

Château Cos d'Estournel 2018

CSPC# 832567

750mlx6

14.59% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot

Appellation

Saint- Estèphe

Classification

Second Growth. Deuxieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.

Website

<http://estournal.com/cos/cos-destournal-red/?lang=en>

General Info

In the old Gascon language, the word Cos means the hill of pebbles. Between Pauillac and Saint-Estèphe, separated from Château Lafite by the stream known as La Jalle du Breuil, the hill of Cos dominates the Gironde from the height of almost 65 feet. Born in 1762 during the reign of Louis XV and died in 1853 under Napoleon III, Louis Gaspard d'Estournel, who inherited a few vines near the village of Cos, had one sole passion: Cos. Louis Gaspard d'Estournel became known as the Maharajah of Saint-Estèphe. To celebrate his distant conquests, he had exotic pagodas erected over his cellar. In 1852, overwhelmed by debts he had accumulated in order to extend and beautify the estate, he was obliged to sell Cos to a London banker called Martyns. In 1855, the work of Louis Gaspard d'Estournel was consecrated by the imperial classification of 1855 placing Cos d'Estournel at the head of Saint-Estèphe. In 1869, the chateau was sold to the Errazu, an aristocratic Basque family, then to the Hostein brothers in 1886 and to Fernand Ginestet, one leading Bordeaux wine merchant, in 1917. The chateau has been belonging to Michel Reybier since 2000. In 2002 was constructed a new winery with a liquid CO2 cooling tunnel, small 19 to 115 hectoliter isothermal stainless-steel cone-shaped tanks and four 100 litre used to replace the traditional pumping over process. Cos d'Estournel has become, in the eyes of lovers of fine wines, the archetype of a certain style of masculine elegance in which immense power is combined with grace and smoothness. Impressive when young for the intensity of its structure and explosive fruit, Cos d'Estournel evolves slowly to arrive, when completely mature (after ten to thirty years) at an admirable smoothness and aromatic complexity. Great vintages can be exceptionally long-living, exceeding a century.

Winemaker

Aymeric de Gironde

Vintage

2018 St. Estèphe produced great wines, from top to bottom. Just about every wine I tasted showed fabulous character from the Second Growths to the Cru Bourgeoise to the smaller, lesser-known wines.

All the wines show good, dark color, rich, opulent fruits, and supple tannins. 2018 Saint Estèphe is relatively forward as well so even the best wines are probably going to start showing well with just a decade of age, while the smaller wines will be enjoyable much younger than that.

"The wet weather in June didn't affect the flowering because it was still quite warm," winemaker Dominique Arangoits explained. While flowering was not an issue, yields were down slightly at Cos d'Estournel, coming in at 30 hectoliters per hectare. This was due in part to losses from early season mildew and very small Cabernet Sauvignon berries. There was also a little dehydration. "In the end, what was interesting was the balance of the vines," Arangoits continued. "There was great energy and fruit. Cabernet was surprisingly round. Merlot looks like Cabernet this year, and Cabernet looks like Merlot," he laughed. "There was incredible tension in the Merlot." Winemaking was also not without challenges. "It was a hot harvest: 25-28 degrees Celsius outside," said Arangoits. "We were able to cool the grapes very quickly. We decided to lower the temperature of fermentation to 28 degrees Celsius rather than 30 degrees to preserve the fruit. We felt this was key preserving the fruit. The gravity cellar really helped with the gentle extraction this year. For whites, we were not so optimistic. But we were pleasantly surprised by the characters. The pH's were low, which is a good sign." The final blends were done in December, after the malolactic fermentations finished.



Vineyards	The vineyard of Cos spreads around the château on 91 hectares. The Cabernet Sauvignon vines (60% of the vineyard) find the soil of their choice in the thin layers of gravely soil situated on the top and on the southern slopes of the hill. On the other hand, the Merlot vines (40% of the vineyard) excel on the eastern slopes and on the slopes where the Saint-Estèphe limestone bed shows on the surface. The percentage of Cabernet and Merlot varies from one vintage to another according to the year weather conditions, benefiting successively to the one or the other. Plantation is extremely dense (8000 to 10000 vines per hectare) and the average age of the vineyard is high (35 years old on the average) in order to enable the roots to extend excessively and to obtain a very slender yield per vine that will create the "Grand Goût" Only the wines coming from over 20 years old vines will have the name of Château Cos d'Estournel.
Harvest	The harvest took place September 19 to October 6.
Maturation	The grapes were small with thin yet robust skins. A rapid extraction of anthocyanins was noted during the pre-fermentation macerations. The use of the gravity proved to be even more useful this year for the merlots with a high tannic potential. It also enabled better control of components of the musts due to much gentler extractions, producing smoother tannins, while at the same time preserving the vintage's freshness and fruity character. Aged 50% in new barrels during 18 month/s
Tasting Notes	Finely structured and vibrant, Cos d'Estournel 2018 is both powerful and balanced, with very soft tannins. It offers a multitude of nuances, including remarkably elegant spices and an extremely long and lingering finish. It is an outstanding vintage with immense cellaring potential that will surely count among the most legendary vintages of the estate.
Serve with	Chateau Cos d'Estournel is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Young vintages can be decanted for 2-4 hours. This allows the wine to soften and open its perfume. Older vintages might need very little decanting, just enough to remove the sediment. Chateau Cos d'Estournel is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted braised and grilled dishes.
Production	16,600 cases made.
Cellaring	Drink 2024- 2038.
Scores/Awards	<p>96 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2021</p> <p>98+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - March 2021</p> <p>97-100 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate - April 2019</p> <p>98 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2021</p> <p>98-99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - April 2019</p> <p>96 points/Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - March 2021</p> <p>95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2019</p> <p>17.5 points - Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com - April 2019</p> <p>97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - November 2020</p> <p>97 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2019</p> <p>98 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2021</p> <p>99-100 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 2019</p> <p>17.5+ points - Farr Vintner - April 2019</p> <p>96 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - March 2021</p> <p>95-97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - April 2019</p> <p>97-100 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2019</p> <p>98+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2021</p> <p>97-99+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - April 2019</p> <p>20+ points - Matthew Jukes, MW - April 2019</p> <p>98-100 points - Falstaff Magazine (score only) - February 2021</p> <p>18.5 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only) - January 2021</p> <p>17.5 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only) - June 2019</p>

Reviews

"This is a bird of a different feather, with a ripe, sleek, and very polished feel as creamed loganberry, plum and boysenberry flavors spill forth, flanked for support by singed alder and incense notes, while black tea and savory threads curl around the finish. Long, showy, and lovely. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Best from 2024 through 2038. 16,600 cases made."

- JM, Wine Spectator

"The 2018 Cos d'Estournel is a blend of 74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot and 1% Cabernet Franc, aged in 50% new oak barriques. The alcohol weighs in at just over 14.5%. Sporting a deep purple-black color, it needs a lot of swirling to begin to unlock a powerful nose of crème de cassis, stewed plums, wild blueberries, and chocolate-covered cherries, followed by nuances of Sichuan pepper, star anise, tree and clove oil, plus a waft of charcoal. The full-bodied palate is densely packed with taut, muscular black fruits and earthy layers, framed by super firm, ripe, grainy tannins, and seamless freshness, finishing very long and wonderfully earthy. A very impressive behemoth, this is going to need a good seven to 10 years to truly show its stuff and should drink for a good 40 years and beyond."

- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The 2018 Cos d'Estournel is composed of 74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot and 1% Cabernet Franc and has 14.59% alcohol. Aging in 50% new barriques, it has a deep purple-black color and drifts effortlessly, gracefully, seductively out of the glass with slowly unfurling notions of blackcurrant cordial, wild blueberries, chocolate-covered cherries, and plum pudding with touches of violets, licorice, wild roses, and yeast extract plus a waft of loose tobacco. The full-bodied palate is built like a brick house with a solid frame of super firm, super ripe tannins, and seamless freshness to back up the vibrant, crunchy, oh-so-muscular fruit, finishing long with loads of mineral layers. Amazing structure will keep this beauty for at least half a century and probably a full one!"

- LPB, Wine Advocate

"The richness and beauty of this wine is impressive with blackcurrant, cherry, berry and fresh cloves. The fruit is so pure here. Full-bodied with tannins that are so integrated and refined that you don't feel them, yet they are there! Very creamy and layered with great length and beauty. It turns to tar and licorice at the finish. Tight now, but the texture is special. Try after 2027."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"The beautiful integration of ripe fruit and ripe tannins gives the wine a layered and agile mouthfeel. Soft and gorgeous with silky tannins that really kick in at the finish and carry the wine for a long time."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*"Rich and dense, this wine is happily poised between ripe fruits and a deceptively powerful structure. Smoky flavors from wood aging combine with solid black fruits that strain but never overstep an impressive balance. This wine will age, promising much for the future. Drink from 2026. *Cellar Selection* (RV)"*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Big, rich and smoky in nature, with powerful fruits and dense tannins, this is a wine that is straining at the limits but still within balance. Rich, smoky flavors shine along with the black plum fruit and bright acidity. It will age for many years. Barrel Sample: 95-97."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot. Barrel sample. Black core with narrow purple rim. Intense black fruit with just a hint of charry oak. Smells sweet and ripe but pure and fresh-fruited too. Glorious Cabernet here. Deep, chewy, and rich on the palate, firm velvety texture, incredibly moreish and so fresh, as much from the tannins as from the acidity. Leaves your mouth clean with dark, savoury, rocky length. Very precise winemaking. I love those dry clean-tasting tannins on the finish. (JH)"

- JH, JancisRobinson.com

Reviews

"A little closed on the nose, and also on the attack. There is a wall of tannin here but backed up by voluptuously ripe fruits that major on damson and fig, overlaid with cinnamon and saffron spices. Lifting acidity through the finish keeps a sense of momentum. This is powerful with ambition, and it carries it off perfectly. 65% of production went into the grand vin. 1% Petit Verdot makes up the blend, and the wine was aged in 50% new oak (a little lower than the usual 60%). Drinking Window 2028 – 2045."

- JA, Decanter.com

"This has some austerity on the attack, then announces its arrival in the inimitable way that Cos is able to do with a slow buildup of exotic spices, liquorice root, cedar and cassis. It stretches out through the palate, and you keep waiting for the tannins to punch through like they did in 2010, but it doesn't happen, even though this is a big wine with high alcohol and an IPT of 80. There's a great menthol freshness on the finish, helped no doubt by a fresh 3.65pH. It has the luxurious signature of Cos, the glamorous touch that you look for in this wine - like at Mouton and at Angelus - that is part of their DNA, but it's also married to elegance and a touch of slate minerality. This is a wine that you would be thrilled to own. 12mm of rain on 12 September and 20mm in mid-August were just enough to stop any blockages in ripening, although the 30hl/ha yield is low due to a touch of mildew and some concentration in September. This compares to a more generous 45hl/ha in 2016. 65% of production went into the grand vin. 1% Petit Verdot makes up the blend, and the wine is aged in 50% new oak (a little lower than the usual 60%). A candidate to up score when in bottle. (JA)"

- JA, Decanter.com

"Just a stunning bottle of wine, everything is rocking here. Deep and dark in color, the nose pops with flowers, licorice, 5 spice, currants, blackberries, orange rind, smoke, and cigar wrapper. Full-bodied, elegant, long, deep, rich and pure, the vibrancy in the fruit keeps the seemingly endless, expansive finish on the tip of your palate. Blended from 74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot, the wine comes in at 14.5%. Much less wine was made this year as yields were only 30 hectoliters per hectare. Read more."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"With its telltale Asian spice perfume, the color is impossible to see through. Full-bodied, dense, rich, and fleshy, the wine coats your palate with a display of red and black fruits, spice, smoke, earth, and licorice. The tannins are polished. The fruit, even with this much weight and flesh, remains fresh and balanced. The finish keeps on going long after the wine has left its glass and gone to where it was intended to go. I timed it, and it surpassed the 60 second mark! This is positively stunning and if you're a lover of COS, as this is one of the best vintages produced in the long history of the estate, this belongs in your cellar. The wine was made from blending 74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot, reaching 14.6% alcohol with a pH of 3.7. The harvest took place September 19 to October 6. The Grand Vin was made from only 65% of the harvest."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Deep purple in colour, with a nose of blueberry, black pepper and toasty oak. There are hints of exotic anise and clove here too. The palate is intense, with a rich, chewy structure and bold, ripe fruits. There are waves of fresh acidity that tame the riper elements and bring notes of dried leaves, cedar, and incense. The finish is slick and polished but remains firm. This is another 2018 that will need time in bottle to show its best."

- Farr Vintners

"The 2018 Cos d'Estournel showed a lot of promise when I tasted it from barrel. Now in bottle and given a 2–3-hour decant, it has a gorgeous and disarmingly pure bouquet, slightly high-toned with iodine scents infusing the lush blackberry and boysenberry scents. The oak is seamlessly integrated. The palate is fresh and crisp on the entry, delivering silky-smooth tannins, perfect acidity and a sense of harmony than is very persuasive. I cannot recall a Cos d'Estournel in recent years with such fine tannins. It gently fans out toward the finish while retaining superb precision, completing what is a beautifully crafted Cos d'Estournel with a long future ahead. 2025 – 2060."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2018 Cos d'Estournel is matured in 50% new oak, a little less than usual. It has a more opulent bouquet compared to the 2016 and 2017 as you might imagine with high-toned but not overbearing black cherries, iodine, and cassis aromas. The dialing down of the oak we a good idea. With aeration, it manifest enticing violet scents. The palate is medium bodied with supple tannins that creates what is one of the most lithe Cos d'Estournel releases in recent years. It is silky smooth in texture with fine acidity, the 14.59% alcohol just lending

Reviews *a little decadence towards the finish. It is one of the more heady wines in recent years although everything seems to me kept in check and the tannins feel very fine and precise on the finish, indicative of prudent winemaking. Very fine, even if it does not quite match the ethereal 2016 Cos d'Estournel."*
- NM, Vinous

"A regal, soaring Saint-Estèphe, the 2018 Cos d'Estournel is also clearly one of the wines of the vintage. On the palate, the 2018 is dark and sumptuous, with striking aromatic presence and silky tannins that wrap around a rich core of exotic fruit. Black cherry, savory herbs, leather, spice, and menthol build in the glass in a wine that is both aromatically intense and richly textured. The 2018 has been nothing short of breathtaking on the two occasions I have tasted it so far. Don't miss it. (AG)"
- AG, Vinous

"An incredible wine from this estate that's as good as anything in the vintage, the 2018 Château Cos D'Estournel checks in as 74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Petit Verdot that was brought up in 50% new French oak. While some 2018s are going to offer pleasure right out of the gate, this isn't one of them, but rather it's a backward, tannic powerhouse of a wine that has flawless balance as well as a level of purity that's off the charts. Thrilling crème de cassis fruit, notes of lead pencil, damp earth, cedarwood, violets, and acacia flowers, full-bodied richness, masses of ultra-fine tannins, and a great, great finish all make for a legendary Saint-Estèphe that will need a good decade of bottle age yet evolve for 50 years or more. If you are tempted to try a bottle in its youth, it needs lots of air. 98+"
- Jeb Dunnuck

"Deeply colored, the 2018 Cos D'Estournel shows the incredible purity and elegance that this estate delivers these days as well as fabulous crème de cassis, graphite, white flowers, and spicy oak aromas and flavors. Made from 74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and the rest Petit Verdot, aging in 50% new barrels, it builds with time in the glass and has a full-bodied, decadent yet also seamless mouthfeel, layers of tannins, and a great finish. This is as classy as it gets and certainly a candidate for the King of Saint-Estèphe in 2018. Given its purity and balance as well as depth of fruit, it should offer loads of pleasure in its youth yet also evolve nicely for 3-4 decades. This estate has been on an incredible roll over the past 7-8 years, and this is another killer wine. For those interested in the technical data, this wine hit 14.59% alcohol, with a pH of 3.69, total acids of 3.3, and a whopping IPT of 80."
- Jeb Dunnuck

"(74 Cabernet Sauvignon, 23 Merlot, 2 Cabernet Franc, 1 Petit Verdot) | 50% new oak | 14.59% alc | 30 hl/ha | 3.69 pH | 66% of total production | 80 IPT I tasted the wines with owner Michel Reybier and winemaker Dominique Arangoïts and they were peculiarly quiet as I worked my way through the glasses. This only ever happens when those concerned are extremely pleased with their wines but don't want to show it. How right they were, albeit without giving anything away! The entire suite of wines from this estate is impeccable, but the Grand Vin is a staggering tour de force. From the incredible volume of fruit on the nose to the exquisite detail on the palate, this is an awesomely balanced wine. It has everything. The fruit is sensationally seductive, and its depth is profound. The mouth-watering mid-palate is truly epic and there is freshness and bounce from the first sip to the final flavour memory and this balance is enchanting. This is a spectacular vintage for Cos and everything you could possibly want in a wine is here but, crucially, there is not too much of any one element. So often, larger framed wines can tip out of balance and deliver too much of a good thing. Cos remains masterful, expansive and also precision-tooled in its detail. This is the finest young wine I have tasted at this Château, and I have no hesitation in giving it a perfect score. While many foundered, this imposing estate, sitting on its majestic plot of land took the best elements from the complex and baffling season and used them to its advantage. It is true that wineries used to making richer styles of wine are the most successful, in my eyes, in 2018. Cos d'Estournel is one such property and it has made a wine which will taste incredible every day of its life and, inevitably, many of these days will be long after I have departed this world."
- MJ, matthewjukes.com