

Château Mouton Rothschild 2020

CSPC# 756553

750mlx3

13.1% alc./vol.

Grape Variety
Appellation
Classification
Website
General Info

84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot
Pauillac

First Growth. Premier Grand Cru Classe in 1855 & in 1973
<http://www.chateau-mouton-rothschild.com/>

Château Mouton Rothschild, owned by Baroness Philippine de Rothschild and her children, is regarded as one of the world's greatest wines. The story of Mouton Rothschild is that of a magical combination of soil, climate, and devotion of one man, Baron Philippe de Rothschild (1902-1988), Baroness Philippine's father. In 1853, Baron Nathaniel de Rothschild, from the English branch of the family, bought Château Brane-Mouton and immediately renamed it in Mouton Rothschild. Baron Philippe de Rothschild, when he took over the estate in 1922, decided to devote his life to it and to make Mouton unique, producing the very best wine. In 1924, he was the first to introduce entire chateau bottling. In 1926, he built the majestic 100-metre barrel hall. In 1945, to celebrate the liberation of France, he had the idea of crowning the label of that year's vintage with a V for Victory. Since then, a different label is created for each vintage by famous painters. In 1962, he opened the Museum of Wine in Art. In 1973, he obtained the revision of the 1855 classification so that Mouton would be officially recognized as a First Growth.

About the Label

A British painter of Scottish origin who divides his time between London and Trinidad, Peter Doig is the artist chosen by Château Mouton Rothschild to create the original artwork to illustrate the label for its 2020 vintage. In his work for the label, the painter combines echoes of Cézanne and van Gogh with a fascinating personal reverie on the nocturnal birth of a great wine, seemingly brought to life by the strange magic of a song played on the guitar.

The painting is a dreamscape. The artist has sought to create a picture that celebrates the growing and harvesting of grapes, showing workers in the vineyard. Peter Doig wished to establish a connection with artists like Millet, van Gogh and Bacon who had depicted vineyard or farm workers. The work also had a personal inspiration in his Trinidadian friend, an artist known as Embah (Emheyo Bhabba) who brought a cuatro - a four string guitar - to one of Doig's exhibitions in Paris and shared his music and poetry during the course of the evening.

Winemaker
Vintage

Philippe Dhalluin

A particularly mild winter and significantly higher than normal temperatures in early spring encouraged early budbreak, about 10 days earlier than the long-term average. A snow flurry in late March fortunately had no effect on the vines.

Spring continued to be warmer than usual, with spells of heavy rain, especially in mid-May, bringing warm and dry weather and significantly accelerating the vegetation cycle, especially during flowering, which occurred 12 days earlier than the average.

Contrasting weather in June gave way to early-Summer heatwaves and drought, especially noticeable in July. However, spells of rain in August set off the veraison process and helped the berries to ripen evenly.

The grapes were in perfect condition as picking started. The harvest on among the earliest on record, favoured by exceptional anticyclonic weather and rising temperatures which brought all grape varieties to full ripeness sooner than usual.

The red grape varieties were picked between 7-24 September in ideal weather. The grapes were in perfect condition, producing beautifully balanced wines that are very full on the palate, underpinned by powerful yet seamless tannins and displaying great freshness.

Although yields were less than generous, the quality of the wines suggests that the 2020 vintage will be one of the great successes of the decade.



Vineyards	The Mouton vineyards incorporate 75 hectares of typical gravelly soil over a base of sand, clay, marl and limestone. They are situated on a mound or <i>motte</i> at an altitude of approximately 40 metres, dizzying heights for the flat and undulating land of the Medoc. It is widely thought that <i>motte</i> is the origin of the name Mouton, the local Bordeaux dialect providing us with as many words for mound, hill or hillock as there are perhaps fish in the <i>Gironde</i> . It does not derive, as some rather unkind individuals have postulated (I say unkind because the accusation brings rural, rustic tones), from the French for sheep, <i>mouton</i> , although this might be suggested by the grazing pasture that abuts the estate. The vines are 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Cabernet Franc, 8% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot, planted at a density of 8500 hectares, with an admirable average age of around 50 years.
Harvest	From 7-24 September
Maturation	Once harvested, fermentation is in 225-hectolitre vats of wood, with a maceration of 15 to 25 days. Then comes up to 22 months in oak before bottling.
Tasting Notes	The wine is a deep, dark, garnet-hued cherry red. The refined and complex nose opens on remarkably ripe black fruit aromas, going on with airing to reveal blackcurrant and aniseed notes combined with touches of graphite and a subtle hint of blond tobacco. From a smooth yet full-bodied attack, the palate displays highly precise tannins which sustain an expansion of flavors in harmonious, succulent balance. Nuanced refinements evident in touches of mint and mineral, smoky notes.
Serve with	Chateau Mouton Rothschild is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Chateau Mouton Rothschild is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
Production	Approx. 20,000 cases annually
Cellaring	Drink 2030-2050
Scores/Awards	<p>100 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023</p> <p>97-99 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021</p> <p>96 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent (score only) - March 2023</p> <p>100 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2023</p> <p>99-100 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021</p> <p>99 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 2022</p> <p>95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021</p> <p>18.5 points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021</p> <p>100 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2023</p> <p>98 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p>99 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - February 2023</p> <p>98-100 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021</p> <p>98 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021</p> <p>95-98 points - Farr Vintners - May 2021</p> <p>97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p>96-98 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021</p> <p>99 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p>96-98 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021</p> <p>97+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023</p> <p>97-99 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021</p> <p>97 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2023</p> <p>97-99 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021</p> <p>100 points - Vert de Vin - May 2021</p> <p>99 points - Andreas Larsson, Tasted - May 2021</p> <p>97-98 points - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021</p> <p>97 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - June 2021</p> <p>97-98 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - May 2021</p>
Reviews	<i>"The 2020 Mouton Rothschild is a striking wine and one that I regretted not purchasing en primeur as soon as it landed in my glass. Offering up complex aromas of minty cassis, pencil shavings, loamy soil, cigar wrapper, espresso roast and violets, it's medium to full-bodied, broad, and layered, with terrific concentrated, beautifully refined tannins and a long, penetrating finish. Checking in at 12.8% alcohol, its incipient complexity, ineffable sense of completeness and exquisite balance mark it out as the purists' choice among the trio of 2018, 2019 and 2020. In this vintage, the lots that made it into the blend were largely confined to the core gravel terroirs that represent Mouton's heart, meaning that there's a little less to go around. This was the first</i>

Reviews *vintage overseen by Mouton's new technical director, Jean-Emmanuel Danjoy, and he has begun with a flying start."*

- WK, Wine Advocate

"The 2020 Mouton Rothschild is composed of 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot, with an alcohol of 13.1% and a pH of around 3.78. Deep purple-black colored, it starts off with subtle notions of fresh raspberries and blackberries, needing considerable swirling and patience to unlock its intense core of blackcurrant pastilles, rose oil, licorice and cardamom, plus touches of cedar chest, black truffles and crushed rocks. The medium-bodied palate is like a tightly coiled spring, possessing exhilarating tension and very firm, ripe, multi-grained tannins to frame the layer upon layer of black and red fruits intertwined with earthy and mineral accents, finishing very long and very fragrant. It is certainly the most coy, reticent, and elegant grand vin of this trio of vintages (2018, 2019 and 2020), bearing Mouton's signature perfume, opulence and stylishness with great grace and sophistication as opposed to devil-may-care flamboyance. It's this gently teasing, achingly beautiful restraint that collectors are not going to want to miss. The vintage went quite well—not as extreme as 2018," said Jean-Emmanuel Danjoy, the new estates manager, formerly the winemaking director at Clerc Milon, now overseeing winemaking for Mouton Rothschild, Clerc Milon and d'Armailhac, following the retirement of Philippe Dhalluin last year. "There was no excessive heat, no sunburn damage, no blockage on the vines. It was an extremely early vintage, but, because of the earlier budbreak, it was also a long growing season—180 days. Usually, it is around 178 days." I asked Danjoy about the slightly lower alcohols this year, given the overall heat of the vintage. "I don't know why—the sugars never went up toward the end. The vines appeared fine. The tannins were getting more and more polished. We also don't have really high acidity." As for the styles of the 2020's, Danjoy commented, "We have cool wines from a hot vintage. There was no heat spell just before the harvest—no cause for jamminess." Philippe Sereys de Rothschild, chairman and CEO of Baron Philippe de Rothschild, commented, "This vintage is freshest compared to the other two (2018 and 2019). And there is a great complexity of tannins. What's happening in the barrels with the wines—there is a multilayered, complexity to the tannins. These wines handle the barrels—they are like an oxygen sink. Usually, it's the more structured vintages that behave like this. It's incredible." The grand vin at Mouton was something of an enigma for me during my tastings. It seemed to have more mid-palate density and layers than many other Pauillac's, and with a touch more tension too (from acid concentration as opposed to dilution). Then I remembered those deep, deep gravels on the Mouton plateau at the heart of the vineyard. While these free-draining gravels can force Mouton's vines to really struggle in very dry, warmer vintages (such as 2018), no doubt they will have offered a distinct advantage during the period of heavy rains in mid-August and the rains toward the end of harvest. Chalk one up for terroir!"

- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The purity of blackcurrants, blueberries, creme de cassis, and flowers. Hints of subtle spearmint. Iron. Blood orange. Medium-bodied with a compacted palate, like a cylinder of perfectly ripe fruit and fine tannins. A million layers of tight-grained tannins. It goes on and on. Such freshness and weightlessness to it. Ethereal. New classicism. Modern take on the 1986. 12.79% alcohol. 84% cabernet sauvignon, 13% merlot, 2% cabernet franc and 1% petit verdot. Drink after 2030 but hard to not drink now."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This is a great and impressive Mouton with plushness and precision. A million layers of tannins. It's full and very friendly, even seductive, in a rich and opulent way, yet it always remains fresh. Balanced and refined. Nothing sticks out here. Every so fine-grained tannin provides flesh. Looking forward to seeing its evolution."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This is a massive, impressive wine. Dense tannins and succulent black fruits are the outward manifestation of the hidden power of this concentrated wine. The fruit is opulent, full of possibility. Drink this wine from 2028. Cellar Selection."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

Reviews

“The natural opulence of this wine is restrained this year by the fine combination of structure and the freshest black currant. It has an upright character following a line of great fruits and delicious acidity. The wine will certainly age although this could be a vintage that shows well in its early years.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot. First vintage with Jean-Emmanuel Danjoy (formerly winemaker at Clerc Milon) at the helm. Cask sample. Characteristic Mouton with its aromatic complexity and lift. Cassis, spice, chocolate, and graphite notes to the fore. Lovely density of fruit. Powerfully structured with very fine tannins. A sense of verticality as it builds on the palate. Textured, clean and fresh. Clearly it has more to give. (JL) 13.1%. Drink 2030 – 2055.”

- JL, JancisRobinson.com

“Dark fruits on the nose, blackcurrants, and cherries with savoury nuances of dark chocolate and tobacco. Fresh and forward on the palate, this hits you square on, still very lean and direct, almost piercing, and severe in its intensity and drive, though wonderfully precise: it’s like an arrow. Serious and focused yet full and layered, the texture is lovely, a slight graininess that lingers but it’s the acidity and the fruit purity that are so excellent - they give such a sense of vibrancy and make this wine so thrilling. You get a feeling of pent-up energy, but after a few minutes the slight density of the ripe fruit comes through, giving some plushness and weight. I love the Cabernet details and the mineral element that leaves the mouth cool and fresh. A well-constructed, subtle beauty.”

- GH, Decanter.com

“A seriously impressive Petrus in 2020. Less hedonistic and instantly emotional than 2019, more sultry, almost shy and reserved but with definition, weight, succulence, and suppleness that shines through. It has a silky tannic tension and clear power but not heft, only a soft muscular expansion that comes with a grip and chew to the black fruits with medicinal, liquorice edges and mouthwatering acidity. Understated yet utterly captivating, it takes its time to come out of its shell - a little serious right now but at the same time it’s stylish with a bright, lifted finish reminding you of the juicy freshness that’s possible even in such warm vintages. A shining star that will be magnificent in time.”

- GH, Decanter.com

“The tannins are carefully wrapped up and finessed, slowly but surely building in power and width, with concentrated blue and black fruits through the palate. Cabernet Sauvignon is dominant on the attack, with a deft, savoury, and not overly exuberant delivery of flavour. As the slate and saline side builds up, you also feel a slowing down and a tugging back of the tannins. As the wine relaxes in the glass, it becomes more and more signature Mouton, full of exuberance, finesse, and pleasure. There is less sweet black cherry fruit than in a year like 2018 or 2019, more on the cassis and bilberry side, it will behave in a more classical manner in the decades to come.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“Intense, concentrated, powerful, deeply spiced, fleshy but restrained, this inches open and feels vibrant, pure, chiselled, seamless, with an electric charge. Expect plenty of smoked and grilled cassis, bilberry and damson fruits, sandalwood, and mint leaf. Has the 2020 signature where flavours are classically serious and balanced but intense, just a monumental Mouton with the freshness and architecture of 2016, edged with floral aromatics, wonderfully enticing and with presence. 100% new oak. First vintage for Jean-Emmanuel Danjoy as director, following Philippe Dhalluin's retirement. One of the wines of the vintage.”

- JA, janeanson.com

“Dark, almost opaque in color, the wine opens with a cornucopia of scents; spice-box, dark Cuban cigar wrapper, flowers, creme de cassis, blackberry espresso, mint, and a drop of dark chocolate. Concentrated, full-bodied, deep, long, intense, and complex, texturally, the wine is opulent, plush and velvety. But there is also more than ample lift keeping everything upbeat. The seamless finish is perfectly balanced, with all its layers of polished, sensuous, silky fruits in the right place for over 60 seconds! The wine blends 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot, 13.1% ABV, pH 3.8. Yields were low at 32 hectoliters per hectare with only 49% of the harvest going into the Grand Vin, so not much wine was made. The harvest took place September 7-September 24. The first vintage with Jean-Emmanuel Danjoy calling the shots is a tremendous success! This is a contender for wine of the vintage.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews

"The 2020 is a blend of 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot. The harvest was completed on the 24th September, which for reference was the same day their 2009 harvest began! Production is down 38% on last year, so expect a significant drop in availability. The abv is 13.1%. Deep ruby-purple in the glass with a highly perfumed nose of violet, incense, exotic spices, and the classic undertone of cassis. The palate is dense yet vertical, a linear drive of black fruit offering real depth. Everything is well-measured and held in place by a chalky, rich tannic structure. Flecks of sweet spices and toast round out the mid palate which is grippy and full. The brambly fruit core drives to the finish, which is very persistent."
- Farr Vintners

"The 2020 Mouton Rothschild has a taut and fresh bouquet, vibrant black fruit, cedar, and graphite - wonderful mineralité that floods through in this First Growth. This is a less flamboyant than the 2019, yet arguably more sophisticated and terroir-driven. The palate is medium-bodied with fine filigree tannins, an unerring sense of symmetry here, gradually building in the mouth towards a distinctively classically styled and quite persistent finish, pencil lead lingering on the aftertaste. This is an outstanding/upstanding Mouton-Rothschild."
- NM, Vinous

"The 2020 Mouton Rothschild is an intriguing proposition, aromatically speaking. Initially, it is less forthcoming than the last three vintages, but it's just toying with you, eventually releasing captivating scents of blackberry, raspberry, crushed stone, touches of India ink and traces of violet petal. The oak is seamlessly integrated, and these aromatics grow in stature with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with very lithe and finely chiseled tannins that frame the pixelated black fruit. Displaying wonderful mineralité and tension, this is a less exuberant and lavish Mouton Rothschild, perhaps, but more cerebral and intellectual than this First Growth during the 1990s. As smooth as Snoop Dogg's flow, this is a marvelous Mouton."
- NM, Vinous

"The 2020 Mouton Rothschild is very clearly one of the great, great wines of the Left Bank in 2020. All the elements are in perfect balance. A wine of total sensuality and nuance, Mouton is all finesse in 2020, all elegance. An explosion of dark cherry fruit, plum, pomegranate, mint and cinnamon are all amplified. From barrel, the 2020 Mouton hinted at greatness. Today, that greatness is evident. The rich, vibrant finish is a thing of beauty."
- AG, Vinous

"The 2020 Mouton Rothschild is sensual, delicate, and polished. Bright floral notes lead into a core of sweet red cherry, cedar, mint, anise, and blood orange. In 2020, the Mouton is a wine of unreal elegance and finesse. I can't wait to taste it from bottle, as I think there may be much more to it than it's showing today. Technical director Jean-Emmanuel Danjoy noted that the 2020 was slow to extract because of its low alcohol (13.1%) compared with recent vintages."
- AG, Vinous

"The 2020 Chateau Mouton Rothschild is in the running for the biggest, baddest, and most concentrated wine in the vintage. Based on 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Petite Verdot brought up in new barrels, this inky hued beast of wine offers up classic Mouton ripe black fruits, scorched earth, tobacco leaf, and freshly sharpened pencil-like aromatics. These carry to a full-bodied, concentrated, tannic, backward 2020 with terrific purity, building, mouth-coating tannins, terrific balance, and one gorgeous finish. Unfortunately, as with many of the top 2020s, this isn't for those looking for instant gratification, and a decade (or more) of cellaring is advised. This hit 13.1% natural alcohol with a pH of 3.78. It will be a 50-, 60-, 70+-year wine. Best After 2031"
- Jeb Dunnuck

Reviews

“Dense purple-hued and a monster of a wine, the 2020 Château Mouton Rothschild checks in as 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot, all of which hit 13.1% natural alcohol with a pH of 3.78. Classic Mouton notes of cassis and currant fruits give way to a more mineral-driven red offering loads of scorched earth, graphite, liquid violets, and crushed stone aromas and flavors. Gorgeously concentrated, full-bodied, and structured, with a firm tannic, inward style that relents with time in the glass, this is a serious Mouton that's going to need a decade of cellaring yet should be just about immortal.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“Deep dark ruby, opaque core, purple reflections, discreet brightening on rim. Delicate tobacco-scented black berries, a hint of blackberry fruit and cassis, nuances of noble wood, still somewhat restrained. Juicy, ripe cherry, pleasant fruit expression, fine, ripe tannins, some nougat on the finish, wonderfully balanced and already accessible, a trace more light-footed than the previous vintage, equipped with certain ageing potential, a beauty.”
- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“The nose is fresh, elegant, delicate and offers power (in subtlety), richness (in delicacy/finesse), a discreet side of content, complexity, and a nice broad aromatic palette. There are notes of bright cassis, bright redcurrant and more lightly juicy/tangy blueberry combined with hints of fleshy gariguet strawberry, lily, green cardamom, discrete tips of fresh blond tobacco and subtle hint of cola. The palate is fruity and offers juiciness, freshness, a nice definition, gourmandize, a tangy frame, suavity, a little pulpy side, harmonious, silk scarf, a frame/structure, a nice sapidity, minerality as well as a nice airy character and subtlety. The wine expresses bright redcurrant, juicy/pulpy cherry and more slightly tart/juicy plum notes combined with hints of fresh/juicy blackberry as well as hints of fresh flowers, racy minerality, discreet hints of spice, cola, cherry blossom, fresh gravel, cardamom, and discreet hints of nutmeg. The tannins are fine, elegant, delicate, and precise. Delicate chewiness and a very discreet hint of bourbon vanilla on the finish/persistence.”
- Vert de Vin

“Excellent purity, depth and definition, another very cabernet, very Pauillac expression with layers of inky dark fruit, crème de cassis, cigar box, roasted coffee, some sage and mint aromas. Very dense and concentrated with great power and precision, a benchmark muscular example without heaviness with copious powdery tannin, bright freshness, and a superbly long lingering finish.”
- AL, Tasted.com

*“(84% CS, 13% M, 2% CF, 1% PV; 13.1% ABV)
A slightly burned / cedary / high-toast cask character to smell here, too (the Mouton “fumée,” from the soil, not the barrels), dense and persistent and fine; rich, elegant, medium-full proportions and presence, so freshly defined by its acidity, and with such fine-textured tannins; an undemonstrative but most aristocratic presence; deep, taut, blackcurrant-sweet, long and juicy, so tenacious and subtle to taste, and with fabulously close-grained tannins, subtly mouthcoating and very prolonged to finish. A wonderfully complete and absolutely lovely wine, which will be an intense yet effortless drinking joy at a mere 13% ABV. A very special combination, in the current climate, of moderate alcohol, intensity of flavor, and absolute class. A sort of splendid classicism. Wait a good ten years plus, and then probably think generations rather than decades? 2034–70+.”*
- MS, The World of Fine Wine
