

# Château Pontet Canet 2018

CSPC# 896453

750mlx6

14.5% alc./vol.

<b>Grape Variety</b>	70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot.
<b>Appellation</b>	Pauillac
<b>Classification</b>	Fifth Growth. Cinquieme Grand Cru Classé in 1855.
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.pontet-canet.com/en/pages/chateau-pontet-canet">http://www.pontet-canet.com/en/pages/chateau-pontet-canet</a>
<b>Sustainability</b>	Biodynamic
<b>General Info</b>	<p>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.</p>
<b>Winemaker</b>	Jean-Michel Comme. Michel Rolland consultant winemaker.
<b>Vintage</b>	<p>With many wines, 2018 Pauillac is a better version of 2009. It is also in the same mold as 2015 as well.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Chateau Pontet Canet suffered extreme crop loses, (as much as 80% of the crop was lost) due to the horrendous outbreak of mildew that was more severe due to their commitment to biodynamic farming. Alfred Tesseron said that even with their heavy losses, they are continuing to farm biodynamically.</p> <p>Alfred Tesseron stated; "Despite substantial losses and a particularly testing vintage, we decided in good conscience to hold our course. There was a high price to pay. But we remained true to our values and the principles of biodynamics, which is a simple approach to winegrowing based on the natural equilibrium of the vine."</p> <p>By the time summer set in, beginning in the middle of July, everything turned around and Bordeaux experienced hot, sunny, dry conditions that carried all the way through harvest time. The best wines were able to handle the water stress from the dry, summer months. The vineyards with old vines, access to water, deep gravel soils that allowed from the roots to reach water, or vineyards with more clay in the soil performed best.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>These wines are stunning examples of Pauillac at its best!</p>
<b>Vineyards</b>	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



<b>Vineyards</b>	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
<b>Harvest</b>	Picking began on September 24 and finished on October 5.
<b>Maturation</b>	Aging in 55% new French oak barrels, 35% in amphora and the remainder of wine in one-year old casks.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	What strikes the taster immediately is the energy these wines display, the expression of tension and intensity: they are bright and brilliant, as though freed of any constraint. Their internal balance combines contained power, uncommon precision of fruit and undeniable class. They seduce by their full-bodied fruit, the finesse of their mouthfeel and their natural elegance, delivering a natural emotion which enhances their seductive charm.
<b>Serve with</b>	Chateau Pontet Canet is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Chateau Pontet Canet is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
<b>Production</b>	Approx. 25,000 cases made.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2026-2040
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>98 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2021</p> <p><b>97-99+ points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2020</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2021</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2021</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2019</p> <p><b>17+ points</b> - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - May 2019</p> <p><b>16.5 points</b> - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - March 2019</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2020</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2019</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019</p> <p><b>17+ points</b> - Farr Vintner - April 2019</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p><b>96-99 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2019</p> <p><b>97+ points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2021</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2019</p> <p><b>18+ points</b> - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2019</p> <p><b>99 points</b> - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - February 2021</p> <p><b>19.5 points</b> - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2021</p> <p><b>20 points</b> - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - June 2019</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>"The 2018 Pontet-Canet is a blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 3% Petit Verdot. It was aged in 55% oak barriques and 45% amphorae. Deep garnet-purple colored, it explodes from the glass with an atomic perfume of raspberry pie, blackcurrant pastilles, rose oil and Chinese five spice, giving way to suggestions of cinnamon stick, dusty soil, pencil lead and underbrush. The rich, seductive, full-bodied palate is a hedonist's dream, delivering layer-upon-layer of black and red berry preserves with loads of fragrant accents, a beautifully firm yet plush texture and tons of freshness, finishing long with a whole firework display of exotic spices."</i></p> <p>- LPB, Wine Advocate</p>

**Reviews** *“Very deep purple-black in color, the 2018 Pontet-Canet rocks up with fantastically expressive plum preserves, baked blueberries, and crème de cassis notes with touches of Chinese five spice, potpourri, licorice and chocolate mint plus a hint of smoked meats. Full-bodied, rich, super-concentrated and decadent, it has a firm frame of wonderfully velvety tannins with bold freshness to back up the fruit, finishing very long and very spicy.”*

- LPB, Wine Advocate

*“The 2018 Pontet-Canet is made up of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 3% Petit Verdot. Picking began on September 24 and finished on October 5; aging is in 55% oak barriques and 45% amphorae. Very deep purple-black in color, it comes rolling sensuously out of the glass with all the opulence and seduction of Cleopatra on a carpet. It emerges with flamboyant scents of crème de cassis, preserved plums, and blueberry compote, and after a few moments, it bursts with nuances of molten licorice, sandalwood, Chinese five spice, candied violets, dark chocolate, and dried roses, followed by underlying earthy suggestions of fallen leaves, black truffles, underbrush, and wild sage. Full-bodied, wonderfully dense, rich, impossibly layered and very, very decadent, the palate delivers all it promises on the nose, with a firm, wonderfully velvety frame and finishing with epic length, a scintillating wave of freshness and a beguiling perfume. This is one for true hedonists.”*

- LPB, Wine Advocate

*“A complex nose of blueberries, elderberries, dried fruit, spice and dark chocolate. It’s full-bodied with a harmonious, balanced texture. The tannins are still firm and powerful, but there’s balance and finesse to the whole thing. Tight and reserved, yet long and energetic. The tannins open slowly. Dusty texture. From biodynamically grown grapes.”*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“A bright and open young wine with polished and soft tannins that spread out and fold into the wine, becoming barely discernible, yet the feel and beauty of them frames the wine in a beautiful way. Love the fruit and purity.”*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“This wine combines the richness of the vintage with a sophisticated structure of smoky tannins and spicy wood aging. It is still young, with a powerful structure and ripe, vibrant black-currant fruits. The wine needs plenty of aging.”*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“This wine is densely textured in rich tannins and beautiful fruit. Flavors of black currant and blackberry are there along with the solid structure that will allow the wine to age. This biodynamic wine has low yields in 2018 because of mildew, but what has been made is impressive and long lasting.”*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot. 11 hl/ha! Cask sample. Very dark purplish crimson. The densest 2018 bordeaux I have seen – right out to the rim. This is hardly wine – it’s a tincture! Extraordinary. Not unpleasantly concentrated by any means; there is freshness here. But it is sui generis. A bit of amphora freshness? Real texture – thick! Very dry finish. It will be fascinating to see how this develops as there is no precedent.”*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*“Barrel sample. Very, very dark. Intensely fruity aroma –even a touch of wild strawberries, blueberry, fragrant and sweetly and wildly fruited. That aroma is on the palate too, a little darker, but all tied up in the tannins, which are smooth but dense. Firm, dry but not chewy. The freshness accentuates the tannins at the moment, hardening them a little. Utterly embryonic but everything in place even if not yet showing. Concentrated and sweet-fruited. Needs a lot of time. Juicy under all that structure and long. More Pontet-Canet than Pauillac, or than my stereotype of Pauillac.”*

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

## Reviews

*"In the glass you get a richly nuanced and aromatic glass of Pontet. Plum, gooseberry, cassis, rosemary, violet, tobacco leaf, sage, and white pepper. Clear freshness, with beautiful floral aromatics through the palate - peony alongside the deeply textured fruit. A touch of bitterness on the finish and in the final moments the tannic grip of Pauillac takes hold. Has its own character and it feels very much of itself. Extremely small yields in this year, in which mildew meant they lost two-thirds of the crop, coming in at under 15hl/ha. 55% new oak, 45% amphorae."*

- JA, Decanter.com

*"The concentration that comes from having yields of 12hl/ha is extremely clear - it makes it feel very Pauillac, again resembling as at Latour, a 2010 style in terms of its backbone and sense of hunkering down. The fruit quality is dark and knitted, with a creamy texture if you give it a minute to settle, an obvious tannic structure and a menthol finish that lets in some juice, bramble, and hedgerow pleasures. It's clearly impressive, although I get just the slightest touch of over-concentration with hints of prune on the finish. The small yields meant the entire process, from destemming to sorting, was done by hand (last year around 30% of the crop was treated in this way), then fermented in small 40L cement vats that had seen their first service for just part of the crop in 2017. There was huge amounts of hard work and stress to ensure that no dried grapes made it through, with no pumping over and only soft manual punch down to control extraction. This is 100% 1st wine, same as it has been here for the past three years. 55% will be aged in new oak barrel, 45% in amphoras. Drinking Window 2026 – 2040."*

- JA, Decanter.com

*"A dusky magenta, the wine explodes from the glass with black fruit, tar, wet forest floor, currants and licorice. Full-bodied, intense, and powerful, this wine is also graceful on your palate. There is an impressive amount of weight and yet the wine feels light. The fruit coats your mouth, teeth, and gums for over 60 seconds, which is a good thing as you will not want this wine to end. Not much of this gem is going to be available due to climatic conditions keeping the yields under ten hectoliters per hectare and making it much harder to find than usual."*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"Deep ruby in the glass. The nose is exotic and complex, with strawberries, raspberries, and dried cranberries all on show as well as a hint of liquorice and darker fruit. The palate is plush and oily, with a heady richness and sweet brambly fruit. The tannins are refined but still chalky, giving a plush, rich texture. The fruit gains in ripeness through the mid palate to leave a hedonistic, warming finish with the spicy oak subtle and well-integrated in the background. Impressive in both power and ripeness."*

- Farr Vintners

*"When I tasted the 2018 Pontet-Canet in barrel I described it as a "freak of nature." The 2018 is more than that, it is a freak of nature. Made from yields of just ten hectoliters per hectare, the 2018 possesses off the chart's richness, phenomenal balance, and head-spinning intensity. Crushed red berries, flowers, mint, cedar and rose petal saturate the palate in a Pauillac of breath-taking richness. The silkiest of tannins frame the phenomenally pure, long finish. This is a towering achievement from the Tesson family and former Technical Director Jean-Michel Comme, who together spearheaded biodynamic farming in Bordeaux and built the present-day estate around a philosophy of non-interventionist winemaking. In 2018, grapes were crushed solely by hand. Because of the tiny yields, the entire production was vinified in Pontet-Canet's new smaller concrete vats. All winemaking was done manually, without the aid of external temperature control or electricity. Put in another way, if Lalou Bize-Leroy made Bordeaux, it would taste like this."*

- AG, Vinous

*"The 2018 Pontet-Canet is a freak of nature. Dark, rich, and explosive, the 2018 possesses off the chart's richness and concentration, much of it coming from tiny yields of just ten hectoliters per hectare, or one third of a normal crop. The 2018 soars out of the glass with stunning aromatic intensity and depth. Black cherry, gravel, grilled herbs, leather, lavender, and menthol stain the palate. Dense and hedonistically ripe, the 2018 is a stunningly beautiful wine. The grapes were crushed by hand. Because of the tiny yields, the entire production was vinified in Pontet-Canet's new smaller concrete vats. All winemaking was done manually, without the aid of external temperature control or electricity. The 2018 is aging in a combination of 55% new oak and 45% terra cotta amphora. Quite simply, I have never tasted anything like it."*

- AG, Vinous

**Reviews**

*“An unevolved, almost primordial 2018, the 2018 Château Pontet Canet sports a dense purple hue as well as loads of blue and black fruits, damp earth, tobacco, candied violets, and graphite-laced aromas and flavors. With full-bodied richness, serious mid-palate depth, and building tannins, it's mostly potential at this point, but it's a beautiful wine in the making. A decade of bottle age is going to be required, though, so it's not for those seeking instant gratification.”*

*- Jeb Dunnuck*

*“Deeply colored, the 2018 Pontet-Canet checks in as a blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and the rest Petit Verdot that was destemmed by hand, fermented all in concrete tanks (punch downs only) and is still aging 55% in new French oak and the balance in concrete amphoras. It's an incredibly rich, opulent, and plush Pontet-Canet that offers loads of black and blue fruits, licorice, crushed violets, and graphite aromas and flavors. Full-bodied, powerful, beautifully textured and layered, it's reminiscent of the magical 2009 with its rare mix of both hedonistic and intellectual pleasure. Unfortunately, the estate was decimated by mildew in the spring and lost a full two-thirds of their total production.”*

*- Jeb Dunnuck*

*“(70 Cabernet Sauvignon, 22 Merlot, 5 Cabernet Franc, 3 Petit Verdot) | 55% new oak, 45% goes in concrete tanks (the equivalent size of four casks) The perfume on this wine is like nothing I have ever encountered in Bordeaux. It is the quintessence of juiciness and concentration, but the palate quickly nips this explosion in the bud and then the flavour is seriously controlled and elegant. The main thrust of fruit is purple and decadent with more than a glimpse of heather and liquorice. They were badly affected by mildew at Pontet-Canet and because of their biodynamic rules they couldn't not simply run out and spray what they wanted in order to prevent catastrophic damage. In addition, they had to hand sort every berry and destem everything by hand. Winemaker Jean-Michel Comme said that they had, '11 people for one table'! In the end they made only one third of a normal production here and yet it shows that the biodynamic path still manages to make headline-grabbing wines. With so much exuberance and theatricality, this is a mesmerising wine with a shockingly vibrant flavour. Only a light pigeage (punching-down) was used with no remontage (pumping over) at all. Jean-Michel stated that the levels of quality and concentration achieved in this wine has 'never been seen here before'. In his opinion it is higher than 2016 and even 2010. While I appreciate that this is an extraordinary wine, I am not as excited about it as I am the aforementioned vintages, so I have given it a cautious score because I have no idea how far or for how long this elixir will develop.”*

*- MJ, matthewjukes.com*