

# Château Les Gravières 2018

CSPC# 847784

750mlx6

13.0% alc./vol.

<b>Grape Variety</b>	100% Merlot
<b>Appellation</b>	St. Emilion
<b>Classification</b>	Grand Cru Classé
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.denis-barraud.com/en/gravieres-saint-emilion.htm">https://www.denis-barraud.com/en/gravieres-saint-emilion.htm</a>
<b>General Info</b>	<p>The estate has been family owned since it was first created at the end of the 19th Century. My grandfather, Pierre-Henri Descrambe enlarged it and he passed on to me his love for the vine. I have been in charge since 1971.</p> <p>The estate now consists of 36 hectares (89 acres):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 7 (17 acres) of these have the appellation Saint-Emilion, where excellent terroir and low yield give complex dense wines with very gentle tannins:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Saint-Emilion Haut-Renaissance</li><li>Saint-Emilion grand cru Château Les Gravières</li><li>Saint-Emilion grand cru Lysolence</li></ul></li><li>- The remaining 29 hectares (72 acres) have the appellation Bordeaux, where an excellent terroir near St Emilion gives us wines of great finesse: Bordeaux De Lyne, Bordeaux Château de la Cour d'Argent, and Bordeaux Clairet De Lyne.</li></ul>
<b>Winemakers</b>	Franck Descudé and Denis Barraud
<b>Vintage</b>	<p>2018 Saint Emilion was not an easy vintage for producers. The winter months were easy, but the spring is one of the wettest in history. Depending on where you located in St. Emilion, during the initial 6 months of the year, between 550 mm to 600 mm (21"-24") of rain soaked your soils. This is more than the normal amount of rain the region experiences in a year!</p> <p>From there growers fended off violent attacks of mildew, which struck fast and furious. 2018 Saint Emilion was saved by the hottest, driest, sunniest vintage conditions since 2003. Barely any rain fell from July to harvest.</p> <p>Picking took place under warm, sunny and dry conditions. On average, production was down 10-20% for many vineyards. Conditions were so good between late September and mid October; vigneron were able to pick at their chosen level of maturity. Harvesting took place from mid September to mid October.</p>
<b>Vineyards</b>	<p>Terroir 4.5 Ha (11 acres) in the communes of St Sulpice de Faleyrens and St Laurent des Combes. Sandy gravel, deep gravels, cool ferriferous sub-soil. Average vine age 38 to 45 years, planting density 5500 plants/Ha. Vineyards grassed and drained.</p>
<b>Harvest</b>	<p>De-leafing and green harvesting in June and August, manual removal of spurs, soil improvement using organic materials exclusively. Manual harvesting with rigorous selection on tables.</p>
<b>Vinification/ Maturation</b>	<p>Fermentation in thermostatically controlled stainless-steel vats, cold maceration at 6° for 8-10 days before fermentation, long (&gt;30 days) vat fermentation, <i>déléstage</i> (the juice is removed and poured back over the cap to moisten and break it up) and <i>pigeage</i> (the cap is forced into the juice), malolactic fermentation in new barrels. Aging on lees. Aging in 100% new barrels for 16 months.</p>
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	<p>The 2018 Gravières is impressive in the vintage. Rich yet saline and balanced, there are fine tannins and impressive length for a wine of this price. Likely a smart buy. The nose opens slowly to reveals minerality and fruit. Notes of graphite, blackberries, and cocoa. Creamy and delicious attack. The wine has body and is endowed with compact tannins which ensure fullness and potential of the wine. Persistent fruity finish. A great success. 2023-2038.</p>
<b>Serve with</b>	<p>Best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. It is also good when matched with Asian dishes, rich fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.</p>
<b>Production</b>	2,420 cases made.
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink now through 2038



**Scores/Awards** **88 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2021  
**94-96 points** - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019  
**91-92 points** - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019  
**94 points** - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019  
**93 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - March 2021  
**91-94 points** - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2019  
**92+ points** - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2021  
**92-94 points** - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2019  
**88 points** - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - March 2019

**Reviews** *"Warmed plum and black currant preserve notes form the core in this offering, with ample toasted cedar, warm earth and tobacco notes framing it. The tobacco edge asserts itself steadily through the finish, giving it an old school feel. Drink now through 2026. 2,420 cases made."*  
- JM, Wine Spectator

*"Made from 100% Merlot, the 2018 Les Gravières is deep garnet-purple and rocks up with gregarious blueberry pie, chocolate-covered cherries and plum preserves scents with nuances of violets, spice cake and mocha. Big, full and decadently fruited, it has a firm frame of super ripe, grainy tannins and wonderful freshness, finishing very long and layered."*  
- LPB, Wine Advocate

*"A solid 2018 with dark-berry, dark-chocolate and cedar character. Medium to full body. Flavorful finish. Barrel Sample: 91-92."*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"Rich, fruity, opulent and sensuous, this supple textured gem pops with espresso, dark fruits, chocolate, licorice and smoke. The wine is full-bodied, velvety, and rich with layers of fruits on the finish. If you can wait 5 years or so, this will be an even better wine."*  
JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*"The 2018 Les Gravières is every bit as impressive as it was from barrel. Graphite, dried herbs, licorice, lavender, and purple/black fruits are all laced together. The 2018 has shut down quite a bit after bottling. Today the acids and tannins are quite present. That won't be an issue in time, but it does mean readers need to be patient."*  
- AG, Vinous

*"A sleeper in this vintage, the 2018 Les Gravières (100% Merlot) is a very pretty and expressive Saint-Émilion. Freshly cut flowers, rose petal, mint and sweet red berry fruit are beautifully lifted in this very understated Saint-Émilion. Medium in body, refined and supremely gracious, the 2018 has a lot to offer. This is such a gorgeous wine."*  
- AG, Vinous

*"A well oaked, rich, concentrated Saint-Emilion, the 2018 Château Les Gravières offers up a dense purple/plum color as well as powerful notes of blackcurrants, chocolate, graphite, chalky minerality, and earth. It packs full-bodied richness, building tannins, no hard edges, and a great finish. Based on 100% Merlot, this hedonistic dream will benefit from 2-4 years of bottle age and shine for over a decade. Rating: 92+."*  
- JD, JebDunnuck.com

*"This estate hit a home run in the vintage. Their 2018 Château Les Gravières (100% Merlot) reveals a saturated purple color as well as a massive bouquet of crème de cassis, black raspberries, lead pencil shavings, and flowery incense. Inky colored, full-bodied, incredibly pure, and layered on the palate, it has polished tannins and delivers a rare mix of elegance and hedonism. It's a serious Merlot to drink over the coming 15 years, if not longer. Tasted twice."*  
- JD, JebDunnuck.com

---