

Leoville du Marquis de Las Cases 1994

CSPC# 766137

Gift pack: 750mlx6 (various vintages)

13.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc

Appellation

Saint Julien

Website

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

General Info

Chateau Leoville Las Cases is a second growth Bordeaux estate located on the northern end of the Saint-Julien appellation adjacent to the Gironde River. Leoville Las Cases is a perfect example of why the 1855 Bordeaux classification desperately needs to be updated. Although rated a second growth, Leoville Las Cases consistently produces wine of first growth quality. Like its next-door neighbor, Chateau Latour, Leoville Las Cases maintains a reputation for making stellar wine even in difficult vintages. It is the undisputed crown jewel of St. Julien, and unequivocally one of the best wines in Bordeaux.

Vineyards

The vineyards of Léoville-Las-Cases lie in the northernmost tip of the St Julien appellation, abutting the Gironde, and only separated from those of Château Latour to the north by the *Juillac*, which drains into the *Gironde*. Whereas the other Léoville vineyards, those of Barton and Poyferré, consist of a patchwork of numerous plots, those of Las-Cases are largely concentrated in this single block. This is the *Grand Clos*, a walled vineyard, the stone wall contiguous with that running around Latour, the highlight of which is the stone archway surmounted by the lion of Las-Cases, which can also be found above the doorway to the tasting room at the *château* (above), and which also graces the label. Totalling over 200 acres, Leoville Las Cases is comprised of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14.5% Merlot, and .5% Cabernet Franc.

Maturation

The fruit is harvested by hand, usually by a team of workers from Spain, before transport to the *chai*, where the berries are destemmed before a gentle pressing and then fermented under temperature-controlled conditions. The fermentation vessels include a fascinating mix of wooden, cement and stainless-steel vats. When finished the wine is pumped from the *chai* to the barrel cellar on the other side of the road through an underground pipe. Here it is transferred into oak *barrique*, between 50% and 100% new for the *grand vin*, Château Léoville-Las-Cases.

Tasting Notes

Dark garnet color. Pleasant smoky, spicy (pepper) and prune bouquet. Full bodied and well balanced. Fruity mid-palate and a slight mentholated note. The tannin remains quite heavy at this point. This is not a super concentrated monster but it's undoubtedly very pleasurable and elegant as of today. One of Medoc's success in this complicated vintage

Serve with

Roast lamb, red meat in general, duck or goose, game.

Cellaring

Drink 2002-2025

Scores/Awards

93 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #109 - February 1997

92-94 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #104 - April 1996

92-95 points - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #98 - April 1995

91 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 2012

93 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 2011

94 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - March 2008

92-94 points - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - July 2004

18 points - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - August 2012

93 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only)

18 points - La Revue du Vin France (score only)

Reviews

"Michel Delon, a great man, is the consummate proprietor, meticulously administering this vast estate spread out along the St-Julien/Pauillac border, separated from Latour's finest vineyard by a mere ten feet. The 1993-95 vintages from Delon are brilliant wines. Leoville-Las-Cases remains one of the irrefutable reference points for high class Bordeaux. One of the more massive Medocs of the vintage, this opaque purple-colored wine exhibits fabulous richness and volume in the mouth. Layers of pure black-cherry and cassis fruit are intermixed with stony, mineral-like scents, as well as high quality toasty oak. Medium to full-bodied, with a sweet, rich entry, this



Reviews *wine possesses plenty of tannin, yet fabulous extract and length. Leoville-Las-Cases is one of the half-dozen great wines of the Medoc in 1994. Anticipated maturity: 2002-2025. This lion never falls asleep on the job!"*
- RP, Wine Advocate

"This great estate, run with extraordinary passion and brilliance by Michel Delon, has once again turned in superlative efforts - wines that are unquestionably of first-growth quality. The 1994 is one of the top ten wines of the vintage. It possesses a degree of opulence, fat, and intensity that is rarely found in a 1994 Medoc. The opaque purple color is followed by extraordinarily pure, cassis, vanillin, and spice aromas that will develop into something even more complex. The wine is full-bodied, with layers of highly extracted, well-balanced and well-defined fruit and structure. Tannic and backward, it should reach maturity in a decade and last for 20-30 years. The 1994 Las Cases is one of the great successes of the vintage. All of the wines in this segment were tasted between March 19 and March 28 in Bordeaux. Most of the important wines from both the 1994 and 1995 vintages were tasted three separate times during my ten-day stay in Bordeaux."
- RP, Wine Advocate

"Michel Delon, the proprietor of this renowned second-growth (first-growth in quality, however) stated that if the rain had not arrived when it did, he was, "convinced 1994 would have been the greatest vintage of the century." Leoville Las-Cases produced a modest 45 hectoliters per hectare, with the older vines producing an average of 20 hectoliters per hectare. Only 40% of the harvest was utilized in the grand vin. The 1994 is a classic Las Cases, with the sweetness, fleshiness, and richness of such great Las Cases as 1990, 1985, and 1982, as well as the structure, power, and tannic definition of the classic, backward, vin de garde 1986. The wine displays a nearly opaque dark ruby/purple color, and the tell-tale Las Cases nose of vividly pure blackcurrants, minerals, and subtle new oak. There is great flavor extraction, superb balance and purity, and moderate to high tannin in the finish. It is a wine of exceptional intensity and texture, which is remarkable given its medium body. Because of the low acidity, it should be approachable by age five and last for 25-30 years."
- RP, Wine Advocate

"Tasted at 28-50 restaurant at the 1994 dinner. The Las-Cases '94 has always been a strong Left Bank wine up there with the First Growths. This bottle does not quite match previous performances. It still displays impressive intensity on the nose with cedar, sous-bois, briary and a touch of wild mint that borders on menthol. The palate is medium-bodied and not quite as complex as previous bottles. It displays fine cohesion and well-judged acidity. It remains masculine and foursquare and perhaps it has its nose slightly put out of joint by the affable nature and liveliness on the finish of the Leoville Barton. Still, this has very good substance and should continue to drink well for another decade. Drink now-2022. Tasted November 2011."
- NM, Wine Journal

"Tasted at the Las-Cases off-line at The Square. One of Delon's great successes is the under-the-radar '94. Here it has a vibrant blackberry, cedar and mocha-tinged nose, mint developing with time with a cheeky hint of menthol. Wonderful focus and delineation here. The palate is medium-bodied with firm, obdurate tannins, typically masculine and foursquare, but you cannot ignore the thrust and power of this Las-Cases with impressive weight and grip towards the finish. Excellent. Tasted February 2011."
- NM, Wine Journal

"Paired against the 1993 by Jean-Hubert Delon at the chateau, this remains the Las-Cases that I completely misread when first encountered. There is a little more ripeness on the nose with black cherries, a touch of dates and a slight scents of brine/seaweed that I find most attractive. The palate is very smooth and velvety, a Las-Cases flirting with opulence rather than actually attaining it. Very pure, slightly more alcoholic than I recall and, on the finish, I prefer the tension on the 1993. Yet overall, I think this is a slightly better wine than that: more cohesive and greater length. Drink 2010-2035+. Tasted October 2007."
- NM, Wine Journal

"An enervated bottle first tasted in January 2000, but in July 2004 it was showing its class. A wonderful Pauillac-like, minty nose - very fresh and vibrant. Quite fat on the palate with cassis and blueberry. Seamless tannins. Very harmonious with a citrus/orange zest touch on the finish. I stand corrected - this is an excellent Las-Cases which has the joie-de-vivre of the 1985. Very impressive for the vintage."
- NM, Wine Journal

Reviews *“This wine shows an undeniable tinge of maturity as it hits the decanter, but at its core there is plenty of red pigment. It isn't the most expressive wine on the nose at first, and despite remaining in contact with the air for several hours it doesn't really develop in this respect. There is a little dark and smoky-dusty fruit, with subtle elements of seashell and black olive behind. Its character on the palate reflects this rather reserved and stolid character on the nose, as it shows a fine structure with a good weight and sweet, dusty tannins combined with nuanced notes of violets and a gentle perfume of tea leaf. Supple, with an overt structure although it is balanced by a gentle, sinewy flesh, And in the finish, just a little trace of muscly tannin. Attractive, a very good claret for roast beef or similar, I think. Ready, but no rush; I suspect this will be good for ten years yet, and probably much longer than that.”*

- CK, The Wine Doctor
