

Vieux Château Certan 2005

CSPC# 763559

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	60% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon
Appellation	Pomerol
Classification	Bordeaux AOC (<i>Appellation d'origine contrôlée</i>)
Website	http://www.vieuxchateaucertan.com/vieux_chateau_certan_uk.html
General Info	The Vieux Château Certan estate, which in 1745 already figured on Bellayme's famous map under the name of "Sertan", is located in the heart of the Pomerol plateau. Covering 14 hectares (35 acres) in one single block, the Vieux Château Certan vineyard is the fruit of a century of painstaking work and careful decision-making.
Vineyards	The 13.5 hectare Vieux Chateau Certan vineyard is located in the center of Pomerol, on the plateau. When you arrive at the junction where the estate rests, you are truly at the cross streets that could easily be renamed to the center of the heart and soul of Pomerol. Directly across the street is Chateau Certan de May and just down the road you'll find Petrus. Vieux Chateau Certan has a terroir of clay and gravel soil. Vieux Chateau Certan is one of the largest vineyards in the Right Bank that are planted in one single block of vines. The Vieux Chateau Certan vineyard in total is divided into 23 separate parcels. The vineyards of Vieux Chateau Certan are planted to 65% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon with vines that average 50 years of age. However, there is one very old plot of Merlot that was planted all the way back in 1932, making it one of the oldest parcels in the Pomerol appellation. Alexandre Thienpont is responsible for changing the makeup of the vineyards as well. He removed the Malbec and reduced the amount of Cabernet Sauvignon in the vineyards, while adding more Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Unlike the vineyard farming practices used in the 1960's and 1970's, today, no pesticides of any type are used on the vines. Alexandre Thienpont practices sustainable vineyard management techniques.
Vinification/ Maturation	The grapes are picked by hand and sorted meticulously at the end of each row of wines. After a gentle crushing they are put into oak vats, by variety. Those vats destined to make up the blend of the Grand Vin are run off into 100 % new French oak barrels and aged for 18 to 22 months.
Tasting Notes	Vieux Chateau Certan 2005 can be compared with the 1989 vintage as well as with some other outstanding vintages. It displays a wonderful balance between aromatic freshness, acidity, concentration and tannic richness. It shows great Merlot character and can start being enjoyed over the next few years and also for many years to come, thanks to its huge ageing potential
Serve with	Vieux Chateau Certan is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised and grilled dishes. Vieux Chateau Certan is also good when matched with Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms and pasta.
Production	4,167 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2015-2035
Scores/Awards	97 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2016 95 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2003 95-100 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2001 95 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #176 - April 29, 2008 92-94+ points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #170 - April 29, 2007 92-94+ points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #164 - April 23, 2006 95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - November 29, 2013 96 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 30, 2012 94+ points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 30, 2009 95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 30, 2012



Scores/Awards **96-97 points** - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - December 31, 1999
97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com (score only)
92+ points - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar (score only)
17.5 points - JancisRobinson, JancisRobinson.com - February 2009
19 points - JancisRobinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2006
18 points - James Lawther, Decanter.com - April 2006
96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - July 12, 2016
96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - June 28, 2015
96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - September 16, 2013
96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 11, 2012
95 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - August 3, 2011
95 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - June 23, 2007
18 points - Farr Vintner - April 2006
96 points - Campbell Mattison, The Wine Front (score only)
95 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)
18.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only)
18 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only)
18.5 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)
17.5 points - Gault & Millau (score only)

Reviews *"This shows some noticeable maturity at first, with black tea and mulling spice notes out front, but there's a lovely spine of briary tannins and finely beaded acidity that pulls this back to a fresher side as the core of raspberry pâte de fruit slowly wakes up, throwing off additional cherry, currant and plum nuances. By the time this all knits through the finish, you realize it's just a bit too soon to open this beauty.—2000 Bordeaux blind retrospective (December 2015). Best from 2020 through 2035. 4,167 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"This is real. Dark and brooding, with chocolate, game and berry aromas. Full-bodied and very silky, with refined tannins and a long, lingering finish. Winemaker Alexandre Thienpont crafts his wine like a fine watchmaker. The 2000 is refined, yet rich. Best after 2010."
- JS, Wine Spectator

"Absolutely gorgeous aromas, with mineral, licorice and hints of orange peel. Full-bodied, with super, fine tannins. Has class written all over it. Score range: 95-100"
- JS, Wine Spectator

"A stunning effort from Alexander Thienpont, the 2005 Vieux Chateau Certan (a blend of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc) reveals an inky/blue/purple color along with a rich, sumptuous perfume of black olives, lavender, roasted herbs, licorice, pain grille, and oodles of truffles as well as creme de cassis. In the mouth, hints of chocolate and charcoal also make an appearance along with good acidity, fabulous purity, and a full-bodied, powerful mouthfeel. In keeping with the style of this terroir, the wine is reserved and restrained, but deep. It should develop magnificently, and age for 30-40 years. Anticipated maturity: 2015-2035."

- RP, Wine Advocate

"A remarkable blend of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc has produced a Medoc-styled Pomerol exhibiting a deep ruby/purple hue, a sweet bouquet of roasted herbs, licorice, toasty vanilla, and plenty of black currants as well as truffles. It is a rich, classic effort with abundant tannin, good acidity, and impeccable purity and balance. Always a restrained, reserved style of wine, but it delivers considerable complexity, and ages brilliantly. Anticipated maturity: 2016-2030+."

- RP, Wine Advocate

"Sweet scents of mulberries, black currants, and cherries intertwined with notes of herbs, licorice, and pain grille emerge from this lovely Pomerol. The wine comes across as reserved, but there is impressive extract, tannin, and glycerin in the long finish. Made from a blend of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc, the 2005 is a structured, elegant, potentially complex and noble Vieux Chateau Certan. Anticipated maturity: 2014-2030+."

- RP, Wine Advocate

"Tasted at the Pomerol tasting at the Antique Wine Company. Alexandre Thienpont fashioned an impressive '05 that I have been fortunate enough to taste multiple times. It has a strict, linear and primal nose that remain broody, with hints of crushed stone and truffle that emerge with time. The palate is supremely well balanced with crushed stone, expressive Cabernet Franc and a wonderful, structured finish that is very persistent in the mouth. This needs another four or five years to reach its plateau. Tasted December 2012."

- NM, Wine Journal

"Tasted single blind at Farr's 2005 dinner in Hong Kong. I thought that Alexandre Thienpont had fashioned an exceptional wine out of barrel, though subsequent bottles have not quite lived up to that promise...until now. It is still quite backward and primal on the broody, almost introspective nose, yet it opens up with hints of black truffle and crushed stone. There is something almost feral and animally here (but not Brett!) The palate is medium-bodied with a rigid, steely structure, the Cabernet Franc lending this real backbone and tension. Long in the mouth, it has fantastic length and precision. Tasted November 2011."

- NM, Wine Journal

"Tasted single blind at Southwold. This VCC seems to have closed down. The fruits is rather subdued on the nose although some decanting would have allowed it to blossom Quite tannic and masculine on the palate, good acidity, a slight savoury, earthy edge, rather angular on the finish but it does have good freshness and vitality. Good potential, but not suited to blind conditions where it does not have time to unfurl. Tasted January 2009."

- NM, Wine Journal

"Tasted at the Bipin Desai's VCC vertical in Los Angeles. The '05 VCC has an almost decadent nose compared to the '04, surfeit with opulent ripe blackberries, cassis, iodine and black olives. Great definition, I have a feeling that this will turn into a ravishing, exotic bouquet in 5-6 years time (it does not appear to be closing down like the 2000 has.) The palate displays wonderful balance, vibrant acidity with hints of Xmas cake and fresh figs towards the refined, concentrated finish. It does not evolve so much in the glass, just softens slightly but retaining amazing vibrancy and purity. A textbook VCC for the long-term. Drink 2018-2040+. Tasted Nov 2008."

- NM, Wine Journal

"A very different VCC compared to 2004, since there is a much higher Merlot content (80 percent). This was due to a parcel of Cabernet Franc not coming up to scratch and being declassified into the Second wine. The nose is therefore dominated by Merlot, quite Saint Emilion in character with sweet ripe red berried fruits,

Reviews *minerals and hedgerow. The palate is more silky than usual, very concentrated and becomes more typically Pomerol towards the finish, which expands or "fans-out", rather than the more linear 2004. Savory aftertaste: great length. Superb. Tasted April 2006."*

- NM, Wine Journal

"Bright ruby-red. Very closed nose hints at licorice and nutty oak. Sweet and broad in the mouth, with a chocolatey ripeness but less energy and grip than the 2006. This is more mouthfilling, and more sexy today in the middle palate, but may ultimately be less complex. Or is it just more reserved today? Finishes with substantial tannins that call for at least several years of aging."

- ST, International Wine Cellar

"Complex on the nose, fresh and lively with some still quite dry tannins on the finish. A virtual palate scrub. This is much subtler than most"

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Quite exceptionally energetic wine. Bright crimson - not one of the deepest colours - and wonderfully fresh, lively, racy wine that is beautifully balanced. Rich, broad yet not at all heavy - really rather like a racehorse at the peak of its form. Undoubtedly very ripe Merlot but Merlot with the greatest aspects of finesse. Already explosive. Lovely texture. Great lightness and life - complete. Alexandre Thienpont, who also did brilliantly in 2004, found his Cabernet Franc a bit austere in 2005 and has favoured Merlot in the blend for this magnificent grand vin. Drink 2010-28"

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

"More Pomerol than VCC this year with 80% Merlot in the blend. Concentrated, silky, sweet, round and fragrant but just misses that extra touch of complexity. Drink 2014-2030."

- JL, Decanter.com

"Silky, lush, polished and fresh, the wine is starting to take on secondary qualities with its truffle, rose, dark chocolate, earth, cherry, smoke and licorice essences. The tannins are so ripe now, you can drink this today, else, wait another 5 years for even more development."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Straddling the fence between hedonistic and intellectual, the truffle, rose, violet, tobacco and dark plum nose gets you, holds you and makes you take another sniff before you sip. Full bodied, concentrated, silky, smooth and still young, there is still tannin to soften. But there is so much ripe fruit you can drink it today. But if you have patience, give it 5 to 10 more years and you're going to be taste pure magic."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"This keeps getting better and better. From start to finish, there is nothing out of place in this sensuous Pomerol. The truffle, black cherry, cocoa and floral nose, the layers of silky, sweet fruits and the opulent, polished, pure finish are a thing of beauty. I really like this wine and it's only starting to reveal its character."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Still young, the wine needed a few hours of air before its beautiful array of fresh plum, chocolate, licorice, floral, dark cherry, earth and vanilla scents bloomed. Full bodied, polished, supple, round and rich, the tannins are pure silk and velvet. Give this another 5-8 years and you'll be rewarded with a superb Pomerol."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Truffle, earth, blackberry liqueur, forest floor and fresh picked flowers pop from the glass as soon it's poured. This rich, lush, polished, round wine is filled with black cherry, plum, spice and cocoa flavors. Elegance paired with chocolate sensuality is an apt descriptor for this beautiful Pomerol wine."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Ripe, round, rich, stylish and even sexy, this deep Pomerol is filled with spice, floral, chocolate and dark berry notes with hints of black raspberry. Full bodied, with velvety tannins, this is what Bordeaux offers in the best vintages."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews *“Alexandre Thienpont has been making sensational VCCs for several years from the great old vines of this exceptionally well situated vineyard. The youngest Merlots were planted in 1959 and the youngest Cabernet Francs in 1948. After the sensational 2004 we were not disappointed by a quite brilliant 2005. 80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc with none of the Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend this year. Not the deepest of colours but the nose is wonderful with ripe, red cherries. On the palate it is opulent, fleshy and silky with a velvet mouthfeel. Less powerful than the 2004 but more exotic and creamy. Sexy. Seductive and finely polished with not a hint of extraction. Confident winemaking from a producer on top form. ONE OF THE WINES OF THE VINTAGE.”*
- Farr Vintners
