

Château Pavie 2020

CSPC# 831605

750mlx3

14.82% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

50% Merlot, 34% Cabernet Franc, 16% Cabernet Sauvignon

Appellation

St. Emilion

Classification

1st Grand Cru Classé A

Website

<http://www.vignoblesperse.com/fr/>

General Info

The slopes of Chateau Pavie and Ausone were first planted by the ancient Romans in the fourth century. However, Chateau Pavie did not become famous as a Bordeaux wine producer until almost two thousand years later. Chateau Pavie was famous by the mid-19th century. At the time, the Robert Parker of the day was the Bordeaux bible published by Cocks and Féret's "Bordeaux et ses vins" written in 1850, the first edition was already high on the wines from Pavie as they named it one of the First classed growths in St. Emilion.

A portion of Chateau Pavie was sold off in 1885 to the well known, Bordeaux wine negociant Ferdinand Bouffard. It was Bouffard's desire to increase the size of the vineyards. In time, he managed to put together a 50-hectare vineyard with an annual production that ranged from 12,500 to 15,000 cases per year. That made Chateau Pavie one of the largest estates in the Right Bank!

By the late 1800's, Pavie and Pavie Decesse were fully separate estates. Close to the same time, the Macquin family was also busy purchasing parcels of Bordeaux vineyards too. Those purchases led to the creation of Chateau Pavie Macquin. Jumping ahead to the next century and the start of the First World War, Ferdinand Bouffard sold Chateau Pavie to Albert Porte who eventually sold to the Valette family. The Valette's were well known Bordeaux wine négociants from Paris. If the name sounds familiar, that's because Christine Valette is the owner of Chateau Troplong Mondot. Chateau Pavie was classified as Premier Grand Cru Classé "B" while under the Valette family's management in 1954. That changed in 2012 with the new Classification of St. Emilion as Chateau Pavie was elevated to Premier Grand Cru Classé A!

In 1998, Gerard Perse, who already owned Chateau Monbousquet purchased Chateau Pavie. Chateau Pavie experienced a rebirth thanks to the drive and the spare no expense attitude of Perse. In 2002 Gerard Perse expanded the vineyards of Chateau Pavie by 2.5 hectares when the vines of Chateau La Clusiere vines were incorporated into Chateau Pavie.

This was allowed to take place because of the similarity of terroirs which led the INAO. In 2002 to authorize the integration (or, perhaps the reintegration) of Chateau La Clusiere into the vineyard of Pavie. At the same time, a small part of the Pavie Decesse vineyards were also merged into Château Pavie. This reduced Pavie Decesse's area from 9.5 hectares to its current 3.5-hectare size, while increasing the vineyards of Chateau Pavie.

Winemaker

Michel Rolland is their consultant

Vintage

2020 was a highly contrasted vintage that got off to a difficult start. The year began with an exceptionally rainy winter followed by a very mild spring. In this context, protecting the vines against mildew and managing the soil was a real struggle.

The first miracle appeared in mid-May, with dry and warm conditions during one of the earliest flowerings we have seen, two weeks ahead of schedule. The second miracle was on 19 June when the rain stopped, and the weather turned dry and cool until the beginning of the grape colour-change in mid-July. It is at this point in time that summer settled in for good, with some spells of heat through to mid-August when thunderstorms provided some relief and allowed the Merlot grapes to swell. The later-ripening Cabernets remained the size of blueberries until harvest, and the Merlots will ripe slowly until mid-September. The result was a vintage harvested about ten days early, mostly in sunny conditions. Both the Merlot and Cabernet were tannic, colourful and perfectly balanced. The grapes quickly expressed an intense aromatic expression in the vats.



Vineyards	The 42-hectare St. Emilion vineyard of Chateau Pavie is truly three unique and different terroirs. Each also has its own microclimate and soils corresponding to the Saint Emilion limestone "plateau", located around 85 metres up from the Dordogne, and composed of clay-limestone soil on top of chalk with marine fossils. Soils corresponding to the "mid-hillside" land 55 metres up from the Dordogne, composed of a brown clay-limestone soil with a fine texture. Many parcels of land have been replanted and the vine-training system raised to increase the leaf surface. The terroir of Pavie does not promote early-ripening. In fact, Chateau Pavie is often one of the last St. Emilion estates to finish harvesting. Pruning down to 6 buds for the old vines and to 2 buds for the young vines. Thinning, leaf-stripping, grapes picked and sorted
Vineyards	by hand. Gerard Perse replanted much of the Chateau Pavie vineyards in 1998. Today, the vineyard is planted to 60% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon.
Harvest	The harvest took place from September 21 - September 30
Vinification/ Maturation	For the vinification of Chateau Pavie, after harvesting sorted in the vineyards and again using optical sorting, the whole berries are moved by conveyor belt to oak tanks for crushing by gravity. The wine is vinified in 20, temperature controlled, wood vats. Pre-fermentation cold maceration lasts for nine days at 8 degrees Celsius. This is followed by a 36-day maceration. Malolactic fermentation takes place in barrels. The wine of Chateau Pavie is aged in 50% new, 50% 1-yr old, French oak barrels for 18 to months. The amount of new oak and time in the barrel will vary, depending on the characteristics of each Bordeaux vintage.
Tasting Notes	Textually, a very complex feeling composition. It has abundant fresh fruits (a combination of red and black berries) filling in its grandly -built structure. Tannins are perfectly ripe and smooth, with vibrant lingering acidity. Some vivid fruit sensations in the middle palate, extending to a very long and linear finish.
Serve with	Chateau Pavie is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Chateau Pavie is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
Production	4,800 cases made.
Cellaring	Drink 2024-2060
Scores/Awards	<p>95 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2023</p> <p>97-99 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - May 2021</p> <p>99 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - March 2023</p> <p>100 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2023</p> <p>99-100 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2021</p> <p>94-96 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2021</p> <p>18 points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - April 2021</p> <p>97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - May 2021</p> <p>99 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2023</p> <p>98-100 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2021</p> <p>95 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2021</p> <p>95-97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2021</p> <p>97-99 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2021</p> <p>100 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2023</p> <p>96-98 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - May 2021</p> <p>95-97 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2021</p> <p>100 points - Vert de Vin - May 2021</p> <p>98 points - Andreas Larsson, Tasted - May 2021</p> <p>93-94 points - Michael Schuster, The World of Fine Wine - May 2021</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"Very expressive, with a lovely violet and cassis set of aromas and flavors that spill forth, though this keeps focus and form, as subtle minerality and a very fine-grained structure allows this to flow gracefully through the finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2028 through 2040. 4,800 cases made."</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Composed of 50% Merlot, 34% Cabernet Franc and 16% Cabernet Sauvignon, the 2020 Pavie weighs in with an alcohol of 14.82% and a pH of 3.61. It is aging in French oak barriques, 75% new. Opaque purple-black colored, notes of plum pudding, blueberry pie and dark chocolate-covered cherries charge out of the gate, followed closely by hints of eucalyptus, star anise, unsmoked cigars, and fertile loam with a hint of cedar chest. The full-bodied palate is built like a brick house, offering very firm yet wonderfully ripe, velvety tannins and seamless freshness to support the densely laden, muscular black and blue fruits, finishing very long and with loads of mineral-laced layers. As hedonic as it is cerebral this year, it is a beautiful paradox."</i></p> <p>- LPB, Wine Advocate</p>

Reviews *"A blend of 50% Merlot, 34% Cabernet Franc, and 16% Cabernet Sauvignon, the 2020 Pavie has a deep garnet-purple color. After a swirl or two, the nose erupts with powerful notions of baked plums and blueberry preserves, giving way to fragrant notes of molten licorice, lilacs, crushed rocks, and chocolate box, with just a touch of black olives. The medium to full-bodied palate is dense and muscular, charged with amazing tension and textured with super fine-grained tannins, finishing very long with multi-layered exotic spices, mineral and floral notes. Shimmery!"*
- LPB, Wine Independent

"This opens up on your palate like a butterfly. It takes your breath away. Purity of blackberry, raspberry, and black cherry. Lavender. Very, very impressive. Full and chewy with tight and polished tannins that go on and on. Energetic and structured. Crisp and vivid. Superb finish. Better after 2029 but a joy to taste."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"The aromas are already exceptional, showing crushed-stone, limestone and salt character to the dark fruit and bark. It's full-bodied, yet agile. Floats on the palate, then kicks in with loads of ultra fine tannins. The intensity and verve of this wine promises true greatness."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Big, bold, and rich with solid black fruits and dense tannins that are definitely not shy. This solid wine is packed with structure. The fruit and freshness of the year are almost overwhelmed by the wine's richness. The wine is redeemed by the perfumed, balanced finish. Barrel Sample: 94–96."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"50% Merlot, 34% Cabernet Franc, 16% Cabernet Sauvignon. Cask sample. Power and elegance combined. Deep purple-black colour. Intensity and complexity on the nose with dark fruit, cassis, mint, and floral notes. Beautifully poised on the palate with smooth attack and persistent fruit and freshness. Powerful tannic frame but tannins really fine and no extraction. Long, persistent finish. Absolute precision. More than highlights the change in style. One of the best yet. (JL) 14.8%
Drink 2030 – 2050."*
- JL, JancisRobinson.com

"Smooth from the get-go, still tense as you'd expect with a straight backbone, but the creamy texture is lovely with a beautiful balancing acidity and suaveness overall. More calm and quiet than I was expecting, certainly not shouting but with clear depth and length to the chocolate, blackcurrant, liquorice, and graphite. Detailed and nuanced, not trying too hard with energy and plumpness yet retaining a serious, savouriness that brings you back to Pavie and to the terroir with clear minerality in the lick of wet stone on the finish. Well-constructed with care. "
- GH, Decanter.com

"The Cabernets dominate the blend on the aromatics, and you can really see they are moving the needle on the architecture and sculpting of this wine. A ton of concentration on the nose and upfront, but it is well balanced by damson and blackberry, and has a sense of energy, uplift and clear minerality. This shows the limestone terroir in a way that, with the best will in the world, the more concentrated style of Pavie just didn't do. There is density and glamour, with layers of black chocolate, graphite, and liquorice. It is pretty disarming overall and will age extremely well."
- JA, Decanter.com

"With a hue so dark, it is impossible to see through, the wine grabs your senses with its aromatic profile consisting of flowers, black plums, blackberries, black cherries, crushed rocks, licorice, smoke, blue fruits, espresso, mocha, and oceanic fragrances. The wine is full-bodied, concentrated, mouth-coating and palate-staining, as well as vibrant, pure, and intense. The practically seamless, opulent finish with its layers of sensuous, salty fruits stick with you for close to 60 seconds. This is one of the great vintages of Pavie! Drink from 2026-2060."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews

“Aphotic ink with purple accents in color, the intense sensation of crushed rocks and stones, flowers, licorice, truffle, wet forest, smoke, plums, black and blue fruits with oceanic smells captivate your interest. Full-bodied, concentrated, lush and palate-staining, with all its depth of flavor, the wine remains light on its feet. The fruit coats your palate with layers of opulent, sensuous, salty fruits that hold on to you for at least 60 seconds. Leave this in the cellar for 12-15 years and enjoy the thrills for the next 3 decades. The wine blends 50% Merlot, 34% Cabernet Franc and 16% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14.82% ABV pH 3.61. Harvesting took place September 21 - September 30. Yields were low at 31 hectoliters per hectare.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The 2020 Pavié was picked September 21–30 at 31hl/ha and matured in 75% new oak, the rest one year old. It continues to see greater emphasis on Cabernets – 34% Franc and 16% Sauvignon, the Merlot reduced to half the blend. This gradual rejigging of the blend is borne out on the nose, which features hints of damp loamy soil and bell pepper infusing vivid blackberry and wild strawberry fruit, becoming more and more citrusy with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with sautéed tannins that gently grip. Powerful, but the 14.82° alcohol is neatly disguised on the finish (at least in tasting measure) with fine delineation. Cohesive and focused. I would like to see a little more personality develop during élevage, but this remains an impressive Saint-Émilion and a Pavié with a long future ahead. Drink: 2030 – 2060.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2020 Pavié is very clearly one of the wines of the year. Rich, inky and wonderfully vibrant, it pulses with energy from start to finish. All the elements are well balanced. Soaring Cabernet Franc aromatics lead into a core of finely knit yet deep fruit in a wine that feels endless. Harvest for the reds started on September 17, paused briefly during some rain on the 25th and 26th, and then wrapped up by the end of the month. The blend is 50% Merlot, 34% Cabernet Franc and 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, so more Cabernets than in the past, the result of a large replanting program that began in the early 2000s. A real head-turner. Magnificent!”

- AG, Vinous

“Pure perfection in red wine, the 2020 Château Pavié checks in as 50% Merlot, 34% Cabernet Franc and the rest Cabernet Sauvignon, all raised in 75% new French oak. Absolutely incredible in every way, it has a sensational bouquet of crème de cassis, smoked tobacco, chocolaty oak, graphite, white truffle, and hints of flowers. Pure, full-bodied, and concentrated, with perfect integration of its fruit, oak, and tannins, it's one of those wines that needs to be tasted to be believed. Hats off to the Perse team for not following trends and for continuing to make a truly Grand Vin that offers a rare mix of power and elegance. Give bottles just 4-5 years and enjoy over the following three decades.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“A wine that's going to flirt with perfection, the 2020 Château Pavié is another magical wine from the genius of Gerard Perse and is 50% Merlot, 34% Cabernet Franc, and 16% Cabernet Sauvignon, brought up in 75% new French oak. The style here has unquestionably shifted from the blockbuster style of the 2000, 2005, 2009, and 2010 to a more elegant, refined style today that still brings plenty of fruit yet certainly stays more focused and precise. Is the new style better? I'm not sure, and there are certainly times I miss the opulence and decadence of the old style. Nevertheless, the wines today are magical Saint-Émilion that still show a rare mix of power and elegance. The 2020 is full-bodied and beautifully concentrated on the palate, offering a mouthful of cassis, black cherry, and mulberry fruits as well as a liqueur of rocks-like minerality, leafy herbs, and truffly earth. It doesn't lack structure and has silky, polished tannins and flawless balance. Give bottles at least 7-8 years in the cellar and enjoy over the following 3+ decades.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Deep ruby colour with opaque core, purple reflections. Fine oak spice, dark forest berries, fresh cherries, a hint of liquorice, nuances of tangerine zest, multi-faceted bouquet. On the palate complex, juicy, ripe plums, energetic tannins, chocolatey touch on the finish, dense and lasting, spicy nuances, a powerful food wine with length and mineral finish.”

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

Reviews

“The nose is elegant and offers power (in finesse), depth, (in control/ all in juiciness), a certain subtlety in its power, a very nice multi-layer side as well as a nice racy grain. A very nice, controlled power. It reveals notes of bright blackberry, small bright blue berries, small notes of cassis associated with touches of bright redcurrant, hints of cornflower, Badiane, lily as well as fine hints of varietal (local biotope), spices, a discreet hint of menthol, mocha, and a discreet hint of Cuban pepper. The mouth is fruity, balanced, racy and offers juiciness, a good definition, gourmandize, a nice suavity, a nice finesse of the grain, precision, a certain tension, a very nice freshness, a nice deepness. The wine expresses notes of juicy/pulpy blackberry, bright cassis, small notes of juicy/pulpy cherry associated with touches of caramelization, blond tabaco, a discreet hint of nearly sappy, a subtle hint of near dried orange zests and a discreet hint of pepper. The tannins are precis, elegant, racy, structured and offer a small softness. a very nice length and persistence in the mouth. Presence of an imperceptible hint of coffee (in the background). A nice wine that will reveal the potential, but one has to have patience for 10/15 years.”

- Vert de Vin

“Fine nuance and layers, modest oak and a great wealth of ripe dark fruit, fine spices, tobacco and a very concentrated palate with bright freshness, copious layers of super refined tannin, mouth coating and extremely persistent with abundant digest dark fruit and a tremendously long, powerful finish.”

- AL, Tasted.com

“Inky, dense blackberry and vanilla; rich, full, vital in acidity, firm tannin; the typical core finesse, 1er cru complexity and length within the still slightly wood-dry tannins, but pure and linear and fine and, as always, you taste the vineyard’s finesse at the heart of the firm frame; here is a fine rich fruit core, with considerable scope, plenty of long-term promise, and fine, scented length. Still clinging to the old “house style” texture a bit, meaning that, at a similar quality level, it doesn’t have the sheer class of the Clos Fourtet, for example. 2032–50+.”

- MS, The World of Fine Wine
