
Clos du Marquis 2003

CSPC# 763556

750mlx12

13.40% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 43% Merlot, 3% Petit Verdot

Appellation

Saint Julien

Website

<http://www.domaines-delon.com/en/>

General Info

One of the oldest Medoc estates, Domaine de Léoville belonged to some of the wealthiest and most influential noble French families before it was acquired by the Las Cases family. The estate was split up between 1826 and 1840 as a result of the French Revolution. (Expropriation of emigrants' property and constitution of egalitarian redistribution). Château Léoville Las Cases was created, thanks to a kind of birthright, from 3/5 of the original estate and the heart of the domain.

The Grand Vin's current *terroir* has therefore been at the historic heart of the original *terroir* since the 17th century. Pierre Jean, Adolphe and Gabriel de Las Cases were successive heirs to the property until 1900, when Théophile Skawinski purchased a share in the estate and became its manager. Léoville Las Cases has now been managed by the same family since the late 19th century and is today represented by Jean-Hubert Delon, sole owner of the Château and proprietor of Château Potensac in the Medoc and Château Névin in Pomerol.

Created in 1902, the Clos du Marquis has its origins in the "Petit Clos" adjacent to the Château de Léoville, home of the Marquis de Las Cases. It was created as a "brand", a second wine to Léoville Las Cases which would absorb the barrels not deemed fine enough for the grand vin. Over time it became a wine in its own right and since 1989 has been produced from separate parcels which lie outside Léoville Las Cases' main vineyards. The Clos du Marquis comes from the great *terroirs* of the Saint-Julien appellation that were not part of the former Léoville estate.

These *terroirs* are located further west and surrounded by prestigious Crus Classés (Classified Growths) including Second Growths from the Saint-Julien and Pauillac appellations: Léoville Poyferré, Léoville Barton and Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande. The Clos du Marquis thus displays typical Saint-Julien characteristics: structure, complexity, balance, distinction and great ageing potential.

Clos du Marquis has the ability to challenge many other châteaux of the Medoc. Indeed, it is the equal of most 3rd, 4th and 5th Growths and has been an outstanding performer for many years.

Vintage

The hottest vintage ever! An extraordinary summer has produced an extraordinary vintage! Between April and September there were only 248 millimeters of rain in Bordeaux which is the second lowest ever recorded and the record belongs to 1961. However, sunshine levels and temperatures beat all previous statistics hands down. The old record for average summer temperature was held by 1976 with 19 degrees Celsius but in 2003 the average was 20.5 degrees. Normally, Bordeaux experiences about 20 summer days with temperatures above 30 degrees but this year there were 53 such days. In August temperatures averaged nearly 30 degrees and on four separate days the thermometers hit 40 degrees (104 degrees F.). Quite simply, it was the hottest summer ever. The results of this heatwave were low yields (about 35% down on average), record degrees of sugar content, dark colours and ripe tannins. Young vines suffered, as did those that were over-exposed to the sun, but many wines produced from old vines with deep roots (especially Cabernet Sauvignon) on great *terroirs* are quite outstanding.

Vineyards

As Clos du Marquis hails from a separate vineyard it is a separate cuvée – and not a Second Wine. The grapes are grown in the Petit Clos (Clos meaning an enclosed garden or field) which is surrounded on all sides by other Second Growths. The Petit Clos vineyard is to the south of the Leoville Las Cases Grand Clos vines and covers 12 acres. It is planted with 57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 38% Merlot, 3% Petit Verdot and 2% Cabernet Franc.

Vinification/ Maturation	At Leoville Las Cases, the wine making remains traditional. Grapes are harvested by hand and fermented in temperature-controlled wood, concrete, or stainless-steel vats of varying size. The stainless-steel tanks range from 40 hectoliters all the way up to 216 hectoliters. The oak vats also range in size from 176 hectoliters up to 270 hectoliters per vat. The oak vats also range in age, with the oldest vats dating back close to 50 years! Malolactic fermentation takes place in tank. Aged in 40% new oak.
Tasting Notes	Even in so richly coloured a vintage this “robe” is impressive, an almost opaque black purple. The nose – a medley of black fruits, red roses, and sweet damsons – shows exceptional subtlety. The flavour is beautifully balanced (as with Pavillon Rouge one forgets one is tasting a second wine), with density and complexity, and the aftertaste is very long and full of incident. I find smoke, coffee, and damson on the finish. Only those owning many cases should start on this in less than 10 years; bottles broached thereafter will give growing pleasure for another 20 or so.
Production	9,500 cases made
Serve with	Western Foods: Great with roast beef, rich coq au vin and mature cheeses (Edam, Gouda), Lamb, Game, Ham, Rabbit in mustard sauce. Chinese Food: Roasted duck, goose and pigeon, salted shrimp and crab, air-dried and smoked meat, sautéed fish, steamed Guangdong pork, braised pork, Nanjing stewed duck in sauce, braised chicken in red wine, fried kidney, fat roast pork, roast chicken.
Cellaring	Drink 2006-2021
Scores/Awards	<p>90 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2006</p> <p>92-94 points - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - June 30, 2004</p> <p>91 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #214 - August 2014</p> <p>90 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #164 - April 2006</p> <p>89-92 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #158- April 2005</p> <p>90-92 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #152 - April 2004</p> <p>88 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2013</p> <p>88 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - March 2011</p> <p>93 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2012</p> <p>90 points - Stephen Tanzer’s International Wine Cellar - May/June 2006</p> <p>18 points - Decanter.com - April 2005</p> <p>17 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 2004</p> <p>90 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - December 18, 2013</p> <p>16 points - Farr Vintner - April 2009</p> <p>90 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)</p> <p>1 star - Le Guide Hachette des Vins – 2007</p> <p>16 points - Vinum Wine Magazine (score only)</p>
Reviews	<p><i>“Very pretty aromas of blackberry, currant and licorice. Full-bodied, with velvety, round tannins and lots of attractive vanilla and berry flavors. Long. Best after 2009. 9,500 cases made.”</i> - JS, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>“Pure currants with wild fruits that turn to fresh flowers. Full-bodied, with velvety tannins and a delicious, super fruity finish. Very long indeed. Cool and racy. Very fine. Score range: 92-94”</i> - JS, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>“In 2003, this was the second wine of Leoville Las Cases as opposed to a separate entity. A brilliant effort, it was harvested between September 11 and 26, and boasts 13.3% natural alcohol. The final blend was 54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 43% Merlot and the rest Petit Verdot. Its deep garnet/ruby/plum color is followed by notes of bay leaf, black currants, licorice and lead pencil shavings. The wine is deep, full-bodied, rich and fully mature, but its length, richness, freshness and complete feel suggest it will continue to drink well for 7-8 years. It's a beauty. Drink 2014-2022”</i> - RP, Wine Advocate</p> <p><i>“The 2003 Clos du Marquis possesses higher alcohol (13.4%) than the 2003 grand vin, no doubt because of the higher percentage of Merlot in the final blend. This impressive sleeper of the vintage boasts a deep ruby/purple color as well as abundant amounts of fleshy, black cherry and currant fruit interwoven with mocha, vanillin, and</i></p>

Reviews *spice box. Pure, layered, upfront, and already delicious, it should be drunk over the next 12-15 years."*
- RP, Wine Advocate

"This wine's 13.4% alcohol is even higher than its bigger sibling's. The 2003 Clos du Marquis exhibits a deep ruby/purple color, a classic nose of cassis and earth, medium to full body, supple tannins, and a long, fleshy, multi-layered finish. Drink it over the next 10-15 years."
- RP, Wine Advocate

"The 2003 Clos du Marquis is one of the finest second wines of the Medoc. Forty-six percent of the crop was used in this blend of 54.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 42.6% Merlot, and 2.9% Petit Verdot. With higher alcohol (13.43%) than its big sister (13.27%), it exhibits an inky/ruby/purple color, great fruit, medium body, tremendous purity, and a long, flashy finish. It should drink well for 10-15 years."
- RP, Wine Advocate

"Tasted at Bordeaux Index's "10-Year On" tasting in London. The Clos du Marquis 2003 has a ripe bouquet of damson, clove and bay leaf that is well defined, almost Pauillac in style. It improves in the glass with touches of marmalade coming through. The palate is medium bodied with supple tannins, good acidity and a fine, quite exotic marmalade tinged finish that fans out nicely across the mouth. I cannot see it improving, but it offers pleasure now. Tasted March 2013."
- NM, Wine Journal

"There is a lot of vanillary oak on the nose with black plum, damson and a touch of coconut. It exhibits a lot of panache, less in the way of intellect of delineation. The palate is medium bodied with a plump, fleshy entry, generous black fruit with a modern, silky sheen, leading to a supple finish. Fine, but there are much better Clos du Marquis out there. Tasted October 2010."
- NM, Wine Journal

"This is a mouthful, with loads of fruit and truffle character. Exotic and wild but starting to close. Give this five years."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Good ruby-red. Roasted plum, currant and leather on the nose. Thick, rich and deep, with uncanny sweetness and mouth coverage for this bottling. Finishes very long, with a suggestion of dried fruits and big tannins that are even sweeter than those of the 2005 (the IPT here is 71, vs. 65 in the '05)."
- ST, International Wine Cellar

"One of the most charming Clos du Marquis for a while."
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Very deep ruby, really fine, fragrant nose, lovely balance, superb Cabernet based Saint-Julien, very good length and great class. Drink: Now-2025."
- Decanter.com

"Earth, cigar box, roasted berries, fennel, smoke and mushroom scents create the perfume. The wine is developed and does not require additional aging. Medium/full bodied and polished in texture, the wine ends with sweet cherries."
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Like its next-door neighbour Latour, Léoville Las Cases produces a second wine that is not really a second wine but is a vineyard of Classed Growth quality in its own right. Indeed, it has more concentration than many Classed Growths. This has been an outstanding performer for many years. 54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 43% Merlot, 3% Petit Verdot - 46% of the production of Las Cases. A forward version of the Grand Vin. Spicy, complex and intense. Glycerol and warmth with the lift of sweet ripe fruit."
- Farr Vintners