

Château Pichon-Longueville Baron 2021

CSPC# 102703

750mlx6

12.9% alc./vol.

Grape Variety	88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot
Appellation	Pauillac
Classification	Second Growth. Deuxième Grand Cru Classe in 1855
Website	http://www.pichonlongueville.com/
Analysis	pH: 3.6
Sustainability	Both the Pichon and Lalande estates are committed to sustainable farming, focusing on organic and biodynamic viticulture. Methods are fastidious both in the winery and out in the vineyards, which have held an accreditation in Sustainable Agriculture since 2003.
General Info	<p>Château Pichon-Longueville Baron, a leading Pauillac 2ème Cru Classé estate, is one of Bordeaux's most illustrious "super seconds". In 1987 it was bought by the AXA Millésimes Group, who also own Cantenac-Brown, Petit-Village, Suduiraut. AXA built a state of the art cuverie and chai at Pichon-Longueville Baron, while, in 2000, Christian Seely took over from Jean-Michel Cazes as general manager. The Cabernet-dominated Pichon-Longueville Baron is a more muscular, tannic and full-bodied wine than that of its neighbour across the road, Pichon-Longueville Comtesse de Lalande. The <i>grand vin</i> is Chateau Longueville au Baron de Pichon-Longueville. The second wine is Les Tourelles de Longueville, introduced with the 1986 vintage.</p> <p>Jean-Rene Matignon started with the Left Bank Bordeaux property in 1985. In three short years, Pichon Baron once again began producing wines of world class quality. The first vintage that brought this historic estate back to prominence was the sublime 1989 followed by the even better 1990. When Jean-Michel Cazes retired from Pichon-Baron in 2000, Christian Seely was asked to take over the management of Pichon Baron as well as the other seven properties of the wine group including Château Suduiraut in Sauternes, Château Petit Village in Pomerol, Chateau Pibran in Pauillac and Quinta do Noval in Portugal. AXA also maintains an interest in Burgundy with Domaine de l'Arlet. Christian Seely has managed many of these estates since 1993. AXA also owns one of the larger Bordeaux wine négociant companies, Compagnie Medocaine.</p>
Winemaker	Jean-René Matignon - Technical Director
Vintage	<p>2021 began with a very mild but extremely wet winter, followed by dry weather from mid-February onwards. An almost summery period in the last week of March hastened bud break, which became widespread from 25th to 26th March - 5 to 6 days earlier than usual. Periods of severe frost then occurred during the first half of April. Flowering then took place in very good weather conditions.</p> <p>In June, stormy weather caused mildew pressure, requiring great vigilance. July and early August were rainy and cool. Veraison progressed slowly and was completed at the end of August.</p> <p>From mid-August to mid-September, a 4-week period of dry weather boosted ripening of seeds and polyphenols. This period without rainfall allowed the Cabernets to ripen well.</p>
Vineyards	The 73 hectare vineyards of Chateau Pichon Baron are planted to 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. However, the Cabernet Franc and the Petit Verdot are reserved exclusively for the second wine. This marks a change in the makeup of the vineyard with the addition of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. The vineyard is planted to a vine density is 9,000 vines per hectare using a double Guyot training. The average age of the vines is 30 years. However, the estate has old vines. The oldest vines date all the way back the 1930's. While the vineyard occupies 73 hectares of vines, the grapes used for Pichon Baron come from the 40 best hectares in the vineyard.
Harvest	The vintage was harvested at the end of September with low yields. The harvest took place from 27th September to 1st October for the Merlot and from 30th September to 7th October for the Cabernet-Sauvignon.



Winemaking	<p>Plot-by-plot selection is fully controlled in our wooden and stainless-steel vats, designed to adapt vinification to each parcel. This year, we have placed even more emphasis on the quality of the fruit by extending the cold pre-fermentation period before starting fermentation with our vintage wild yeast from grapes grown in the old Cabernet-Sauvignon plots of the Plateau.</p> <p>Maceration temperatures ranged from 24 to 29°C. Extractions were preferably performed during mid-fermentation, and the duration of post-fermentation maceration was refined through daily tastings. We drew off the Merlots from 14th to 24th October and the Cabernets from 26th October to 2nd November. Malolactic fermentation continued apace in vats, allowing regular racking in separate batches. The wine was transferred to barrels in mid-November.</p> <p>Aged in 70% in new barrels, 30% from barrels of one vintage for 18 months</p>
Tasting Notes	<p>Our Grand Vin Château Pichon Baron 2nd Grand Cru Classé in 1855 comes from the very oldest vines grown on the historic plots of the estate. This authentic Pauillac offers an amazing sensory experience with its black fruit flavours and spicy hints. Château Pichon Baron shows great elegance, intensity, and exceptional length on the palate. It is a wine that improves year after year and can age for over 40 years in the cellar.</p>
Winemaker's Notes	<p>Château Pichon Baron 2021 features a gorgeous and sustained ruby-red colour with a nice density. The bouquet is still a little restrained, beginning with the notes of fresh blackcurrant, herbs and berries that are typical of its primary grape variety. After aerating, notes of flowers, fresh cherry and raspberry develop alongside aromas of barrel ageing. This combination forms a deep, complex, and elegant whole. The attack is smooth yet ample. On the palate, this wine is velvety and creamy with flavours of vanilla and spice. The finish is long, dominated by minerality and distinctive, luscious and licoricey tannins. The whole experience is an exercise in tension, subtlety, and persistence</p>
Serve with	<p>Chateau Pichon Baron is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes.</p>
Production	<p>Approx. 12,000 cases made</p>
Cellaring	<p>Drink 2030-2060</p>
Scores/Awards	<p>94 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - December 2023 95 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - February 2024 94-96 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022 90-92 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - May 2022 95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2024 96-97 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022 95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2022 16.5+ points - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022 17 points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022 95 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022 94 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - December 2023 94 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - May 2022 96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2024 93-95 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022 95 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2022 92-95 points - Thomas Parker, Farr Vintners - April 2022 93-95 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022 96 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2024 95-97 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022 94 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2024 93-95 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022 18 points - Matthew Jukes - August 2022 96 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022 94 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022 94 points - Vert de Vin - July 2022 95-96 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - May 2022</p>
Reviews	<p><i>"This nicely rendered red unfurls nicely, offering notes of cassis, plum and black cherry puree gilded with violet and lilac hints. A long, sleek iron note stays embedded throughout, while late accents of black tea and warm earth help fill out the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Best from 2026 through 2040."</i></p>

Reviews

"The 2021 Pichon-Longueville Baron is showing very well in bottle, unwinding in the glass with notes of cassis, sweet berries and violets mingled with subtle hints of orange zest and cigar wrapper. Medium to full-bodied, fleshy, and layered, with good depth at the core, bright acids and sweet tannins that assert themselves on the gently structured finish, its serious, slightly reserved profile reflects the unusually high (89%) percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon. The 2021 concluded its élevage in large wooden vats for a month and a half, saw a touch less racking than normal, and was only fined with a small amount of gelatin, not egg white, as has been the rule at this address for several years now. Drink 2030-2060."

- WK, Wine Advocate

"A brilliant achievement, the 2021 Pichon-Longueville Baron opens in the glass with aromas of dark berries, blackcurrants, cigar wrapper, loamy soil, pencil shavings and licorice. Medium to full-bodied, deep, and layered, it's concentrated and penetrating, with terrific concentration and a beautifully refined, classy profile. A blend of fully 89% Cabernet Sauvignon and 11% Merlot, it represents the wine this great estate could have produced in 1996. One of the real successes of the vintage, readers who overlook this wine will live to regret it. (WK) 94-96+."

- WK, Wine Advocate

"Deep garnet-purple in color, the 2021 Pichon Baron needs a lot of swirling to conjure notes of ripe raspberries, fresh boysenberries, and cassis, plus suggestions of tree bark, violets, and fertile loam with a hint of cardamom. Light-bodied, the palate has a racy line and chewy tannins supporting the lithe, electrically charged fruit, finishing with compelling freshness. At 88% Cabernet Sauvignon to 12% Merlot, this is the highest-ever proportion of Cabernet in the blend, which will be aged for 18 months in French oak barrels, 70% of them new. 2027-2052."

- LPB, Wine Independent

"Black currant, violet, lemon blossom and black berry aromas. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and tobacco, black fruit, and cedar undertones. It's tight and chewy, suggesting it needs some bottle age. Some iodine. Oyster shell. 88% cabernet sauvignon. Give this four to five years. Try after 2027."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Blackcurrant, blueberry, violet and blackberry notes, as well as plenty of spices. Medium to full body with plenty of richness and blackcurrant and ink character. Tar and graphite, too. Precise and structured. Very Pichon Baron in nature here."

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"This wine's fruitiness is its star quality. Rich black Cabernet Sauvignon fruits and dark tannins are lifted by the wine's vivid flavors. At the same time, dense structure gives power to the wine."

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

"88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot. Aged for 18 months in barrels (70% new). Represents 50% of the estate's production in 2021. Cask sample. Like other wines from this estate, this wine has a distinctly pink rim and is not that concentrated a crimson. Smells ripe and satisfying. The palate is on a tightrope – only just ripe enough but one little tremor would be disastrous. Bone dry and defiant. Rather an inky finish. There is a little hole in the middle, but the palate entry is convincing and suave. Major refreshment factor! Drink 2028 – 2040."

- JR, JancisRobinson.com

"88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot. Cask sample. Distinctive Cabernet nose (highest percentage ever in the blend) with graphite and cassis notes. Very pure and precise. Dense, tight, and assertive on the palate, the tannins abundant but just a little wayward. Needs time to settle. Very long finish. Enough substance for ageing. (JL) 12.9% Drink 2030 – 2046."

- JL, JancisRobinson.com

Reviews *"The highest proportion of Cabernet Sauvignon ever in the blend at 88% completed by 12% Merlot. Cool red and blue fruits on the nose, smells so welcoming with blueberry, vanilla, and cola notes. A soft succulence straight away so you know there is good acidity, but the structure and the delicate tannins take over and fill the mouth, giving great Cabernet savoury and herbal aspects, filling and expansive while delivering the crystalline purity on the tongue in terms of texture. Tannins are so fine, but this is rich in its depth yet still so focussed and straight. The mid palate has weight but there's such drive and energy. The lick of stone is welcoming, giving the salinity and yet another element to taste and contemplate. Mighty, thrilling and a joy to taste. Elegant and classic in the best way - this will need some time but will be excellent. Drinking Window 2027 – 2048."*

- GH, Decanter.com

"Inky plum in colour, full of Pauillac character, cassis, fennel, pencil lead, liquorice and slate, bitter chocolate, creamy through the mid palate in a way that is unusual in 2021, with a foot on the break that gives a more understated, old school feel than recent vintages of Pichon Baron. Highest level of Cabernet Sauvignon to date (just a slice more than 2018), with 70% new oak for ageing. Harvest through to October 8."

- JA, janeanson.com

"Gorgeous depth through the palate, plenty of character, enjoyable, clear power to the well-structured tannins. There is less density than the past three vintages of Pichon Baron, but they focused instead savoury Cabernet-dominant fruits and added complexity by drawing out the fennel, rosemary and pencil lead character that keeps us firmly in Pauillac. Highest level of Cabernet Sauvignon ever (just more than 2018), with 70% new oak for ageing. Harvest through to October 8."

- JA, janeanson.com

"One of the wines of the vintage owes its character to having used the highest percentage of Cabernet in the history of the estate in the blend at 88% Cabernet Sauvignon, followed with 12% Merlot. Concentrated, rich, deep, fresh, and complex, the wine is packed with racy, energetic currants, cherries, plums, peppery spices and lift. There is concentration, and purity to the fruits that linger and expand. This is even better in the bottle than it was in the barrel, which is always the mark of a great wine. This is a perfect example of what a top, classically styled Pauillac should taste like. This is the final vintage produced by the incredibly talented, long-time technical director, Jean-Rene Matignon. With a few more years of age, this could score even higher. Drink from 2028-2060."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Produced using the highest percentage of Cabernet in the history of the estate, the wine blends 88% Cabernet Sauvignon and 12% Merlot. Here you find espresso, cigar box, cedar, soy, lead pencil and red with black currants on the nose. On the palate, the wine is fresh, bright, vibrant, spicy, and racy. The tannins are soft, the fruit carries a peppery edge, finishing with layers of sweet, chewy red fruits. This is a perfect example of what a good, classically styled Pauillac should taste like. This is also the final vintage produced by the incredibly talented, long-time technical director, Jean-Rene Matignon. Drink from 2028-2055."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"The 2021 is 88% Cabernet Sauvignon and 12% Merlot. The volume is down 35% on last year. Deep purple colour. The high level of Cabernet translates into blackcurrant and cedar on the nose. There is a toasty richness from the wood, but enough fruit to match. The palate has very refined black fruit, turning to red with high acidity on the palate. Tightly coiled with tannins that create a very linear, focused finish. This is highly precise but remains compact for now. It should achieve the upper end of the scoring bracket with some fleshing out in the bottle."

- TP, Farr Vintners

"The 2021 Pichon-Longueville Baron (which, incidentally, has been the legal name since 2021!) is matured in 70% new oak. It opens up nicely in the glass, revealing a straight-down-the-line, floral bouquet of violets intermingled with graphite notes. There is a delicacy about the aromatics that distinguishes it from recent vintages. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins, very pure and "athletic." No extra fat here; instead, perhaps, slender like the Mouton-Rothschild, which is not a bad thing. Nimble might be a better word. Very fine."

- NM, Vinous

Reviews *“Dark and brooding in bearing, the 2021 Pichon Baron is a somber, mysterious wine. It is every bit as impressive as it was en primeur. Graphite, leather, spice, mocha, and dried herbs meld together in a wine of power, precision, and contemporary classicism. It's one of my early favorites in this vintage. I won't be too surprised if it turns out even better than this note suggests.”*

- AG, Vinous

“The 2021 Pichon-Baron is a dense, packed wine, its mid-weight structure notwithstanding. There is a lot of wine here, but readers have to be patient. Red-toned fruit, blood orange, mint, rose petal and cinnamon add layers of nuance, but more than anything else, the 2021 stands out for its persistence.”

- AG, Vinous

“The flagship 2021 Château Pichon-Longueville Baron lives up to the billing. A blend of 88% Cabernet Sauvignon and 12% Merlot brought up in 70% new oak, it has a pure, medium-bodied, concentrated, flawlessly balanced style as well as pure cassis and subtle blue fruits, some floral, graphite, and cedar pencil nuances, silky tannins, and a great finish. It's not going to rival recent vintages in terms of concentration or depth, but it's nevertheless a brilliant 2021 that has so much to love. It's approachable and offers pleasure even today yet will ideally be given 5-7 years and enjoyed over the following 15+.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“As to the Grand Vin, the 2021 Château Pichon-Longueville Baron is 88% Cabernet Sauvignon and 12% Merlot that's a selection of 50% of the total production and is resting in 70% new barrels. This straight, pure, incredibly focused, and impressive 2021 has deep blue fruits as well as notes of cassis, graphite, chalky minerality, and hints of tobacco. It's elegant and balanced, with ripe tannins as well as good acidity and density.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Like many of the great estates on the Left Bank, Directeur Général Christian Seely used a considerable slice of Cabernet Sauvignon in his Grand Vin, making it more densely packed and also a composed style of wine. A dark, cool, and deep-rooted sense of place forms the structure here, and yet the nose and finish seem relatively suave and elegant. Cassis-soaked and impressively concentrated but in no way heavy, there is a refreshing character on the finish that shows greenness or austerity, marking the way for a successful future. 18.”

- Matthew Jukes

“Deep ruby core, purple reflections, subtle brightening on the rim. Fine noble wood spices with a touch of cassis, liquorice, red cherries, and nuances of orange zest. Medium-bodied, lively structure with delicate fruit sweetness. A fine and elegant wine with great ageing potential.”

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

“The nose is fruity, fresh and reveals a nice depth, concentration, definition, grain, definition, finesse, power, stretch. There are notes of pulpy blackberry, pulpy/full bodied blackcurrant and more lightly wild strawberry combined with fine touches of grey pepper, violet, spice, clove, cardamom, graphite, a subtle hint of vanilla and a subtle hint of blueberry (in the background). The palate is fruity and offers freshness, minerality, juiciness/minerality, good definition, lovely acidity, discreetly tight tension, depth, concentration, depth and purity. On the palate this wine expresses pulpy/juicy blackberry, fresh/acidic currant and more lightly violet/blueberry notes combined with hints of crunchy cherry, tonka bean, liquorice as well as a subtle hint of bourbon vanilla, a touch of sweet blond tobacco and tobacco. The tannins are elegant, smooth, supple and sapid. A fine, elegant wine, full of finesse and freshness.”

- Vert de Vin