

Château Pichon-Longueville – Comtesse de Lalande 2018

CSPC# 847786	750mlx12	14.0% alc./vol.
CSPC# 849000	750mlx3	14.0% alc./vol.
CSPC# 831549	750mlx6	14.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety 71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot
Appellation Pauillac

Classification Second Growth. Deuxième Grand Cru Classé in 1855

Website <http://www.pichon-comtesse.com/>

General Info Pichon Longueville and Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande were originally one huge property. When Baron Joseph de Pichon Longueville died in 1850, his estate was split between his two surviving children, Raoul and Virginie. Raoul's part became Château Pichon Longueville, while Virginie's became Château Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande.

Edouard and Louis Mialhe, descendants of an old Bordeaux family of vineyard owners and wine brokers, bought Château Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande in 1925. May Eliane de Lencquesaing, Edouard's daughter, inherited it in 1978 and ran it with great devotion and rigour for 30 years, during which time it gained international renown. Finally, in 2007, eager to ensure the continuing success of the estate in the future, she decided to sell it to another family firm, the Louis Roederer Champagne house.

Winemaker Frédéric Rouzaud & Nicolas Glumineau

Vintage 2018 Pauillac is a contender for the appellation of the vintage. The wines are flat-out extraordinary! Universally, they are deeply colored, concentrated, supple, firm, full-bodied and occasionally, ostentatious. But even with all their flair, they retain their firm, regal, Pauillac nature.

With many wines, 2018 Pauillac is a better version of 2009. It is also in the same mold as 2015 as well.

To get an idea about what to expect, imagine a better version of 2009, with all its best attributes, except with more freshness, silkier tannins, and a bit more concentration. Of course, not all 2018 Pauillac wines were created equal.

Jean-Rene Matignon of Chateau Pichon Baron explained the hallmarks of 2018 Pauillac, "In 2018, the character of the vintage comes through the extreme richness of the grapes as well as the precision, concentration and the accuracy of the maturity."

In short, the growing season started out extremely wet. The vineyards experienced rain almost daily until the middle of July. This rain created the rapid onset of mildew that attacked some vineyards more than others.

Nicolas Glumineau of Chateau Pichon Lalande summed 2018 Pauillac quite nicely saying "The weather conditions and our winemaking skills improving since 2016, allowed us to make the first Vintage of a promising trilogy 18-19-20."

2018 Pauillac wines at their best share commonalities, including concentration from low yields, small berries, and healthy maturity in the skins, seeds, stems and skins, so the wines are all dark, deep, long and intense. The wines can be alcoholic, but there is no heat, or overripe sensations. Do not let the numbers on a label dissuade you. These wines are stunning examples of Pauillac at its best!

Vineyards The terrace of Château Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande offers a magnificent view of the vineyards of Pauillac and Saint-Julien and the Gironde Estuary. The vines lie mainly in Pauillac, yet 11 of its 86 hectares are actually in Saint-Julien. Pichon Comtesse is Château Latour's neighbour and, like the illustrious Premier Cru, has poor soil of gravel mixed with clay, which benefits from excellent drainage. Poor, yet ideal, since the vine needs hardship if it is to produce good wine, and its roots must plunge several metres down in the quest for nutrition. An unusually high percentage of the vineyard is planted with Petit Verdot, which brings freshness and great



Vineyards	aromatic complexity to the wine. In very sunny years such as 1982, 1986, 1989 and 1990, in which the grapes reach excellent maturity, it has a remarkable influence. Since Roederer took over the estate, major work on restructuring the 78-hectare vineyard has been undertaken. Thorough studies of the soils and sub-soils have produced very detailed mapping of the many different plots and better knowledge of the terroir. A replanting programme has been launched to ensure varieties and their root stocks are best suited to the type of soil.
Harvest	The picking took place September 13-October 11 and 50% of the crop was placed into the Grand Vin. The yields were low here this year at only 35 hectoliters per hectare.
Vinification/ Maturation	To produce the wine of Chateau Pichon Lalande, the vinification takes place in 70, temperature controlled, stainless steel vats that vary in size that range from as small as 50 hectoliters and increase in size to 50, 70, 80, 120 and even 150 hectoliter vats. This allows for very precise fermentation work. Malolactic fermentation takes place in tank. Aged 50% new oak for 18 months.
Tasting Notes	At the tasting, the vintage presents the aromatic signature of the great wines of Pauillac. The nose opens with aromas of black and red fruits, especially blackcurrant and raspberry, punctuated by delicate floral fragrances of violet and peony. We also find very nice touches of lemon and smoke notes reminiscent of tobacco or cigar box. On the palate, the wine offers a delightful fruity sensation, evolving plenty of generous texture. The palate is precise, fine, and balanced, sporting an elegant frame of tannins with a tight grain. Full of tenderness and generosity, the end of mouth is prolonged into a finish of incredible length. A masterful Pauillac in a great vintage for Bordeaux.
Serve with	Chateau Pichon is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
Production Cellaring	Average of 15,000 cases made annually Drink 2030-2050
Scores/Awards	<p>98 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - January 2021</p> <p>97-100 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - June 2019</p> <p>97+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2021</p> <p>97-99 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019</p> <p>97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2021</p> <p>98-99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019</p> <p>98 points/Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2021</p> <p>96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2019</p> <p>18 points - Tom Parker, JancisRobinson.com - October 2020</p> <p>17.5 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - March 2019</p> <p>98 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2020</p> <p>98-100 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2019</p> <p>99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2021</p> <p>98-100 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019</p> <p>18.5 points - Farr Vintner - April 2019</p> <p>97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p>96-98 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - November 2019</p> <p>97+ points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p>95-98 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2019</p> <p>98+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2021</p> <p>96-98+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2019</p> <p>18.5+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2019</p> <p>96-97 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - February 2021</p> <p>18 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - June 2019</p>
Reviews	<i>"Offers a deep well of dark currant, blackberry paste and plum preserves fruit that needs time to unwind fully, as it's shrouded in warm earth, tobacco, singed cedar, sweet bay leaf and savory notes. A ramrod of graphite adds to the strident, structured feel. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Best from 2030 through 2050."</i> - JM, Wine Spectator

Reviews *"This one nails it in 2018, with saturated, almost sappy kirsch, plum and blackberry preserve flavors at the core, inlaid with sweet tobacco, singed vanilla, worn cedar and fresh earth notes. A bolt of graphite provides support. Concentrated, long and very complete. One of the high water marks of the vintage. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"The 2018 Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande is a blend of 71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot with a pH of 3.85, an IPT (total polyphenol index) of 87 and 14% alcohol. The grand vin represents 50% of the crop this year. Deep garnet-purple colored, it charges out of the gate with bold scents of baked plums, ripe blackcurrants, and wild blueberries, followed by hints of cedar chest, pencil lead, bouquet garni and charcuterie, plus a waft of lilacs. The medium-bodied palate is beautifully crafted with its seamless freshness and firm, grainy tannins supporting the compelling, finely knit black fruits and savory nuances, finishing on a lingering fragrant-earth note. This will need a good 5 years to come around and should easily cellar for another 30 years or more."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The grand vin represents 50% of the crop this year. The 2018 Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande is made up of 71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot with a pH of 3.85, an IPT (total polyphenol index) of 87 and 14% alcohol. Very deep purple-black colored, it is like hitting a brick wall to begin, needing considerable coaxing to start to reveal notes of crushed black cherries, warm blackberries, ripe blackcurrants, and chocolate cake with nuances of violets, rose hip tea, charcuterie, tapenade and incense with wafts of new leather and iron ore. Full-bodied, concentrated and completely laden with tightly wound black fruit and savory layers, the palate gives a rock-solid backbone of firm, super ripe, super fine-grained tannins and soft background freshness, finishing very long with a veritable display of mineral fireworks."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"Aromas of blackberry, dried blueberry, gravel, mocha and cigar box. Light fresh-herb undertone. It's full-bodied with firm, ultra-fine tannins and fresh acidity. Focused and minerally with a long finish. Great length. Very tight and restrained at the moment. Wait until at least 2026 to take a look."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"A deep and intense young red with blackberries and blueberries, as well as green olives and hints of fresh tobacco. But really black fruit. Full-bodied, tight, and integrated with a refreshing and harmonious finish. Just floating on the palate. Great tannin backbone to this. A classic. Another flying carpet."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"This famous estate at the southern end of Pauillac has produced a powerful wine. Packed blackberry fruits, laced with acidity, are just starting out on a long journey along with the tannins. The wine's elegance is beautifully preserved within the structure. With considerable potential, the wine should not be drunk before 2027. *Cellar Selection*"*
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Ripe and stylish, it is elegance personified and will be a very fine wine to age. Its structure and tannins are generous yet gently handled, giving density while preserving the bright dark fruit flavors."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot. Deep ruby colour. Complex fruit on the nose, both ripe cassis but also more floral and lifted fruit and a hint of white pepper. The structure and depth of Cabernet Sauvignon drives the palate with fresh black fruits and bold but ripe tannins. Despite this mouth-coating richness the real drive behind this wine leaves the impression of depth rather than breadth. A profound wine with real ageing potential. (TP)"
- TP, JancisRobinson.com

Reviews

“71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot; 60% new oak. 35 hl/ha. Barrel sample. *Black core. Cedary cassis-leaf aroma, typically Pichon Lalande. Like the Réserve de la Comtesse, this is so gentle, charming, rounded, fresh and tender. Easy to underestimate. Extremely fine, intense but no show of power even with a long finish and even knowing that it has real depth. A gentle and surprisingly subtle beauty.*”

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“Lovely grilled and graphite notes right off the bat; this is big and muscular, and extremely Pauillac. There is grace here too, with raspberry purée, cassis, fig and blackberry fruits set against charcoal and fine tannins that quickly build up to suggest how well this will age. 1% Petit Verdot completes the blend. 60% new oak used. 13% press wine. 3.75pH, 88IPT – higher even than the 80IPT in 2016.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“This has to be up there with one of the most seductive Comtesses on record with layers of alternating softness and concentration combined with a lot of 2016’s elegance and power. The nose on this stands out a mile, getting it right up on the podium before you even take a sip. Rich raspberries combine with peonies and curls of woodsmoke while the appellation’s signature slate, cedar, liquorice and tannic grip slowly builds up on the palate. I’ve tasted this several times with each conveying a juiciness and elegance that is quite different in style to many in Pauillac this year - it’s a 98-100 for me, and I’m already looking forward to re-tasting it in bottle. 1% Petit Verdot completes the blend. 60% new oak used. 13% press wine. 3.75pH, 88IPT – higher even than the 80IPT in 2016. Drinking Window 2026 – 2040.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“With a remarkable depth of color, the wine opens from the glass with touches of espresso, smoke, tobacco, flowers, spice and an array of red and black fruits. Full-bodied, richly textured, opulent, velvety and silken, the wine is off the charts with its decadent sex-appeal. This is a modern-day version of the legendary 1982 that will easily age for 3-4 decades without fear. Give it at least 10 years in the cellar before pulling a cork. Bravo to the team of Nicolas Glumineau for producing this incredible wine!”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Full-bodied, rich, powerful, dense, opulent and frankly, incredibly sexy, as well as structured, stylistically it feels like a blend of 2009 and 2016 with the best attributes of each vintage. This wine is sensual with firm tannins, vitality, length, complexity, and vibrancy in the finish. Yes, the wine is high in alcohol. But there is no heat, jam, or lack of freshness. Everything here is in balance. Lay this down for a decade and pour sensuality right into your glass. The wine will age effortlessly for decades. Is it better than the perfect 100 Pt. 2016? Maybe, maybe not. But I cannot wait to taste those two vintages side by side in a blind tasting. The wine combines 71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot reaching 14% alcohol with a pH of 3.85. The picking took place September 13-October 11 and 50% of the crop was placed into the Grand Vin. The yields were low here this year at only 35 hectoliters per hectare.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Deep ruby in colour. The nose is intense but lifted here, with a pure blackcurrant core layered with some exotic spices - cinnamon and clove - as well as a floral violet character. The palate is supple and generous, with velveteen tannins giving a rich and rounded structure that allows the fruit to shine. Elegant and polished, the black cherry and creamy cassis are lifted and elegant, giving an ethereal, fragrant intensity. Superb precision and finesse are on show, with an enduring, very long finish. A superb effort in 2018.”

- Farr Vintners

“The 2018 Pichon-Lalande was given an hour’s decant and then observed over the next 24 hours. It has clearly retained the showstopping nose that I encountered from barrel, those same ‘gentle waves’ of black cherries and blueberry, incense and violets lending it a Margaux-like allure. The palate is vibrant and full of tension from the start, the acidity slicing through the layers of quite plush black fruit, judiciously laced with tobacco and mint. There is a beguiling sense of harmony conveyed by this Pichon-Lalande and although there is clearly plenty of structure, the tannins are so pixelated and pliant that it might well be broachable in 4–5 years’ time. Personally, however, I would prefer to cellar it for 8–10 years (by which time I hope that the new Cure album is finally released). However long you decide to keep it tucked away, this is a quite brilliant Pauillac.”

- NM, Vinous

Reviews

"The 2018 Pichon-Lalande was picked from September 16 to October 10 at 35hl/ha. It has a voluminous, generous bouquet of ample black cherry and blueberry fruit, quite floral if not exhibiting the killer definition of the 2016 tasted in direct comparison. The palate is very seductive and lithe thanks to the supple tannins. There are plenty of layers of black fruit here, laced with graphite and touches of mint, and building nicely to a defined finish. Touches of dark chocolate on the aftertaste mingle with minerals. This is a seriously fine Pichon-Lalande that might ultimately stand shoulder to shoulder with the 2016. 2025-2055."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2018 Pichon-Longueville Comtesse de Lalande dazzles from the very first taste. A heady concoction of inky dark fruit, graphite, new leather, licorice, lavender, spice and grilled herbs soars out of the glass. The 2018 is rich and expansive yet retains a super-classic vertical feel. Plush, silky tannins add to its immeasurable pedigree. I would cellar the 2018 for a decade or so, if patience permits. It's a stellar wine in the making"

- AG, Vinous

"The 2018 Pichon-Longueville Comtesse de Lalande is powerful, dense and explosive, with a real sense of vertical lift that conveys energy. Grilled herbs, lavender, inky blue/purplish fruit, and spice notes develop in the glass, but it is the wine's balance, purity of tannin and finish that stand out most. In 2018, so many wines lean towards extreme versions of themselves, but Pichon-Longueville Comtesse de Lalande remains very much within its classic parameters. The 2018 doesn't quite offer the visceral thrill of the very best recent vintages, but it comes very close. At its purest essence, the 2018 is very Pichon-Longueville Comtesse de Lalande. The en primeur sample is shown from 100% new oak, although the wine will have about 60% new wood. Tasted four times."

- AG, Vinous

"The 2018 Château Pichon-Longueville Comtesse De Lalande is a monster of a wine with an almost Château Latour-like stature and structure, offering deep, backward, slightly reductive notes of blackcurrants, crushed stone, scorched earth, lead pencil shavings, and tobacco leaf. Based largely on Cabernet Sauvignon mixed with 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Petit Verdot, it's full-bodied, concentrated, and powerful on the palate, with masses of tannins, beautiful mid-palate density, and a great finish. As I've commented previously, the up-front, sexy style of the past (due to the larger Merlot content, I believe) has been replaced by a more regal, at times austere profile. Nevertheless, it's still its own wine and very Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande in style. This 2018 is going to need 5-7 years of bottle age and will evolve for 40+ years."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"The top wine is the 2018 Pichon-Longueville Comtesse De Lalande, a Cabernet Sauvignon-dominated blend of 71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Petit Verdot. Compared to the 2010 by director Nicolas Glumineau, this saturated purple-colored effort offers the classic elegance and regal style of the estate as well as plenty of pure Pauillac character. Crème de cassis, liquid violets, charcoal, and scorched earth nuances all give way to a full-bodied, deep, layered 2018 that has remarkable purity, building yet ultra-fine tannins, flawless balance, and a great, great finish. It's in the same class as the magical 2016, and while I suspect it will be approachable with just short-term cellaring, it's going to age for 40 years or more. This estate has been on a qualitative roll over the past 5-6 years thanks to the talents of Glumineau, and this is unquestionably another great wine from him and his team. Barrel Sample: 96-98+"

- Jeb Dunnuck

"(71 Cabernet Sauvignon, 23 Merlot, 5 Cabernet Franc, 4 Petit Verdot) | 50% new oak (the sample I tasted was 100% new oak) | 14% alc | 3.85 pH | 88 IPT This is certainly more complex than the second label, as one would expect, but this is a more backward and more introverted wine, with less showy fruit and more graininess and density than I ever thought I would see in this vintage. There is obviously a lot of oak in this sample and there is also an amazing amount of skin tannin as the IPT figure suggests, but there is ample fruit here and given time it will most likely fall into harmony. Not the easiest of the wines to taste, this is a combative Comtesse, and it will most likely be a long-lived wine, but I sense good potential here even if this sample seems rather tense and stern."

- MJ, matthewjukes.com