

Vieux Château Certan 2019

CSPC# 814286

750mlx6

14.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	78 % Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc, 7% 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	<p>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.</p>
Winemaker	Alexandre and Guillaume Thienpont
Vintage	<p>A very attractive aromatic and dynamic wine! Everything this year contributed to the success of the vintage: a sufficiently cool and rainy winter followed by a fresh and sunny spring that enabled a fast, even budding of the vines.</p> <p>Throughout the summer, a water deficit in the soils gradually set in before the veraison process. During the ripening of the grapes, dry, sunny weather combined with cool nights enhanced the aromatic potential of the grapes as the harvest approached. A few welcome light rain showers as from 22nd September allowed the vines to rehydrate and complete the full ripening of the grapes.</p>
Vineyards	<p>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.</p>
Harvest	From 23rd to 27th September then on 2 nd and 3rd October 2019. 40hl per hectare.
Vinification/ Maturation	The grapes are picked by hand and sorted meticulously at the end of each row of vines. 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	<p>2019 is a ripe, tannic wine with fruit character and amazingly well-preserved acidity. It shows superb balance. The merlot contributes density, body, smoothness, volume, and breed. The little Cabernet Franc that was selected for the First Wine displayed lace-like elegance and was complex, flavoursome, and very long on the palate. The Cabernet Sauvignon was lively, delicious, and flavoursome.</p> <p>Even in small proportion, it brought an indispensable touch of freshness to the final blend. Vieux Château Certan 2019 is very promising and can be compared with the 2009 in terms of character, concentration, and complexity.</p>
Serve with	Vieux Chateau Certan is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. 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	3,916 cases made



**Cellaring
Scores/Awards**

Drink 2025-2040

97 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2022
100 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022
97-100 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - June 2020
99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2022
98-99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2020
94-96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2020
18+ points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - June 2020
99 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2022
97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - June 2020
97 points - Jane Anson, Insidebordeaux.com - January 2022
99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2022
98-100 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - June 2020
95-97 points - Farr Vintners - May 2020
97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2022
96-98 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - June 2020
98+ points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2022
95-97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2020
98+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2022
18 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2022

Reviews

"Allows glorious plum sauce, boysenberry puree and black cherry compote flavors to unfurl over a bed of velvety tannins, while subtle black tea, violet, alder, and sweet tobacco notes flirt in the background. The finish is underscored by a subtle warm earth note, which adds latent length. A beauty. Merlot, Cabernet Franc, and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2025 through 2040. 3,916 cases made."
- JM, Wine Spectator

"One of the wines of the vintage, the 2019 Vieux Château Certan unfurls in the glass with a striking bouquet of cassis and cherries mingled with notions of violets, loamy soil, sweet spices, and incense. Full-bodied, ample, and layered, it's seamless and enveloping, with a fleshy core of beautifully vibrant fruit, lively acids and ripe, powdery tannins. Concluding with a long, resonant finish, this perfumed, sensual Vieux Château Certan is a remarkable achievement from Alexandre and Guillaume Thienpont. Drink Date 2029 – 2059."
- WK, Wine Advocate

"Very deep purple-black in color, the 2019 Vieux Château Certan slowly opens out to reveal a heart-stopping perfume of red roses, kirsch, black raspberries, violets, and star anise over a powerful core of plum preserves, blueberry pie and boysenberries plus hints of cardamom, sandalwood, and Ceylon tea. Medium to full-bodied, the palate is achingly graceful, featuring tightly wound layers of crunchy blue and black fruits with tannins so ripe and finely grained, you really have to look for them. The acidity here is absolutely seamless, and the finish explodes into an array of mineral sparks. Be prepared to fall head over heels for this one."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"Subtle and complex with blackberries, violets, lilacs, roses, and hints of ink. So floral, yet subtle on the nose. Full-bodied with incredible polish and beauty, the silky tannins running the length of the wine and going on and on. It builds with sheer elegance and structure. A blend of 78% merlot, 15% cabernet franc and 7% cabernet sauvignon. Drink after 2028, but already a joy to taste."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"The nose is so beautiful, offering dried flowers, white pepper, and other spices. Yet, there's also bright, blue fruit. Tar, too. Love the depth of fruit here. The wine flows across the palate with so well integrated tannins. You just want to drink it. Glorious. The cabernet in this makes it almost Medoc-like. A blend of 78% merlot, 15% cabernet franc and 7% cabernet sauvignon."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"With a small percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend, this wine is solidly tannic, with intense acidity to balance the ripe berry flavors and structure. The wine is destined for long aging with its structure and powerful tannins. At the same time, juicy acidity gives vibrancy. Drink from 2024. Cellar Selection"
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

Reviews *"70% new oak. Yield 40 hl/ha. Alexandre Thienpont explained the Cabernet Franc was less productive in 2019, hence the reduction on 2018 (30%) and addition of young-vine (2012) Cabernet Sauvignon. Barrel sample. Dark crimson hue. Complex and intense on the nose with dark fruit, tea, and floral notes. Oak just perceptible but well integrated. Touch of sweetness on the attack (oak again?) but the palate remains juicy, lively, and fresh, the tannins rounded and refined. A classic VCC that's sapid and digeste, the finish long, dry, and clean."*
- JL, JancisRobinson.com

"A sophisticated wine, glamorous yet refined with nuances of perfumed flowers, liquorice, crushed stones, dark chocolate and blackcurrants - all subtly presented but so fitting together. Great energy and clarity from the start, the flavours just hit the tongue and expand but slowly and carefully, the wonderful perfume permeating and driving down layer upon layer of softly sweet, ripe fruit and salty mineral freshness. Multi-dimensional in the best way - one you want to sit with and enjoy the aromatic complexities. Divine."
- GH, Decanter.com

"A wonderful wine, great depth of black fruit but extremely balanced, lace and satin. The aromatics open up almost immediately to show raspberry and redcurrant fruits. It's extremely complete; but mainly it just makes you want to enjoy it - no aggression to these tannins. 66% new oak, all the estate's Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc grapes are here (with the 2nd wine 100% Merlot), and it surely helps give this sapidity and flavoursome savoury character. 3.75pH. A yield of 42hl/ha, so a good quantity, around the same as in 2018."
- JA, Decanter.com

"The tannins are firm and strict, keeping the dark fruits carefully in line. Tons of liquorice and slate, with a beautifully fragrant edge of violets, peonies, smoke. It has the kind of austerity that makes you happy to be patient, hiding layers and layers of nuance, with the sleight of hand between density and lightness, so it rises and falls, breathing through your palate, stretching its limbs. A delicious and beautifully classical expression, intellectual also, finishing with oyster shell salinity. 70% new oak, 40hl/h yield."
- JA, Inside Bordeaux

"There is no hotter wine these days in Pomerol than Vieux Chateau Certan. Since 2009, vintage after vintage has been extraordinary and 2019 continues its hot streak! The first thing you notice is the perfume, which is just like walking into a flower store with rows of roses, violets, and lilies along with forest greenery, spice box, plum liqueur, black cherry, truffle, and dark chocolate scents come alive. But it is on the palate that leaves you wanting more, due to non-stop waves of perfectly ripe, black cherries, plums, blackberries, and blue fruit which feel like each berry was hand-polished with a velvet cloth. The seamless finish delivers cashmere textures for more than 60 seconds! You can drink this relatively young for its hedonistic thrill-ride, or age it for additional complexities. Either way, this is a future legend! Drink from 2026-2060."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Flowers, black raspberry, plum liqueur, truffle, wet earth, forest floor and cherry blossoms are in the nose. Rich, intense, full-bodied, deep, and velvety, the wine is loaded with dark chocolate, black cherries, and the essence of dark plums. The decadent finish sticks with you for close to 60 seconds, which is a good thing, because the wine is so texturally sensual, you do not want it to end. Blending 78% Merlot with 15% Cabernet Franc and 7% Cabernet Sauvignon, the wine reached 14.5% alcohol with a pH of 3.75. Picking took place September 23 -September 27 for the old vine Merlot and October 2-October 3 for the Cabernet. The wine is aging in about 67% new, French oak barrels."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"The 2019 follows in the lofty footsteps of a 2018 that received three potential 100-point scores from barrel. Deep ruby in colour with pure red cherry and plum on the nose, accented by cedar and hints of pencil shavings. The palate follows, interplaying sweet cassis and cherries with savoury wild mushroom. The tannins are velveteen and persistent, adding weight and depth to the mouthfeel. There is great harmony and drive to the palate, with waves of dark fruits and fresh acidity building through to a long, fine finish. Tasted in Bordeaux."
- Farr Vintners

Reviews

“The 2019 Vieux Château Certan was picked September 23–27 and October 2–3 and matured in two-thirds new oak. Alexandre Thienpont mentioned that the 2019 includes a lot of Cabernet Sauvignon, which displayed such distinctive aromatics that he had to include it in the final blend (unlike in 2020). He pointed to a scent of immortelle, a plant that grows on sand dunes. This was stunning as a barrel sample, and there is no change in bottle. It still delivers exquisitely delineated, vivacious scents of red fruit, touches of crushed stone and a suggestion of brine. The palate is medium-bodied and classic in style, the expressive Cabernet components complementing the Merlot. There’s fine backbone here, and this VCC fans out gloriously on the finish, with a surfeit of freshness and tension. Yet unlike some recent vintages, this is a Pomerol that says "Attendez!" Give it a decade in a cellar if you know what’s good for you. 2030 – 2060.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2019 Vieux Château Certan is deep in colour. It has a fabulous, very intense nose that explodes from the glass with billowing scents of black cherries, freshly shaved black truffles, raspberry and light rose petal aromas. The palate is so sensual and seductive on the entry, its creamy texture irresistible and completely disguising the structure underneath. Interestingly this VCC really comes into its own after 12-hours of opening, revealing more quintessential Pomerol characteristics and more grip on the finish. Alexandre and Guillaume Thienpont fashioned a brilliant follow-up to the glorious 2018. 2025 – 2055.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2019 Vieux Château Certan is even better from bottle than it was from barrel. It is very clearly one of the highlights on the Right Bank. Soaring aromatics are immediately captivating. There is an exoticism in the 2019 that I saw from barrel that is evident in the bottled wine, but today, I see more balance and harmony. Crème de cassis, licorice, lavender, spice and rose petal blend into a core of red/purplish berry fruit. All the elements are so well balanced. The Grand Vin is a blend of Merlot and Cabernet Franc, but the blend also includes one lot of young vine Cabernet Sauvignon that was added for its aromatic presence. That decision paid off in spades, as the 2019 is truly magical. 2034 – 2069.”

- AG, Vinous

“The 2019 Vieux Château Certan is a heady, rich wine that captures all of the exoticism of the year. Crème de cassis, graphite, crushed rocks, lavender, and spice are some of the many aromas and flavors that run through the 2019. This is an especially ripe, unctuous style for VCC. It will be interesting to see what aging brings, as there is plenty of grip and structure underneath a core of dense fruit that remains remarkably primary.”

- AG, Vinous

“A wine I wasn't able to taste from barrel, the 2019 Vieux Château Certan is an awesome expression of Merlot that's as singular as they come. Revealing a deep purple hue as well as a prodigious, deep, layered bouquet of blackcurrants, black cherries, tobacco leaf, cedar pencil, and sappy spring flowers, it hits the palate with a full-bodied, multi-dimensional texture, a great mid-palate, no hard edges, perfectly integrated acidity, and a blockbuster of a finish. It shows the more ethereal, nuanced, elegant style of the vintage, both in its aromatics as well as on the palate, but it has classic Vieux Château Certan opulence and power. This heavenly wine is clearly in the same ballpark as the 2015, 2016, and 2018 and will probably merit a triple-digit rating at maturity. A decade of cellaring is advised, and it should be a 40-, 50-, if not 60-year wine.”

- Jeb Dunnuck
