

Château Pape Clément 2020

CSPC# 753465

750mlx12

14.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety
Appellation
Classification
Website
Sustainability
General Info

50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 50% Merlot
Pessac-Léognan
Grand Cru Classe Graves
<https://bernard-magrez.com/en/>

Terra Vitis Label and HVE3 Label (high environmental value 3rd level)

The red wine of Château Pape Clément is a classified growth. The vineyards were first planted in the 13th century by Bertrand de Goth, the youngest son of a noble family from Bordeaux. He was elected Pope in 1305, during the reign of Philippe le Bel, and took the name of Clément V. Château Pape Clément belonged to the Archbishop of Bordeaux until the French Revolution. Wine has been made here continuously for 7 centuries. Château Pape Clément is one of the brightest stars in the extensive range of vineyards Bernard Magrez owns worldwide. Based in Bordeaux, the great owner has made quality his personal battle, his strength in facing the increasing competition in the wine business. Hence, the care lavished on this land exceptional qualities of which have made Pessac's reputation for over seven centuries. Pruning and leafing according to unusually demanding standards, hand destemming, vinification, and maturation in accordance with the strictest rules, all implemented so that Nature can freely express the best she has to offer. With his grand Cru Classé de Graves, Bernard Magrez gives us a rare elegance and strength which reminds us how unequalled the Bordeaux tradition remains. The production of the white Château Pape Clément has been increased some years ago. It is in general dry, rarely heavy, with spicy notes which are typical for graves from Pessac.

Winemaker
Vintage

Bernard Magrez

2020 - a year of more than the usual challenges. In a few words, 2020 is a high-quality vintage of less than normal quantity. The mild and wet spring led to early flowering which in turn turned into a hot summer including over fifty days of drought, and a heat spice during the summer. The diminished yields of the year resulted from mildew pressure in the spring and a few hail-producing thunderstorms, and in fact is one of the lowest yield vintages in the last decade. The heat throughout but particularly at the end of the summer led to concentrated fruit.

Vineyards

The vineyards today account for 32.5 hectares of the Pessac-Léognan *vignoble*, with three distinct *terroirs* across the estate as a whole. Over a limestone bedrock which originated in the Oligocene and Miocene eras, there are the gravels that typify the region as a whole, as well as areas of clay and sand. The vineyards to the west are sandier, with a deep seam of gravel, whereas those to the east have an increasingly significant amount of clay, and those to the north of the estate the soils are particularly thin and poor. The red vines, which cover 53 hectares, are 51% Cabernet Sauvignon, 46% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot, 1% Cabernet Franc. Here knowledge of the *terroir* is important, as the former variety is planted mainly to the gravelly areas whereas Merlot is selected for those soils with more clay. The majority of these vines have more than 27 years of age, and many are over 40.

Harvest
Winemaking

The harvest started September 10.

Manual plot-by-plot harvest in crates. First sorting in the vineyard. Manual grape-by-grape sorting on the table. Filled into oak vats from 30 to 70 hl by gravity. Pre-fermentation maceration at a low temperature of 8 ° C. Fully manual punching down. Maceration time of 30 days. Direct flow into barrels and French oak casks by gravity. Malolactic fermentation in barrels (2/3 new oak and 1/3 of one previous wine)

Maturation
Tasting Notes

Aging for 18 months in barrels (90%) and casks (10%) of French oak.

50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 50% Merlot A feeling of wild earthy fruit. Strong flavours of alpine and hedgerow berries. This is fully concentrated and there is a feeling of warm spiced oak, providing a touch of sweetness. There is no sense of reserve to this wine, the high degree of muscle will reward patience and bottle aging.

Serve with

Chateau Pape Clément is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Chateau Pape Clément is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.



**Cellaring
Scores/Awards**

Drink 2028-2038.

- 95 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - November 2022
- 94+ points** - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023
- 96-98 points** - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021
- 94 points** - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent (score only) - March 2023
- 98 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - December 2022
- 96-97 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021
- 94-96 points** - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021
- 16.5+ points** - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021
- 16.5+ points** - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021
- 94 points** - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021
- 95 points** - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - January 2023
- 97 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023
- 95-97 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021
- 95 points** - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021
- 93-95 points** - Farr Vintners - April 2021
- 95 points** - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2023
- 95-97 points** - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021
- 98 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2023
- 95-97 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021
- 97+ points** - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023
- 97-99 points** - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021
- 17.5+ points** - Matthew Jukes - May 2021
- 94 points** - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2023
- 96 points** - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021
- 94-95 points** - Vert de Vin - May 2021
- 96 points** - Andreas Larsson, Tasted - May 2021
- 90-93 points** - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021
- 18 points** - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2021

Reviews

"This is snazzed up with flashy toast, but there's ample mulberry, cassis, and plum compote fruit to soak it up, while notes of licorice and sweet spice fill in the background. A late tug of warm earth keeps this grounded. Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Best from 2028 through 2038."
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Aromas of rich cherries, cassis, burning embers, violets and dark chocolate introduce the 2020 Pape Clément, a medium to full-bodied, rich and fleshy wine that's ripe, layered and generously extracted but also a touch deeper and more reserved than the flashy 2019. While it would be an exaggeration to say that this estate's red wines are making much of a shift in the direction of restraint, the style is certainly less aspirational than it was a decade ago."
- WK, Wine Advocate

"Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2020 Pape Clement comes barreling out of the glass with bold notes of cassis, plum preserves, and licorice, giving way to scents of cedar chest, crushed rocks, charcoal, and pencil lead. The medium to full-bodied palate is tightly coiled with beautiful tension and a firm, finely grained texture locking in the layers of black fruits and minerals, finishing with great length and energy. The blend this year is 50% Cabernet Sauvignon and 50% Merlot, aging mainly in French oak barriques, 66% new, with about 10% aging in large oak foudres. The wine will spend approximately 18 months in barrels."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"Lots of blackberry, iodine, and crushed stone here. Some black pepper and graphite, too. Full body and medium, fine tannins that have a powdery texture and open in the mouth. So much is going on. Iodine and iron undertones with some raw mushrooms bring you back for more. Muscular. This is for the cellar."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Superb aromas of blackberries, crushed stones, iodine, and graphite. Full-bodied with ultra fine tannins and a balanced finish. Such length and beauty. Very close to the 2019 in quality."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

Reviews *“This ancient estate, an oasis in the suburbs of Bordeaux city, offers a wine that is packed with promising tannins. The important and rich black fruits reveal concentration, density, and the potential of the development of a fine balance and structure as it matures. Barrel Sample: 94-96.”*
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Full, embossed bottle a completely unnecessary 1,570 g. Cask sample taken 6 April to be tasted before 16 April. Phew ... just made it. No more details given. Dark purplish crimson. Not too heavy on the appetising nose even if a tad sweet on the palate with a rather demandingly drying, tart finish. But I know from experience that everything often falls into place by the time the drinking window comes around. But don't try to broach it before then. Drink 2029 – 2044.”
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

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- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“Powerful in color, this has the glass staining red and purple colors that Pape Clément does so well. Touches of licorice and cocoa beans, well handled, this gives power with one hand but takes it away with the other as the austerity and fresh mint leaf comes to the fore. Impressive, a really enjoyable, classically wrought but still full of concentration Pape Clément. Savory, there is nothing too exuberant in the fruits, but it exudes deft confidence. Barrel Sample: 94.”
- JA, Decanter.com

“Muscular tannins that have grip and staying power, exuberant while staying on the right side of the line, giving punch and definition without drowning the fruit. Cassis, liquorice, slate, crayon, crushed rocks, very much on style for Pape Clement and an excellent wine with staying power. Harvest started September 10. Heavy bottle. 60% new oak.”
- JA, janeanson.com

“With a deep hue that is close to opaque, the wine exudes smoke, roasted espresso, cigar wrappers, blackberries, black cherries, licorice, and chocolate. There is fabulous depth, purity, length, and complexity here. The richly-textured finish is fleshy, powerful, intense, and polished, with an endnote that keeps on going long after the wine has left the glass. This is the finest vintage of Pape Clement in years. Drink from 2026-2055.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Close to opaque in color, the wine explodes from the glass with smoke, cigar box, espresso bean, black cherry liqueur, chocolate ganache, bay leaf, and black currants. Rich, lush, concentrated, and deep, the wine is fleshy, powerful, intense, and polished. Incredibly long, balanced, and complex, the finish keeps on going long after the wine has left the glass. The range of dark red berries sits with you growing in intensity on your palate. This is the finest vintage of Pape Clement in years.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The 2020 is equal parts Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, harvested two weeks earlier than usual here. Deep ruby in colour. Sweet and toasty in oak on the nose, there is enough juicy fruit underneath to keep everything in check. The fruit comes through more on the palate, all cassis and cherry, but it still has to compete with flashy, toasty oak. The harmony is there, and there is grippy tannin to add more edge to the wine, but this is a glossy, slick style.”
- Farr Vintners

Reviews

"The 2020 Pape Clément Rouge has an incredibly intense bouquet with multi-layered blackberry and bilberry fruit, cedar, and black olive compote aromas. Hints of vanilla pod and black truffle emerge with time. The palate is medium-bodied with firm and quite assertive tannins that frame a huge weight of fruit (more than Domaine de Chevalier or Malartic-Lagravière tasted alongside). It's not a subtle Pessac-Léognan for sure, but there is adequate freshness and a sense of mineralité and tension at the finish. It will require at least a decade in bottle but long-term, this will be magnificent."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2020 Pape Clément, which I afforded an hour's aeration, has a very precise bouquet of pure blackberry, cedar, mint, and violet aromas, quite discreet but paradoxically intense; these aromas are very seductive. The palate is medium-bodied with ripe, lithe tannins framing wonderfully pure black fruit laced with crushed stone and a judicious touch of white pepper. Seamless in texture, this is a sophisticated Pape Clément in the making, an outstanding wine that should age brilliantly in bottle. Drink 2025 – 2060."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2020 Pape Clément is outrageously beautiful. Dark, virile, and imposing, the 2020 is a rare vintage of Pape Clément that is vertical and statuesque in feel. Dark fruit, chocolate, new leather, licorice, and cloves infuse the palate with tremendous depth. In a word: magnificent."

- AG, Vinous

"The 2020 Pape Clément is so impressive. Red cherry, plum, cedar, mint, tobacco, blood orange and rose petal all build as the 2020 opens in the glass. Vibrant and beautifully delineated, the 2020 has a ton to offer. The 2020 exudes purity, energy, and breathtaking balance. It is one of the finest recent vintages I can remember tasting. Drink 2025 – 2045."

- AG, Vinous

"I loved the 2020 Château Pape Clément, and this beauty is up there with the top wines in Pessac. Checking in as equal parts Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, aged 18 months in 90% barrels and 10% in foudre, it offers a deep purple hue to go with a powerful, concentrated profile displaying both red and black fruits, lots of spicy, chocolate, flowery incense nuances, full-bodied richness, and an almost salty, bloody character on the finish. This beauty shows the concentrated yet utterly classic, focused, elegant style of the vintage and has so much to love. Rating: 97+."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"Ranking with the top wines of the vintage, the dense purple-hued 2020 Château Pape Clément offers a sensational bouquet of pure crème de cassis interwoven with notes of liquid violets and classy oak. Possessing flawless balance, full-bodied richness, and ultra-fine tannins, it excels in this vintage and has a pretty, elegant, yet also layered and concentrated profile. It will drink well with just short-term cellaring yet evolve gracefully for 20-30 years. I was able to taste this on multiple occasions, and it always checked in near the upper end of the scale. This is a gorgeous wine in the making."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"Muscular, spicy, and very extracted, I am amazed that this wine seems to have retained some semblance of balance given the sheer scale of flavour on the palate. It is dry and hard on the finish, but the fruit is massive, too, and so I don't see any reason why this wine will not even out, but it will take some time!"

- Matthew Jukes

"Dark ruby, opaque core, purple reflections. Attractive fresh cherry fruit, dark wild berries, cassis, fine oak spices and fine tobacco nuances; a multi-faceted bouquet. Juicy, complex, very elegant, has freshness and ripe tannins, mineral and very persistent with great balance and length. Despite its youth it is already very seductive but will mature for many years."

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

"On the nose, elegant, aromatic, racy and offers a little complexity, some power (in delicacy). With notes of pulpy wild blackcurrant, strawberry and more lightly of small black berries associated with touches of cherry, bright purple plum as well as points of racy minerality, camphor, star anise, fine points of lilac and pepper. The palate is fruity, balanced and offers juiciness, smoothness, straightness as well as a certain tension, a nice acidic frame, a certain power (in softness) and a little compact/tight side. On the palate, expressing notes of

Reviews *pulpy/juicy blackberry, red currant and more lightly bright cherry associated with touches of purple plum, tart blueberry as well as racy minerality, star anise, zan, discreet vanilla, an imperceptible hint of fresh blond tobacco and crushed almond. The tannins are massive, well conducted, numerous, and relatively mellow. Good length. Congratulations!*

- Vert de Vin

"Pure and aromatic nose with bay leaf, sage blending red and dark fruit. The palate shows its usual concentration and depth with fine layers, refined tannin, a good dose of freshness underneath and a brilliantly long finish."

- AL, Tasted.com

"(50% CS, 50% M). An abundance of ripe black fruit to smell, right on the edge of raisiny; full-bodied, vigorous in acidity, firm in tannin, quite fine but making for a muscular impression and balance; intense flavor, strong and deep within its tannin frame, a light gravel impression behind the mass of fruit, quite long to taste and with good fruit persistence. A very particular style, that of the hot vintage plus fairly extract winemaking. A solid, powerful, sinewy, low-yield wine. There is clearly a fine fruit core within the substantial framework, but little of the gravel aromas that are often there. This seems a bit old-fashioned in style in today's winemaking context—none the worse for that, but worth observing. Needs a decade minimum. 2030–50."

- MS, The World of Fine Wine
