

Château Pontet Canet 2010

CSPC# 744974

750mlx12

15.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety
Appellation
General Info

65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot
Pauillac

5th classified growth in 1855. Jean-François de Pontet, royal governor of the Médoc, combined several vineyard plots in Pauillac in the early 18th century. Years later, his descendants added neighbouring vines in a place named Canet. This was the beginning of one of the largest estates in the Médoc, which quite naturally added the name of its founder to that of the land registry reference. A century later, Pontet-Canet was included in the famous 1855 classification, thereby confirming its membership among the elite of the Médoc. This privileged position did not go unnoticed by one of the most important Bordeaux shippers of the time, Herman Cruse, who bought the estate in 1865. He built new cellars, modernised the winemaking facilities, and established the wine's reputation around the world. The Cruse family owned Pontet-Canet for 110 years, until another shipper (from Cognac this time), Guy Tesseron, acquired it in 1975. Currently owned by Guy Tesseron's sons, Alfred and Gérard, this means that Pontet-Canet has belonged to only three families in over two centuries.

Vintage

During the growing period, Pontet Canet seek to support the terroir and the vines in a most natural way, according to the year's prevailing climatic conditions. To harmonise the annual cycle, they make use of plants, flowers and gentle handling of soil & vines.

Vineyards

Thirty years after their arrival in Pauillac, the Tesseron can be proud of having gradually restructured the entire vineyard as well as renovating the cellars and service buildings. Château Pontet-Canet is located in the heart of the Pauillac appellation, just south of châteaux Mouton Rothschild and d'Armailhac. It has the poor gravelly soil typical of the greatest vineyards. In fact, the soil has so much gravel and sand that it is difficult to imagine that anything could grow there at all. The château's winegrowing philosophy is to intervene as little as possible and as naturally as possible in the vineyard. Only traditional viticultural and cultivation practices are used. Chemical weed killers are banned in keeping with environmental protection, and priority is given to the vine's long-term health. Fertilisers are uniquely organic, and only used on plots that genuinely require extra nutrition. This helps to maintain a good balance and self-regulated low yields, as well as to respect the vines, reflect the terroir, and produce pure, natural wine. In 2003, a purification station was built. 2005 was the first harvest using biodynamic practices throughout the whole property of 81 hectares. In 2005, the second vat room was restored and modified at the image of the first one which dates back to the 19th century, with concrete truncated cone-shaped vats allowing fermentation by natural gravity flow, without the use of pressure or pumping. A part of the vineyard is worked with horses since 2008. Soil: quaternary gravel on a subsoil of clay and limestone; Area: 81 hectares Average age of the vines: 35 years; Density of the vines: 9000 feet per hectare: Yield: 45 hectolitres per hectare

Harvest

In a very positive state of mind Pontet Canet began the harvest on the 29th September starting with the Merlot. The Cabernet Sauvignon followed on the 9th October, with the total harvest being completed by the 17th of October.

Maturation

66% in new barrels during 15 month/s

Tasting Notes

Pontet Canet is now consistently producing wine of "super-second" quality. A powerful, explosive, dense black fruit nose. Massive and absolutely packed with ripe intense fruit on the palate. Tons of glycerol with a hint of prunes. Huge, complex and long. Amazing richness and power with perfect structure to balance. Long, quite tannic at this stage but a long life ahead. Great potential. A real monster..

Cellaring

Drink 2020-2040



Scores/Awards **97 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2013
96-99 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2011
100 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #205 - February 2013
96-100 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #194 - May 2011
93-95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2011
100 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2013
97-98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2011
96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 25, 2011
94-97 points - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2010
17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2011
17-18 points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - May 2012
16-17? points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - April 2011
18.5 points/5 stars - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2011
96 points - Jane Anson, The New Bordeaux - April 2011
97-98 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - July 30, 2011
96-97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 20, 2011
95-97+ points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - April 2011
98 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - May 2011
95 points - Jean Marc Quarin - March 2011 (no review)
18.5 points - Alun Griffiths, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants - April 2011
93-97 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2011
18.5 points - Farr Vintners - April 2011

Reviews *"This is big, broad and powerfully rendered, but remarkably polished and refined at the same time. An enormous core of roasted fig, blackberry and black currant fruit is suavely wrapped with roasted apple wood and sandalwood, while dark espresso, loam and warm paving stone notes drive the finish. Very long, with a great tug of scorched earth at the end. A terrific combination of power and precision. Best from 2020 through 2040."*
 - JM, Wine Spectator

"Seriously dense, with thickly layered fig paste, macerated black currant fruit, Kenya AA coffee and roasted tobacco. But really fresh and invigorating throughout, with mouthwatering iron and apple wood notes. Despite the power, this cuts like a knife from the start. When the Bordelais say precise, this is what they mean. Score range: 96-99."
 - JM, Wine Spectator

"An absolutely amazing wine, from grapes harvested between the end of September and October 17, this blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot has close to 15% natural alcohol. It comes from one of the few biodynamic vineyards in Bordeaux, but you are likely to see many more, given the success that Tesseron seems to be having at all levels, both in his vineyards and in his fermentation/winemaking. An astounding, compelling wine with the classic Pauillac nose more often associated with its cross-street neighbor, Mouton-Rothschild, creme de cassis, there are also some violets and other assorted floral notes. The wine has off-the-charts massiveness and intensity but never comes across as heavy, overbearing or astringent. The freshness, laser-like precision, and full-bodied, massive richness and extract are simply remarkable to behold and experience. It is very easy, to become jaded tasting such great wines from a great vintage, but it is really a privilege to taste something as amazing as this. Unfortunately, it needs a good decade of cellaring, and that's assuming it doesn't close down over the next few years. This is a 50- to 75-year wine from one of the half-dozen or so most compulsive and obsessive proprietors in all of Bordeaux. Is there anything that proprietor Alfred Tesseron is not doing right? Talk about an estate that is on top of its game! Pontet-Canet's 2010 is a more structured, tannic and restrained version of their most recent perfect wine, the 2009. Kudos to Pontet-Canet!"
 - RP, Wine Advocate

"Pontet-Canet's 2010 harvest took place between September 29 and October 17 (this vineyard is one of the few in Bordeaux that is fully certified as biodynamic) and the final blend was 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot that achieved nearly 15% natural alcohol. A remarkable, full-bodied effort (as was the estate's 2009 and 2008), like so many recent vintages from proprietor Alfred Tesseron, it is of first-growth quality (some may even argue that it eclipses several first-growths). Dense purple to the rim, it offers classic notes of creme de cassis, graphite, subtle smoke and spring flowers. Multidimensional with massive concentration as well as vivid purity, precision and freshness, this is another astonishing effort from an

Reviews *obsessive/compulsive proprietor who is doing everything right. On the downside, this 2010 will require a decade of cellaring and should evolve for 50+ years. It will be fascinating to drink it side by side with the 2009 and 2008.*
- RP, Wine Advocate

"The Pontet Canet has a very pure bouquet that you could almost compare to a Burgundy. Blackberry, dark cherries, a touch of mint and graphite, exceptionally well defined, flowering with 3-4 minutes in the glass. The palate is full-bodied with very fine but firm, tensile tannins, perhaps even more purity than the 2009, not a million miles away (both geographically and stylistically) from Mouton-Rothschild. The finish is very smooth with a sorbet-like freshness, firm grip, long in the mouth towards the finish with some creme de cassis and blueberry towards the finish. The Merlot content lends this a little more opulence than some of the other Pauillac 2010s. There is a lot of volume to this wine, really fills the mouth with a sweet, sensual finish, but keep find myself yearning for more Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink 2020-2050. Tasted March 2011."
- NM, Wine Journal

"The aromas to this are incredible with blueberry, minerals, dried flowers, and stones. It goes to dried meat and spices. Full body and incredibly integrated with blackberry, licorice, and minerals. There's a wonderful purity to this. It goes on for minutes. The quality of tannins is amazing. Seamless. There's an amazing transparency that shows you all the elements of the wine's unique terroir. Try after 2018."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"What a nose of black currants, minerals and blueberries. Flowers too. Licorice. Full bodied, with a wonderful texture of super refined tannins and a long, long finish. A beautiful concentration of fruit and purity and precision. So clear and focused. Super, super long. The tannins and finish are all in balance. This is the first vintage completely certified for biodynamic. Like a Swiss watch? A Lange! 65 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 14 percent Merlot, 20 percent Cabernet Franc, 1 percent Petit Verdot."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"96-98 Juicy, sappy character. The wine has ripe, very pure fruit, with the most piercing acidity. The dark tannins, hints of black fruits, big structure all come from super-rich, still elegant fruit."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"(65% cabernet sauvignon, 30% merlot, 4% cabernet franc and 1% petit verdot) Bright ruby. Knockout nose of cassis, black pepper, minerals and cedar just screams Pauillac. Enters the mouth sweet, creamy and pure, displaying very rich, dense flavors of black fruit, minerals and dried herbs, with lively, integrated acidity keeping the wine from coming across as top-heavy. Finishes extremely long, with silky tannins and an intriguing floral note. Twenty-four hectares are now farmed by horse (up from seven last year) at what has become the first officially certified biodynamic grand cru classe property of Bordeaux. This wine has one of the most impressive and memorable noses of all in 2010 and is much better than the very good but generally overrated 2009. Though it's a little more accessible now than some other great wines of 2010 such as Latour and Calon-Segur, this still needs another 10 to 12 years in the cellar to start showing its best and will keep another 40 years after that without problem."
- ST, International Wine Cellar

"Dense, rich and minty on the nose with real density. Lots of luscious chew. This Pontet Canet wine is clearly from a great vintage with huge vivacity. Heavy undertow. Long. Minerals and firm. Racy."
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

Reviews

“At the primeurs I recall I found the 2010 to possess a rather firm showing on the nose and that still comes across here. At present it is largely the oak lactones doing it though, as they cover the fruit and completely dominate the aromatics. The palate shows these oaky elements rather less than the nose does though, and it possesses a rich texture, balanced with a moderate weight, and nicely matched by the acids and firm, peripheral tannins. This is a wine of considerable substance, and notable tannic underpinnings. A very good wine. From a Grand Cru Classé Tasting. 17-18/20 (May 2012)”

- CK, The Wine Doctor

“Harvest began with the Merlot on September 29th, then the Cabernet Sauvignon on October 9th, all finishing on October 17th. Now fully certified as biodynamic, having completed the three years of conversion following the use of chemicals during the 2007 vintage. The blend is Cabernet Sauvignon 65%, Merlot 30%, the third highest percentage of Merlot in any Pauillac classified growth grand vin, after the 40% at Grand-Puy-Ducasse and Clerc-Milon's 36%, Cabernet Franc 4% and Petit Verdot 1%. Very dark, glossy, purple-crimson hue. A dark and rather withdrawn fruit character on the nose to match this. Certainly, very reticent. A very polished feel at the start, with nuances of exotic red fruits coming in here, a great flesh underpinned by a very firm tannic grip. There is a massive tannic substance here but also a juicy, creamy sense to the fruit. And there is a lot of tannic substance in the end as well. With subsequent tastes it seems to come together more; the tannins are absolutely undeniable but there is a wealth of supple, juice-edged fruit. The fresh and lively acidity helps too, giving the wine a vigorous feel. Tannic but fruity in the finish. What can I say? This is a wine bound to impress, showing a lot of structure coming out of the vintage and perhaps from the high percentage of Merlot, but the substance of the wine itself - the fruit and the texture - struggles to fill the frame that the tannins provide. It all ends up feeling very firm and anabolic, right through the long, grippy finish. From my Bordeaux 2010 primeurs assessment. 16-17/20 (April 2011)”

- CK, The Wine Doctor

“Masses of concentrated cassis fruit, but already has wild violet fragrance of the greatest Pauillacs, superb middle sweetness, perfect structure and length, perhaps more elegant than Pontet-Canet's great 2009.”

- SS, Decanter.com

“The attention to detail at this over-performing biodynamic Fifth Growth has elevated it into Bordeaux's front rank over the last five years. This is as good as the equally wonderful 2009, albeit in a different style, with more tannin and acidity, but the same perfume, fruit concentration, subtle oak usage and palate length thanks to careful extraction. If this sells at less than £1,000 a case, buy it.”

- TA, timatkin.com

“2010 is the first year that this estate has been certified both organic and biodynamic, and once again proves why it has leapt up in terms of reputation over the past decade. No leaf thinning, no green harvesting, both contributed towards the grapes being protected from the heat. Same blend as 2009 (64% cabernet sauvignon, 30% merlot, 4% cabernet franc and 1% petit verdot). Such a vibrant colour, just jumps out of the glass. Incredibly aromatic on the nose. This is violet, plum, rosemary, black cherries, pure cassis, all clearly defined. They – of course – start the malolactic naturally here and wait for each individual vat to start with its own natural yeast, but still had no problems with late malo, and were finished by November. 80% of the overall production goes into the first wine. 96/100. Drink 2020-2045. “

- JA, The New Bordeaux

“Inky, opaque with deep purple accents in the color, this stunning Pauillac offers strong aromas of blackberry, blueberry, pepper, truffle, caramel, stone, vanilla, smoke and forest floor. This concentrated, rich, packed and stacked wine coats your mouth with intense flavors. Long, round, powerful, polished and tannic, the finish ends with dark chocolate covered blackberries, boysenberries and spice. The flavors remain etched in your mouth for more than one full minute! This stunning wine has gained in texture and complexity since tasted in April. The wine was released at 100 Euros, a large jump from 2009. The price did not deter consumers. 2010 Pontet Canet is one of the best-selling Bordeaux wines of the vintage. 97-98 Pts”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews *"Pontet Canet Produced from an assemblage of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot, yields were down 10% from 2009. Inky black in color, the wine stains the sides of the glass. Cassis, stone, forest floor, tobacco and cedar aromas effortlessly pop from the glass. This fills your mouth with flavor. Packed and stacked with layers of ripe, fat, plump fruit, voluptuous in style, with freshness and ripe tannins, the blackberry, blue fruit, cassis, licorice and spice filled finish grows in your mouth. 96-97 Pts"*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Deep and very dense saturated look; ripe, attractive nose; quite forthcoming; blackcurrants, fresh, some coffee, creamy and layered; very ripe and attractive palate; very well balanced and harmonious; terrific balance; quite fine tannins, extraction managed perfectly. Caresses the palate, clean and fresh. Almost easy. Brilliant wine. 95-97+/100 Tasted 5April 2011 at the chateau"
- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com

"A few years ago, proprietor Alfred Tesseron gave us a blind tasting of four Pauillac wines from the 1996 vintage. They turned out to be Mouton, Latour, Lafite and Pontet-Canet, and the last-named lost virtually nothing by comparison with its lofty peers. I reckon he could repeat the exercise this year with the same results. This is a monumental wine, seamlessly brilliant on the palate, exuding class on the bouquet. Everything is in such balance and harmony that I feel I should not bother to find the vocabulary to describe it, so I'll just say it's very special. (65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot)"
- AG, Berry & Rudd Wine & Spirit Merchants

"There is a lot of power on the nose lots of rich black fruits. Dark chocolate and coffee beans back the cassis and black cherry on the palate layers of flavour giving lots of complexity. The richness of the fruit copes well with the structured tannins. This is Pontet-Canet at its best."
- Derek Smedley MW

"Alfred Tesseron has been making classic Pauillac here every year since the excellent 1994 and recent vintages have been amongst the best ever, scoring impressively when shown in blind tastings. Pontet Canet is now pushing the Pichon's as Pauillac's top non-first growth. Grapes are manually sorted by a team of 30 people on specially made sorting tables. The vineyard is now 100% organic bio-dynamic and even being worked by horses. 64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot in two thirds new oak. Pontet Canet is now consistently producing wine of "super-second" quality. This 2010 seem to have the richness of 2009 with added grip and structure. There is an amazingly saturated, decanter-staining colour. Thick and oily in texture with an amazingly powerful nose of concentrated creme de cassis, espresso coffee and smoky elegance. Big, rich and viscous on the palate with enormous flesh and impressive structure. Long, long finish. A real showstopper. Sensational Pontet Canet again"
- Farr Vintners
