

Château Fonplégade 2021

CSPC# 102903

750mlx12

14.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

88% Merlot, 12% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

Saint-Emilion

Classification

Grand Cru Classé

Website

<https://www.fonplegade.com/Home>

Sustainability

Biodynamic. Certified organic since 2013

General Info

The name Fonplégade was inspired by the terroir. Fonplégade means full or bent fountain. It was derived from the natural fountain, located close to the center of the vineyard which supports numerous, small, running springs in various bent and twisted shapes that are located on the estate.

Skipping ahead about 1,500 years, in 1852, Jean-Pierre Beylot purchased Chateau Fonplégade. Beylot built the magnificent chateau that is still on the Fonplégade property today. In 1863, Chateau Fonplégade was sold to the Duke of Morny. Morny was the stepbrother of Napoleon the 3rd.

The Moueix family purchased the estate in 1953. Things changed again most recently in 2004 when Denise Adams and Stephen Adams bought the Right Bank vineyard of Chateau Fonplégade for 30 million Euros from Armand Moueix.

After a complete and very expensive renovation of the Chateau Fonplégade chateau, cellars and wine making facilities, they also replanted large portions of the vineyards. Next, the Adams family started taking a different approach with their vineyard management techniques.

They began a biodynamic farming program starting with the 2009 vintage. They were certified organic in 2013. Michel Rolland was the first consultant they hired. In 2015, they also brought in the team of Stephane Derenoncourt to help consult in the vineyard management and winemaking along with Corinne Comme.

Winemakers

Corinne Comme, winemaker. Stéphane Derenoncourt 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

Château Fonplégade represents the purest and most typical expression of our terroir. Enriched with a mosaic of ideal soils and a wonderful diversity of geology and geography, our vineyard is divided into 27 parcels on 45.5 acres. These hand-farmed blocks comprise the artist's palette of our terroir, providing a wealth of flavor components for the development of our wines.

Harvest

The manual harvest took place from September 30-October 14.

**Vinification/
Maturation**

To produce the wine of Chateau Fonplégade, the fruit is whole berry fermented, following a cold maceration for 5 days. The wine is vinified in 6, thermos-regulated, large, 95 hectoliter oak vats and 2, 55 hectoliter oak tanks. 5% of the wine is barrel fermented in 500-liter oak barrels using the micro vinification process. 30% of the wine is vinified in conical shaped, cement vats.

90% of the Malolactic fermentation takes place in 60% new, French oak barrels, with the remaining 10% going through malolactic in cement, egg shaped tanks.

The wine is aged 50% new, 30% 1-yr-old barrels, 10% cement eggs and amphoras, for an average of 16-18 months, depending on the quality and character of the vintage.

Tasting Notes

With an impeccable balance between fruit, complexity and aromatic length, this wine is characterized by a sophisticated minerality, consistent from year to year, with soft and supple tannins and a velvety texture. It is made from the estate's oldest vines, meticulously hand-farmed using organic and biodynamic practices to bring out the finest quality in each cluster. Predominantly Merlot, the blend includes just enough Cabernet Franc to imbue the wine with an elegant tannic structure.



Serve with	Chateau Fonplegade is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Chateau Fonplegade is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
Production	Approx. 3,000 cases made annually.
Cellaring	Drink 2025 – 2038.
Scores/Awards	<p>89-91 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p>85-87 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent (score only) - May 2022</p> <p>92 points - Zekun Shuai, JamesSuckling.com - December 2023</p> <p>92-93 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022</p> <p>91 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022</p> <p>93 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - November 2023</p> <p>93 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - 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 - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2024</p> <p>93-95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022</p> <p>92 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2024</p> <p>92-94 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022</p> <p>90 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022</p> <p>91 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022</p> <p>92-93 points - Vert de Vin - July 2022</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"The 2021 Fonplégade offers up aromas of rich berry and cherry fruit framed by minty new oak. Medium to full-bodied, fleshy, and lively, it's generous and concentrated, albeit a touch marked by its 50% new oak at this early stage."</i> - WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>"Smoked herbs, spices, and a hint of lanolin cream to the red berries and plums. Generous but juicy on the palate with a medium body and silky tannins. Pretty long and flattering finish. Plenty of wood here but it should come together better in two more years. Try in 2025."</i> - ZS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>"All about finesse and focus for the vintage, with a medium-bodied palate and fine tannins. Racy and pretty. Slightly smoked lemon. From biodynamically grown grapes."</i> - JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>"Perfumed and scented on the nose with cocoa powder too. Dark and savoury on the palate, the fruit more blackcurrant, plum and damson with clear liquorice spicing throughout the palate. The texture is appealing as is the minerality at the back of the throat, but this stops a little short or rather just lacks a little persistence in terms of weight. But good direction and long aerial finish."</i> - GH, Decanter.com</p> <p><i>"Ripe plum in colour, skillful winemaking that combines fresh cool-vintage fruit character with a tingle of pumice-stone minerality and grip. Climbs through the palate with lemongrass, slate, orange zest, fine tannins, and a juicy signoff. Enjoyable, still signposting the fresh acidities of the year, but with depth to the flavour, and it sits within the estate signature. One to recommend. Owners Stephen and Denise Adams."</i> - JA, janeanson.com</p> <p><i>"Great quality, this is plump, rich, plenty of raspberry and red cherry fruit with pencil lead and chalk tannins, maintains momentum through the mid palate, and very much working with the vintage, careful extraction that keeps the foot on the pedal to emphasise juicy acidities rather than austere tannins. Good stuff."</i> - JA, janeanson.com</p> <p><i>"Incense, espresso, spice, herbs, and red fruits make an appearance in the nose. On the medium-bodied palate, the wine is supple, creamy, round, and fresh with layers of ripe, plums and dark, red cherries with a hint of sea salt and a refreshing edge of chocolate mint that comes in at the end of the finish. This is quite strong for the vintage. Drink from 2024-2038."</i> - JL, thewinecellarinsider.com</p>

Reviews

"Initially you notice flowers and crushed rocks before moving on to the black raspberries, licorice, cherries, and background note of orange blossom and a healthy dose of oak. On the medium-bodied palate, the wine is soft, pure, and fresh, with a sweetness to the fruits, silkiness to the tannins and a touch of chocolate-mint, sea salt and espresso in the endnote. Made from a blend of 88% Merlot and 12% Cabernet Franc, 13.5% ABV, pH 3.6. The harvest took place September 30-October 14. Drink from 2023-2039."

- JL, *thewinecellarinsider.com*

"The 2021 Fonplégade is a very pretty, delicate Saint-Émilion. Silky, aromatic, and medium in body, the 2021 is classy from start to finish. Spice, menthol, tobacco, mocha, and dried herbs open gradually in the glass. In this tasting, the 2021 comes across a bit clenched in feel."

- AG, *Vinous*

"The 2021 Fonplégade is classy and refined to the core. It possesses terrific depth, with sweet floral aromatics and fine-grained tannins that convey finesse. Red/purplish fruit, lavender, spice, and bright saline notes all meld together. Fonplégade is built more on vertical persistence than volume. It is one of the most elegant Saint-Émilions of the vintage and a terrific effort from proprietors Denise and Stephen Adams. Tasted three times."

- AG, *Vinous*

"From a beautiful terroir on the hillside just outside of Saint-Emilion, the 2021 Château Fonplégade is based on 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc raised in a mix of cask, concrete, and amphora. Cassis, spring flowers, ripe strawberries, and hints of tobacco all emerge from this medium-bodied, supple, layered, incredibly impressive 2021. I love its mid-palate, and it has present yet perfectly ripe tannins and outstanding length."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"I loved the 2021 Château Fonplégade, a richer, medium to full-bodied, round, impressively textured Saint-Emilion. Coming from a gorgeous hillside terroir and mostly Merlot, it has good mid-palate density, terrific balance, and outstanding length. The blend is 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc, still resting in 30% new barrels."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"Dark ruby core, purple reflections, subtle brightening on the rim. Delicate herbal savouriness, dark cherries on the nose with hints of plums and nougat. Juicy, elegant, palate with a fine fruit sweetness of strawberries with well-balanced notes of vanilla, mineral hints, and a chocolatey finish. Already very well developed."

- PM, *Falstaff Magazine*

"The nose is fresh and reveals fruit, a fine crispness, some complexity, and fine depth. There are notes of creamy blackcurrant, ripe wild strawberry, crushed raspberry, and a hint of fresh lily combined with a touch of crushed cherry, cherry blossom and hints of sweet blond tobacco and vanilla. The palate is fruity and reveals minerality, a juicy/acidic structure, roundness, fullness, and a fine airiness in the approach. On the palate, this wine expresses notes of pulpy blackberry, creamy raspberry and, more slightly, fleshy/acidic strawberry combined with hints of crushed red berries, peony, vanilla and a subtle hint of sweet blond tobacco and mild spices. The tannins are well managed. Good length. A fine mellowness on the finish/persistence. Some purity and generosity of fruit."

- Vert de Vin