

Château Canon La Gaffeliere GCC 2009

CSPC# 744967

750mlx12

14% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

55% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon,

Appellation

Saint Emilion

General Info

The von Neipperg counts are descended from a noble line dating back to the Holy Roman Empire. This family has contributed great soldiers and illustrious diplomats throughout the centuries. Responsible for numerous military exploits, the family's long history is grounded in their attachment to their land. In fact, the Counts von Neipperg have been making fine wine there since the 12th century.

In 1985, Stephan von Neipperg was officially named estate manager and proceeded to make in-depth changes at Canon La Gaffelière. He started by making a complete analysis of data concerning his vineyard and then drew logical conclusions of what needed doing. His collaboration at a later date with Stéphane Derenoncourt also contributed to Canon La Gaffelière's reputation around the world.

Vintage

Stephane Derenoncourt is the long-time wine consultant at all of Stephan von Neipperg's estates. Yields were shockingly low here, 28 hectoliters per hectare, and the wine is a beauty of both elegance and power.

Vineyards

The 19.5-hectare vineyard has a complex, outstanding terroir of clay-limestone and clay-sand soil. The topsoil is primarily sandy, increasingly so as one moves away from the slope. The vines, an average of 45 years old, are deeply rooted in the soil and absorb all the goodness in the terroir. They are mostly replaced individually rather than plot by plot (which maintains the average age). The last major replanting dates back to 1986. Mass selection is practiced. This is especially useful in order to perpetuate the precious old Cabernet Franc vines. It not only maintains the vineyard's genetic heritage, but also its unique balance

Harvest

October 1-10. By hand, into small crates to avoid bruising Sorted before and after destemming No crushing. The grapes arrive on a conveyor belt

Maturation

in wooden vats for 35 days. Extraction by pneumatic pigeage (punching down the cap). Aged in new oak barrels (90%) on the lees for 17 months. No fining or filtering

Tasting Notes

Dark ruby/purple, with notes of incense, sweet cedar, black cherry jam, cassis, and blackberry as well as licorice and subtle smoke, this wine has superb texture, a full-bodied mouth feel, stunning concentration, and not a hard edge to be found. It is one of those remarkable 2009s with amazing power and density, but also tremendous finesse, precision, and freshness, an anomaly in itself.

Production

5140 cases made

Cellaring

Drink 2015-2030

Scores/Awards

96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2012

94-97 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2010

95+ points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #199 - February 2012

94-96 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #188- April 2010

94 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 2012

93-95 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2010

97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2012

95 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 1, 2012

89-92 points - Ian D'Agata, ST's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2010

17 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 20, 2010

18 points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - May 2012

17.5 points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - March 2010

17 points/4 stars - James Lawther, Decanter.com - April 2010

92 points - Jean Marc Quarin - March 2010

99 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2010



Reviews *"This is well-cloaked for now in roasted vanilla and espresso notes, but there's ample, fleshy fig sauce and mulled blackberry fruit in reserve. The long finish sports a melted licorice snap feel. Dense, but beautifully polished and pure. For the cellar. Best from 2015 through 2030. 5,140 cases made"*

- JM, Wine Spectator

"The Cabernet Franc really comes out here, with roasted berry, coffee bean and citrus following through to blackberry. Full-bodied, with fabulous concentration of fruit and super soft tannins, a long, long finish. This is so juicy and wonderful. No dry tannins here. Score range: 94-97"

- JS, Wine Spectator

"An intriguing blend of nearly 50% Merlot, a whopping 35% Cabernet Franc and the rest Cabernet Sauvignon (a somewhat unusual combination for this region), the 2009 reminds me of the 1990. A big, inky/purple-tinged wine with just over 14% natural alcohol, it exhibits exotic, flamboyant aromas of espresso roast, incense, sweet black cherries, black currants, licorice, asphalt, barbecue smoke, Christmas fruitcake and herbs. Full-bodied with silky tannins, luscious fruit, a hedonistic yet complex personality, low acidity, noticeable tannin and enviable purity, this head-turning beauty can be enjoyed over the next 15-20 years.

This has been one of my favorite St.-Emilions since the late 1980s, when proprietor Stefan Neipperg began to resurrect this once moribund estate that made so many mediocre wines in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s (the 1982 was shameful). It is one of hundreds of examples of properties that have been returned to life, providing Bordeaux with greater quality, diversity and recognition than it has ever had in its long history."

- RP, Wine Advocate

"Proprietor Stephan von Neipperg has made so many terrific wines at this estate since the late 1980s, it's hard to say that the 2009 is going to turn out to be the finest, but did it show well on the four separate times I tasted it! A final blend of 55% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc, and a whopping 10% Cabernet Sauvignon (somewhat unusual for this area of St.-Emilion), the natural alcohol was 14%. Stephane Derenoncourt is the long-time wine consultant at all of Stephan von Neipperg's estates. Yields were shockingly low here, 28 hectoliters per hectare, and the wine is a beauty of both elegance and power. Dark ruby/purple, with notes of incense, sweet cedar, black cherry jam, cassis, and blackberry as well as licorice and subtle smoke, this wine has superb texture, a full-bodied mouthfeel, stunning concentration, and not a hard edge to be found. It is one of those remarkable 2009s with amazing power and density, but also tremendous finesse, precision, and freshness, an anomaly in itself. This wine should drink well for 15-20 years, based on the fact that the 1990, a vintage far lower in acidity and not nearly as concentrated, is still at the top of its game. Bravo! (Tasted four times.)"

- RP, Wine Advocate

"Tasted at the Union de Grand Cru in London, this is warm and voluptuous on the nose, perhaps not displaying quite the delineation of say, Canon or Beausejour Becot. The palate is full-bodied with a spicy entry, very modern in style but with panache and class, a savoury tincture on the finish lending intrigue. Very fine. Tasted October 2011."

- NM, Wine Journal

"Tasted at Canon-la-Gaffeliere, cropped between 1st and 10th October at 34hl/ha, this is a blend of 55% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, matured in 90% new oak, the bouquet takes a great deal of coaxing from the glass, reluctantly offering blackberry, raspberry coulis, a scent of wet clay and mulberry. The palate is full-bodied with firm tannins, off-dry, good weight in the mouth and fine definition, perhaps a little more austere than I anticipated but I like that (the coolness of the sample accentuating the tannins here.) A touch of savoury fruit towards the grainy finish, very good length and harmony, the pH plays a fundamental role in balancing the finish and engendering such freshness. Excellent. Tasted March 2010."

- NM, Wine Journal

"Porcini mushrooms, with dark and ripe fruits. Turns to licorice and violets. Full body, with round and soft tannins and a long delicious finish. The texture is gorgeous. So much going on in the glass. Try after 2018."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

Reviews *"One of the peculiarities of St.-Émilion's classification is that Canon la Gaffelière is not classed in the top rung. Because, as this wine shows, it produces superb wines. This is ripe while so elegant, with great intensity and sweet perfumes."*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"(a blend of 55% merlot, 35% cabernet franc and 10% cabernet sauvignon; 34 hectoliters per hectare; 90% new oak; 14% alcohol) Ruby-purple. Perfumed nose offers pure dark berries, herbs and licorice lifted by a peppery nuance. Then sweet and spicy in the mouth, with very good intensity of black fruit flavor and a coffee-and-chocolate impression of ripeness. Perhaps deceptively easygoing today, finishing with good fruity persistence, a touch of warmth and hints of tar and licorice."

- ID, International Wine Cellar

"Really dark, deep and savoury character here, showing great interest and substance. The fruit is deeply grained and yet perfumed and fresh too, and this continues through on the palate where the very lovely substance and texture carries the dark fruit found on the nose. Very dark, very rich, with that velvety weight of the vintage, but again with more evident structure here suggesting the wines of this vintage are tightening up somewhat. Impressive substance here. This is very harmonious and convincing. And it is set for great things. From a Grand Cru Classé Tasting. 18/20 (May 2012)"

- CK, The Wine Doctor

"A dense fruit here, rich with the toasty spice of new oak as well. The palate seems to have a remarkable harmony for Canon-la-Gaffelière, the supple fruit combining easily with the firm layer of tannins beneath. There is structure and grip, and although there is a firm seam of tannins contributing to this it is not as overtly displayed as it is in some wines, and it is much more harmonious than in some vintages of Canon-la-Gaffelière tasted at this stage too. Rather a firm, alcohol-tinged body though; the alcohol is declared to be 14%. Overall though, convincing. From a tasting of 2009 Bordeaux at two years of age. 17.5/20 (October 2011)"

- CK, The Wine Doctor

"As always, beautifully constructed. Perfect pitch of ripeness, fresh, satisfying with a fine tannic frame. Elegant and harmonious. Drink 2016-2030."

- JL, Decanter.com

"This is one of the most impressive wines yet from Stephan von Neipperg's revitalised estate. Unlike many St Emilions in 2009, it is harmonious and poised with enough acidity to balance the ripe, textured fruit. This is restrained and elegant, with lovely use of oak, considerable grace and beautifully integrated tannins. Likely to be reasonably priced, too. 10+ years."

- TA, timatkin.com