

Château La Conseillante 2017

CSPC# 801695

750mlx6

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

85% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

Pomerol

Classification

unclassified

Website

<http://www.la-conseillante.com/en>

General Info

The name “La Conseillante” first appeared in the middle of the 18th century. It was given to the property by a certain Catherine Conseillan, an influential figure who ran the estate at that time -almost 300 years ago.

It was in 1871 that the Nicolas family bought the estate, whose surface area and vineyard plots have remained unchanged since then.

Today, it is the turn of the fifth generation of the Nicolas to manage the estate, a demonstration once again of continuity and the attachment of the family to this great growth. Bertrand Nicolas and Jean-Valmy Nicolas are the joint managing directors of La Conseillante. Marielle Cazaux is the estate manager.

The Nicolas heirs are clearly identified on each bottle by the initials “LN” on the label at the centre of a shield within a silver-edged border whose four corners are sloped. The violet-coloured bottle capsule evokes the characteristic aroma of the wine. These packaging features, first chosen back in 1871 by the Nicolas brothers, remain elegant and yet modern even today.

Château La Conseillante is a member of the Union des Grands Crus and L'Académie des Vins de Bordeaux.

Winemakers

Marielle Cazaux. Michel Rolland - consultant winemaker

Vintage

Despite the precocious and challenging vintage, La Conseillante triumphed in 2017, resulting in a wine of great success considered one of the greatest of Pomerol this year. The work and the daily attention paid by the technical team, led by the talented Marielle Cazeau, is enough to arouse admiration. The vineyard plots were flown over at a low altitude by a helicopter to spread warm air over the vines. Among the other extreme measures taken, burning lanterns were arranged in between vineyard rows. Thanks to these efforts, Chateau La Conseillante managed to survive the frenzy of the frost of the end of the month of April, with only 2 hectares affected at the bottom of the plateau. The vineyard teams then proceeded in the difficult task of identifying and marking the vines as first and second generation. Extreme care was taken also during the winemaking, which was aimed to offer the purest expression of each parcel used in the blend of the Grand Vin. On the plateau, where the grand vin comes from, the yield was a reasonable 39 hl/ha. The alcohol this year comes in at an elegant 13.5%.

Vineyards

The 12 hectares of vineyards are in the heart of the Pomerol plateau next to Petrus and Cheval Blanc. One third of the vines – the ones to the left of Cheval Blanc’s driveway – are located in Saint-Emilion on gravel and sand, but the remaining two thirds of the vineyard is planted on blue clay. It is apparently the combination of these two elements which provides the finesse and aroma for which the property is famous, and the power and depth which make it long lived. 80% of the vines that grow in this unique place, where the soils are predominantly made up of clay, are of the Merlot variety, which makes our wines round, deep and smooth. The remaining 20% that grow in gravel soils are Cabernet Franc, which contribute structure and freshness to the blend.

Harvest

Harvest here started on September 5th for the Merlot and finished with the Cabernet Franc on September 29th.

Maturation

Pre-fermentation cold soak for 2 to 4 days. Vatting period: 2 to 4 weeks. Ageing: 50% to 80% in new French oak barrels for 18 months. Racking: Every 3 months, using a traditional bellow pump. Fining: In barrel, 2 to 3 fresh egg whites per barrel.



Tasting Notes The La Conseillante 2017 achieves the perfect union of charm and elegance, which has become its signature. Sophisticated and pure, its aromatic bouquet reveals fresh notes of red berries, like cherry and plum, enhanced with touches of licorice, adorned with a floral style with fragrances of violet that is the signature of the house. In an exquisitely refined attack, the palate offers a silky, velvety texture that is the hallmark of the La Conseillante style. Without losing intensity, the palate evolves with a perfect tension between the structure of the tannic frame and the mellowness of the fruit, stretching into a full and energetic finish. A magnificent expression of the vintage in the dazzling style of Pomerol.

Serve with Chateau La Conseillante is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Young vintages can be decanted for 2-3 hours. This allows the wine to soften and open its perfume. Chateau La Conseillante is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised and grilled dishes.

Production 3,299 cases made.

Cellaring Drink 2022

Scores/Awards **95 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2020
97 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2020
95-97 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate #236 - April 2018
95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2020
94-95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2018
94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2020
95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2018
17+ points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - October 2019
94 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2018
17 points - Farr Vintner - April 2018
93-95 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2018
93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2020
93-95 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2018
96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2020
94-97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2018
95 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2020
94-96 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2018
19+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2018

Reviews *"A tobacco leaf accent pierces the large core of raspberry, plum and blackberry compote flavors, injecting energy as this moves along, pulling juniper, bramble and black tea notes through the finish. Shows lots of detail and energy on the finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2022 through 2038. 3,299 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Medium to deep garnet-purple colored, the 2017 La Conseillante sashays out of the glass with the most gorgeous notes of lilacs, Black Forest cake, kirsch and black raspberries plus nuances of cinnamon stick, dark chocolate and licorice. Medium to full-bodied, the palate has a firm, finely grained texture with bags of perfumed black fruits and wonderful freshness, finishing very long and very fragrant."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The 2017 La Conseillante displays a deep garnet-purple color and simply sings of crushed blueberries, mulberries and ripe plums with suggestions of violets, chocolate box, rose hip tea and a waft of menthol. The palate is medium bodied with impressive richness at this elegant weight coupled with vivacity and supported by plush, velvety tannins, finishing with great length and energy. This is an arrestingly beautiful expression of this vintage!"
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"A young red with sweet fruit and very fine tannins, which have a creamy and almost salty sensation. Medium to full body. Blackberries, dark chocolate and bark. Some black tea, too. It shows an energy and tension. The creamy tannins give polish and beauty. Better after 2023."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

Reviews *"Tight and precise with focused tannins and a lovely texture to this young wine. Medium to full body. Compressed and serious. Some salty and dark fruit at the end."*
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"A powerfully juicy wine, this has weight as well as elegant sophistication. Generous layers of rich Merlot offer dark black-fruit flavors as well as a jammy balance for the acidity. Drink from 2024."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"This is a very rich wine, with opulent Merlot fruit and generous tannins. There is a spicy, perfumed character to the nose, speaking to the Cabernet Franc in the blend. Fine acidity pierces through the ripe black fruits. It will certainly age well and should be enjoyed after 2023."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"85% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc. Very dark with a black core. Sweetly scented with black cherry and also a more savoury pencil-shavings cedary quality. Dry and compact tannins but with enough fruit at the core to hold the tannins apart in your mouth. Very firm grip. Needs a lot of time. Very chewy. (JH)"
- JH, JancisRobinson.com

"I had the chance to taste through the individual components of this wine as well as the blend, and then re-tasted it the following week. It's an excellent take on the vintage, the austerity coming through on the attack before it opens to a wonderfully smoky mid-palate with loganberry and blackberry fruit, showing real fullness and volume. This has texture, structure and good aromatics, with a great sense of energy and persistency."
- JA, Decanter.com

"Sophisticated, sexy and fresh, the wine is lenient and silky. There is a strong violet sensation along with black cherry, boysenberry, truffle and dark chocolate. The wine is classic in style but in a virtuous way. There is depth and volume. On the palate, you'll experience sweet, bright, fresh, dusty, chocolate-covered plums."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"They believe this wine to be in the style of their excellent 2001 vintage here. A violet colour in the glass hints at the wild aromatics of blueberry, clove, and jasmine tea. The fruit has great definition, with ripe blue and black fruits etched into the plentiful but velvet-textured tannins. With time in the glass the aromatic expression only increases, and though the tannins remain persistent, their refinement allows for added complexity and spiciness to come through - though the notes from the oak are very subtle, and expertly handled. Finishing with cinnamon and cocoa, this is focused, poised and harmonious."
- Farr Vintners

"Violets fragrant the nose has real charm the palate sweet with ripe fruit mid richness suppleness the tannins are discreet and velvety. Rich and ripe at the back there is depth of fruit with purity of flavour on the finish. 2026-38"
- Derek Smedley MW

"The 2017 La Conseillante suffered a touch of frost on the Cabernet Franc and was bottled 5 and 6 June. It is impressive on the nose with blackberry, boysenberry, truffle and bay leaf aromas. I appreciate the delineation and focus of this Pomerol. The palate is medium bodied with quite firm, slightly chalky tannins at the moment. It is not a deep nor powerful La Conseillante, but it has plenty of character and charm, reflecting the growing season and the vineyard. It just finishes a little curtly like many 2017 Pomerols, but it should flesh out with bottle age. It's probably bad luck that this is sandwiched between the 2016 and 2018 but hey, you cannot choose the year you were born. 2020 - 2025."
- NM, Vinous

"The 2017 La Conseillante contains a little less Cabernet Franc than usual because four or five rows were damaged by frost. It has a classic Pomerol bouquet with touches of truffle and incense infusing the broody Black fruit that take a few minutes to unwind in the glass. The palate is medium bodied with fine tannin,

Reviews *well balanced with a subtle sprinkling of white pepper and fennel. The Cabernet Franc, despite its diminished contribution, is quite expressive towards the balsamic-tinged finish that shows plenty of energy and decent persistence. It is less powerful than the 2016 at this stage but it is clearly a very well crafted, almost sensual Pomerol by winemaker Marielle Cazaux. Tasted twice with consistent notes, this may well settle at the top of my banded score once in bottle. Drink 2022-2045."*

- NM, Vinous

"The 2017 La Conseillante is a regal wine. Lithe and statuesque in the glass, La Conseillante soars with real vertical intensity. Sweet floral aromatics and silky tannins give the 2017 much of its understated, classy personality. Inky dark blue/purplish fruit, spice, licorice and lavender develop with a bit of time, but it is the wine's balance and extreme sense of harmony that stand out most. Technical Director Marielle Cazaux gave the fruit about 2 days on the skins, with no SO2 at crush. Cazaux added that the malos were quite fast. The blend is 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc. Frost reduced production by around 15%, while drought further reduced yields in the Franc by a further 10%. This is a fabulous showing. Drink 2025-2042."

- AG, Vinous

"The 2017 La Conseillante is a wine of total finesse and class. Bright, floral and beautifully lifted, the 2017 is exceptionally polished and nuanced from start to finish. Despite its mid-weight, gracious personality, the 2017 has real staying power. Technical Director Marielle Cazaux gave the fruit about 2 days on the skins, with no SO2 at crush. Cazaux added that the malos were quite fast. The blend is 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc. Frost reduced production by around 15%, while drought further reduced yields in the Franc by a further 10%. As for the wine, well, the 2017 was magnificent on each of the three occasions I tasted it."

- AG, Vinous

"A wine compared to the 2001 by winemaker Marielle Cazaux and showing beautifully both from barrel and now bottle, the 2017 Chateau La Conseillante is a classic, elegant wine from this estate that does everything right. Revealing a deep purple hue as well as terrific notes of creme de cassis, black cherries, crushed violets, camphor, and a hint of licorice, it hits the palate with medium to full-bodied richness, a bright spine of acidity, silky tannins, and a balanced, incredibly classic style. Give this complex, complete Pomerol 5-7 years of bottle age and enjoy over the following two decades. Tasted twice. The blend is 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc and comes from the estate's 11.8-hectare vineyard of mostly gravelly clay soils (there's some sand as well as iron), and the aging spans 16 months in 70% new French oak. The 2017 is a selection from 70% of the total production. Marielle Cazaux has unquestionably raised the bar at this estate, which is now nearly always producing one of the top wines in the vintage"

- Jeb Dunnuck

"One of the sure bets in the vintage is the 2017 La Conseillante, which sports a vibrant ruby color and a deep, concentrated, beautifully layered personality. Black cherries, currants, violets, Asian spice, and truffle all flow to a full-bodied 2017 that has terrific depth of fruit, ripe, sweet tannin, and a great finish. It's an undeniable success in the vintage, if not the wine of the vintage in Pomerol. The blend in 2017 is 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc, from tiny yields of 34 hectoliters per hectare, aged in 70% new oak. Tasted twice."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"Winemaker Marielle Cazaux was elated about her 2017. The temperatures dropped to -2C and so they rented a helicopter (which hovered at a height of 30m) and this took the temperatures back up to 0C. On the Cheval Blanc side, the temperature dropped to -3.5C and they lost 15% of fruit which was destined for Duo. A very early vintage, with veraison happening at the end of July. They started picking on 5th September and so Marielle had to cut her holiday short! They stopped for rain and then finished everything on 29th September. The Cabernet Franc berries were very small, very spicy and of great quality. Pure, complex and totally refreshing, this is a stunningly energetic La Conseillante with lovely definition and class. This is all about length rather than depth and while it is forward and clear, it will hold well on account of the stunning acidity. This is a completely different wine to the 2015 and 2016 and it is very worthy of its place in this fabulous trio of vintages."

- MJ, matthewjukes.com
