

Virginie de Valandraud 2014

CSPC# 771445

750mlx12

14% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

St. Emilion

Classification

Grand Cru Classe B

Website

www.thunevin.com

General Info

In 1989, Jean-Luc Thunevin and Murielle Andraud 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...

Château de Valandraud was one of the first **Garagiste** wines with its inaugural vintage being the difficult 1991.

Created in 1992 as a second wine, Virginie de Valandraud since 1997 is its own wine, named after Jean-Luc Thunevin's daughter. The vineyard is the same as Château Valandraud, and the wine is made the same way, by the same team, under the supervision of Murielle Andraud, Jean-Luc's wife.

De Valandraud produces only about 400 cases a year and, not surprisingly, this very rich and concentrated St-Emilion is now one of the most sought-after wines in Bordeaux.

Valandraud was upgraded in the official 2012 St. Emilion Classification to Premier Grand Cru Classe B.

Vintage

2014 was marked by an extraordinary Indian summer that saved the vintage. Fine spring weather was conducive to a good start to the growing season. However, challenging summer conditions seriously slowed down ripening. Fortunately, the month of September was absolutely beautiful, with dry, extremely sunny weather accompanied by highs of close to 30°C. This superb weather, with cool night-time temperatures, enabled the grapes to ripen beautifully, and they were able to be brought into the vat house having reached a perfect level of ripeness.

Vineyards

Jean-Luc and Murielle Thunevin own a mere 2.7 hectares of vineyards which consist of 4 separate parcels and are planted with 75% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc and 5% Malbec.

11 acres of clayey limestone, sand, and gravel soils

Average vine age 30 years.

De Valandraud's yields are pitifully low and the grapes are de-stemmed by hand before being fermented in 2 open-top fermenting vessels. The younger vines are used in the making of this wine, which is then aged for 20 months in 100% new oak barrels, some 10 months less than Château Valandraud. Virginie de Valandraud is comparable to Château Valandraud in some vintages and is an impressive stand-alone wine.

Harvest

Hand harvested

Vinification/

Maturation

After the grapes are harvested by hand, they are first sorted by the pickers, then undergo a second picking by density at the winery. Temperature-controlled vinification in stainless steel tanks, with manual punching down of the cap, pumping-over, and maceration of about 3 weeks.

Production

3,500 cases made.

Cellaring

Drink 2018-2030



Scores/Awards **88 points** - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2017
90-92 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #218 - April 29, 2015
88-89 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2015 (score only)
93 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2017
92-94 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 1, 2015
16.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2015 (score only)
17 (90) points - James Lawther, Decanter.com - April 2015
89-91 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2015
91-93 points - Jeremy Williams, winewordsandvideotape.com - March 2015
90-92 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2015 (score only)
15.5 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)
16-16.5 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only)
15.5 points - Gault & Millau (score only)

Reviews *"Not shy on fruit, with dark plum and blackberry notes carried by a slightly toothy mix of licorice, plum skin and toast. Fleshes out a bit on the finish. For near-term consumption. Drink now through 2022. 3,500 cases made"*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"The Virginie de Valandraud 2014 has a very pure bouquet, precise and elegant as usual, with precocious dark cherry and crème de cassis scents merged with violet petals. The oak here is nicely in sync. The palate is medium bodied with ripe, chalky tannin over-layered with surprisingly minerally dark berry fruit that dovetails into a long spicy finish. There's a lot going on in this deuxième vin and it should be fascinating to re-visit later on during its evolution. It surpasses many a self-aggrandising "big gun" in Saint Emilion."
- NM, Wine Advocate

"Made from a separate parcel of the Valandraud estate, this is a fruity, ripe wine. Dark tannins and flavors of dark chocolate combine with great fruit and acidity. It is still packed with tannins and will take plenty of time to come around. Drink from 2024."
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"92-94. Barrel Sample. The second wine of Valandraud is packed with tannins and elegance, a fine combination. It is seriously structured, with dry tannins and a dark, concentrated core, although it all seems to be in balance"
- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Creamy dark fruit with well-integrated vanilla oak. Seductive fruit on the palate, mid-palate weight, freshness and length on the finish. Harmonious."
- JL, Decanter.com

"Juicy, forward and luscious, this wine delivers a blast of sweet, ripe, round fruit with a vanilla inflection in every sniff and sip. 89-91 Pts"
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"2014 Deep and dark looking; tight to the edge; earthy blackcurrant; cool black cherry; plummy fruit; very nice seam of layered glossy fruit on the nose; ripe entry; creamy; integrated; textured and complete; creamy; ripe and creamy mid palate; tannins considerable but well managed. Chew on the finish but also freshness. Chocolate notes. Tasted Jean-Luc Thunevin, 3 April 2015. Drink 2019-2025. 91-93"
- JW, winewordsandvideotape.com
