

Château Fleur Cardinale 2010

CSPC# 744977

750mlx12

14.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

70% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Franc, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon,

Appellation

Saint Emilion

General Info

The estate was bought in 2001 by Florence and Dominique Decoster, and it has benefited from major investments which have made Château Fleur Cardinale one of the top names of the appellation. It is located to the east of the village of Saint-Émilion, on one of the high points of the appellation and it extends over 20 hectares. With its great value for money, and showing great consistency in its quality, Château Fleur Cardinale was promoted to "Saint-Emilion Grand cru classé" in 2006.

Vineyards

The vineyard is planted in a clay-limestone soil in the middle of the plateau on a pleasant late producing terroir. The vines are mainly merlot (70%) and then a balance of 15% cabernet sauvignon and 15% cabernet franc. Surface area in production: 44.46 acres (18 ha); Density of plantation: 6000 vines/hectare Average age of vines: 35 years old; Yield after sorting: 33 hl/ha

Harvest

100% hand-harvested from 18th October to 5th November 2010

Maturation

Once in the vats, cold maceration at 5° takes place over 5 or 6 days followed by alcoholic fermentation then warm maceration for 2 to 3 weeks. All the pumping over is done by gravity, which avoids "stirring up" the musts and "stressing" the yeasts. The fermenting cellar was built ecologically and is equipped with 22 small thermo-regulated stainless-steel vats. This means the vinification can be done by plot, while in the ageing cellar the wine can be aged between 12 and 16 months in barrels of new French oak (the wood comes from the Forests of Tronçay, Bertranges, Jupille and Limousin). 100 % new French oak barrels

Tasting Notes

A rich, plush modern style Saint Emilion that has seduced Robert Parker in recent vintages. This is black in colour, quite extracted and very strong and powerful. Sweet, jammy and full all the way through to the finish. Tannins to match the fruit. Impressive if you like the late-picked style.

Cellaring

Drink 2013-2036

Scores/Awards

93 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2013

91-94 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2011

95 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #205 - February 2013

92-95 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #194 - May 2011

No score - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2011

93 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2013

86-89 points - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2011

17 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2011

17 points - James Lawther, Decanter.com - April 2011

89 points - Jean Marc Quarin - March 2011 (Score only)

93-95 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 22, 2011

Review Only - Chuck Haywood, JJBuckley Wines - April 2011

Reviews

"This is rich and very plush, but really pure as well, with gorgeous macerated cherry, cassis and blackberry preserves flavors gliding along, carried by remarkably polished tannins. Flecks of bergamot, blood orange and apple wood fill in on the finish, with a fine minerality buried as well. This should be lovely after some cellaring. Best from 2015 through 2030."

- JM, Wine Spectator

"A dense, slightly chewy version, with a broad swath of roasted fig, espresso and black currant confiture pushed by additional charcoal and roasted tobacco notes. This is plenty fleshy and dense, with an encore of anise and plum at the very end. A bit raw still, but everything's there. This estate is quietly putting it all together. Score range: 91-94"

- JM, Wine Spectator



Reviews

“Dense ruby/purple, it tips the scales at 15% natural alcohol and was bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. Full-bodied in texture, it offers up loads of blueberry, blackberry and raspberry fruit intermixed with some cedar, vanilla and a touch of spring flowers. Impressively built, with good acidity and light tannin, this is a superb example of wine that reaches its prime in 3 or 4 years and lasts two decades. It’s right up there with their brilliant 2005”
- RP, Wine Advocate

“The greatest Fleur Cardinale since the 2005, the super-powerful, rich, opaque purple-colored 2010 exhibits beautiful floral notes intermixed with black raspberry, blueberry and boysenberry fruit as well as a hint of minerality. Exuberant and flamboyant with full-bodied richness, stunning purity and an impressive, textured mouthfeel and finish, this beauty should age effortlessly for 12-20 years.”
- RP, Wine Advocate

“This is extraordinarily over-ripe on the nose with prune, creme de cassis and blueberry jam. The palate is full-bodied, a low acidity blockbuster Saint Emilion that overwhelms the senses. Very sweet and cloying on the finish at the moment. I will seek another sample down the line. Tasted March 2011.”
- NM, Wine Journal

“Wow. This shows an impressive richness on the nose of cappuccino, ripe berries and dried flowers. Full body with velvety tannins and a fine finish. Rich and delicious. Harmonious and luscious. So delicious now but better in 2017.”
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

(a blend of 70% merlot, 25% cabernet franc and 5% cabernet sauvignon) Bright ruby-red. Floral, scented aromas of cassis and chocolate. A supple, spicy midweight with flavors of raspberry, graphite and tobacco. On the soft side but juicy and delicious, finishing with a light dusting of tannins and decent length. This would have merited a higher score with a little more complexity. In fairness, some critics liked this wine a lot more than I did.”
- ID, International Wine Cellar

“Sweet and rich and round and hugely flattering. This wine has managed to keep the vitality in without excessive dry tannin. Really well done! Lovely finish. Very distinctive. Very readable and transparent. 17 out of 20.”
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

“Rich, ripe and decadent, this wine just oozes sumptuous fruit. Plum and berry aromas and flavour. Bold, firm tannins. Drink 2017-2028. (17 points)”
- JL, Decanter.com

“Fleur Cardinale from an 18 hectare, clay and limestone vineyard, located next to Valandraud, Florence and Dominique Decoster put a lot of effort into their 2010, starting with reducing their yields to 36 hectoliters per hectare. With its deep color, cassis, blackberry, licorice and jammy liqueur aromas exude from the glass. This full-bodied wine offers layers of opulent dark fruit ending with a fresh, licorice, blackberry, dark cherry and chocolate finish. From an assemblage of 78% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon and 7% Merlot, the wine reached 14.5% alcohol. This is the best wine from the estate since their outstanding 2005. For consumers not yet familiar with this estate, Fleur Cardinale is one of the most consistent Bordeaux producers making wines that combine price and quality. 93-95 Pts
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The bouquet offers a mélange of expressive and complex aromas that are pure and enticing, as cassis and cherry compote mingle with powerful mint nuances that lead into multi-layered fruit expressions on the palate. Although richly textured and almost approaching viscous, there is no sense of overripe fruit that can be found in other examples from the appellation, and silky tannins finish the thrilling experience. A terrific wine. Hard to resist now, expect increasing complexity until maturity arrives over the next twenty years. Jean-Philippe Fort (Rolland) consults as does neighbor Jean-Luc Thunevin.”
- CH, JJ Buckley Wines
