
Château Lagrange 2021

CSPC# 872855

750mlx12

13.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety
Appellation
Classification
Website
Sustainability

84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot
Saint-Julien
Third Growth. Troisieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855.
<https://chateau-lagrange.com/en/the-wine/>

Hand in hand with our vine workers, we have been advancing for the last 20 years in a true commitment to maintain an environmental approach in our vineyard. Since 2008, we have been farming 10 hectares according to the principles of biodynamic agriculture and also 20 hectares organically, without applying for official certification. A natural grass cover is maintained in many vine plots to encourage the development of the underground ecosystem and limit erosion.

General Info

The vast vineyard of Lagrange spreads over 117 uninterrupted hectares in the Saint-Julien-appellation. In 1855, its passionate and visionary owner, the Count Duchâtel, ex-Home Secretary to King Louis-Philippe, who had introduced a drainage system in the vineyard, contributed to its classification as a third growth. The beginning of the 20th century was much less glorious as the economic conditions deteriorated. Despite several changes in ownership, the decline in business meant the estate had to be broken up: from 280 hectares in 1840, the domain had been reduced to 57 hectares by December 1983, when the Japanese group Suntory bought it from the Cendoya family, owners since 1925. By dint of more than twenty years of major efforts and investments, Château Lagrange is universally acknowledged as being back in excellent form after this restructuring which is considered as the most spectacular of the Medoc. In May 2007, Bruno Eycard succeeded Marcel Ducasse (1984-2007) as Director of Château Lagrange. In 2008 was realised a new refurbishing of the vinification room. In 2009, Château Lagrange innovated with the optical sort-out of the berries in order to face the great volume of berries to sort out in this big estate. The great care taken to the vineyard (yield control, harvest by hand) and the vinification plot by plot give birth each year to a rich and elegant wine, with a long ageing potential.

Winemaker
Vintage

Matthieu Bordes

The total rainfall recorded in 2021 was lower than the average of the past 25 years. It is interesting to note that temperatures remained cool throughout the growth cycle, a vital element for maintaining balance in the wines. The preparatory vine care during June and July allowed the grapes to reap full benefit from the sun's rays. The first baskets of Merlot were picked on 27th September with an uncertain weather, but the Indian summer began on 4th October: it was the day when everything changed, the turning point. We decided to take our time and to suspend the picking for 2 days. It was a risky decision but a necessary one if we were to harvest great Cabernets! We finish the harvest on the 12th October, we observed the grapes developing every day, progressively more concentrated, losing up to 30% in weight, the tannins and skins becoming finer, revealing promising aromas. The balance and harmony of the 2021 vintage reminds us somewhat of the wines produced in the 2000s, with a higher quality in the tannic framework and the aromatic precision. Like a window open onto the past, the 2021 will be our neo-retro vintage par excellence!

Vineyards

Located entirely within the appellation of Saint-Julien, our vineyard stretches in a single block over two North-South rises of Gunzian gravelly soil. In parts, large and coarse and in others finer, this gravel is combined with sand or iron-rich clay depending on the plot. With an altitude of 24 metres, the centre of the domain marks the highest point of Saint-Julien. The estate covers 157 hectares (390 acres), of which 115 hectares (284 acres) are under vine. Many of the plots benefit from a drainage system. The red grape varieties planted are those that typically thrive on the Médoc terroir, with 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Merlot and 7% Petit Verdot. The Cabernet Sauvignon contributes structure and ageing potential, the Merlot roundness and body, and the Petit Verdot fruit and complexity. Average vine age is 37 years.



Harvest	<p>Just to give you an example of the challenges of harvesting the 2021 vintage at Lagrange, it took 250 people hand picking to harvest 18 hectares of vines per day. Having taken the risk of waiting until the beginning of October to harvest the Cabernet grapes, Matthieu Bordes was rewarded with berries that had lost 30% of their weight and were much more concentrated.</p> <p>Grapes are handpicked into individual crates. The first selection is done by hand on whole bunches, and a second one grape by grape with an optical camera.</p> <p>Harvest from September 27th to October 12th 2021</p>
Vinification/ Maturation	<p>Plot by plot and intra plot vinification. 102 thermoregulated stainless steel vats for 103 vine plots. Variable capacity of the vats: 36 to 220 hl. Selection of batch conducted according to the varietal, age of vines, terroir and grapes maturity. Traditional vinification at 26-28 °C during 18 to 25 days. Moderate pumping over every day, or pigeage or déléstage. Malolactic fermentation through co inoculation.</p> <p>Blending in January. Maturation for 21 months. 50 % of new oak barrels. Fining in barrel with fresh egg whites. Final blending before bottling</p>
Winemaker's Notes	<p>Dark red colour with a crimson tint. Aromatic notes of red fruit, such as strawberry or raspberry. The attack is supple and fleshy. With 84% Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend, the tannic structure is powerful yet elegant. The harmony that reigns throughout promises a large drinking window.</p>
Tasting Notes	<p>Lagrange 2021 has a dark, rich sombre colour, a crimson rim, lovely density, with berried fruit and scents of cassis, plums, cedar, and tobacco. There are warm, supple tannins, which are silky but very present and they give good structure to the wine. Matthieu compared the vintage to years such as 2012, 2015 and 2017 and believes the wine can last for 30 years.</p>
Serve with	<p>Chateau Lagrange is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.</p>
Production Cellaring	<p>Approx. 11,200 cases made Drink 2025-2050</p>
Scores/Awards	<p>93 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - February 2024 92-94 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022 87-89 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - May 2022 92-93 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022 16.5 points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022 93 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022 93 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - May 2022 92 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2024 91-93 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022 90 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2022 89-91 points - Thomas Parker, Farr Vintners - April 2022 91 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2024 91-93 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022 94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2024 92-94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022 93 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2024 90-92 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022 18 points - Matthew Jukes - August 2022 92 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022 92 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022 93-94 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - May 2022</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"The 2021 Lagrange is a strong effort, offering up notes of dark berries, pencil shavings, licorice, and loamy soil, followed by a medium to full-bodied, lively and nicely concentrated palate with lively acids and youthfully structuring tannins that assert themselves on the finish, reflecting the record-high percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend. This is one 2021 that will reward a bit of patience. Drink 2027-2045.</i></p> <p><i>When Matthieu Bordes arrived at Château Lagrange in 2006, he had the good fortune to take over a vineyard that had been extensively replanted in the 1980s and was just arriving at maturity. Since Suntory acquired this estate, indeed, no expense has been spared, nor has any selection been considered too severe; and as the fruits of that investment over the years met Bordes's talents, the results have been exceptional. In 2021, a strict selection and a willingness to sacrifice volume (via saignée and osmosis) have delivered a Lagrange that transcends the limitations of the vintage."</i></p> <p>- WK, Wine Advocate</p>

Reviews *“Representing only 39% of the estate's production, the 2021 Lagrange is very promising indeed, mingling aromas of wild berries and blackcurrants with notions of loamy soils, pencil shavings and violets. Medium to full-bodied, ample, and seamless, with fine depth at the core, powdery tannins and lively acids, it saw a cool vinification and contains a record 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, much of which was picked late, between the 7th and 12th of October. It's a brilliant effort from Matthieu Bordes and his team. Tasted five times, twice at the estate.”*
- WK, Wine Advocate

“The 2021 Lagrange is a blend of 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Merlot, and 2% Petit Verdot, with this grand vin representing 39% of production. Deep garnet-purple colored, it delivers pronounced notes of black cherries, redcurrant preserves, and black raspberries, plus suggestions of cracked black pepper, mossy tree bark, and licorice with a waft of tar. The light to medium-bodied palate is elegant and refreshing, featuring a light grip of grainy tannins and seamless freshness to support the red and black fruit layers, finishing on a peppery note. The pH is usually lower than this year's 3.6. 2025-2037.”
- LPB, Wine Independent

“A firm and silky red with medium body, fresh acidity, and an orange-peel and berry aftertaste. Refined and bright.”
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot. Even more Cabernet than 2019 (80%). Cask sample. Open and aromatic with dark fruit to the fore. Palate shows good density, again with attractive fruit and a firm but ripe tannic frame. Drives on the finish. Some potential here.
Drink 2028 – 2040.”*
- JL, JancisRobinson.com

“Super-floral on the nose, a celebration of peony, violet and rose flowers. Juicy and supple with a real life-force. The starts off bright and upfront with strawberry and red cherry notes that merge into a darker, more savoury mid-palate full of slate and chocolate. I like the persistence here, the clarity of the fruit expression and the brightness. It's not the most expansive but the individual elements are so well presented with detail on show. A great effort in the vintage with no drop in the mid-palate, acidity in check and nice floral fruit.”
- GH, Decanter.com

“Bright, vivid raspberry and cassis fruit, savoury and sculpted, clear cinnamon, fennel, and clove spice. Not exuberant or overdone, working with the vintage and retains the St Julien feel of balance and finesse. This is the 2nd note I am publishing for this wine, as I tasted it at the château during a vertical a month ago, and this is one point higher, boding well for increased weight over ageing. Harvest September 27 through to October 12, with no Cabernet picked until October. The weight of the berries reduced by 30% in the last week before picking because the weather got so much better. 35hl/h yield, 50% new oak. Eric Boissenot consultant.”
- JA, janeanson.com

*“The nose, with its tobacco, herbs, flowers, red currants, cedar, and spice pops with little effort. On the palate, the wine is medium-bodied, crisp, chewy, and loaded with savory-tinted red fruits with ample, sweetness to the soft, supple, cherries in the finish. The wine is a blend of 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Merlot and 2% Petit Verdot. It is interesting to note that this is the highest percentage of Cabernet used in the blend in the history of the estate.
Drink from 2025-2045.”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

*“Blackberries, cedar, tobacco, spice, and savory herbs on the nose bring you to a soft-textured, supple, round, forward, classical wine with a creamy-textured, dusty, peppery, crunchy, red currant-packed finish. The wine is a blend of 84% Cabernet Sauvignon and 16% Merlot. It is interesting to note that this is the highest percentage of Cabernet used in the blend in the history of the estate. 13% ABV. Yields were low at only 30 hectoliters per hectare.
Drink from 2025-2045.”*
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

Reviews

"When pushed by us for comparisons, Matthieu Bordes, the general manager and wine-maker of Lagrange, finds this a vintage similar to 2012 - but with more concentration, a rounder version of 2014 and a slightly less ripe version of 2015. Led with a strong 84% Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend. Bright ruby-purple. Firm black fruit on the nose together with smoky charred wood. The palate is classic St Julien, with blackcurrant leaf, cedar, and fresh blackcurrant fruit. This is honest, classically structured claret with just a whiff of exotic wood spice to add some sweetness. Compact but long on the finish, it will appeal to lovers of traditional Médoc wines."

- TP, Farr Vintners

"Winemaker Matthieu Bordes was the only one to mention that he had to conduct some reverse osmosis (mainly on the Merlot) for the 2021 Lagrange. The wine was bottled last July. It has a classically styled nose, certainly not as complex as in more benevolent seasons, lighter and slightly leafier in style. The palate is medium-bodied and well-balanced, with fine tannins and a little chalkiness toward the finish. I would drink this over the next 10 to 15 years."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2021 Lagrange was picked from 12 September to 12 October at just 30hL/ha and matured in 60% new oak. The Grand Vin represents 39% of the crop. It offers light red berry fruit on the nose, with a touch of mint developing over time. The palate is medium-bodied with grainy tannins, well-balanced, not a powerful Saint-Julien but it conveys a sense of finesse. Drink this over the next 12-15 years."

- NM, Vinous

"The 2021 Lagrange turned out beautifully. Succulent red cherry, plum, cedar, tobacco, spice, and mocha infuse the 2021 with gorgeous depth. Soft, succulent, and inviting, Lagrange is wonderfully appealing. It will drink well with minimal cellaring."

- AG, Vinous

"The 2021 Lagrange has a ton of potential. Bright Cabernet inflections lead into a core of red/purplish fruit. This mid-weight, gracious Saint-Julien is all class, all the way. Layered and super-expressive, Lagrange is a winner in 2021. Tasted two times."

- AG, Vinous

"Showing better from bottle than barrels, the 2021 Château Lagrange has a healthy ruby/purple hue to go with a gorgeous nose of blackcurrants, violets, chalky minerality, and graphite. It's rich, medium-bodied, has a concentrated, layered mouthfeel, beautiful tannins, and a great finish. It's a seriously impressive, layered, concentrated 2021 with tons to love. The blend is 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Merlot, and 2% Petit Verdot, aged 21 months in 50% new barrels. Give bottles 2-4 years and enjoy over the following 15+."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"The Grand Vin 2021 Château Lagrange is clearly a step up, offering a deeper, richer style that stays firmly planted in the fresher, more elegant style of the vintage. Based on 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Merlot, and 2% Petit Verdot, representing a selection of just 39% of the total production, it has terrific mid-palate density as well as classic notes of cassis, darker plums, chocolate, and integrated oak. It's beautifully done and should easily be an outstanding wine that will benefit from just a handful of years in the cellar."

- Jeb Dunnuck

"I always tend to find Lagrange too oaky, and this vintage is no exception, but the level of woodwork does not spoil the perfume, which is as pure and bright as I can remember from this Château. However, the oak accentuates the tannins on the finish, but, overall, this is a confident and finely tuned Lagrange. 17.5. "

- Matthew Jukes

"Dark ruby, opaque core, purple at narrow rim. Fresh cherries, blackberry compote, fine noble wood spices, a touch of orange zest. Medium-bodied, red cherry fruit, fine tannins, mineral with a long length; a fine companion at the table."

- PM, Falstaff Magazine
