

Château Figeac 2021

CSPC# 813879

750mlx6

13.0% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Cabernet Franc, 29% Merlot

Appellation

St. Emilion

Classification

Premier Grand Cru Classé

Website

<https://www.chateau-figeac.com/en/vintage/vintage-2021/>

Sustainability

Unsurprisingly, Château-Figeac is committed to preserving biodiversity, keeping nearly 12 hectares (30 acres) of the estate's 54 hectares (133 acres) as natural areas with meadows, a lake, an arboretum, a bamboo plantation, a heath planted with common, holm and cork oak, a three-kilometre hedge and Mrs Manoncourt's 1001 China rose bushes which punctuate the rows of vines. As well as creating an exceptional environment, these natural areas encourage extremely rich biodiversity, and the vineyard manager is always on the lookout for ways of improving things. An orchard created as part of Figeac's greenway will increase the population of pollinating insects. Château-Figeac is the only estate among Saint-Émilion's First Growths to have kept such extensive natural areas, due to the Manoncourt family's determination to protect them. They are an integral part of Château-Figeac's personality.

Château-Figeac committed to ISO 14001 certification in 2015 under the first Environmental Management System for the Bordeaux vineyard. The company has Level 3 HVE High Environmental Value certification.

General Info

Figeac is a very ancient estate, going back at least as far as the 2nd century AD, during the Gallo-Roman period, when a certain Figeacus gave his name to a villa he built on this location. The site has been continually inhabited ever since then, as proved by vestiges: a water-supply system dating from the Gallo-Roman period, foundations of buildings from the Middle Ages with defensive walls, and the remains of a Renaissance chateau reflected in the present-day chateau's great door and tower. Figeac belonged to the same family for more than 500 years and was nearly 200 hectares by the late 18th century. Unfortunately, the estate was sold a number of times in the 19th century. Successive owners sold numerous plots, which explains the birth of various chateaux that amended the name Figeac to their own. However, Figeac continues to be the largest estate in the commune of Saint-Emilion, with 40 hectares of vines. The central part of the chateau, built in a very pure, classical architectural style, dates from the late 18th century.

One of the great names and terroirs of Saint Emilion whose wines exude class and sophistication rather than raw power. There have been some serious improvements here recently under winemaker Frédéric Faye. Michel Rolland has been brought in to consult - but not to change the unique Figeac style. Modern techniques such as vibrating sorting tables, destemming and an optical laser sorting line are being used, as well as 100% new oak barrels from 7 different coopers. As a consequence, the wines produced now seem a little riper and more polished than before but are still fine, pure and classic. Unusually for the right bank there is only 30% Merlot in the vineyard with 35% Cabernet Franc and - rare on the right bank - 35% Cabernet Sauvignon. Valmy Nicolas from La Conseillante has been brought in to sort out the commercial side. A sizeable part of production is relegated to the second label - Petit Figeac. After two stunning vintages in 2015 and 2016 Figeac is one of the hottest properties in Bordeaux. The 2018 harvest lasted nearly a month from the picking of the first Merlot to the last Cabernet. The blend is 37% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc and 33% Cabernet Sauvignon with a yield of 39 hl/ha and 100% new oak. 14 degrees. 10,000 cases with 4500 of Petit Figeac. Frederic compares this wine to his magnificent 2016 but describes it as being "more crystalline and focused".

Winemakers

Frédéric Faye. Michel Rolland consults.



Vintage	<p>Nurtured by a mild and wet late winter, the vines began their growth two weeks early. A cold snap at the end of March mobilized the team to protect the vines over many nights. The cool and humid months of May and June slowed vine growth. Better weather from early July triggered véraison on the usual date (July 16th). August and September were sunny and unusually dry, bringing slow and steady ripening.</p> <p>After harvesting the Merlots at the end of September, the team made the audacious decision to ignore alarming weather forecasts for the weekend of October 2nd, determined to wait for optimum maturity of the Cabernets. Their intuition was correct, as only a few drops of rain fell and the following two weeks brought radiant sunshine and dry winds. The Cabernets took advantage of this weather to achieve unexpectedly perfect ripeness</p>
Vineyards	<p>Figeac is owned by Thierry Manoncourt and is located in the north-west of the appellation with its vineyards adjoining those of Cheval Blanc. Its 40 hectares of vineyards (Cabernet Sauvignon 35%, Merlot 30%, Cabernet Franc 35%) lie on a deep, Médoc-like gravel topsoil ('Graves') over a flinty, iron-rich subsoil. with the vines averaging about 35 years of age and sitting at a density of 6000 vines/ha. Evidence for this selection of varieties comes not from mere opinion, but from the work of Thierry Manoncourt who, for many decades, would bottle some of the Figeac wines unblended so that he could assess how wines from different grape varieties and different portions of the vineyard matured in bottle.</p>
Harvest	<p>Merlot 21 September - 1 October Cabernet Franc 4 - 19 October Cabernet Sauvignon 4 - 19 October</p>
Vinification/ Maturation	<p>In the vat room, a gentle, sulphur-free vinification was carried out according to the phenolic ripeness of the grapes. Each vat had its own vinification itinerary in order to bring out the best in this great vintage. The raw material was treated with great respect and never forced.</p>
Tasting Notes	<p>The first vintage vinified in our new winery, grown under complex climatic conditions, the 2021 reveals once again the great quality of Château-Figeac's terroir.</p> <p>Brilliant ruby in color, Chateau-Figeac 2021 seduces the nose with a rich aromatic palette. Raspberry, strawberry, and blackcurrant are delicately intertwined with the floral and mentholated touches that reveal the quality of the Cabernets. Perfectly integrated tannins caress the palate with their graphite texture. The finish is remarkably savory and long. The first vintage vinified in the new winery, the Figeac terroir expresses its singular identity with sincerity, precision, and purity.</p>
Serve with	<p>Chateau Figeac is best served at 15.5 degrees Celsius, 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool, almost cellar temperature gives the wine more freshness and lift. Best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted, braised, and grilled dishes. Chateau Figeac is also good when matched with Asian dishes, rich fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.</p>
Production	<p>11,200 cases made</p>
Cellaring	<p>Drink 2027-2050</p>
Scores/Awards	<p>96+ points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - February 2024 94-97 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022 Wine Advocate Wine of the Vintage 94-96 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - May 2022 94-95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022 95-97 points - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - June 2022 17+ points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022 97 points - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022 97 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - March 2024 97 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - May 2022 96 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - March 2024 95-97 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022 96 points - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com (score only) - April 2022 94-96 points - Thomas Parker, Farr Vintners - April 2022 94 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - February 2024 95-97 points - Neal Martin, Vinous - May 2022 94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - February 2024 93-95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous - May 2022 95 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - March 2024 95-97 points - Jeb Dunnuck MW - June 2022 95 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022 99 points - Vert de Vin - July 2022 97 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - May 2022</p>

Reviews

“A wine that transcends the vintage's challenges, the 2021 Figeac is performing brilliantly in bottle, wafting from the glass with aromas of raspberries and cherries mingled with striking top notes of violet, rose petal, iris, and mint. Medium to full-bodied, satiny, and suave, it's pure and vibrant, its enveloping core of fruit framed by ultra-refined tannins, concluding with a long, floral finish. Readers in the habit of drinking top grand cru Burgundy are liable to find themselves seduced by this immensely elegant, perfumed Saint-Émilion, a wine I'll definitely be adding to my own cellar. It's the result of gamble that paid off, as Figeac's team chose to wait to pick their Cabernet Sauvignon despite the menace of forecast rain—a menace that, in fact, scarcely transpired. The 2021 saw a somewhat shorter-than-usual élevage of 16 months in barrel without fining. Director of Château Figeac since 2013, Frédéric Faye emphasizes precision and timing when he characterizes the estate's evolution over the last decade. Harvest now lasts three or four weeks, stopping and starting, so each parcel of this 41-hectare vineyard can be picked at optimal maturity. Farming is similarly adapted parcel by parcel, emphasizing sustainability. And a brand-new winery triples the team's working space, with small tanks so that each parcel can be vinified separately. Yet the objective is to polish Figeac, not to change it. If the estate's wines are now suppler and fuller, their classically Cabernet-rich assemblage hasn't altered. Old-fashioned approaches such as submerged-cap fermentation for fruit growing on gravel soils have been retained. And of course, the estate's distinctive soils haven't changed. Figeac's compelling success in the challenging 2021 vintage demonstrates the fruit of all that work.”

- WK, Wine Advocate

“One of the highlights of the vintage on the Right Bank, the 2021 Figeac is a blend of 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Cabernet Franc and 29% Merlot, and the fruit of a harvest that lasted a full month, from September 21 to October 19, with each parcel picked at optimal maturity. Offering up aromas of blackberries, cassis, rose petals, violets, cigar wrapper and sweet soil tones, it's medium to full-bodied, supple, and seamless, its velvety attack segueing into a deep, layered core of beautifully vibrant fruit, concluding with a long, saline finish. The first vintage vinified in Figeac's new winery, it's a resounding success for administrator Frédéric Faye and his team.”

- WK, Wine Advocate

“The 2021 Figeac is a blend of 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Cabernet Franc, and 29% Merlot, with the Merlot harvested from 21 September to 1 October. Deep garnet-purple colored, it slowly unfurls in the glass, releasing languid notions of redcurrants, black raspberries, and mulberries, followed by hints of iron ore, violets, star anise, and menthol with a hint of graphite. Medium-bodied, the palate is elegant with ripe, grainy Cabernet-led tannins, featuring great tension and lots of bright red fruit and mineral layers, finishing long and ferrous. pH 3.65. 2027-2050.”

- LPB, Wine Independent

“A red with lots of dark-fruit, graphite and tar aromas and flavors. It's medium-bodied and very integrated with firm, polished tannins, and a long finish. Racy and compact. Silky texture.”

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

“95–97. Barrel Sample. The wine is fresh with a fine structure from the 70% Cabernet Sauvignon and Franc in the blend. It is a structured wine, light while also showing ripe black currant fruits and an edge of spice. With its fine acidity at the end, this is an excellent reflection of the year.”

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

“40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Cabernet Franc, 29% Merlot. 38 hl/ha. 70% of production. First vintage made in the new cellar. Cask sample. Berry fruit with just a hint of oak. Sappy with plenty of freshness and drive. Velvety attack then a firm tannic structure all the way through. Just a hint of grainy tannin on the finish. Long. Typically Figeac in style. (JL) 13%. Drink 2028 – 2046.”

- JL, JancisRobinson.com

“One of my absolute favourite wines in 2021 with Figeac's star power clearly on show. Amazing aromatic complexity on the nose; dark chocolate with perfume from the Cabernet Franc - pink flowers, red cherry touches vanilla and cinnamon - such a seductive smell. Pure and focused - so smooth and sleek with a clear tang to the palate. Quite taut, so defined and pure. The minerality comes through the sweet strawberry and raspberry fruit

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giving that chalky, salty flavour and texture on the palate. Everything is precise and in the right place. You can tell this is ripe, the concentration is there in the fruit, alongside such bright freshness but also these fun and playful red fruit flavours with lively acidity. Classic Bordeaux style with vibrancy, clarity, and harmony - you feel the St-Emilion terroir and the understated glamour. This is an epic wine, a brilliant Figeac and contender for wine of the Right Bank."

- GH, Decanter.com

"These guys have always known how to keep a steady hand on the extraction, and that skill comes in to play in 2021. This is such a gorgeous Cabernet Franc-led expression of the vintage, with its iris and violet notes, crushed brambled fruits and high smoke aromatic. Subtle but savoury, mouthwatering, gentle complexity, they have leaned in and leaned back with the challenges of the vintage. Delicious quality, for earlier drinking with a ton of pleasure. One of my wines of the vintage En Primeur and remains so. The last vintage before promotion to Premier Grand Cru Classé A. No fining, and extremely light filtration. 100% new oak. Romain Jean-Pierre technical director. 38hl/h yield, harvest September 21 to October 19. First vintage with the new cellar."

- JA, janeanson.com

"Lovely aromatics right off the bat, good spice, white peppers, touches of savoury cassis. This 71% mix of the two Cabernets is the highest ever at Figeac, and you feel it in this savoury, rosebud, leafy character to the palate, brilliantly handled and one of the wines of the vintage. This delivers careful balance, sculpted fruits, with a juicy finish. 100% new oak. Romain Jean-Pierre technical director. 38hl/h yield, harvest September 21 to October 19 (with a three-week gap between Merlot and Cabernet). 3.65ph. First vintage with the new cellar. 70% production into Figeac, 8% press wine. Tasted twice, excellent quality."

- JA, janeanson.com

"Floral, energetic, and fresh, this is the perfect example of elegance and class. The nose, with its bouquet of flowers is made even better with the addition of cigar wrappers, mint, cherries, plums, black raspberries, cocoa, and espresso. The medium-bodied palate is fresh, with layers of red, and dark red fruits, refined-textures, and a finish with length, purity, and a salty savory, minty endnote. This is a perfect example of a modern classic wine blending 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Cabernet Franc and 29% Merlot. Drink from 2026-2055."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"Violets, roses, cigar wrapper, espresso, cherries, plums, blackberries, and currants create the attention-seeking perfume. Lively and fresh, the wine is perfectly balanced between its elegant nature, vibrant red fruits, silky textures, length, and purity. The fruit has a sweetness along with salinity that is impossible to miss. The wine is a slow build on your palate. So, you do not notice it at first. But with an intake of air, the wine begins slowly expanding in the finish. This is a perfect example of a modern classic wine blending 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Cabernet Franc and 29% Merlot. 13% ABV, 3.65% pH. The harvest took place September 21 - October 19, making 2021 not only one of the longest harvests in the history of the estate, but also one of the latest vintages they have ever recorded. Both choices were the key to the vintage's success here. Of equal importance, 2021 marks the debut vintage for the estate's new, state-of-the-art cellars. Drink from 2026-2055. 95-97."

- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

"The 2021 is the first vintage to be made in the hugely impressive new winery at Figeac that allows fermentation to be much more precise by lot. It is fully 40% Cabernet Sauvignon and 31% Cabernet Franc, with the remaining 29% Merlot. The abv is 13%, with harvest carried out from 21st September until October 19th. The risk taken in holding off harvest of 29 hectares of Cabernets until mid-October has paid off, with forecast rain much reduced and riper fruit flavour and tannin the reward. The Merlots came in at 12.5% abv, with the younger vines finding greater ripeness as the shallow roots created more hydric stress. The Cabernets came in at 13.5-13.7% abv, so the resulting wine is 13%. Volumes are 10% down on last year. Deep purple in colour. High energy on the nose with intense cassis, clove, and nutmeg together with charcoal, roasted plums and graphite. The palate has real matière, but - as Frédéric Faye alludes to - the extraction of tannin has been managed very well. Chewy and richly structured as Figeac should be, there is a tempering of the firmer elements that allows the blue and black fruit to shine. A little herbal, minty character comes together with sweet spice to layer complexity on the fruit. Tightly wound and vertical, this intense and long wine will reward patience in the cellar, both to unfurl and to allow the still smoky wood to integrate fully. It should then prove another excellent showing and a worthy first wine to christen the new chai."

- TP, Farr Vintners

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“The 2021 Figeac was bottled the previous mid-July after being stored in vat for two months to gain more on the mid-palate. It has a sensual bouquet with pure wild strawberry and raspberry fruit, pencil box and tobacco scents that emanate from the Cabernet component. This seems to be a bit closed on the day. The palate is medium-bodied with a hint of dark chocolate and leather on the entry and a fine sapidity throughout, gently fanning out toward its composed, menthol-tinged, refreshing finish.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2021 Figeac was picked from September 21 until October 19 and matured, as usual, in 100% new oak. It has a very pure, elegant bouquet, the Cabernet Sauvignon imparting subtle pencil lead notes, blackberry, and briar, almost understated at first but gaining vigor with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannins, a fine bead of acidity and just the right amount of sapidity. There is unerring symmetry about this Figeac, which is extremely focused yet unconcerned about showing off. There is lovely piquancy on the finish. Unequivocally one of the finest Right Bank wines in 2021. Frédéric Faye continues to guide Figeac to the pinnacle of the appellation.”

- NM, Vinous

“The 2021 Figeac is a classy, supremely polished Saint-Émilion. Floral and savory notes meld into a core of dark cherry, leather, tobacco, spice, mocha, and lavender. I imagine the 2021 will drink well with minimal cellaring. It's an undeniably attractive wine with no hard edges, but also less textural depth than the best years. Managing Director Frédéric Faye and his team reduced élevage by two months because of the lighter structure of the wine, a decision that paid off nicely.”

- AG, Vinous

“The 2021 Figeac is a super-classy, elegant Saint-Émilion. Silky tannins and lifted, savory aromatics add to a total impression of finesse. There is more Cabernet Sauvignon than typically in this year's blend, which naturally brings added aromatic presence. The 2021 is not as explosive as recent vintages have been, but its class is evident. This is a strong showing from Figeac and the team led by Estate Manager Frédéric Faye.”

- AG, Vinous

“The Grand Vin 2021 Château Figeac checks in as 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Cabernet Franc, and the rest Merlot that was brought up in 100% new barrels. Hitting 13% alcohol and a pH of 3.65, it's a gorgeous 2021 that has both red and black currant fruit, classic tobacco, lead pencil, and violet aromatics, medium to full body, beautiful tannins, and just about flawless balance. It's clearly up with the crème de la crème of the vintage. I'd happily drink a bottle today, yet it's going to benefit from 4-6 years of bottle age and cruise for at least two decades. It's pure class.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Unquestionably one of the wines of the vintage on the Right Bank, the 2021 Château Figeac checks in as 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Cabernet Franc, and 29% Merlot, brought up all in new barrels. It's a gorgeous, medium to full-bodied, concentrated, and textured 2019 with remarkable purity in its darker cassis and fresh plum fruits as well as notes of tobacco, truffle earth, cedar pencil, and spice. While it's easy to compare this to wines from the Médoc given its high Cabernet content, it has beautiful Right Bank character and is a classic, balanced, incredibly impressive Figeac that will benefit from 4-5 years of bottle age and cruise for over two decades.”

- Jeb Dunnuck

“Deep ruby garnet core fading to purple at the rim. Fine dark forest berry nuances, delicate savoury nuances, a touch of nougat and cherries. Juicy, elegant, fresh, and balanced, subtle sweet fruit extract, ripe tannins, finessed and already approachable, mineral, very precise, endowed with good length and a salty finish; a great companion at the table.”

- PM, Falstaff Magazine

Reviews *“A lovely, elegant, precise, delicate nose that reveals gourmandize, a fine airiness in the approach, some fleshiness of the fruit and a nice ripeness. Fleshy/juicy cherry, pulpy/crunchy red berry and slightly blackcurrant notes are combined with fine nuances of bright blue plum/blackberry as well as a discreet roasted hint of fruit and subtle hints of sweet spice/sweet tobacco. The palate is fruity, elegant, nicely balanced and offers minerality, gourmandize, pulpiness, nice definition, fleshiness, airiness, fine uprightness, substance, nice acidity and complexity in the ripeness levels of the fruit. Nice bitterness, a very nice substance, a lot of finesse and elegance. On the palate this wine expresses notes of fleshy/chunky blackberry, crisp/acidic cherry and more lightly fleshy/fresh red berries combined with touches of blueberry, tonka bean, crushed/crushed almonds, as well as hints of pulpy/fresh/juicy blue berries, star anise, a very discreet hint of serenity, fine hints of sweet spices, nutmeg, and a very discreet hint of almost blood orange (in the background) and chocolate. A subtle hint of graphite and a nice sapidity/salinity in the background. A lot of purity in its fruit and minerality. An imperceptible hint of caramelised almond in the background. The tannins are pretty, elegant, sapid and mellow. A very nice harmony! Congratulations!”*

- Vert de Vin
