

## Clos Fourtet 2020

CSPC# 813878

750mlx6

14.0% alc./vol.

### Grape Variety

90% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Cabernet Franc

### Appellation

St. Emilion

### Classification

1<sup>st</sup> Grand Cru Classé

### Website

<http://www.closfourtet.com/en/index.html>

### General Info

Thanks to the geology of the Saint-Emilion plateau (chalk overlaid with aeolian sand), its fine wines boast a unique reputation, and Clos Fourtet, occupying a prime site, is among one of Saint-Emilion's oldest and most renowned estates. Medium in size (20 ha of vineyard), Clos Fourtet is built around an authentic private residence dating from the end of the Ancien Regime and itself stands at the very gates of the medieval city. It was in fact built over magnificent underground quarries where its wines are aged both in barrel and in bottle. The site itself is one of those most frequently visited and greatly admired. Throughout the 18th century, the Rulleau and de Carles families contributed largely to its growing renown, fully exploiting the land's potential. Here, thanks to the thin layer of arable soil, vines root easily, yet yield little, this "stress" being a fundamental prerequisite for the production of great wines. An exceptional terroir, the primary condition for production of a very great wine, associated with judiciously selected grape varieties cultivated in the time-honored fashion, traditional winemaking controlled by the latest techniques and finally aging in new barrels, ensure that Clos Fourtet takes its rightful place among the most highly esteemed growths in the appellation and in the region. In 1949, the Lurton family bought the château. They helped the vineyard to progress particularly the last 10 years. In 2001, Clos Fourtet has been repurchased by Philippe Cuvelier who continues the modernisation.

### Winemakers

Jean-Claude Berrouet and Stéphane Derenoncourt

### Vintage

2020 was a highly contrasted vintage that got off to a difficult start. The year began with an exceptionally rainy winter followed by a very mild spring. In this context, protecting the vines against mildew and managing the soil was a real struggle. The first miracle appeared in mid-May, with dry and warm conditions during one of the earliest flowerings we have seen, two weeks ahead of schedule. The second miracle was on 19 June when the rain stopped, and the weather turned dry and cool until the beginning of the grape colour-change in mid-July. It is at this point in time that summer settled in for good, with some spells of heat through to mid-August when thunderstorms provided some relief and allowed the Merlot grapes to swell. The later-ripening Cabernets remained the size of blueberries until harvest, and the Merlots will ripen slowly until mid-September. The result was a vintage harvested about ten days early, mostly in sunny conditions. Both the Merlot and Cabernet were tannic, colourful and perfectly balanced. The grapes quickly expressed an intense aromatic expression in the vats.

### Vineyards

Thanks to the spare no expense attitude of the new owners, Clos Fourtet is doing what it takes to make the best wine possible. This effort begins in the vineyards. They practice sustainable, vine-growing methods. Grass is seeded between the rows to help reduce excess water. The soil between the vine plants is ploughed. The vines are pruned keeping two long canes, which are later de-budded to the required number of buds. De-leaving is done on the east-facing side at the end of June, and on the south-facing side at the end of August. Crop thinning is carried out at the beginning of the grape-colour change. As a result, the bunches are evenly spread out and well ventilated for good ripening. The 20-hectare Bordeaux vineyard of Clos Fourtet, is situated a stone's throw from the village of St. Emilion right on top of the limestone plateau. The vines are planted to 85% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon with vines that average 30 years of age. The wine is aged for 18 months in 60% new oak barrels. There is a second wine, Closerie de Fourtet.

### Harvest

By hand, using small baskets. The harvest took place 15th to 30th September



<b>Maturation</b>	The alcoholic fermentations began within 24 hours of the berries being sent into vat. During the fermentation process, we carried out 10 pigeages (punching down the cap) during the middle part of the process, so as to gain a good extraction. The vatting period lasted on average 28 days. The wine is vinified traditionally and is aged in oak barriques (60% new, 40% used) for 16 months. It is bottled unfiltered.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	This vintage reaches exceptional fruit maturity. The potential for anthocyanins and tannins was such at harvest that gentle extraction was a matter of course. Everything came naturally. A magnificent fruit mixed with blood orange precedes a formidable, delicate mellowness which develops a creamy fruit carried by limestone and a chiseled tannin.
<b>Serve with</b>	Best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Clos Fourtet is also good when matched with Asian dishes, rich fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.
<b>Production</b>	3,500 cases made
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2028-2048
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>94 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2023</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2023</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - March 2023</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2023</p> <p><b>95-96 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 2023</p> <p><b>17 points</b> - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - January 2023</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - January 2023</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021</p> <p><b>90-93 points</b> - Farr Vintners - May 2021</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2023</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021</p> <p><b>97+ points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023</p> <p><b>97-99 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021</p> <p><b>17.5+ points</b> - Matthew Jukes - April 2021</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2023</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021</p> <p><b>93-95 points</b> - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021</p> <p><b>96-98 points</b> - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - July 2021</p> <p><b>94-97 points</b> - Bettane &amp; Desseauve (score only) - July 2021</p> <p><b>17.5 points</b> - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2021</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>“Nicely rendered, this manages to belie the vintage’s heat, with a focused and streamlined core of dark currant and blackberry fruit studded with licorice snap, violet, alder and tobacco notes along the way. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2028 through 2040. 3,500 cases made.”</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>“The 2020 Clos Fourtet offers up aromas of dark berries, plum preserves and pencil shavings framed by nicely integrated new oak. It is medium to full-bodied, with a rich core of ripe fruit that’s framed by powdery, youthfully firm tannins that assert themselves on the finish. This limestone site always delivers low pHs, so the wine remains fresh and vibrant, even if its fruit flavors are marked by the warmth and sunshine of the vintage. Like its neighbor, Canon, Clos Fourtet sits on Saint-Émilion’s limestone plateau, with shallow soils directly above the bedrock; but whereas Canon is exposed south/southwest, Clos Fourtet’s exposition is more northerly exposed and thus a touch less precocious. Since the Cuvelier family’s purchase in 2001, the vineyards have been extensively replanted at higher density, and a massal selection has been taken and propagated, being rolled out wholesale beginning in 2018. Now the vineyards are maturing, and so is the winemaking style: There’s less and less malolactic fermentation in barrel, winemaking is gentle and more classical in inspiration, and new oak is chosen for discretion rather than impact.”</i></p> <p>- WK, Wine Advocate</p>

**Reviews** *“The 2020 Clos Fourtet is a blend of 90% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Sauvignon and 3% Cabernet Franc, harvested from 15th to 30th September and weighing in with an alcohol of 14.5% and a pH of 3.6. It is being aged for 14-18 months in 50% new oak barrels, 48% second-fill barrels and 2% amphora. Deep garnet-purple in color, it comes bounding out of the glass with ripe, expressive notes of crushed black plums, juicy blackberries, and black cherry preserves, followed by hints of ground cloves, cinnamon stick, camphor, and cedar chest. The medium to full-bodied palate is jam-packed with bright, vivacious black fruits, framed by velvety tannins and bags of freshness, finishing with great length.”*

- LPB, Wine Advocate

*“Deep garnet-purple in color, the 2020 Clos Fourtet is a little closed to begin, starting off with cedar and crushed rocks notions before scents of black cherry compote, wild blueberries, and dark chocolate emerge, plus suggestions of violets and licorice. The full-bodied palate is packed with tightly wound, muscular black fruits, supported by ripe, fine-grained tannins and bold freshness, finishing long and mineral-laced. The blend is 90% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 3% Cabernet Franc.”*

- LPB, Wine Independent

*“Subtle aromas of orange peel, sweet tobacco and currants follow through to a medium body, fine tannin texture and a fresh finish. Extremely tight now, but persistent at the finish. Classy. Best of the trilogy.”*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“This is really something with so much tension and focus and a persistent, long finish that lasts for minutes. It’s full-bodied, yet tight and so long. Such polish and finesse. Elegance with power.”*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“This wine's structure is massive. Serious tannins are matched with generous black fruits. Acidity gives a succulent character at the back of all this dense texture. It's a wine to age. \*Editors' Choice\*.”*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“Full bottle 1,355 g. Cask sample taken 6 April. 90% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Cabernet Franc. Fermentation of whole uncrushed berries in 25 small temperature-controlled tanks; extraction via manual pigeage; vatting period lasting 22 to 30 days; malolactic conversion in vats, jars, and barrels. Deep purple. Pretty heady, complex nose. Appetising palate. Round, ripe tannins lurking beneath some pretty sophisticated fruit. Finishes dry and spreads out on the very end like a peacock's tail. Much drier than most St-Émilions, with seriously interesting freshness. 14.5%. Drink 2027 – 2043.”*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*“Dark, brooding nose, jammy and ripe, heady, and evocative. Really beautiful texture, grip, length, and overall styling here. I like this more than the 2019, it's dark with tons of liquorice and spice - wood is on show, but this has an excellent frame and such allure. Sensual, chalky and grippy in a good way with such persistence and length, mouth filling but elegant at the same time. Bramble fruit flavours with cool blueberries, pomegranates and raspberries and lovely licks of wet stone and slate. Serious power but not taken too far. This has sex appeal with a gorgeous juiciness keeping things pure and lively. A clear standout.”*

- GH, Decanter.com

*“Plush damson and blueberry on the nose, there is juice and a tightrope walking concentration of fruits. An excellent Clos Fourtet, with a juicy edge where the magic of limestone in dry summers is very much showing through. A yield of 40 hl/ha. 14 to 18 months ageing in underground limestone cellars. 2021 sees 20 years of the Cuvelier family at Clos Fourtet and this is an excellent wine to showcase what a brilliant job they have done here. The score could go higher after barrel ageing. Drinking Window 2028 – 2044.”*

- JA, Decanter.com

## Reviews

*“Wonderful limestone character, walking the tightrope of tannins, acidity, and fruit, remains pretty austere even after ageing, and this is one to put away for another six or seven years. Serious and concentrated, with creamy blueberry, raspberry, and damson puree appearing as it opens in the glass. 40 hl/ha yield. 18.5ha estate, that will increase in size as of the 2022 vintage due to inclusion of neighbouring Les Grands Murailles. Stéphane Derencourt and Jean-Claude Berrouet consultants, Matthieu Cuvelier owner.”*

- JA, [janeanson.com](http://janeanson.com)

*“Scoring at the top of my range from my barrel scores, this is a majestic vintage for Clos Fourtet. With stunning levels of concentration, intensity, purity and sensuality, the wine paints your palate with layer after layer of black and red fruits. The velvet-drenched finish seals the deal with its seamless, mineral driven finish that builds, lingers, and expands. Drink from 2026-2060.”*

- JL, [thewinecellarinsider.com](http://thewinecellarinsider.com)

*“Dark garnet in color, the wine gets your attention quickly with its licorice, smoke, dark cocoa, chalk, and plummy aromas. Pure silk and velvet on the palate, with a fabulous sense of purity in the fruits, lift, length, richness, concentration and minerality. This is clearly a top vintage for Clos Fourtet that will age for decades. The wine was made from blending 90% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Franc and 3% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14.5% ABV.”*

- JL, [thewinecellarinsider.com](http://thewinecellarinsider.com)

*“The 2020 is a blend of 90% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Sauvignon and 3% Cabernet Franc harvested at 40hl/ha. 14.5% abv. Deep ruby-purple in the glass with a redolent nose of bramble fruit, sweet vanilla, and fleshy red berries. The palate is less succulent than might be expected, with mouthcoating tannins and a graphite, mineral edge working well to cut through the dense and sweet core of fruit. The finish is toasty and helped by a savoury note against the fruit weight.”*

- Farr Vintners

*“The 2020 Clos Fourtet has a gorgeous, complex bouquet with ample red berry fruit, undergrowth, sage, and hints of pencil box coming through with time. This is very classy. The palate is medium-bodied with pliant tannins, perfectly judged acidity, and seamlessly integrated new oak. Backward at the moment, this will require a few years in bottle, but it will age with style and panache.”*

- NM, [Vinous](http://Vinous.com)

*“The 2020 Clos Fourtet was picked September 15–30 at 40hl/ha and matured in 50% new oak. It has an expressive, winsome bouquet of red and blue fruit, crushed rose and iris, touches of blood orange coming through with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with svelte tannins and wonderful acidity. Harmonious and almost crystalline toward the finish. This is a very impressive Clos Fourtet that brims with freshness and persistence, gaining weight and depth over the course of an hour. It will battle the 2019 for supremacy. 2028 – 2060.”*

- NM, [Vinous](http://Vinous.com)

*“The 2020 Clos Fourtet is a towering, statuesque beauty that captures all the personality and character of this site in a wine that marries vertical intensity, power, and explosive energy. Black cherry, gravel, menthol, sage, crushed rocks, and chocolate all soar out of the glass. This is a tremendous showing from the Cuvelier family.”*

- AG, [Vinous](http://Vinous.com)

*“A wine of stature and breeding, the 2020 Clos Fourtet is absolutely breathtaking from barrel. A rush of lavender, graphite, spice, licorice, and espresso hits the senses. Vibrant and powerful, yet also remarkably light on its feet, the 2020 has so much to offer. All the elements are so crisp, so beautifully defined. The 2020 is all class. It is one of the most promising wines of this young vintage and a fabulous effort from the Cuvelier family. Don't miss it.”*

- AG, [Vinous](http://Vinous.com)

*“Much more closed and backward now from bottle, the 2020 Château Clos Fourtet is nevertheless a brilliant Saint-Emilion that ranks with the crème de la crème of the vintage. A blend of 90% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Sauvignon, and the rest Cabernet Franc, its deep purple hue is followed by an incredibly pure, classic Saint-Emilion bouquet of darker cherry and cassis-like fruit as well as chalky minerality, lead pencil shavings, and white flowers. Concentrated, full-bodied, and flawlessly balanced, it has perfectly integrated oak, an incredible*

**Reviews** *sense of minerality, good acidity, and a great finish. It's going to need a solid decade of bottle age but will evolve for 30-40+ years in cold cellars. The Château deserves far more attention in the market today as they're consistently producing some of the greatest wines in a vintage.*  
- Jeb Dunnuck

*"One of the biggest successes on the upper plateau is the 2020 Château Clos Fourtet, and it does everything right in the vintage. A magical, perfumed bouquet of red plums, black cherries, white truffle, and white flowers just screams Saint-Emilion, and it hits the palate with medium to full-bodied richness, flawless overall balance, a dense mid-palate, and a liqueur of rocks-like minerality on the palate. Building incrementally with time in the glass, this is thrilling stuff that should offer some up-front appeal in its youth yet benefit from 7-8 years in the cellar and keep for 30 years or more. Bravo! The blend is 90% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 3% Cabernet Franc that's still resting in 50% new French oak."*  
- Jeb Dunnuck

*"While there is seemingly a forest of oak standing in front of the fruit this is still a forcefully fruity and heady wine with both black fruit and also blueberry tones in the mix. There are plum and mulberry nuances, too, which add to the complexity, but much of this exuberance is shut down by the earthy tannins which swarm the palate and dry everything out. This will be a medium to long-term wine and the fruit is reeling from the battering it is taking from the oak, but the fruit will win through given time."*  
- Matthew Jukes

*"Deep ruby, opaque core, purple reflections, bright rim. Mineral undertow to dark forest berry fruit, liquorice and cassis, fine noble wood spices. Powerful, juicy, and round, ripe tannins pronounced fruit with a salty-limestone freshness to the finish. Plenty of ageing potential."*  
- PM, Falstaff Magazine

*"(90% M, 7% CS, 3% CF; 40hl/ha; 14.5% ABV; 50% new). Soft and plump to smell and subtly mineral; rich, fleshy, vital in acidity, finely firm in tannin; rich, juicy, succulent flavor, with a beautiful complexity and length of taste; prolonged, lively, leisurely, linear, mouthwateringly tasty, and very long to finish; a rich, complete, classy limestone wine. Elegance, freshness, great finesse, great beauty. A most successful Clos Fourtet. 2028-50."*  
- MS, The World of Fine Wine

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