquare and correct towards the off-dry, cedar and tobacco finish that is missing a little length. Still, this is a very fine, if rather serious and conservative Latour. Drink now-2020. Tasted January 2012.”
- NM, Wine Journal

Reviews *"This has always been a great '94. Tasted at The Ledbury, it has a lovely, fragrant nose of cedar, leather, freshly rolled tobacco with just a hint of fresh coffee beans. Great precision. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins, foursquare and "correct" yet very well balanced and focused with red-berried fruit and just hint of sour cherry and smoke on the finish. Good length. Not a Latour to sit back and admire from afar, but to get your nose into and enjoy. Drink now-2020. Tasted August 2008."*
- NM, Wine Journal

"First tasted July 2001. A subtle meaty nose with a touch of wild mushroom. The palate had high acidity and is relatively advanced for Latour. Tasted again in December 2004. A similar hue to the Latour 1996 though the nose is much less intense. Cigar box, scorched earth and leather with a touch of mushroom. Very classic Latour, supple but conservative: a "correct" Pauillac that demands food. Moderate concentration. Savoury. Very foursquare on the finish. Nice balance and harmony. Definitely one of the best 1994's. Could drink now or leave for 5 years."
- NM, Wine Journal

"Quite deep, but with a lighter rim. More muted nose. Less fragrant at first, though it opened out in the glass. Big and blobby. Chewy end. Again, quite stern. Slightly smudgy. Lots of tannin. Date tasted 5th May 03."
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Very, very deep purplish crimson. Full, ripe and opulent nose. Very gentle and well handled. Not very intense, but very correct and chewy. Lots of tannins underneath. Date tasted 7th Oct 02."
- JR, JancisRobinson.com
