

Château Fleur Cardinale 2021

CSPC# 814410

750mlx12

13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

60% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon

Appellation

Saint Emilion

Classification

Grande Cru Classe in 2006

Website

https://fleurcardinale.com/en/les_vins/chateau-fleur-cardinale-2021/

Sustainability

We are committed to sustainable and precise winegrowing methods that allow us to optimize the tremendous potential of our different terroirs and ensure regular quality while respecting the environment.

In 2021, we decided to start our conversion to organic farming. This conversion, which lasts for a period of three years, will begin this year, and will be completed in 2024, by which time we aim to have the entirety of our vineyards, both red and white varieties, certified as organically-farmed.

Since 2017, we no longer use organic fertilisers, except on rare occasions and then in a very limited way. Instead, we use vegetal cover crops over the entirety of the estate, grown from seed between the vine rows.

Additionally, we don't burn the freshly pruned vine shoots cut away during the winter. Instead, we mulch them into the vineyard soil, thereby providing nourishment for the vines without any added fertiliser.

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.

Winemaker

Jean-Philippe Fort from Rolland Laboratory consults.

Vintage

If 2021 was drier than previous years, two intense climatic episodes impacted the vintage. The first one is the April frost which mobilized our teams for 9 nights. The second is linked to the strong episodes of rain in June, with nearly 180 mm of precipitation. The trio August / September / October was accompanied by low rainfall, allowing to harvest in optimal conditions and preserving the qualitative potential of the vintage.

Vineyards

The vineyard is planted in a clay-limestone soil in the middle of the plateau on a pleasant late producing terroir. The two properties owned by Florence and Dominique Decoster extend across a 23.5-hectare area for the Château Fleur Cardinale, and a 4-hectare area for the Château Croix Cardinale. The two vineyards are planted on clay-limestone soil in the middle of the hillsides, and they enjoy an identical harvest, notable for its 75% dominance of Merlot together with 20% Cabernet Franc and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon.

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

The vineyard is farmed using organic, self-sustainable farming techniques. In 2013, Fleur Cardinale was awarded their certification by the Environmental Management System (S.M.E.).

Harvest

Harvested from 1st to 12th October. Yields: 21hl/ha

Vinification & Maturation

Vinification takes place in 20 small, thermoregulated, stainless steel vats. The number of vats is equal to the various parcels of vines. This allows the vinification to be done on a parcel-by-parcel basis. The vats range in size from 21 hectoliters up to 52 hectoliters. Made in a mix of tanks and wooden vats. There are 10 wood vats of 500L. Vatting time is 28 days. Malolactic fermentation takes place in 100% new oak barrels and in tank.

Aged for 12-14 months in Old Merlot and old Cabernet Franc barrels, plus two 750-litre Tava amphoras

Tasting Notes

Château Fleur Cardinale 2021 takes you by surprise with its chiselled aromatic nose, its bright aromas of fresh blueberries and raspberries, highlighted by floral nuances. With real density, it unfolds into a beautiful creaminess. Its fine silky tannins give it a good length with a real freshness. After the tremors of an eventful beginning, 2021 appears more than any other as a fine vintage destined for the well-deserved rest of a lengthy maturation.



Serve with	Chateau Fleur Cardinale is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Fleur Cardinale is also good when matched with Asian dishes, rich fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.
Production	43,000 bottles made.
Cellaring	Drink 2026-2039
Scores/Awards	<p>90-92 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p>87-89 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent (score only) - May 2022</p> <p>93-94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022</p> <p>91 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 2024</p> <p>92-94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2022</p> <p>16.5 points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022</p> <p>94 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022</p> <p>92 points - Jane Anson, Inside Bordeaux - May 2022</p> <p>93 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2024</p> <p>92-94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022</p> <p>93 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2022</p> <p>92-94+ points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p>91-93 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p>91-93 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022</p> <p>92 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022</p> <p>92-94 points - Yves Beck - June 2022</p> <p>91 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022</p> <p>95 points - Terres de Vins (score only) - April 2022</p> <p>95 points - Vert de Vin - July 2022</p> <p>91-93+ points - Colin Hay, The Drinks Business - May 2022</p> <p>91-93 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - May 2022</p> <p>93-94 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - May 2022</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"The 2021 Fleur Cardinale exhibits aromas of sweet cherries and blackberries mingled with vanilla pod and spices. Medium to full-bodied, bright, and unusually elegant, it's seamless and polished, with good depth at the core and a mouthwatering finish. I suspect it will continue to flesh out with further élevage."</i> - WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"A refined and linear wine with blackberry and blueberry aromas and flavors. Medium-bodied with fine tannins and a racy finish. Classy."</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>"This Saint-Emilion Grand Cru Classé wine is packed with black fruits. Tannins are present but softening well. Blackberry flavors also will open and integrate as this structured wine matures. Drink from 2026."</i> - RV, Wine Enthusiast</p> <p><i>"After 12 months in wood, the wine has a fine spicy edge. That balances the rich black fruits with their floral character. This is a ripe wine that has plenty of potential. Drink from 2026."</i> - RV, Wine Enthusiast</p> <p><i>"Mouth-filling and gourmand. Plenty of substance here with textured fruit and rounded tannins. Structured and complete with the fruit already engaging."</i> - JL, JancisRobinson.com</p> <p><i>"Intensely perfumed on the nose, so expressive and aromatic with dark chocolate and blackcurrant liqueur aspects. Juicy, fresh, playful, lifted, and upfront - this has a lot going on. It's lightly framed with a lifted nature on the palate, the flavours all vertical and expansive but not heavy. It's a delicate style in terms of structure but the flavours are persistent and really fill the mouth with a brightness as well as minty, chocolate, liquorice fresh tannins. I love this one - a real success of the vintage. Usually 70-75% Merlot, so this is a new Fleur Cardinale, the 'kind of blend we'd like to have in the future' says Ludovic and Caroline Decoster, with increased plantings of Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon taking place at the estate. Consultants Jean Philippe Fort - Michel Rolland Laboratoire. First year of conversion to organic, 2021 saw a loss of 50% production - 20% to frost and 30% to mildew. A fine effort."</i> - GH, Decanter.com</p>

Reviews *“Bright, plump redcurrant and raspberry fruit, with the touch of glamour that Fleur Cardinale does so well. This is a sleek and well-made wine that performs well within the 2021 vintage but is not as effortless as the past few vintages have been at this exceptional, dynamic estate.”*
- JA, janeanson.com

“Chocolate-coated plums, black cherries, espresso, flowers, and mint leaf pack the perfume. The palate is even better with its layers of lush, sweet, red fruits, spice, creamy tannins, and touch of chalk. The blend is 60% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. All that extra Cabernet really makes a difference adding more freshness, complexity, and individuality. I hope they continue using more Cabernet here in future vintages. This is the first vintage from 100% organic farming. Sadly, not much was made, as close to half the crop was destroyed by frost. Drink from 2023-2039.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Deeply colored, lush, round, opulent, and concentrated for the vintage, you find spicy, floral, black cherries, touches of chocolate, licorice, espresso, and a hint of spice. Silky in the mouth, fresh and fruity, the finish is soft, supple, and polished. The blend is 60% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. All that extra Cabernet really makes a difference adding more freshness, complexity, and individuality. I hope they continue using more Cabernet here in future vintages. The harvest took place October 1 - 12.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The 2021 Fleur Cardinale has a very ripe bouquet of black cherries, blueberry, and crushed violets scents, showing better delineation than previous vintages. The palate is medium-bodied with sappy black fruit, fine acidity, gentle grip, and judicious use of oak on the finish. This is a more restrained Fleur Cardinale, and it works well.”
- NM, Vinous

“The 2021 Fleur Cardinale is an unqualified success for the Decoster family. Dense, rich, and beautifully layered, the 2021 offers up copious dark plum, chocolate, spice, and licorice, deftly balancing its extroverted personality with the vibrancy of the year. The 2021 was gorgeous both times I tasted it. Sadly, yields are down a startling 50%.”
- AG, Vinous

“The 2021 Château Fleur Cardinale is terrific, and certainly an outstanding wine. Lots of ripe darker cherry and almost blue fruits give way to a medium-bodied, concentrated, balanced, textured 2021 that has a great mid-palate and ripe tannins. It offers tons of pleasure and will drink well right out of the gate. Aging in 90% new barrels, it was harvested between the 1st and 12th of October, and it hit 13.5% natural alcohol. Tasted numerous times.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“Dark ruby core, purple reflections, subtle brightening on the rim. Fresh blackberries, hints of liquorice, fine wood spices and tangerine zest. Medium-bodied red berries and cherries on the palate, fresh, somewhat loosely knitted tannins, and a lemon citrus finish. Good with food.”
- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“The nose is fruity, fresh, complex and reveals nice concentration of freshness/finesse, a certain intensity of finesse/delicacy/freshness. There are notes of fresh cherry, violet and, to a lesser extent, bright blackcurrant, combined with hints of fresh saffron, lilac and graphite, as well as fine hints of balsamic, a very discreet touch of timut pepper, vanilla, and toast. The palate is fruity, balanced and reveals freshness, a nice acidic structure, minerality, a nice definition, elegance, some volume, a nice work of bitters, lightness in the sense of delicacy/subtlety. On the palate this wine expresses notes of fresh/crisp blackcurrant, pulpy/acidic blackberry and more lightly small red berry, crunchy cherry combined with hints of tonka bean, lilac, fine hints of tobacco as well as a subtle hint of cardamom, a very discreet hint of cocoa bitterness, toasted/roasted almond, roasted/charcoal (in the background). Good length.”
- Vert de Vin