

Château Clinet 2018

CSPC# 811818

750mlx6

14.75% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

85% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon

Appellation

Pomerol

Classification

Bordeaux AOC (*Appellation d'origine contrôlée*)

Website

<http://www.chateauclinet.com/chateau-clinet-pomerol/>

General Info

Chateau Clinet is a relatively small property in Pomerol, home of the best Merlots made in the world. Over the last decade or so, it has risen to be amongst the top wines of the region. Château Clinet is located in the heart of the Pomerol appellation, about 40 km from the city of Bordeaux. Posed on beautiful plots of the famous terrace serious Gunz, particularly suitable terroir for Merlot, it is one of the most prestigious area of the appellation. The estate wines, elegant and intense style parties are now the great wines of Pomerol.

Chateau Clinet once belonged to the Constant Family before it passed to the Arnaud family. The Arnaud's had good taste in wine. At the same time, they were also owners of the famed Bordeaux wine property, Petrus. Following the Arnaud's involvement, from 1900 to 1991, Clinet became the property of the Audy family. They were best known as Bordeaux négociant's. When the managing director Jean-Michel Arcaute arrived in the early 1980s, Chateau Clinet began producing some of the best wine in their history.

It was Arcaute's desire for Clinet return to the previous level of prominence it occupied in the early 19th century. Arcaute began leaf thinning, green harvesting, and more importantly, he strived to harvest fruit that was phenologically ripe. The estate also reduced the amount of cabernet sauvignon vines planted in the vineyards. Clinet is one of the few Pomerol properties with a large percentage, (Large for Pomerol) of cabernet sauvignon vines.

In 1991, the chateau was sold to Gan insurance. Arcaute remained the director of the estate. Clinet was bought by Jean-Louis Laborde in late 1998. Tragically, Arcaute died in a boating accident in 2001. Today, the estate is managed by the young Ronan Laborde. Laborde could have been a competitive marathon runner if he was not a wine maker. Michel Rolland consults this Bordeaux wine property. Clinet has been improving slowly but steadily since the Laborde family purchased the estate. 2008 was a big jump in quality and their 2009 Bordeaux wine is even better!

Winemaker

Ronan Laborde. Michel Rolland consults.

Vintage

2018 Pomerol continues the appellations streak of recent great vintages, 2009, 2010, 2015, 2016 and now 2018. While each of those years offer incredible wines with characteristics you can only find in Pomerol, at their best, perhaps 2018 outclasses all those previous years.

2018 Pomerol might not be as consistent as other great vintages, meaning that all wines did not perform at an equal high-level. With 2018, you need to look at the rich clay soils on the plateau for the best of the best. But make no mistake, the top wines from the plateau are future Bordeaux legends!

It is the style and character found in 2018 Pomerol that makes the vintage so good. At their best, they have incredible levels of depth. They are concentrated, rich and alcoholic. But the pH is low enough, making the acidity high enough to provide lift and energy on the palate.

At their best, the top wines offer a decadent tasting experience that drenches your palate with layers of decadently textured fruits that feels off the charts. These are exciting wines that fans of Pomerol will want in their cellar.

2018 Pomerol did not start out promising. The early part of the growing season found a region drenched from almost non-stop rains. To give you an idea of how much water fell in Pomerol, from January to July, close to 24", (600 mm) drenched the region over 6 months!



Vintage	<p>The biggest issues came with the rains that fell in April and May. All that rain brought attacks of mildew, which had the potential to wreak havoc. Growers with the resources to act quickly were able to fight off most of the mildew. Crop losses were mild with 2018 Pomerol.</p> <p>While the soils were saturated by July, the clay terroirs soaked up as much water as possible before expelling the rest. This proved to be part of the magic recipe needed to create 2018 Pomerol. Because the second half of the growing season turned out to be one of the hottest and driest vintages of the past 50 years!</p> <p>For many soils, especially sandy terroirs, there was not enough water to allow the grapes to reach full desired levels of ripeness. But the plateau with its clay soils retained ample water to promote maturity in the vines. The harvest took place in picture-perfect conditions over an extended picking window. Conditions were so good; vigneron were able to pick at their chosen level of maturity.</p>
Vineyards	<p>This small (8 hectare) property is situated at the edge of the plateau of Pomerol behind Clos L'Eglise. It shot to fame following a 100-point Parker rating in 1989 and then repeated this feat 20 years later. The wines here are serious, dense, and powerful. 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, with all the Cabernet Franc now removed from the vineyard. The 2018 had a yield of 38 hl/ha and is being aged in 75% new oak. Average vine age of 47 years.</p>
Harvest	<p>Merlot was harvested on the 19th, 20th, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th and the 2nd October and the Cabernet Franc was harvested on the 5th October</p>
Vinification/ Maturation	<p>Vinification takes place in wooden vats and stainless steel with thermo micro-oxygenation. 5 weeks maceration with vigorous pumping over. Malolactic fermentation in the bottles. Aged for 16 months in 75% new oak barrels, and 25% 1 yr. old barrels.</p>
Tasting Notes	<p>Deep purple in colour with violet hue and black core. Well concentrated nose with great potential, however very closed. Restrained fruit, discreet spiciness, and hints of dark chocolate. On the palate well structured with ripe but firm tannins, excellent depth, and length.</p>
Serve with	<p>Best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.</p>
Production	<p>49,000 bottles production</p>
Cellaring	<p>Drink 2023-2045</p>
Scores/Awards	<p>97+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2021 94-96+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019 96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2021 95-96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019 94-96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 2019 17 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - October 2020 16 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2019 97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2020 97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2019 97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2021 97-99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019 15+ points - Farr Vintner - April 2019 95 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - March 2021 93-95 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - November 2019 91-94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2019 99 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2021 96-99 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2019 17.5+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2019 94 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - May 2019</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"The 2018 Clinet is a blend of 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, aged for approximately 16 months in French oak barriques, 75% new. Deep garnet-purple colored, the nose is locked down tight at first sniff, requiring a good amount of air to begin to reveal profound notions of stewed black plums, mulberries, and black cherry compote, plus hints of black truffles, damp soil, tobacco leaf and chargrill with an emerging waft of cedar. The full-bodied palate is a full-on volcano of black fruit and molten rock waiting to erupt, with a solid frame of firm, grainy tannins and bold freshness, finishing with amazing length. There is a lot going on here, but it is a wine for</i></p>

Reviews *the patient. Give it a good 5-7 years in bottle, at least, and drink it over the next 30+ years.”*
- LPB, Wine Advocate

“Deep garnet-purple in color, the 2018 Clinet begins a little coy and then, with coaxing, opens out to vibrant black cherries, kirsch, baked plums and cinnamon stick scents with hints of cloves and anise plus earthy truffles and fungi wafts. Full-bodied and chock-full of bright, energetic fruit, it has a firm, finely grained structure and long, fragrant finish. “
- LPB, Wine Advocate

“Blackberries and blueberries with subtle black chocolate and violets on the nose, following to a full-bodied palate with polished, creamy tannins. Beautiful balance and really refined texture. Drink after 2024, but already so gorgeous.”
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This is a young red that really grows on the palate with so much dark fruit and firm yet luscious tannins. Full-bodied, it grows and grows on the palate. Extremely long and vivid. Solid as a rock. 15 per cent cabernet sauvignon, the rest merlot.”
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“A perfumed wine with fine tannins, this is packed with a blackberry flavor and finishes with intense acidity. All the elements are in place for a wine that will reveal great elegance as it develops.”
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Black core, purple rim. Intense cassis, a touch minty, but also a slightly intrusive aroma that I think must come from the oak. For now, at least, the tannins and the oak are pretty overwhelming though I can detect lovely fruit underneath. Really chewy.”
- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“18 months in 75% new oak. Black core to crimson rim. Distinctively sweet aroma: blueberry as well as cassis and a touch of thyme. Lovely counterpoint between that sweet fruit and the firm, dry, savoury tannins. Very firm, utterly embryonic despite the inviting and open fruit aromas. The tannins enhance the freshness. Long and promising in its chewy current state.”
- JH, JancisRobinson.com

“One of the star Pomerol names showing us how it’s done in 2018. This wine absolutely stands out, being beautifully vibrant and very polished, where you feel the individual strands of flavour and know it’s clearly going to age. Here you get licks of salted rosemary sprigs right on the nose followed by a silkiness and round mouthfeel that speaks to the alcohol, but you certainly don’t feel it. It’s well judged, very Pomerol, and on the dark side of the fruit scale, perhaps because this is Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, not Cabernet Franc. I found Clinet a little difficult to approach in 2017, giving it a highly recommended but at the low end of the scale, but here it is roaring back to form. Drinking Window 2027 – 2044.”
- JA, Decanter.com

“Closed and coiled right now, with ripped layers of fruit. A ton of graphite, bitter dark chocolate, and finessed berry fruits. Definitely need to give this time and respect its muscular form. A seriously impressive Clinet that has held its form over ageing. Drinking Window 2026 – 2045.”
- Decanter.com

“Deeply colored, the wine is intensely concentrated with layers of black, red and blue fruits accompanied by licorice, dark cocoa, truffle, flowers, espresso bean and hints of Asian spice. There is a fabulous sense of purity to the fruits that really comes alive when the layers of velvet-drenched fruits hit your palate. The wine is equally hedonistic and elegant, which is a hard thing to accomplish. The wine will age and evolve with ease for 3 decades.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews

“Sensual, luscious and sexy, this is bottled decadence. The wine takes pure plums drenches them in velvet and drizzles them with roses, dark chocolate, licorice, espresso, and truffle. The wine is full-bodied, concentrated, powerful and lush. The harvest took place September 19 to October 5.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Very deep and inky in colour, with a ripe nose of figs and charred wood. The palate is rich and extracted, with bold, grippy tannins that make the fruit somewhat difficult to penetrate at this stage. What does show through is ripe, with damson and dried cherries to the fore. The wood is evident, a high char, drying sensation comes through to the finish. This will need a long time to resolve, but at this stage it feels slightly over extracted.”

- Farr Vintners

“The 2018 Clinet, which was cropped at 38hl/ha, has an exquisite bouquet of lavish black cherry and raspberry fruit, and still those bunches of violets I observed from barrel, flanked by potpourri. The aromatics are well defined and the new oak seamlessly integrated. The palate is medium bodied with sappy black fruit. It has firmed up since I tasted in barrel, when I noted that it felt like a "muscular" Clinet in the making. That trait is emphasized in bottle, and those accustomed to the more hedonistic Clinet's of yore might find it a tad more reserved and drier. But it is a style that suits it well. White pepper leaves the mouth tingling after it has departed, the fitting conclusion to a superb – dare I say cerebral? – Clinet that has a long and prosperous future. Drinking window: 2023 – 2045”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2018 Clinet was picked from 19 September until 5 October at 45hL/ha before selection and 38hL/ha projected for the Grand Vin. It has a sumptuous and very pure bouquet with perfumed black cherry, iodine and crushed violet aromas, although it remains controlled and focused. The palate is medium bodied with firm tannins, quite a muscular Clinet in the making with good backbone, layers of black fruit laced with clove, white pepper, and truffle. This is nicely detailed on the finish. The 2018 should grow up into a very fine Clinet.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2018 Clinet is a powerful, explosive wine. Clinet is unusual for Pomerol in that the wine includes a good bit of Cabernet Sauvignon (15% in 2018). Gravel, smoke, licorice, grilled herbs, leather and menthol wrap around a core of plush, dark fruit. The Cabernet is very much felt in the wine's flavor profile and textural weight. Dense, rich, and inviting, Clinet is a winner from proprietor Ronan Laborde. Tasted three times.”

- AG, Vinous

“One of the superstars of the vintage, it has incredible elegance and finesse as well as gorgeous richness and depth. Notes of cassis and truffle dark fruits as well as tobacco, damp earth, chocolate, and lead pencil shavings emerge from the glass, and it's full-bodied, with a seamless, multi-dimensional texture, gorgeous tannins, and a great, great finish. It already offers incredible pleasure, but it won't hit maturity for another 5-7 years and should evolve for 30 years or more. This magical wine is in the same league as the 2015 and 2016 and drinking these beauties over the coming decades will be an incredible treat.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Sporting a saturated purple color, it has a massive perfume of black and blue fruits, crushed violets, spice, and orange blossom. Full-bodied, deep, expansive, and layered on the palate, it's an incredibly hedonistic and sexy wine that shows the best of this great vintage. It's going to be hard to resist on release and knock your socks off over the following two decades or more.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“(85 Merlot, 15 Cabernet Sauvignon) | 75% new oak, using around a quarter of 500l barrels | 14.5% alc | 38 hl/ha | 49000 bottles production | Merlot was harvested on the 19th, 20th, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th and the 2nd October and the Cabernet Franc was harvested on the 5th October. Dry and sour with a lot of skin and blunt tannin, this is a very backward Clinet, and it is hard to see any fruit or tenderness here. The slightly sour notes are mouth-watering, but they are also masked by the oak, and this means that the fruit really struggles to make itself known. I am not sure whether this is a miss-step or simply that the wine is very closed right now, but there is a lot of tension and little flesh on display and so I am slightly confused as to when the fruit will emerge. I will be sure to taste this wine again as soon as possible to check its progress.”

- MJ, matthewjukes.com
