

## Clos L'Église 2018

CSPC# 761721

750mlx6

15.0% alc./vol.

### Grape Variety

80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc

### Appellation

Pomerol

### Classification

Bordeaux AOC (*Appellation d'origine contrôlée*)

### Website

<http://www.vignoblesgarcin.com/index.php?dom=vg&lang=en>

### General Info

In the 18th century, Clos L'Église with its 14 hectares was considered to be a very big domain for Pomerol, ahead of about a dozen great wines which formed, and still form, the heart of Pomerol. The estate subsequently took the name of Clos L'Église. However, following succession problems, it was split into two with, on the one side, the original Clos L'Église (Rouchut family) and on the other, Clos L'Église-Clinet (Mauléon family). Clos L'Église therefore has a continuous wine-producing tradition spread of several centuries. It is the soil which gives a great wine its personality and it is the efforts of Sylviane Garcin-Cathiard that have developed it fully. She took over the property in January 1997 and using her experience at Château Haut-Bergey in Pessac-Léognan, she completely reorganized the chai.

Today Helen Garcin-Leveque and her husband own and run Clos l'Église. They immediately stated a program of renovation and re-planting, after they took over which has come to fruition in a spectacular manner.

The property has a second wine, Esprit de L'Église.

### Winemaker

Hélène and Patrice Lévêque

### 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!

In fact, as you will see in our tasting notes, the wine of the vintage in my view comes from Pomerol!

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!

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.

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!

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



<b>Vintage</b>	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.
<b>Vineyards</b>	The terroir of Clos L'Eglise is filled with rich clay and gravel-based soil with iron deposits. Located on a sloping hill, with famous neighbors like Chateau Clinet, Chateau L'Eglise Clinet and Chateau Trotanoy, most of their 5.9 hectare, Bordeaux wine vineyard stretches to the south west of their wine making facilities. The Pomerol vineyard of Clos L'Eglise is planted to 70% Merlot and 30% Cabernet Franc. On average, the vines are 35 years of age. Although there is an old parcel of Cabernet Franc remaining that was planted in the 1940's! The vineyard is planted to a vine density of 7,150 vines per hectare.
<b>Harvest</b>	There was a big gap in harvesting between the Merlot on 19/20 September and Cabernet Franc on 10 October, as it had to ripen after blockages, but they were able to be patient and got to the full ripeness."
<b>Maturation</b>	The wine is made according to traditional methods. It is for this reason that Sylviane Garcin-Cathiard chose wooden vats for Clos L'Eglise. Each batch is treated separately in a thermostat-regulated vat of 60 hl. Manual pigeage has been re-introduced; the pulp and mass of skins, known as chapeau, floats to the top during fermentation and is punched down manually several times a day. The wine is left in fermenting vats for a long time, and malolactic fermentation is carried out in 100% new barrels. Ageing lasts between 16 to 18 months depending on the vintage. Interestingly Clos L'Eglise uses as many as 12 different coopers to age their wine in.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	<p>It is an incredible charmer, evoking immediate pleasure and certain seduction. When it reveals its elegance, its roundness, its opulence it pays tribute to its origins, rare and inimitable. Clos l'Eglise is a philanthropist who leaves behind, on meeting, the persistent memory of a tender emotion.</p> <p>The Clos L'Eglise 2018 is made from a blend of Merlot (80%) and Cabernet Franc (20%). At the tasting, the Clos L'Eglise 2018 reveals a dark purple color and shimmering purple hues. Powerful, intensely expressive, and very pure, the nose opens with notes of black berries, like blackcurrant and blackberry, followed by licorice and chocolate notes. The mineral touches of graphite then appear and give way to hints of smoky earth. On the palate, the vintage reveals the full extent of its personality through a deliciously melting, mouth-coating material with a velvety texture. Great finesse and elegance characterize the tannic structure of this vintage. The mid-palate shines with bright, juicy fruit, stretching into a long, spicy, and powerful finish. A great vintage of Clos L'Eglise which will evolve wonderfully over the years.</p>
<b>Serve with</b>	Clos L'Eglise is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
<b>Production</b>	1,665 cases made.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2022-2032
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>92 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - January 2021</p> <p><b>93-96 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - June 2019</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2021</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2021</p> <p><b>96-97 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019</p> <p><b>92 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2019</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2021</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019</p> <p><b>93 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p><b>92-94 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - November 2019</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p><b>92-95 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2019</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2021</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2019</p>

**Reviews** *“Enticing, with macerated fig and plum notes forming the core while dark tea and savory notes course underneath. Hints of wet stone and charcoal echo at the very end. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2032. 1,665 cases made.”*

- JM, Wine Spectator

*“Grippy from the start, featuring bramble and tar notes, layered with steeped plum and blackberry cobbler flavors. A touch chewy, but displays ample energy, with nice spice details on the finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. 1,665 cases made.”*

- JM, Wine Spectator

*“The 2018 Clos l'Eglise is a blend of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc. Deep garnet-purple colored, it comes bounding out of the glass with energetic scents of Morello cherries, fresh black plums, boysenberries and lavender, plus underlying nuances of crushed rocks, woodsmoke and black truffles. The full-bodied palate is packed with perfumed black fruit, supported by ripe, velvety tannins and tons of freshness, finishing on a lingering fragrant earth note.”*

- LPB, Wine Advocate

*“The 2018 Clos l'Eglise is a final blend composed of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc; the Merlot was harvested September 19-20, and the Cabernet Franc was harvested on October 10. Deep garnet-purple colored, it explodes on the nose with bold, expressive plum preserves, blueberry compote, mincemeat pie and sandalwood with nuances of lilacs, woodsmoke, Indian spices and dusty soil. Full-bodied, rich, velvety and decadently fruited in the mouth, it offers layer upon layer of voluptuous fruit, finishing long and spicy.”*

- LPB, Wine Advocate

*“A round-textured and layered young Pomerol with berry, plum, chocolate and hazelnut aromas and flavors. It's full-bodied, plush and luscious on so many levels. Try after 2026, when it tightens up.”*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“Fantastic depth of fruit to this young wine with crushed-berry, tile and stone character. Full-bodied with superb structure. Polished yet intense tannins. Powerful finish. Best ever?”*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“This has the sensuous, easy generosity and exuberance of Pomerol offering soft tannins at first, but with grip as they close in through the palate, alongside seductive chocolate notes with licorice on the finish. There was a big gap in harvesting between the Merlot on 19/20 September and Cabernet Franc on 10 October, as it had to ripen after blockages, but they were able to be patient and got to the full ripeness.”*

- JA, Decanter.com

*“Dark in color, the wine pops right off the bat with an array of aromatics. Flowers, truffle, smoke, licorice, black cherry, and raspberry liqueur consume your nose. On the palate, the wine is rich, seductive, sensuous, and silky. Full-bodied, concentrated, opulent and velvety, everything here is in perfect proportion. The finish feels so good, it is impossible not to take another sip. This superb Pomerol will age effortlessly for 3 decades.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“Powerful, plummy, silky, deep and fresh, this full-bodied wine is long and filled with dark, red pit fruits, chocolate, espresso and violets. Give this velvet textured beauty a decade to age and it is going to be superb! 94-96 Pts.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“The 2018 Clos l'Eglise has an open, expressive bouquet of brambly red fruit, crushed strawberry and raspberry, intermixed with dark chocolate and espresso scents. It certainly repays 90 minutes to really open. The palate is medium-bodied with fine-grained and quite strict tannins that lend it more linearity than the Barde-Haut tasted alongside (also owned by the Garcin-Lévêque family). Black pepper and clove remain present on the finish and there is a persistent spicy aftertaste. This is a classy Pomerol, but it will require 3–4 years in bottle.”*

- NM, Vinous

**Reviews**

*“The 2018 Clos l’Eglise has a different fruit profile to the Barde-Haut tasted alongside, as one might expect comparing Pomerol against Saint-Émilion. Here one finds more red fruit, raspberry and wild strawberry intermingling with blackberry and cassis fruit. The new oak (80%) is nicely integrated here. The palate is medium-bodied with grainy tannins. There is plenty of rondeur in this Pomerol, black truffle filtering through the blackberry fruit with a dash of cracked black pepper and clove towards the finish. This has always the hallmarks of classic Pomerol and it might drink earlier than the Barde-Haut “*

- NM, Vinous

*“The 2018 Clos L'Eglise is dense and powerful to the core. The tannins are equally forbidding, suggesting the 2018 is going to need a number of years to be at its best. Heat and mildew resulted in an unusually deep Clos L'Eglise. Dark cherry, plum, mocha, licorice, spice, and gravel open with a bit of coaxing. Readers have to be patient here.”*

- AG, Vinous

*“The 2018 Clos L’Eglise is a powerful, brooding wine with a huge core of super-ripe, dense fruit and equally imposing tannins. In 2018, heat and mildew impacted yields and resulted in a big, rich wine. Dark cherry, graphite, plum, mineral, spice and licorice add to an impression of brooding power. It will be interesting to see what élevage does here. Today, Clos L’Eglise is a real powerhouse. The blend is 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc.”*

- AG, Vinous

*“A pretty, elegant wine from this terroir, the 2018 Château Clos L'Eglise reveals a ruby/purple color as well as smoking good notes of black cherries, blueberries, white truffle, damp earth, and a little bit of iron and bloodiness that emerge with time in the glass. With medium to full-bodied richness on the palate, it has ripe tannins, a balanced texture, and just a ripe yet elegant, fleshy profile. Give bottles 4-5 years of bottle age and enjoy over the following 10-15 years.”*

- Jeb Dunnuck

*“The 2018 Clos l'Eglise from this talented team is also beautiful, with ripe, sexy notes of blackberries, plums, graphite, smoked earth, and chocolate. Possessing the beautiful fruit of the vintage, medium to full-body, a great mid-palate, and building tannins, and a great finish, this deep, flawlessly balanced, complete Pomerol should be snatched up by savvy readers.”*

- Jeb Dunnuck

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