

Château Lynch Bages 2016

CSPC# 832565	750mlx12	13.5% alc./vol.
CSPC# 756474	750mlx6	13.5% alc./vol.
CSPC# 866105	750mlx6	13.5% alc./vol.

Grape Variety 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot
Appellation Pauillac

Classification Fifth Growth. Cinquieme Grand Cru Classe in 1855
Website <http://www.jmcazes.com/en/chateau-lynch-bages/grand-cru-classe>

General Info Château Lynch-Bages was owned by the Lynch family for three quarters of a century. They descended from John Lynch, a young Irishman from Galway who was chased out of his country in 1691. In the 18th century, Count Jean-Baptiste Lynch, mayor of Bordeaux, inherited the estate and handed over management to his brother Michel Lynch, who was also mayor of Pauillac during the French Revolution. Jean-Charles Cazes, highly respected in the Médoc for his experience in viticulture and winemaking, bought the property in 1934. With his son André, he devoted all his energy to Lynch-Bages for more than 35 years. In 1974, his grand-son Jean-Michel Cazes set about restructuring and managing the estate and recently, in 2006, handed over the running of the property to his son Jean-Charles.

Winemaker Jean Michel Cazes

Vintage In 2016, there were two main trends in the weather as we experienced it in Pauillac:
– a very wet winter and spring: more than half of the annual rainfall came in the first four months of the year, including a record 240 mm in January.
– an extremely dry summer and autumn without any significant rainfall, resulting in a water deficit at the end of the year. As a consequence of the summer drought, the grapes were numerous but remained rather small, making for density and concentration. High temperatures in August and September allowed for slow ripening and excellent maturity, so that the harvest started with the Merlot on 26 September and continued in perfect conditions until 14 October.

In the vat house, each grape variety and each plot were, as usual, vinified separately in order to let their intrinsic character shine through. The wines, which have now been blended, offer remarkable colour, intense fruit and spice aromas and a dense texture of very rich and well-rounded tannins. Its density and substance make the 2016 vintage comparable with the finest so far this century.

Vineyards Stretching over some 100 hectares in the commune of Pauillac, the vineyards of Lynch-Bages lie entirely upon the soil of choice for great wines, formed along the estuary by the alluvia from the gravel of Médoc. The property sits among favourably designed hillcrests located south and southwest of the city. This particular topography allows for both a natural drainage of soils to the river and, with help of the water table in shallow areas, a fine feeding of water for the vines. The red wine vineyard of Lynch-Bages extends across a homogeneous soil and subsoil of deep Garonne gravel. Early yielding, scantily fertile and well drained, these soils are particularly favourable for Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. In the plots located along the river and the Gaët channel, the Garonne gravel soil is associated with clayey subsoil, more specifically suitable for Merlot. There is also a small part of the vineyard of predominantly sandy gravel, ideally suited for growing Cabernet Franc, which helps to yield lighter, aromatic, and nicely rounded wines. This analysis of the characteristics of the terroir, recorded during the planting of the varieties, has made it possible to identify an optimal planting. It is now composed of 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. The average age of the vines is about 30 years old, with the oldest vines over 60 years old.

Harvest 27-30 September



Maturation	<p>Running off took place after an average 20 days of vatting, from 18 October to 2 November, and the distinctive signs of a great vintage began to become apparent: full maturity of all varietals, particularly noticeable in terms of seed and skin tannins; no vegetal flavours (herbaceous notes, green pepper, etc.) thanks to summer heat peaks that limited pyrazines; small berries, mainly in the Cabernet, which increased the marc/juice ratio in the vat and made the wine richer, in terms of both structure and aroma; a very marked acidity, thanks to cool nights in September and early October and a perfect sanitary state.</p> <p>Like for previous vintages, one third of malolactic fermentation took place in vats and two thirds in barrels. Fermentation was quite quick, by the end of November it had ended for all the estate's batches, and we were able to begin blending.</p> <p>Aged in French oak barrels for 18 months (75% new wood)</p>
Tasting Notes	<p>Deep garnet red in colour, Château Lynch-Bages 2016 has the characteristics of a remarkably mature vintage. The nose is very expressive with notes of dark fruit (blackcurrant, morello cherry, etc.) mixed with fresh touches of mint. The attack is smooth, revealing an exceptional substance, supported by a wonderful freshness. The tannins are already remarkably well-blended.</p>
Serve with	<p>Chateau Lynch Bages is best served with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes</p>
Cellaring	<p>Drink 2022-2058</p>
Scores/Awards	<p>97 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2019 96-99 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2017 97+ points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Wine Advocate Interim Issue - November 2018 97-99 points - Neal Martin, Wine Advocate #230 - April 28, 2017 97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - February 2019 98-99 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - March 2017 95 points/Cellar Selection - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - May 2019 96-98 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - April 1, 2017 17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - October 2018 17.5 points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 5, 2017 95 points - Jane Anson, Decanter.com - April 2017 97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 13, 2018 92 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - April 29,2017 97 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2017 18+ points - Farr Vintner - February 2017 93-95 points - Derek Smedley, MW - April 2017 96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - January 2019 92-95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - April 2017 95+ points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - February 2019</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"This is built for the cellar, with a generous core of kirsch, raspberry paste and plum preserve flavors waiting to unfurl. Will take time, due to the licorice snap, roasted apple wood and sweet tobacco elements draped over the fruit. Should meld with age, as the structure is invigorating in feel, showing both acidity and tannins in lockstep with the fruit. Best from 2025 through 2040."</i> - JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"This flashes some sporty flavors of ripe cassis, plum and blackberry compote, but quickly pulls everything together with the terrific graphite spine. Alluring tobacco and anise notes line the finish. Delivers fruit, power and cut. A great showing. Score range: 96-99"</i> - JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2016 Lynch Bages comes charging out of the gate with pronounced cassis, chocolate-covered cherries, mulberries and menthol notions, backed up by scents of garrigue, tilled soil and a waft of tapenade. Medium to full-bodied, rich and fantastically concentrated, the generous fruit is superbly framed by firm, ripe, grainy tannins with tons of pepper, cinnamon and cloves layers coming through on the finish. Truly, a legendary Lynch Bages!"</i> - LPB, Wine Advocate</p>

Reviews

"The 2016 Lynch Bages is a blend of 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot with 13.7% alcohol and an IPT of 95, the highest ever for this property and probably one of the highest on the Left Bank this vintage. It was picked between from 27-30 September for the young vines, then the picking team stopped, restarting on 3 October with the Merlot and the Cabernets finished on 12 October. This vintage is matured in 75% new oak. It has a very concentrated, almost opaque bouquet that required some coaxing from the glass, developing floral and crushed limestone scents with time: disarmingly fresh and with stunning vivacity. The palate is concentrated and tannic, although they are not obtrusive and appear neatly embroidered into the multi-layered black fruit. This is a classic Lynch Bages with ambition and recalls vintages like 1990, a Lynch Bages built for long-term ageing. That arching backbone is counterbalanced by the keen line of acidity and a freshness that knows no bounds. There is ethereal delineation and tension on the finish, but I would give this at least ten years in bottle to enjoy this audacious Lynch Bages at its peak. Maybe the biggest surprise of the vintage, this has all the makings of a sensational wine."

- NM, Wine Advocate

"Very rich and exotic with blackberry, black-tea, graphite and lead-pencil aromas. Full-bodied, dense and structured with lots of ripe tannins and a long, flavorful finish of currants and forest floor, combined with fresh mushrooms and bark. Needs four to five years to show its true potential. Try after 2024."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This is really back-ended thanks to a powerful and almost endless finish. Full-bodied, dense and powerful with incredible concentration and length. Round and polished tannins. Layered. This unravels bit by bit. Energetic acidity gives it such superb freshness. This is at the 2010/2009 level."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Rich, jammy and powerful, this wine is all about concentration and firm tannins. Ripe black-currant flavors add great juiciness at the end. The wine has magnificent potential. Drink from 2025."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"96–98. Barrel Sample. This wine is ripe and opulent, while still elegant. The balance is fine, showing plenty of concentration and a light touch of acidity. Black currant fruit matches the tannins and structure, making this one for the long term."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"Heady, herbal nose. (New winery will be ready for 2019 vintage apparently.) Rich and layered but a bit less intense than the Ch Pichon Baron tasted immediately before. Rich. Should age well."

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"Very annoyingly, my tasting note on Lynch Bages has evaporated into thin air. I remember the wine as being delightfully plump yet structured and very recognisably Lynch with its trademark spiciness - so there don't seem to be any ill effects to its being made in a completely different place from usual (see pictures above) but more than that I cannot say for the moment. (I am trying to track down another sample.) I think I have remembered the score correctly but am much less certain about the drinking dates I have suggested here. All to be taken with a pinch of salt, I'm afraid."

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"As we have increasingly seen in recent years, Lynch-Bages has shifted up a gear to go fuller, bigger and darker. The IPTs are around 95 here, which is unusual even in the northern Médoc, although they are unquestionably yielding, pliable and expertly worked tannins. The result is a hugely impressive wine with a creamy texture through the mid-palate and lashings of dark fruits, graphite and the essential addition of mint leaf freshness on the finish. From a blend of 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, with a yield around 42hl/ha, a touch lower than some because the deep gravel produced small berries, all coming in at 3.66pH and accounting for 65% of the overall production. This is a great Lynch without doubt, one for Pauillac purists who are looking for powerful impact."

- JA, Decanter.com

Reviews

"Like Grand-Puy-Lacoste, Lynch has made a Fifth Growth wine of First Growth quality in 2016. This is a stunningly pure Pauillac, with incredible focus, balance and harmony. Mocha oak leads into a fresh, leafy, grassy palate of understated concentration. 2029-40"

- TA, timatkin.com

"Intensity, concentration, character and length combine perfectly. In fact, everything here is in perfect proportion. The tobacco, smoke, wet earth, lead pencil and mocha nuances add to the ripe, sweet, dark red, earthy fruits. There is energy in the long, mouth-filling finish."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Powerful, concentrated and long and with depth of flavor, this wine is rich and fat, like someone wearing a gold Rolex and a diamond pinkie ring. There is a refined, stern, masculine quality to the fruit with a finish that lasts and sustains the layers of fresh, sweet black currants. This is probably the best Lynch Bages since 1989/1990. Produced from 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, this wine is aging in 75% new French oak barrels. Reaching 13.4% alcohol with a pH of 3.69, the picking took place September 28 to October 12 and the Grand Vin represents 65% of the harvest."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Lynch Bages is one of the most popular and reliable Châteaux of Bordeaux. Release prices of this archetypal Pauillac are usually modest compared to those that consumers are happy to pay for mature vintages. This much-loved Chateau, owned by the Cazes family for nearly a century, consistently makes one of our most demanded and biggest selling wines. Jean-Michel Cazes' son, Jean-Charles, is now in charge here and recent vintages have been amongst the best ever. Classic Pauillac is made here with cassis fruit, a touch of mint and cigar box aromas. 76% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, and 2% Petit Verdot. 75% new oak this year, with two thirds of the production going into the Grand Vin. Dense and brooding on the nose, with blackcurrant, blackberry, wood smoke and sweet vanilla. The palate is bold, robust and firm with rich black fruit framed by chewy, ripe and refined tannins. There is great weight and intensity, but it builds layers of complexity and freshness through the mid-palate. Cedar, black chocolate, nutmeg and clove all meld with fruit and tannin, before focusing through to a very fine, long, harmonious and yet concentrated finish. A really fantastic Lynch Bages, a firm favourite from all at Farr in 2016."

- Farr Vintners

"The nose has sweetness depth of flavour the palate ripe black cherry and cassis a complex mix. Bright in the middle the tannins integrated the fresher fruits giving a lighter feel on the back palate. The finish has sweet fruit and good depth. 2025-40"

- Derek Smedley MW

"A stellar wine, the 2016 Lynch-Bages is dark and explosive in the glass. Beams of tannin and bright acids give the 2016 its sense of drive and tension. From bottle, the 2016 is quite a bit more powerful than it was from barrel. Dark flavors and potent tannins give the 2016 a distinctly brooding, somber feel. Sage, lavender, menthol, licorice and wild cherry are all laced into the potent, dramatically sweeping finish. Readers should not be in a rush, as the 2016 is going to need a number of years to be at its best. Even so, it is super-impressive today. Drink 2026 - 2056."

- AG, Vinous

"The 2016 Lynch-Bages is deep, racy and sensual, with soft contours, silky tannins and striking juiciness in its fruit. All of the elements seem to fall into place effortlessly. Today, Lynch-Bages is unusually well put together for such a young wine. Expressive floral aromatics give the flavors lift, energy and brightness, while beams of present but well-integrated tannins extend the finish."

- AG, Vinous

"The flagship 2016 Château Lynch Bages is a powerhouse, raised in 75% new French oak. This deep, concentrated, powerful 2016 is going to be one for the ages, but if you're looking for instant gratification, this isn't for you. Saturated purple-colored, with thick black fruits, graphite, and scorched earth aromas and flavors, it fills the mouth with fruit, has masses of tannins, and beautiful overall balance. Don't even think about opening bottles before 7-8 years from now, and it's going to have 3-4 decades of longevity. Drink 2026-2066."

- Jeb Dunnuck
