Château Lafite Rothschild

A monument to Pauillac finesse, Château Lafite Rothschild 2020 expresses aristocratic restraint and detail, revealing profound structure and clarity born from one of Bordeaux's most illustrious terroirs.

GRAND VIN DE LAFITE ROTHSCHILD

100 WineEnthusiast

1er Cru Classé 2020

Bordeaux, France

Region and Vineyards

Château Lafite Rothschild is situated at the northern tip of the Pauillac appellation in the Médoc, a privileged position that benefits from gravelly soils and proximity to the Gironde estuary. The estate's terroir—composed primarily of deep gravel with sand and limestone—encourages excellent drainage and ideal conditions for ripening Cabernet Sauvignon.

The vineyards span approximately 112 hectares, with vines averaging 40 years of age, although some parcels trace back to the late 19th century. Pauillac is known for producing structured and age-worthy wines, and Lafite's location just south of Saint-Estèphe, bordering Cos d'Estournel, gives it a unique microclimate. The 2020 growing season was marked by a very early vegetative cycle, followed by a hot and dry summer, which—despite climatic challenges such as August storms—yielded remarkably balanced, age-worthy fruit.

Winemaking

The 2020 blend is composed of **92% Cabernet Sauvignon**, **7% Merlot**, and **1% Petit Verdot**, emphasizing structure and aromatic purity. The grapes were harvested earlier than usual, beginning in early September, due to accelerated ripening from a hot summer. Despite climatic pressures, meticulous vineyard management ensured optimal physiological maturity.

The vinification process remains traditional, with fermentation carried out in temperature-controlled stainless steel and concrete vats. Following fermentation, the wine undergoes aging in **100% new French oak barrels**, lasting approximately **18 to 20 months**, depending on the parcel. The élevage process is carefully monitored to maintain the clarity and tension that Lafite is known for. Bottled in March 2022, the wine exhibits clarity, purity, and remarkable aromatic depth even in its youth.

Alcohol :13,30 %

Composition: 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 1% Petit Verdot

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Tasting Notes

- **Color**: Deep garnet with vibrant violet reflections, indicating both concentration and youth.
- **Aroma**: Exquisitely refined nose of blackcurrant, graphite, cedar, and crushed violets, layered with hints of pencil shavings, dark chocolate, and fine tobacco leaf.
- **Palate**: Silky, precise, and linear, the palate reveals a core of pure cassis and ripe black cherry supported by polished tannins and a vein of minerality. The finish is long, cool, and impressively composed, with subtle notes of cigar box, gravel, and a saline lift.

Did you know?

The estate's documented history dates back to the 14th century, but it wasn't until **1868** that Baron James de Rothschild acquired Lafite. Since then, it has remained under Rothschild stewardship, although a different branch from that of Château Mouton Rothschild. Lafite is also famed for its enduring reputation as one of the most collectible wines globally—Napoleon is said to have insisted on it during his exile.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Roast rack of lamb with rosemary**: The wine's structure and herbal nuances complement lamb's richness and savory herbs.
- **Duck breast with blackcurrant reduction**: The cassis character in the wine echoes the sauce, enhancing both.
- **Aged Comté or Gruyère cheese**: The umami and nuttiness of aged cheeses harmonize beautifully with the wine's tertiary notes.
- **Beef Wellington**: The wine's elegance offsets the dish's intensity, while tannins cut through the richness of the pastry and meat.

100 WineEnthusiast

Wine Enthusiast (WE) : 100 Points (2020)

*Structured, dense and with great concentration, this wine is magnificent. Its black fruits and density indicate the power of the wine and its longevity. At the same time, the wine has the elegance that is always associated with this estate. *Editors' Choice* (RV)*

100 James Suckling

James Suckling (JS) : 100 Points (2020)

Amazing aromas here with tobacco, crushed stone, cigar box, currants, tar, and lead pencil, as well as spices, iron, and dried ginger. Medium- to full-bodied, with a density and tightness. Very compact and complex. Racy. Delicacy with strength. Orange peel undertones. A wine to contemplate. You must understand it to understand the great Lafites of the past and those of the future. Only 12.8% alcohol. 92% cabernet sauvignon, 7% merlot and 1% petit verdot. Best after 2030, but drink it if you have the chance taste it.

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Jeb Dunnuck (JD) : 100 Points (2020)

Looking at the Grand Vin, the 2020 Château Lafite-Rothschild is a sensational effort checking in as 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot that hit 12.8% natural alcohol and a pH of 3.94. As Lafite as Lafite gets, this ultra-classic reveals a dense ruby/plum hue as well as a tight, yet layered bouquet of ripe blackcurrants, smoked tobacco, freshly sharpened pencils, graphite, and subtle spice. Flawlessly balanced, deep, concentrated, and layered, it has an incredible mid-palate, building, perfect tannins, and a finish that leaves you salivating. Refined, elegant, and perfection are the buzz words here. Unfortunately, it's not for the instant gratification crowd, and I wouldn't be surprised to see this require 15 years to hit the early stages of its prime drinking window. It will probably hit its 100th birthday in fine form.

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