

Château Valandraud 2019

CSPC# 848134

750mlx6

14.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	90% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Franc, 3% Cabernet Sauvignon
Appellation	St. Emilion
Classification	Promoted 1st Grand Cru Classé B in 2012
Website	http://valandraud.fr/en/
General Info	<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". In 2012, Château Valandraud has been promoted as a 1st classified growth of Saint Emilion. In 2017, Château Valandraud became a full member of Union des Grands Crus de Bordeaux</p>
Winemaker	Eric Talavet. Jean-Luc Thunevin and Murielle Andraud - owners.
Vintage	Winter: very mild. Spring: cool. Summer: exceptionally hot and dry. Autumn: very fine start to the season, some rainfall end September.
Vineyards	<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.</p>
Harvest	Manual harvest. Harvest dates 3-10 October, 2019
Vinification/ Maturation	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 "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 and aged for 24-36 months.
Tasting Notes	The bouquet of Valandraud is well marked by its terroir, through chalky notes, and by its aging with notes of caramel and coffee. Over the minutes the fruit and the freshness gain in expression and take over with aromas of morello cherries, blackcurrant, and mint. The minerality, in a filigree way, does not miss the call through chalk and graphite. On the palate the wine is elegant, creamy, and precise. What serenity and strength contained thanks to a good symbiosis between very fine, perfectly integrated tannins and the freshness of the structure which gives pep and liveliness to the whole palate. Fruity and refreshing finish thanks to the limestone tension. A wine that stands out for its freshness, finesse, and serenity. What a notion of quiet strength!



Serve with	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.
Production	2,900 cases made
Cellaring	Drink 2025-2040
Scores/Awards	<p>95 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 2022</p> <p>96 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022</p> <p>95-97 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - June 2020</p> <p>98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2022</p> <p>97-98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2020</p> <p>98-100 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2020</p> <p>97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - June 2020</p> <p>97 points - Jane Anson, Insidebordeaux.com - January 2022</p> <p>98 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2022</p> <p>95-97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - June 2020</p> <p>97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2022</p> <p>96-98 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - June 2020</p> <p>97+ points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2022</p> <p>95-97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - June 2020</p> <p>99 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2022</p> <p>96-98 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2020</p> <p>95 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - January 2020</p> <p>97-98 points - Yves Beck (score only) - June 2020</p> <p>95 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - June 2020</p> <p>96 points - Terres de Vins (score only) - September 2021</p> <p>96 points - Vert de Vin - April 2020</p> <p>18.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2022</p> <p>95-96 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - July 2020</p>
Reviews	<p><i>“Richly textured, featuring cashmere-like waves of dark plum, cassis and blackberry compote flavors that glide through and are laced with light violet, anise, and black tea notes. The rumble of tannins can be heard on the finish, but for the vintage, this is extremely suave in the end. Merlot, Cabernet Franc, and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2025 through 2040. 2,900 cases made.”</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>“Rich and dramatic, the 2019 Valandraud bursts with aromas of berry fruit, plums, and licorice, framed by a lavish but far from exaggerated application of creamy new oak. Full-bodied, fleshy, and sensual, it's broad and enveloping, its lavish core of fruit framed by ripe, polished tannins and succulent balancing acids. Seamless and integrated despite its ripe, hedonistic style, this has turned out beautifully and has the balance to perform well for at least two decades, even if there's no youthful asperity to preclude near-term enjoyment.”</i></p> <p>- WK, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“Deep purple-black colored, the 2019 Valandraud sings of freshly crushed black plums, warm blackberries, and black cherry coulis with nuances of lavender, cinnamon stick, clove oil and aniseed with a fragrant waft of candied violets. Full-bodied, the palate is both densely laden with concentrated black fruits and wonderfully refreshing, with a firm backbone of velvety tannins, finishing with lingering exotic spice spar.”</i></p> <p>- LPB, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“Vivid and focused with brightness and clarity of fruit. Dried flowers, too. Full-bodied with layers of fine, soft tannins that spread across the palate and show class and refinement. It goes on for minutes. A beautiful bottle. Try after 2027, but so attractive already.”</i></p> <p>- JS, JamesSuckling.com</p> <p><i>“Extremely polished and refined red with structure. It's full-bodied, yet ever so refined and balanced. The tannins are very fine-grained. Chewy, yet energetic and precise. Tight and integrated at the end.”</i></p> <p>- JS, JamesSuckling.com</p>

Reviews *“This is a dense and luscious wine, the best yet from this estate. Its great structure and tannins show a style that is powerful but all within. This is a magnificent vintage from this Premier Grand Cru Classé estate, and fully deserves to be aged for many years.”*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“Right from the first nose you get deep, richly textured plum fruit, with nuances of chocolate shavings and baked earth. Pencil lead through the mid palate combines the restrained tug of limestone with the confidence of a wine that knows how to make an impression. This is great stuff, really well controlled, carefully but still exuberantly extracted, and one that you would be extremely happy to own. This is the last year in the old winery, with the fancy new one built into the St Emilion hillside, opening as of 2020. A yield of 40hl/ha. 100% new oak.”

- JA, Decanter.com

“Scoring at the top of the range, this is a majestic vintage of Valandraud that is packed and stacked with waves of inky, purple colored, black cherries, plums, mint, espresso, cocoa, licorice, flowers, and crushed rocks. Full-bodied, rich, intense, opulent, complex and with a fruit-filled, velvet-textured, non-stop finish, this is already a treat in your glass. Drink from 2026-2055.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Deep dark red with purple accents in its hue, the wine provides a beautiful freshness to the ripe, sweet, juicy cherries, espresso, and licorice. Not as powerful or as concentrated as some recent vintages, instead you discover more, energy, refinement, elegance, and purity in the lingering fruits.”

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“The 2019 Valandraud remains deep in color and yes, the bouquet marches out of the glass with its upfront, precocious aromas of black cherry and boysenberry fruit, plus touches of pressed violet crushed stone. The palate is medium-bodied, complex, and harmonious, with fine, very supple tannins, a keen line of acidity and a slightly creamy-textured finish. As I mentioned in my previous note, it belongs within the top tier of Right Bank wines in this vintage.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2019 Valandraud is deep purple in color. It storms out of the glass with bold black cherries, boysenberry, and faint scents of violet, extremely pure and seductive, the new oak seamlessly integrated. The palate is imbued with a sorbet-like freshness on the entry. The multi-layered dark cherry and plummy fruit is underpinned by a killer line of acidity. The finish feels pixelated to the n'th degree. This is a formidable wine from Jean-Luc Thunevin and ranks amongst the very best Right Bank wines of this vintage.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2019 Valandraud is sensational. Stunning in its delineation and with sheer energy, the 2019 dazzles right out of the gate. Dark red/purplish berry fruit, mocha, new leather, licorice and lavender all come alive in the glass. In 2019, Valandraud is a towering, statuesque wine that captures all the best the vintage had to offer. I tasted the 2019 three times, and it was magnificent on all three occasions. It is a tremendous effort from Jean-Luc Thunevin and his Murielle Andraud. What a wine! 97+”

- AG, Vinous

“A regal, statuesque wine, the 2019 Valandraud dazzles from the very first taste. Deep, beautifully textured and expansive, the 2019 races across the palate with stunning energy and pure vibrancy. Dark plum, espresso, chocolate, licorice and menthol are some of the many aromas and flavors that build in the glass. A wine of notable power and explosive richness, Valandraud is truly magical in 2019.”

- AG, Vinous

Reviews *“The local bad boy of Bordeaux, Jean-Luc Thunevin, continues to fashion truly brilliant wines, and his 2019 is no exception. Based largely on Merlot with small amount of Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon, the 2019 Château Valandraud is a deep purple-hued beauty offering up a kaleidoscope-like bouquet of black and blue fruits, scorched earth, chocolate, gravelly earth, spicy oak, and sappy flowers. Deep, rich, full-bodied, and wonderfully concentrated, it has insane purity of fruit, brilliant tannins, a stacked mid-palate, and just has everything in the right places. It's up with the top wines of the vintage and a tour de force that readers should snatch up. It shows a very different style than the sexier 2018, but it's every bit as good. It needs 4-5 years of bottle age and will evolve for 2-3 decades.”*
- Jeb Dunnuck

“The grand vin 2019 Château Valandraud knocks it out of the park, and this more elegant vintage plays to this cuvée's strengths, giving it beautiful purity and balance paired with its natural richness and depth. Deeply hued with stunning notes of crème de cassis, toasted spices, incense, violets, and orange blossom, it hits the palate with full-bodied richness, a plush, sexy texture, awesome tannins, and a monster of a finish. Despite being a rich, powerful wine, it's flawlessly balanced and just classic Saint-Emilion. It's going to keep for 25-30 years.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“Deep dark ruby garnet, opaque core, violet reflections, delicate edge lightening. Fine precious wood touch, black cherries, a hint of liquorice, fresh orange zest. Juicy, black berries, fresh and full of energy, integrated tannins, mineral, and salty finish, stays on the palate, sure development potential.”
- Falstaff Magazine

“The nose is elegant, fine, gourmand, precise, racy and offers power, a fine freshness. It reveals notes of ripe/juicy boysenberry, juicy wild cassis, small notes of wild raspberry associated with touches of small acidulous fruits, cornflower as well as hints of toasted, nutmeg, tonka bean and sense of the place (terroir). The palate is elegant, beautifully defined and offers a beautiful precision, an acidulous frame, suavity as well as a small freshness. On the palate this wine expresses notes of juicy/acidulous blackberry, fleshy/acidulous cassis, small notes of raspberry associated with touches of cornflower, small fleshy fruits as well as hints of violet plum, nutmeg, cardamom, and chocolate. Good length. Tannins are elegant, well-built, and structuring. A very discreet hint of chocolate on the persistence.”
- Vert de Vin
