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## Château de Valandraud 2009

CSPC# 867460

750mlx6

15.0% alc./vol.

<b>Grape Variety</b>	85% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc
<b>Appellation</b>	St. Emilion
<b>Classification</b>	Promoted 1st Grand Cru Classé B in 2012
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.thunevin.com/chateau-valandraud">https://www.thunevin.com/chateau-valandraud</a>
<b>General Info</b>	<p>In 1989, Jean-Luc Thunevin and his wife Murielle bought a tiny 1.5-acre plot in Saint-Émilion near Châteaux Pavie-Macquin, Ausone, and La Clotte. Without the capital to build a full winery, a nearby garage was used...</p> <p>The resulting wine, Château de Valandraud, was first released in 1991 (the name "Valandraud" is an amalgam of "Vallon de Fongaban" –where its vines grow– and "Andraud" – Murielle's maiden name). By 1995, it was rated 95 by Robert Parker. Thus, was born the "garage wine" movement, so influential in the 1990s, and earning Thunevin the nickname of "Bad Boy".</p>
<b>Winemaker</b>	Jean-Luc Thunevin and Murielle Andraud
<b>Vintage</b>	<p>The conditions for the 2009 vintage were the driest in ten years, though the growing season started with a very wet and cool spring, delaying the bud break. On 13 May, the Saint-Émilion vineyards were battered by a hailstorm, most notably the plateau, which resulted in a partial loss of the harvest. Throughout the 2009 vegetation cycle, the water balance was largely in deficit, particularly from 15 June to mid-September. From this point of view, the vintage is very similar to that of 2000, but with lower yields. The onset of vine water stress was later than in 2005. The earliness of the storm and the quick reactions of the château's team made it possible to repair the damage quickly and with the best possible outcome in the circumstances. These superb climatic conditions were conducive to the formation of a rich vein of tannin, with late onset of technological and aromatic ripeness. The powerful presence of anthocyanins and above all the very low level of malic acid are similarly characteristic of this vintage. The rains in mid-September gave fresh momentum to the rather slow ripening of the grapes, while the magnificent late-season weather provided ideal harvesting conditions. During the summer of 2009, the high quality of the clay and limestone slopes of Faugères afforded a good level of water recovery for the vines, without any pronounced stress or phenol blocking. Moreover, with the yield limited by the hailstorm in May, the fruit that survived was endowed with even greater richness.</p>
<b>Vineyards</b>	<p>While Valandraud started off as a small St. Emilion property, over the years, Jean Luc and Murielle have increased holdings due to continued purchases of vineyard land. Today, the property is 10 hectares. The vines are located in various areas in St. Emilion. Valandraud produces red and white wine. For the red wine, the terroir varies, but the best soils consist of clay and limestone. At Valandraud, they are one of the few St. Emilion estates to include some plantings of all five, Bordeaux grape varieties; Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec and Carmenère. For the white wines, they have plantings of Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon and Sauvignon Gris.</p> <p>In all, Valandraud is produced from 10 hectares of vines. 8 hectares are devoted to plantings for the red varieties. the vineyards are planted to 70 % Merlot, 20% Cabernets Franc, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon and small portions of Malbec and Carmenère. 2 hectares are devoted to the production of white wine, which is split evenly between Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon, and Sauvignon Gris.</p>
<b>Harvest</b>	14 Oct. -> 20 Oct.
<b>Vinification/ Maturation</b>	A combination of traditional and modern techniques is used at every step of the production: double Guyot pruning, de-suckering, thinning, green harvesting... The harvest is done manually and lasts only a few days. A first grape sorting is done directly in the vineyard in order to pick only the ripest bunches. Once brought to the



<b>Vinification/ Maturation</b>	“organic” spirited cellar of Mr. Thunevin, the grapes are sorted one more time, before being de-stemmed. The following step consists in bursting the grapes. The very rich and pure must produce is run into the fermenting vats (wood, stainless steel or concrete). The winemaking of Château Valandraud takes place with regular pumping over and punching down of the cap. At the end of the alcoholic fermentation, the new Valandraud cuvee is poured into 100% new French oak. Aged 22 months.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	Intense purple red colour with garnet red hue. Smoky nose, ripe berries, and hints of mild spices. On the palate sweet fruit, well made with good balance and depth. Smooth tannins and fine acidity.
<b>Serve with</b>	Valandraud is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Valandraud is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.
<b>Production</b>	1,080 cases made. (13,000 bottles)
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2019-2040
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>94 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2012</p> <p><b>93-96 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - June 2010</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2019</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #229 - February 2017</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #0713 - January 2013</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #199 - March 2012</p> <p><b>95-98 points</b> - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #188 - April 2010</p> <p><b>94-96 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #0510 - March 2010</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2012</p> <p><b>93-96 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2010</p> <p><b>94 points/Cellar Selection</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - January 2013</p> <p><b>17 points</b> - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - February 2019</p> <p><b>17.5 points</b> - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2010</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - September 2019</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2017</p> <p><b>97 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2013</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - July 2011</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - June 2010</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2010</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Neal Martin, Vinous - March 2019</p> <p><b>96 points</b> - Jeb Dunnuck MW - November 2020</p> <p><b>95 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2012</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - Falstaff Magazine - April 2010</p> <p><b>17 points</b> - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2014</p> <p><b>18.5 points</b> - Bettane &amp; Desseauve (score only) - February 2012</p> <p><b>17 points</b> - Vinum Wine Magazine - February 2012</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>“Racy and beautifully defined, with a sleek graphite frame to the mouthwatering loganberry, blackberry and linzer torte flavors. Shows lots of toasted spice on the finish, but is well-integrated, with a gorgeous mouthfeel. This has ample fruit but remains very suave. Best from 2013 through 2025. 1,080 cases made.”</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>“What a nose to this young red, showing crushed blueberry and blackberry, with black licorice as well. Full-bodied, with super silky tannins and a racy and beautiful finish. Score Range: 93-96.”</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>“Deep garnet colored, the 2009 Valandraud is truly strutting its stuff right now with a bold, flamboyant nose of Black Forest cake, molten licorice, blackberry preserves and baked plums plus touches of kirsch, candied violets, star anise, unsmoked cigars, incense and a compelling waft of smoked meats. Full-bodied, the palate is a pedal-to-the-metal, fruit-n-spice blockbuster with a full-on sexy texture of beautifully plush, rounded tannins and tons of freshness to lift the very long, very perfumed finish. (LPB)”</i></p> <p>- LPB, Wine Advocate</p>

## Reviews

*"Tasted blind at the Valandraud vertical at the property, the 2009 Valandraud is a blend of 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc matured in 100% new oak for 22 months. It has a more opulent, ravishing, Rubenesque bouquet than the outstanding 2008 Valandraud (as you would expect): layers of viscous black cherry and raspberry fruit, orange pith, over-ripe Satsumas, and crushed violet. The palate is medium-bodied with sweet tannin and plenty of luscious ripe red and black fruit. The alcohol seems nicely contained with a slightly cloying blueberry and raspberry finish that leaves a tang of licorice on the aftertaste. Decadent but irresistible. Tasted December 2016.*  
- NM, Wine Advocate

*"Served blind at the Southwold 2009 tasting. The Valandraud '09 has a charming, pure Merlot bouquet with luscious scents of kirsch, balsamic, touches of sage and glycerin. The palate is medium-bodied with very fine tannins. It is utterly composed with seamless integrated oak and a harmonious finish that exudes finesse and charm. Stunning – although the Virginie runs its big brother damn close. Tasted January 2013."*  
- NM, Wine Advocate

*"An inky/purple wine with an extraordinary nose of black raspberries, blueberries, acacia flowers, licorice and camphor, it is full-bodied, multi-dimensional and layered, with silky tannins, stunning purity, and a finish of 50+ seconds. This is an opulent, sexy, sumptuous style of wine to drink over the next 15 or more years. Kudos to Jean-Luc Thunevin and Murielle! One of the all-time great wines from Jean-Luc Thunevin and his partner Murielle Andraud, the 2009 Valandraud represents 13,000 bottles, with most of it coming from vineyard parcels near the sector of St.-Emilion known as St.-Christophe des Bardes."*  
- RP, Wine Advocate

*"Bad boy Jean-Luc Thunevin has possibly produced the finest Valandraud since his debut vintage in 1992. A blend of 65% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Franc and the rest Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, and a tiny shot of Carmenère, the wine has an opaque purple color and a beautiful nose of spring flowers, creme de cassis, blueberry, charcoal, and a hint of espresso. A seamless, full-bodied mouthfeel, striking purity, a skyscraper-like texture, freshness, and precision make for the most complex and noble, as well as most concentrated and massive Valandraud to date. This wine should drink beautifully for 25 or more years. Kudos to St.-Emilion's patron saint of garage wines.*  
- RP, Wine Advocate

*"Tasted at Ets. Thunevin. Deep, limpid purple colour. It has a dense, ripe, opulent bouquet of black cherries, bilberry, black plum, honey, and violets that spirals from the glass. The palate has a thick, chewy entry, huge weight in the mouth, but there is a counter-balancing citrus freshness, with fresh apricot and star fruit suffused into the pure red-berry fruit, a hint of liquorice curled like a snake around the finish. Very dense to the point of being impenetrable at the moment but at least there is no astringency on the finish and despite the opulence, the minerality comes through on the finish. Superb. Tasted March 2010."*  
- NM, Wine Advocate

*"Stunning aromas of black truffles and blueberries, with Valrona milk chocolate undertones. Full body, with a wonderful core of fruit. This just dances on your palate. A wine that makes you smile. Superb. Best Valandraud ever?"*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"What a nose to this young red, showing crushed blueberry and blackberry, with black licorice as well. Full-bodied, with super silky tannins and a racy and beautiful finish."*  
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"Big, floral, ripe and juicy, this epitomizes the richness of the 2009 vintage. It offers firm tannins and generous, forward fruits."*  
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*"Notably fragrant. Attractive salty thread and real energy. Savoury and interesting. Really appetising. Long. Throbs with energy. Super-clean and fresh but far from light. Very long. 17/20 points (JR)"*  
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

## Reviews

*“Very deep crimson. Rich and round and a little tarry on the nose. Very sweet and round and flashy. Dramatic and alive with lots of electricity in the wine. Dry on the finish but not excessively so. Dances a bit and is very lively as well as managing to be quite supple. Just 10% Cabernet Franc, pH 3.5, < 14% apparently. Date tasted 30th March 2010. Drink 2016-2029.”*

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*“The best Valandraud ever. Rich and concentrated but measured. Ripe, fresh, red-berry fruit aromas and flavour. Almost Burgundian in nuance. Palate suave, succulent, harmonious and poised. Remarkable finesse. Potential to age. Drink 2015-2028.”*

- JL, Decanter.com

*“This is so youthful; it is hard to believe it is already a decade old. Over the years, the wine has filled out, softened, and gained in complexity and length. Rich, powerful and loaded with layers of ripe, dark, juicy fruits, licorice and smoke, there is still some oak in the finish that needs to fully integrate. Give it another 3-5 years and the wine will be even better! Quite dark in color, the wine is concentrated, lush and powerful. The nose, with its licorice, flowers, smoke, chocolate, and boysenberry is impossible to ignore. The fruit packs a punch with its volume and intensity. The tannins are ripe, the texture is opulent and on the palate the fruit is dense, deep, and fresh. But it is the decadently textured, full bodied blast of fruit on the palate that knocks this out of the park.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“This is pure bottled sex! With the texture of spun velvet, silky tannins and fruit that gushes its sweet, juicy flavors, this is not a wine of contemplation. It is a wine that offers pure, unbridled pleasure. Concentrated with perfectly ripe, sweet, black and blue fruits, there is the right amount of vibrancy to give it lift and life, keeping it interesting.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“This sexy wine explodes with licorice, espresso, chocolate covered boysenberries, cherry, blueberry and earthy aromas. Pure, opulent and incredibly rich, there is not a hard edge to be found in this decadent tasting experience.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“A flamboyant nose of licorice, black raspberry jam, spice, pepper, chocolate, blueberry, vanilla and cloves introduce the wine. On the palate, this sensuous wine is dense, rich, concentrated, and plush in texture. The wine finishes with layers of licorice, vanilla, and blackberry jam. Tasted within days of bottling, once this wine has settled in, it will probably earn a higher score.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“2009 Valandraud is deep, dark ruby with purple tints. This pungent wine offers aromas of fresh picked flowers, jammy blackberries, licorice, black raspberries, kirsch, coffee, and black cherries. This Valandraud is a richly textured, full-bodied wine concentrated with pure ripe fruit. The long, clean, powerful finish offers freshness, paired with cherry and blackberry flavors. The best Valandraud since the stellar 1995.”*

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“The best Valandraud ever. Rich and concentrated but measured. Ripe, fresh, red-berry fruit aromas and flavour. Almost Burgundian in nuance. Palate suave, succulent, harmonious and poised. Remarkable finesse. Potential to age. Drink 2015-2028.”*

- TimAtkin MW

*“The 2009 Valandraud has a ripe and opulent bouquet with precocious red fruit, fig and rose petals, a little warmth of alcohol blurring the edges and becoming more tarry with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with succulent plush, saturated tannin. This is sleek and modern in style, heady and concentrated with a decadent finish. It conveys a sense of purity.”*

- NM, Vinous

**Reviews** *“Showing beautifully, the 2009 Château Valandraud has shed considerable baby fat and reveals an incredibly classic, balanced, nuanced style today. Textbook notes of blackcurrants, white truffle, lead pencil, balsam wood, and hints of chocolate emerge from the glass. These carry to a full-bodied, concentrated Saint-Emilion with a layered, multi-dimensional texture, sweet tannins, and just a sexy, opulent, undeniably delicious style that's a joy to drink. It's rock star stuff today yet has another 10-15 years of prime drinking, after which I suspect a gradual decline”*

*- Jeb Dunnuck*

*“Fresh red berry nuances, inviting roasted aromas, some cranberries, orange zest. Complex, salty-mineral texture, present, fine tannins, elegant, already very balanced, pleasant extract sweetness, rich in finesse, potential.”*

*- Falstaff Magazine*

*“Alcohol and oak are present, but perfectly integrated, the whole thing is harmonious in its own way, cheerful, excellently made, velvety, full-bodied, and will be great fun for fans of this style in the years to come. So enjoy young!”*

*- Vinum*

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