

Château Figeac 2018

CSPC# 813879

750mlx6

14.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

37% Merlot, 33% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

St. Emilion

Classification

Premier Grand Cru Classé

Website

http://www.chateau-figeac.com/index_en.php

General Info

Figeac is a very ancient estate, going back at least as far as the 2nd century AD, during the Gallo-Roman period, when a certain Figeacus gave his name to a villa he built on this location. The site has been continually inhabited ever since then, as proved by vestiges: a water-supply system dating from the Gallo-Roman period, foundations of buildings from the Middle Ages with defensive walls, and the remains of a Renaissance chateau reflected in the present-day chateau's great door and tower. Figeac belonged to the same family for more than 500 years and was nearly 200 hectares by the late 18th century. Unfortunately, the estate was sold a number of times in the 19th century. Successive owners sold numerous plots, which explains the birth of various chateaux that appended the name Figeac to their own. However, Figeac continues to be the largest estate in the commune of Saint-Emilion, with 40 hectares of vines. The central part of the chateau, built in a very pure, classical architectural style, dates from the late 18th century.

One of the great names and terroirs of Saint Emilion whose wines exude class and sophistication rather than raw power. There have been some serious improvements here recently under winemaker Frédéric Faye. Michel Rolland has been brought in to consult - but not to change the unique Figeac style. Modern techniques such as vibrating sorting tables, destemming and an optical laser sorting line are being used, as well as 100% new oak barrels from 7 different coopers. As a consequence, the wines produced now seem a little riper and more polished than before but are still fine, pure and classic. Unusually for the right bank there is only 30% Merlot in the vineyard with 35% Cabernet Franc and - rare on the right bank - 35% Cabernet Sauvignon. Valmy Nicolas from La Conseillante has been brought in to sort out the commercial side. A sizeable part of production is relegated to the second label - Petit Figeac. After two stunning vintages in 2015 and 2016 Figeac is one of the hottest properties in Bordeaux. The 2018 harvest lasted nearly a month from the picking of the first Merlot to the last Cabernet. The blend is 37% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc and 33% Cabernet Sauvignon with a yield of 39 hl/ha and 100% new oak. 14 degrees. 10,000 cases with 4500 of Petit Figeac. Frederic compares this wine to his magnificent 2016 but describes it as being "more crystalline and focused".

Winemakers

Frédéric Faye. Michel Rolland consults.

Vintage

The year 2018 was marked by strong climatic contrasts with a cold and rainy winter followed by a wet spring. Chateau-Figeac was spared by the hailstorms and thunderstorms that hit the region between May and mid-July. The summer finally arrived, bringing beautiful weather that lasted until the harvest date. Sunny, dry and warm, the summer allowed the fruit to ripen perfectly. The constant vigilance and great know-how of the Chateau-Figeac technical teams kept the vines perfectly healthy. At Chateau-Figeac, the grape harvest began on September 17 with Merlot and ended on October 12 with Cabernet. The fruit was rich in sugars, polyphenols, and tannins of great finesse.

Vineyards

Figeac is owned by Thierry Manoncourt and is located in the north-west of the appellation with its vineyards adjoining those of Cheval Blanc. Its 40 hectares of vineyards (Cabernet Sauvignon 35%, Merlot 30%, Cabernet Franc 35%) lie on a deep, Médoc-like gravel topsoil ('Graves') over a flinty, iron-rich subsoil. with the vines averaging about 35 years of age and sitting at a density of 6000 vines/ha. Evidence for this selection of varieties comes not from mere opinion, but from the work of Thierry



Vineyards	Manoncourt who, for many decades, would bottle some of the Figeac wines unblended so that he could assess how wines from different grape varieties and different portions of the vineyard matured in bottle.
Harvest	Picking took place from September 17 to October 12
Vinification/ Maturation	The winemaking was carried out with the greatest respect toward the fruit, with gentle extractions and low fermentation temperatures to maintain the freshness, aromatic complexity, and balance of the juice.
Tasting Notes	An attractive, deep, bright, purple color. An expressive, air-light nose leads on to Figeac freshness and aromatics, followed by floral notes mingling harmoniously with nuances of fruit and underpinned by aromas of blackcurrants and raspberries. The palate is expressive and vibrant, cadenced by a clean powerful entry, an enveloping and velvety mid-palate reminiscent of 2015 vintage, and a fresh, lean finish accompanied by tannins of a finesse and minerality that recall the 2016 vintage. The greatness of this vintage is embodied by the amazing harmony between the round and enveloping Merlot, the fresh and elegant Cabernet Franc, and the lace-textured, tender Cabernet Sauvignon. The Chateau Figeac 2018 delivers here the perfect chord from its famous three grape varieties.
Serve with	Chateau Figeac 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. Chateau Figeac is also good when matched with Asian dishes, rich fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.
Cellaring	Drink 2025-2065
Scores/Awards	<p>96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2021</p> <p>97-100 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - April 2019</p> <p>97+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2021</p> <p>97-99 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019</p> <p>98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2021</p> <p>98-99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019</p> <p>100 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 2021</p> <p>97-99 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 2019</p> <p>18 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2019</p> <p>98 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - February 2021</p> <p>98 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2019</p> <p>98 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2021</p> <p>98-100 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019</p> <p>18.5 points - Farr Vintner - April 2019</p> <p>97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p>96-98 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - November 2019</p> <p>96-99 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2019</p> <p>98 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2021</p> <p>97-99 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2019</p> <p>97 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - May 2019</p> <p>96 points - Jeannie Cho Lee MW, asianpalate.com (score only) - March 2019</p> <p>97 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2019</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Sleek and tightly focused, this is a racy style marked by a pure beam of cassis and cherry purée and infused with red tea, bergamot and bay hints. Very fresh and refined through the finish, with a long chalky thread lingering after everything else."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"This is pretty gorgeous, with velvety texture that lets nearly exotic cassis, plum and blackberry fruit reduction flavors roll through. Has a beautiful bass line of warm earth and smoldering tobacco notes all while keeping its sensational mouth feel. The encore on the finish makes you realize this is the serious gourmet stuff. One of the highlights of the vintage."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Deep garnet-purple in color, it soars out of the glass with opening notes of freshly crushed red and black cherries, mulberries and ripe, juicy plums, followed by hints of violets, damp soil, cedar chest, crushed rocks and</i></p>

Reviews

pencil shavings. The medium-bodied, elegantly styled palate features bags of freshness and exquisitely ripe, beautifully poised tannins to support the bright, energetic black and red fruit layers, finishing on a lingering fragrant earth note. This is absolutely recognizable as being cut from the same cloth as old-school Figeac, but all the recent vineyard and winemaking improvements have unveiled the beautifully ripe, intense, nuanced potential here. Bravo to managing director/winemaker Frédéric Faye and his team! Although there is a lot to love about this wine right now, give it 5-6 years for the oak to fully integrate and the underlying perfume suggestions to emerge, then enjoy over the next 20-25 years or more.”

- LPB, Wine Advocate

“The 2018 Figeac is composed of 37% Merlot, 33% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Cabernet Franc, harvested September 17 to October 12 with a 3.7 pH and 14% alcohol. Deep purple black in color, it charges out of the gate with vivacious black and red cherries, cassis, warm plums and wild blueberries scents plus fragrant hints of violets, star anise, tilled soil, and forest floor with wafts of Ceylon tea and chocolate box. Full-bodied and jam-packed with energetic, crunchy black and blue fruits, it has a rock-solid, firm, grainy frame and loads of bright, refreshing sparks lifting the dense layers on the very long, savory finish. Wow—the Cabernet really makes itself known this vintage, and it is good. The signature of this wine is so clear, so defined, that this is a Bordeaux wine without peers. In my view, this is the finest Figeac ever produced.”

- LPB, Wine Advocate

“A powerful, structured Figeac, offering loads of blackberry, blueberry, chocolate, walnut and mushroom with some tobacco. It’s full-bodied with layered, chewy tannins that are polished and beautiful. So impressive and solid. Better than the great 2010? Time will tell. Goes on for a long time. Try after 2026.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“This shows wonderful precision and focus with dark-berry, tobacco, and blueberry character. Full-bodied, tight, and vivid. Solid and structured. Really powerful for Figeac. The real new style here of Figeac that harkens back to the great wines of the 1950s and 1940s. This year, equal parts of merlot, cabernet sauvignon and cabernet franc.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“With its rich swathe of Cabernet Sauvignon, this wine has density and immense structure balanced by stunning black fruits that give impressive promise. This powerful wine is probably the greatest ever produced from this estate. Drink from 2027.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“This is a rich, velvet-textured wine. The Cabernet duo in the blend gives this wine immense structure and brilliant acidity. The perfumed, black currant fruits are layered with the acidity and crisp freshness. The wine finishes with some formidable tannins for the future.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“37% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc, 33% Cabernet Sauvignon, pH 3.7 – ‘classic for Figeac on gravel soils’ and ‘superb Cabernet Sauvignon’, says technical director Frédéric Faye. Barrel sample. Inky with purple rim. A little bit spicy on the nose, scented and ripe but not overripe, that touch of nutmeg that I found on the Nénin. Ripe and pure. Very smooth and rich on the palate, remarkably soft when you know the quantity of tannins. Smooth and accessible, rounded, and luxurious but balanced by the freshness. Grainy texture but fine grained. Second tasting of a cooler sample (the temporary tasting room was a tent and the samples warmed up quickly when the sun was out): fragrant with small black berries, opens up to a more scented beauty, still some spice but also a hint of roses. Greater finesse and freshness at a cooler temperature. Concentrated but so round on the finish. More Cabernet Sauvignon would have given a hardness on the finish, says Faye. Cool chalky finesse. Fine-grained persistence and freshness with a surprising juiciness on the finish. (JH)”

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

Reviews

"I loved this en primeur, and it absolutely lives up to billing now that it is in bottle. It has put on a little weight through the mid palate, closed down further as you would expect at this point, but retains all the depth and texture of the black fruits, burnished with coffee beans, liquorice and crushed stone. It has much in common with the 2016 but there is a juicier, more succulent quality to the finish than the 2016 had at this stage, and I wouldn't be surprised if it turns out to be even better. Harvest ran from 17 September to 12 October, giving a yield of 39hl/ha (with 70% organic farming, 30% biocontrol). 65% of the crop went into the grand vin. 3.7pH."
- JA, Decanter.com

"Back to a more traditional blend after last year's frost impact, Figeac has done a wonderful job of harnessing the opulence of the vintage while maintaining freshness. This is extremely focused and precise, with a silky texture and inky depths, developing complexity as the flavours unfurl. These are big tannins, but they steal up on you, doing that subtle creep that's such a marker of the vintage. Powerful, utterly gorgeous, and clearly a wine that will age well, this is equal to the estate's excellent 2016. Barrel Sample: 98."
- JA, Decanter.com

"Almost at the level of the perfect 2016, this gorgeous wine sports an inky dark hue with a complex aromatic profile of flowers, licorice, herbs, black with red fruits and espresso bean. The wine shows a beautiful sense of purity in the fruit that expresses itself best in its concentrated, velvet textured, sumptuous, silky, sensuous palate. This stunning wine requires at least a decade before it is ready for the start of its prime-time drinking window. The wine was made from a blend of 37% Merlot, 33% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Cabernet Franc."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Pitch black in color with purple accents, my glass seemed like it was packed with an orchard of berries! The fruit pops from the get-go. Blackberry, smoke, licorice, flowers, and earthy black plums are impossible to avoid. And why would you want to miss out on all this complexity? Everything is in balance here as the volume is matched by the freshness and level of purity in the fruit. And to top things off, the tannins are incredibly velvety. The fruit coats your palate in all the right ways with a finish that never wants to leave. The wine was made from a blend of 37% Merlot, 33% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Cabernet Franc. The wine reached 14% alcohol and the picking took place from September 17 to October 12."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Deep ruby in the glass, with an expansive, expressive nose of creamy cassis, white chocolate, toasted spices and fresher, graphite minerality. The palate is opulent in fruit - fleshy, ripe black cherries and blackcurrant explode on entry - yet has magnificent poise. Fresh acidity and refined, mouthcoating tannins bring fantastic precision and contain the more exuberant, chocolatey, spicy tones through the mid palate. This restraint gives the finish great drive and length, with all elements in perfect harmony between toasty opulence and fresh black fruits. Another hit from Figeac in a fantastic run of vintages."
- Farr Vintners

"The 2018 Figeac continues to not put a toe, let alone a foot, wrong under head winemaker Frédéric Faye. The bottle is closed initially, and in fact it was only the following morning that it began to unfold and reveal its true character. Quintessential Figeac on the nose, it offers blackberry, briar, pencil shavings courtesy of the Cabernet Sauvignon, and touch of terracotta. Beautifully defined, as we have come to expect these days; I might well confuse it for a Pomerol. The palate is medium-bodied and has soaked up the 100% new oak. Lithe tannins render this more approachable than the Figeac's of yesteryear, yet it maintains the same DNA. Elegant and refined, it gently fans out with pure, slightly tertiary black fruit and traces of clove and bay leaf. To quote my conclusion from barrel, it is still "cool, calm and collected" on the finish. Divine. 2024 – 2055"
- NM, Vinous

"The 2018 Figeac was picked 17 September to 12 October. Winemaker Frédéric Faye told me that he vinified at a lower temperature compared to previous vintages with no pigeage or déléstage. It offers a classic Figeac bouquet with blackcurrant, raspberry coulis, touches of graphite from the Cabernet, marmalade, and orange pith. The oak, 100% new, is well integrated. The palate is medium bodied with fine grain tannins and wonderful freshness. This is a dense Figeac with impressive body. Frédéric Faye managed to imbue this with elegance and the classic leitmotifs of this château. Cool, calm, and collected on the finish, this is one of the wines of the vintage. Drink 2024-2055."
- AG, Vinous

Reviews

“The 2018 Figeac is simply magnificent. A regal, soaring wine with tremendous vertical lift and nuance, the 2018 is marvelously complete from the very first taste. All the elements fall into place effortlessly. Medium in body and refined, the 2018 is vibrant, with fine tannins and, frankly, quite a bit more freshness than I expected to see given the very dry, sunny summer. Rose petal, mint, lavender, and spice add nuance to a core of red/purplish fruit. Harvest started on September 17 and finished on October 12. Yields were 39 hectoliters per hectare, just shy of the historical average of 42/32. While mildew pressure was an issue, it was the dry October winds and their dehydrating effect on the last Cabernets that impacted yields most. Like so many of his colleagues, Technical Director Frederic Faye and his team opted for gentler vinifications with no SO2 at crush, lower temperatures in fermentation and smaller pump overs. The 2018 Figeac is brilliant. That's all there is to it. The blend is 38% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36% Merlot and 26% Cabernet Franc. Tasted three times. Barrel Sample: 96-99.”

- AG, Vinous

“Reminiscent of the 2016 with its incredible purity and elegance, the 2018 Château Figeac offers a terrific perfume of crème de cassis, redcurrants, dried earth, tobacco, lead pencil, spring flowers, and exotic spice-driven nuances. Playing in the medium to full-bodied end of the spectrum, it's flawlessly balanced, has silky, polished tannins, and a stunning sense of purity. It doesn't have the sexiness of the 2015, but it's very much in the style of the 2018 vintage with its pure, elegant, haut couture-like style. And it doesn't show a hint of its 100% new oak élevage. Give bottles 4-5 years of bottle age and enjoy over the following 20-30 years. It's not the biggest or richest Saint-Emilion, yet the balance, finesse, and elegance are something to behold. I think it's going to check in behind the 2015 (and maybe the 2019) when all is said and done, but it's unquestionably one of the greatest Figeac in the past 20-30 years.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Tasting like a hypothetical blend of the 2015 and 2016, the 2018 Château Figeac offers that rare mix of elegance and sexiness that makes it the most Médoc-like wine from the Right Bank. Checking in as a blend of 38% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36% Merlot and 26% Cabernet Franc that will spend 19 months in new oak, made from 75% of the total production, it offers a saturated purple color as well as incredible notes of liquid violets, exotic flowers, crème de cassis, and spice box. Full-bodied, multi-dimensional, flawlessly balanced, and with awesome purity of fruit, it's going to flirt with perfection in 4-5 years and keep for 3-4 decades or more. Hats off to director Frédéric Faye for another viscerally thrilling wine that's up with the crème de la crème of the vintage.”

- Jeb Dunnuck
