

Château Larcis-Ducasse 2017

CSPC# 869811

750mlx6

14.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

92% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

Saint Emilion

Classification

First Growth B. Premier Grand Cru Classe B.

Website

<http://www.larcis-ducasse.com/en/saint-emilion/actualites/#>

Analysis

TA: 3.24 g/L pH: 3.56

General Info

Chateau Larcis Ducasse had its birth during the days of the ancient Romans. The modern era for Larcis Ducasse begins in 1893, when Henri Raba bought the St. Emilion vineyard. After Henri Raba passed away in 1925, his wife and son Andre Raba continued managing Larcis Ducasse. Andre died during World War 2. His niece, Helene Gratiot Alphantery, inherited the property in 1941. She managed Larcis Ducasse until 1990. Her son, Jacques-Olivier Gratiot took control of the property after she passed away and he remains in charge today.

Larcis Ducasse remains the property of the Gratiot Alphantery family. Prior to 2003, it had been years since the wines of Larcis Ducasse were prized by Bordeaux wine lovers. The wine had fallen out of favor. That changed in 2002 when they hired the team of well-known St. Emilion consultants, Nicolas Thienpont and Stephane Derenoncourt to turn things around and manage the estate. One of the first improvements to the property suggested by Nicolas Thienpont and Stephane Derenoncourt was to create a new drainage system. The next step was to change harvesting practices. Now, the harvest takes place when the fruit is ripe, and the picking can take as long as 2 to 3 weeks to complete.

Winemakers

Nicolas Thienpont and Stephane Derenoncourt

Vintage

The 2017 vintage will have gone through several stages to give birth to great red wines. Despite a difficult start to the year the season unfolded in a remarkable way with dry weather until summer. The beautiful month of August will allow a very good development of the vine, and despite some rain in September, the good maturation of the grapes will be ensured, they will be rich and concentrated at harvest time.

Vineyards

Total area: 11,15 ha. Area in production: 10,41 ha. Density of plantation: 6000 vines/ha, replantation's at 8888 vines/ha. Average age of the vineyard: 35 years.

Terroirs: 10% of limestone-clay plateau on asteriated limestone, 55% of south facing terraces - very shallow loamy clay soils on asteriated limestone, 35% of limestone-clay colluvial soils on hillsides.

Vineyard management: ongoing search for balances thanks to traditional light ploughing, spontaneous natural growth or inter-row planting. Continual programme of renovation of the vines: grubbing up, complantation and replanting. Numerous manual interventions: de-budding, leaf-thinning and green harvest. 100% hand-picked harvest.

Harvest

Merlots from September 18th to 29th, and the Cabernets francs from September 29th to October 2nd.

Winemaking

To produce the wine of Chateau Larcis Ducasse, the grapes are whole berry fermented. The fruit is transported by gravity flow into traditional cement tanks for fermentation. Cuvasion takes between 25-28 days. There are no pump overs. Pigeages are conducted during fermentation. Malolactic fermentation takes place in the barrel. The wine of Chateau Larcis Ducasse is aged in 70% new, 30% 1-year old, French oak barrels for an average of 16-18 months.

Tasting Notes

The nose discovers a beautiful solar and concentrated bouquet of blackberry, black cherry liqueur and sweet spice aromas along with delicate floral notes that evoke rose petal and violet scents. With roundness and fleshiness, Chateau Larcis Ducasse 2017 reveals a velvety, sensual, and fleshy mouthfeel, which envelops the palate in a succession of different sensations. Fine tannins that coat the palate give structure while the mid-palate centers on fruit concentration. This all unfolds with freshness and vivacity to give a persistent and aromatic finish.

Serve with

Château Larcis Ducasse 2017 would be a wonderful accompaniment to roast beef with a Périgord cep sauce accompanied by baked apples, veal chop à la Dijonnaise, roast duck, or a confit lamb mouse. For a pairing with cheeses, choose soft cheeses with a bloomy rind: Brie, Brillat-savarin, Camembert, Chaource or Coulommiers.



Serve with Production For desserts, it will be particularly appreciated with a three-chocolate dessert, profiteroles, or an Opera cake. 3,000 cases made.

Cellaring Drink 2023-2030. Château Larcis Ducasse 2017 will reach its qualitative peak between 2027 and 2032, possessing indeed a very good aptitude for cellar aging. However, it lends itself very well to tasting today. To do this, take to open the bottle at room temperature and decant it 3 to 4 hours before tasting. The bottles will be kept in the cellar protected from the light, lying down, at an optimal hygrometric degree of 70%.

Scores/Awards **93 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2020
92-95 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - April 2018
95 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2020
92-94 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2018
95 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent (score only) - September 2022
96 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2020
94-95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2018
93 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 2020
92-94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 2018
16 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2018
92 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - September 2019
88 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2018
94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2020
94 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2018
91 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2020
91-93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2018
96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2020
92-95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2018
94 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2020
92-95 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2018
15.5+ points - Matthew Jukes - April 2018
17/20 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2018
93 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2018
94 points - Vert de Vin - October 2019
16.5 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - July 2020
16 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - September 2020

Reviews *"Refined and focused, with a core of gently mulled plum and dark cherry fruit flavors, laced with rooibos tea, incense and red licorice notes. Shows a light bramble hint through the finish. Stylish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2022 through 2035. Tasted twice, with consistent notes. 3,000 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Lovely blackberry and boysenberry puree flavors glide through, with suave toast, a pretty graphite note and a finely polished feel overall."
- JM, Wine Spectator

"Deep garnet-purple in color, the 2017 Larcis Ducasse (a blend of 92% Merlot and 8% Cabernet Franc) has a very enticing nose of kirsch, warm blackberries, baked plums, and wild blueberries with hints of pencil lead, tar, tilled soil, and forest floor. Medium-bodied, the palate is tightly knit with great poise and subtlety, offering bright, energetic fruit and loads of mineral sparks, finishing with great length. Drink: 2021-2039."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The 2017 Larcis Ducasse is deep garnet-purple colored with a bombastic, gregarious nose of preserved plums, baked blackberries, and mocha with hints of sautéed herbs, pencil lead and chargrilled meats plus a waft of yeast extract. The palate is big, rich, and full-bodied with a very firm frame of chewy tannins and lashings of oak joining with opulent fruit, finishing long."
- LPB, Wine Advocate

"This is a wine that is showing lots of structure with tightly wound tannins that spin through the center palate. Full-bodied, intense, and beautiful. Pure and real. Drink after 2025."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

Reviews *"A very pretty and structured red with blackberries, blueberries, and hints of limestone character. Medium to full body, solid tannins, and a real freshness underneath. Long and flavorful."*
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"At this stage, this wine is muted, but its future and structure are all in place. As it opens, it will reveal smoky fruits, rich tannins, impressive concentration, and a core of black-plum and berry flavors. This will take time, so drink the wine from 2024."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"This wine is fruity, soft, and rounded. With attractive acidity and some firm tannins in the background, it has enough structure to allow it to age. The core of the wine is dry with a ripe surround. Drink from 2023."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"Deep crimson. Lifted and lots of red fruit, relatively light but silky and fresh. Falls away a little on the finish with a slight lack of fruit depth and follow through.
Drink 2022-2028."*
- JH, JancisRobinson.com

"This is an excellent wine, tasted both here in London and also in Bordeaux during a vertical of the estate. A mouthwatering salinity is clear through mid-palate and on the finish, drawing out the length of the wine, and throughout there is a seductive push and pull between austere minerality and powerfully fleshy black fruits. This is worth taking notice of. Drinking Window 2024 – 2040."
- GH, Decanter.com

"Grilled oak aromas, with blackberry fruit that struggles to make itself heard, although it does achieve a feeling of richness in the mouth. There is unquestionable impact through the palate, but it sits a little heavily on the finish. Despite this, they have maintained their signature style and deliver a wine of personality."
- JA, Decanter.com

"Stony, mineral-driven red plums and cherries are all over the place. Concentrated, fresh, complex, and fresh, give this a decade or so, allowing everything to come together, gaining complexities, nuances, and softness."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Flowers, crushed rocks, and ripe, deep red fruits are found in abundance here. With silky textures, sweet maroon berries, earth, licorice and salty tannins, the wine offers concentration of flavor with cut and definition. The mineral character is profound in this vintage, therefore give it at least a decade to develop before popping a cork."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"The 2017 Larcis Ducasse was picked from 18 September until 2 October. It has a very well-defined bouquet with tightly wound black cherries, raspberry, and bilberry fruit, touches of iodine developing in the glass, comparatively intense for a 2017 vintage. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannins, fine acidity, but just missing that "spark" that would elevate it higher. It has fine density and a gentle grip with touches of brown spice and mint towards the finish. It closes in a rather "serious" fashion with moderate length. Tasted at the Larcis Ducasse vertical in Bordeaux."
- NM, Vinous

"The 2017 Larcis-Ducasse was cropped at 34hl/ha from 18 to 29 September for the Merlot and 29 September to 2 October for the Cabernet Franc. It has a very high-toned, iodine-tinged bouquet that just lacks the usual harmony, and certainly the cohesion that I discerned apropos the 2015 and 2016 vintages at this early stage. The palate is underpinned by fine tannin and here demonstrates much more harmony than the aromatics. The black fruit is flecked with black pepper and subtle fennel notes, the tannins are quite fine, and the finish is much more linear and stricter than recent vintages. It is a more classically styled Larcis-Ducasse this year, but it should age well. I expect it will land towards the upper end of my banded score."
- NM, Vinous

Reviews

"The 2017 Larcis Ducasse is just as compelling from bottle as it was from barrel. Pliant and deep, with terrific fruit purity, Larcis possesses striking fruit purity and tons of resonance. Red cherry, blood orange, pomegranate, mint, spice, licorice, and mocha infuse the 2017 with striking complexity as well as nuance. Readers will have a hard time keeping their hands off this gem. Larcis is never one of the most obvious wines in Saint-Émilion, but it is often among the most regal. Best of all, Larcis remains one of the best values anywhere in the world."

- AG, Vinous

"The 2017 Larcis Ducasse is a rich, sensual wine, with softer contours and more plushness than is typically the case, part of which is attributable to the vintage and part of which is the result of gentler winemaking. Dark red cherry and plum fruit is nicely pushed forward in this succulent, racy Saint-Émilion. Mocha, licorice, and menthol wrap around the juicy, pliant finish. The 2017 is an especially succulent, racy Larcis. It has been consistently brilliant on the four occasions I have tasted it so far."

- AG, Vinous

"I always love this wine and the 2017 Chateau Larcis Ducasse is no exception. Offering up a complex bouquet of spiced red and black fruits, white truffle, smoked game, and hints of underbrush, it hits the palate with medium to full-bodied richness, nicely integrated acidity, and present yet ripe, polished tannins as well as subtle background oak. It's not a blockbuster like the 2015 and 2016 but has a terrific sense of minerality, flawless balance, and a great finish. Give bottles 4-5 years of bottle age and enjoy over the following 15-20 years or so. The blend is 92% Merlot and 8% Cabernet Franc and was brought up in 60% new barrels."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"Blueberries, blackberries, violets, licorice, and ample crushed rock notes all emerge from this medium-bodied, tight, firm 2017 Larcis Ducasse, which comes from a magical terroir not far from Pavié. It doesn't have the density or depth of the 2015 or 2012, yet has beautiful purity of fruit, ripe tannins, and considerable elegance and purity. I suspect it will put on weight with time in barrel and evolve similarly to the 2008. The 2017 is 92% Merlot and 8% Cabernet Franc harvested from the 18th of September to the 2nd of October. 3,000 cases produced."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"I am not a fan of this wine simply because the fruit is too grubby and boggy, and it lacks clarity. Add to this a very heavy-handed approach to the oak and it is all too much. I have tasted it a few times and this note has no upside, sadly."

- Matthew Jukes

"Deep dark ruby, purple reflections, faint brightening on the rim. Attractive bouquet with cherry fruit, floral notes and delicate blackberry and orange zest. Juicy, elegant, and balanced with pleasant fruit sweetness, fine acidity, mineral and long. Promising ageing potential."

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

"The nose is aromatic, elegant, racy and offers a beautiful finesse of the grain and a fine intensity. It reveals notes of blackberry, coffee and small notes of small blue fruits associated with touches of strawberry as well as very fine hints of flowers, toasted almond, and a subtle hint of spices. The palate is fruity, fresh, mineral, elegant and offers tension and an acidulous frame. On the palate this wine expresses notes juicy/fresh blackberry, small juicy/fresh blue fruits and small notes of juicy/fresh raspberry associated with a subtle hint of crunchy cherry, violet as well as very discreet hints of cornflower, tonka bean and spices. Tannins are fine and very discreetly tight. Good length. Good persistence on hints of bitter of chocolate/coffee."

- Vert de Vin
