
Château La Croix du Casse 2000

CSPC#765469

750mlx12

13.0% Alc./Vol.

Grape Variety

90% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon

Appellation

Pomerol

Website

<http://www.lacroixducasse.com/>

General Info

Château La Croix du Casse was for many years owned and administered by Jean-Michel Arcaute, who also owned Chateau Jonqueyres and world famous Chateau Clinet. He was one of Bordeaux's true innovators and propelled Croix du Casse into the front line of Pomerol properties. The former owner, Jean-Michel Arcaute set the estate on the right and rigorous course to establish itself as a force in Pomerol. The wine is not fined or filtered. Half the crop is aged in new oak barrels. Tragically that era ended in 2001 after a bizarre double tragedy, when its celebrated winemaker Jean-Michel Arcaute died in a boating accident, and his winemaking son died a week later of an aneurism. The 2000 vintage was their swan song, and what a vintage to end with.

Chateau La Croix du Casse was purchased by Philippe Casteja in 2005. Casteja bought the estate from the Audy family, who were better known for owning the renown Chateau Clinet. Since his purchase in 2005, Philippe Casteja has continued to make improvements in the cellars and Pomerol vineyards of Chateau La Croix du Casse. The results began to show with the quality of wine found in the 2009 vintage. La Croix du Casse's produces plummy, voluptuously rich Pomerols that ooze sweet, black fruits, herbs, coffee and sometimes dark chocolate accompanied by smoky vanilla oak notes. Irresistible while young but they will continue improving for a decade or so.

2000 La Croix du Casse is a wine that got lost in the mix of 2000's, due to some unusual reviews early on. It was born with particularly high tannins, which, it was assumed, would out-live the fruit. Its recent reappearance in the market defies that hypothesis, and upon uncorking and gently decanting a bottle, we have proven to ourselves that the wine is balanced and beautiful. Made 90% or so from Merlot, with the remainder Cabernet Franc, it was a candidate from the start for being one of the stars of the vintages. The evidence is in the bottle.

Vintage

Prayers were answered with a vintage of very high quality which produced many stunning wines. Greatest successes were in the Médoc districts where Cabernet achieved perfect levels of ripeness; however throughout the region exceptional wines were made and during our tastings we found memorable wines in each of the major appellations. Colours are deep, perfumes are rich and on the palate structure and power support delicious ripe fruit. The Bordelais cannot believe their good fortune!

Vineyards

The Right Bank, Bordeaux wine vineyard of Chateau La Croix du Casse is situated on the southern edge of the plateau of Pomerol, not that far from Chateau Taillefer. The parcels consist of soils with sand, gravel and some iron deposits. The 9 hectare, Pomerol vineyard of Chateau La Croix du Casse is planted to 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. On average, the vines are 30 years of age. The vines are planted to a vine density of 7,000 vines per hectare.

Most of the vintage was re-planted in 1956 which means that the vines are now at their optimal age for producing the best grapes.

Harvest

The wine is harvested manually, of course, with a strict selection of only the best grapes for the final assemblage. All of the technology in the chai is state-of-the-art.

Vinification/ Maturation

The wine of Chateau La Croix du Casse is vinified in small, stainless, steel, temperature controlled vats that range in size from 50 hectoliters to 100 hectoliters. The Merlot is vinified in the larger vats and the Cabernet Franc is placed into the 50 hectoliter tanks. The wine is aged in 40% new, French oak barrels for between 12 to 16 months. After barrel aging, the wine is placed back into vat for an additional 4 months of aging with the goal of reducing the effects of too much oak.



Tasting Notes	La Croix du Casse 2000 is ready for drinking and is a wine of great charm and elegance – oozing sweet, black fruits, herbs, coffee, smoky vanilla notes. The wine will age beautifully for a decade or so. The La Croix du Casse is a rare opportunity to get an affordable taste of elusive little Pomerol from one of the finest vintages ever produced.
Production	4,330 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2008-2018
Scores/Awards	<p>92 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2003</p> <p>89-91 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2001</p> <p>88 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #146 - April 2003</p> <p>86-88 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #134 - April 2001</p> <p>85 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 2013</p> <p>82-84 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - November 2004</p> <p>16 points - Decanter.com - March 1 2001</p> <p>86 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)</p> <p>15 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only)</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"A powerful and muscular young red. Very ripe, with smoky, meaty and berry aromas. Full-bodied, thick and powerful. What a mouthful. Velvety. Rich aftertaste. Best after 2008. 4,330 cases made."</i> - JS, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"An outstanding wine, with black olive and berry character. Medium- to full-bodied, with big, velvety tannins and a chewy finish. Score range: 89-91"</i> - JS, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Some leathery, astringent tannin kept me from scoring this wine higher. It is certainly extracted, with an impressively saturated ruby/purple color, noticeable smoky new oak, thick, juicy blackberry and currant flavors, but high tannins that possess a certain astringency. As I indicated in my tasting notes last year, in the conflict between fruit and tannin, history usually favors the tannin. I do not see any reason to change that thought. Anticipated maturity: 2008-2018?"</i> - RP, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"This wine displays some of the problems encountered in certain 2000s. Highly-extracted, but extremely dry, austere tannins are ferocious as well as unrelenting. The wine exhibits impressive color saturation and plenty of black fruit, earthy, and spicy new oak characteristics, but the tannin level is bothersome. Certainly this 2000 is concentrated, pure, and well-made, but in the war between fruit and tannin, history usually favors the tannin. Anticipated maturity: 2008-2018?"</i> - RP, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"The 2000 La Croix de Casse has a sweet ripe nose: redcurrant, kirsch, damson and loganberry with a touch of soy and cooked meat. The palate is medium-bodied with bold meaty tannins, a little rustic, perhaps too much extraction at the expense of finesse and refinement. Slightly bitter on the finish with a little greenness, this should be better. Tasted November 2010."</i> - NM, Wine Journal</p> <p><i>"A very attractive nose of smoke and cedar, though with breathing it begins to lose some vigor in the glass. The palate is quite gamey and rich with a noticeable metallic element. Some astringency on the finish. This ought to have been much better. Tasted November 2004."</i> - NM, Wine Journal</p> <p><i>"Plenty of rich, ripe fruit, round, medium acidity with flush of alcohol on the finish. Ready 2007-2009."</i> - JL, Decanter.com</p>