

Château Fleur Cardinale 2011

CSPC# 764028

750mlx12

15.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	75% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon
Appellation	Saint Emilion
Website	http://www.fleurcardinale.com/en/
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: 30 hl/ha
Harvest	100% hand-harvested from September 30 th - October to 20 th
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	Dark purple red with violet hue and almost black center. Rich and mature fruit, blackberries and plums, vanilla and toasted oak, chocolate in the background. On the palate well structured, mature fruit but firm tannins, good length.
Production	6250 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2012-2027
Scores/Awards	90 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2014 90-93 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2012 93 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #212 - April 2014 92-94 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #200 - April 2012 86-88 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2012 89-90 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2012 89-91 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 11, 2012 16 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2012 16.5 points - James Lawther, Decanter.com - April 2012 15.75-16 points - Jean Marc Quarin - March 2012 (Score only) 91 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - November 17, 2013 90-93 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2012 15-15.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) 90-92 points - Jeff Loo, JJBuckley Wines - April 2012 (review only)
Reviews	<i>"This is solid, with lush fig, blackberry and black currant compote notes, accented by a warm ganache edge. Dark and fleshy through the finish, showing prominent yet integrated dark toast. Should settle in with modest cellaring. For fans of the more hedonistic style. Best from 2015 through 2023. 6,250 cases made."</i> - JM, Wine Spectator <i>"A ripe, fleshy style, with lots of fig and mulled blackberry and blueberry fruit. Good toast and ganache notes thread this together, with a muscular feel on the finish. An overt style, but well done. Score range: 90-93"</i> - JM, Wine Spectator



Reviews

"This gorgeous 2011 continues the succession of impressive wines made by this estate since it was acquired by the Decoster family. Beautiful black raspberry, blueberry and black currant fruit notes intermixed with a touch of spring flowers emerge from a wine with excellent balance, nicely integrated acidity, tannin, alcohol and wood, and a healthy saturated ruby/purple color. This full-bodied, long, captivating La Fleur Cardinale is already drinking well, and should continue to do so for 10-12 years. It is a sleeper of the vintage. "

- RP, Wine Advocate

"Another top-notch success, the 2011 (70% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon) hit 15% natural alcohol. Yields were a low 30 hectoliters per hectare, and the harvest occurred quite late. The result is a dense purple-colored wine with a stunning bouquet of blackberry jam, graphite, charcoal and blueberries. With superb density and purity as well as a multidimensional mouthfeel, this intense St.-Emilion is a sleeper of the vintage, although consumers are catching on to the exquisite quality emerging from La Fleur Cardinale. The 2011 should drink well for 15+ years.

This property has been on a qualitative hot streak since it was acquired by the Decoster family nearly a decade ago. Consultants are the impressive Jean-Philippe Fort (from Michel Rolland's laboratory) and Jean-Luc Thunevin.

- RP, Wine Advocate

"There is patently a lot of new oak on the nose that is rounded and savoury. The palate is medium bodied with dry, slightly coarse tannins. There is a touch of hardness in the middle and the finish is slightly austere and saline. Tasted April 2012.

- NM, Wine Journal

"Plenty of good fruit with mineral and blueberry character. Full and chewy with polished tannins and a violet fruit undertone. Well made."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Barrel sample. Here is a warm, ripe wine with dark tannins. It's well spiced and fruity, showing crisp black currant fruits."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Black-hearted crimson. Very ripe there's even a touch of strawberry sweetness to the black fruit. Firm, thick tannins, not dry but quite hard work and slightly bitter on the finish. Drink 2016-2024."

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Ripe and generous. Good aromatic complexity – blackcurrant, violet and liquorice notes. Suave, sweet and warm with a long, firm finish. Drink 2017-2028."

- JL, Decanter.com

"Packed with black licorice, floral, stone, blackberry and chocolate, this blend of 70% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon produced a lush, round, St Emilion that ended with chocolate covered black cherries. This is a very successful wine for the vintage."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Dark chocolate, flowers and black cherry notes are easy to find in the aromatics. Soft, round, forward and open, this early drinking wine delivers a lot of pleasure in the glass with its lush style."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"15% potential alcohol. From a 20-hectare property on a high point to the east of the town of St. Emilion. Average vine age is 35 years, planted in rich clay atop limestone. Soils are primarily clay-limestone. Grapes are sorted by hand before and after de-stemming, with fermentation in small stainless-steel vats. The wine is aged in 100% new oak. Crimson core with a garnet rim. The wine opens with aromas of smoked meats, plum, red currant, and spice, complemented by prune, chocolate, and a soft floral accent. Full-bodied and showcasing the vintage with racy acidity and subdued tannins. Roasted coffee, mocha, and lavender flavors lead to an elegant yet powerful finish. Give this wine 3-5 years after bottling and enjoy for the following 10-15. Jean Philippe Fort consults. Tasted three times. Drink 2016-2030 (April 2012)"

- JL, JJ Buckley Wines
