

Château La Gaffeliere 2021

CSPC# 102697

750mlx6

13.7% alc./vol.

Grape Variety

58% Merlot, 42% Cabernet Franc

Appellation

St. Emilion

Classification

1er Grand Cru Classé

Website

<http://www.chateau-la-gaffeliere.com/?lang=2>

Sustainability

Certified High Environmental Value (HEV)

Analysis

AT 3.52, pH 3.3

General Info

With the Malet-Roquefort family at the helm for four centuries, Château La Gaffelière is one of the oldest family-owned chateaux in St Emilion. Nestled between the Ausone and Pavie hills, their south-orientated single vineyard has an average vine age of 35 years producing elegant wines with entrancing aromatics and pure fruit character. Historically La Gaffelière was a reference point for many of the great St Emilion chateaux. During the 1970s and 80s La Gaffelière lost some of its direction, but since consulting for the chateau Stephane Derenoncourt has woven his magic and Parker believes that the wine *"has gone from strength to strength over the last decade"* returning to past glory.

Winemaker

Stéphane Derenoncourt and Simon Blanchard consult.

Vintage

The vine was subject to major stress throughout 2021, due to quite low temperatures and sometimes frost, a chaotic summer, and severe pressure from disease (downy mildew). While September was quite cool with sunny periods, and the health of the vines was finally rather good, early October saw ideal weather conditions for optimum ripening, especially for the Cabernet Franc. Depending on the terroirs, this allowed us to delay and optimize picking for the best plots and to harvest healthy grapes at perfect ripeness.

Vineyards

The Château La Gaffelière vineyard enlarges upon 25 hectares and gazes its 22 hectares vineyard all-in-one parcel between the Ausone hill and the Pavie one. The whole favourably south oriented, receives an ideal sunshine which benefits to the 35 years old vine. Hillsides are clayey and calcareous, whereas hill-feet are more siliceous. Area: 38 hectares, of which 22 hectares of 1er Grand Cru Classé. Soil: limestone plateau, clay-limestone hillsides, more siliceous at the foot of the slopes. 75% Merlot, 25% Cab Franc

Harvest

Merlot: From 22 September to 15 October. Cabernet Franc: From 4 - 12 October.

Vinification/

Maturation

The grapes are kept for 12 hours in a cold room at 7°C before passing through the optical sorter. Vinification by parcel in stainless-steel temperature-controlled tanks, filled by gravity without sulfur. Alcoholic fermentation with pumping over and punching down. Malolactic fermentation in tanks (75%) and barrels (25%). Maceration during 30 days for Merlot and 32 days for Cabernet Franc.

Tasting Note

14-16 months in barrel. 60% in new barrels (French oak). Three rackings
Very intense black fruits, with a slight aromatic lift and savoury spice. The acidity is fantastically fresh, but balances so well with the pure, ripe fruit. There's complexity of crushed rock, mint and clove. This has density and concentration but is perfectly poised. The tannins are ripe and there is a lovely saline, appetising quality to the finish, thanks to a higher than usual proportion of Cabernet Franc.

Serve with

Chateau La Gaffeliere is best paired with all types of classic meat dishes, veal, pork, beef, lamb, duck, game, roast chicken, roasted braised and grilled dishes, Asian dishes, hearty fish courses like tuna, mushrooms, and pasta.

Production

7,500 cases made.

Cellaring

Drink 2027-2050

Scores/Awards

92 points - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - April 2024
93 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - February 2024
92-94 points - William Kelley, Wine Advocate - April 2022
94-96 points - Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent - May 2022
94 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - January 2024
94-95 points - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - May 2022
16.5+ points - James Lawther, JancisRobinson.com - May 2022



Scores/Awards **93 points** - Georgina Hindle, Decanter.com - March 2022
94 points - Jane Anson, janeanson.com - May 2022
93-95 points - Jeff Leve, thewinecellarinsider.com - May 2022
91-93 points - Thomas Parker, Farr Vintners - April 2022
94-96 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
17 points - Matthew Jukes - August 2022
94 points - Jean Marc Quarin (score only) - April 2022
92 points - Peter Moser, Falstaff Magazine - May 2022
96 points - Bettane & Desseauve (score only) - May 2022

Reviews *"Presents a pretty solid core of black cherry and cassis notes (for the vintage), while apple wood, sweet tobacco and black tea flavors fill in. The finish reveals a sanguine, chalky underpinning, which stays fresh and helps minimize the vintage's austere side. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now- 2035. 7,500 cases made."*
- JM, Wine Spectator

"The 2021 La Gaffelière is quite rich and generous by the standards of the vintage, wafting from the glass with aromas of cherries and raspberries mingled with licorice, pencil shavings and creamy new oak. Medium to full-bodied, velvety, and seamless, it has good depth at the core, lively acids, and a sapid finish."
- WK, Wine Advocate

"A notable success in this vintage, the 2021 La Gaffelière offers up aromas of sweet cherries and berries mingled with notions of licorice, loamy soil, and spices. Medium to full-bodied, seamless, and enveloping, it's supple and charming, with a fleshy core of fruit, lively acids, and ripe, powdery tannins, concluding with impressive persistence. Tasted four times, twice at the château."
- WK, Wine Advocate

"Deep garnet-purple in color, it needs a little swirling and coaxing to unleash vivacious scents of wild blueberries, black raspberries, & black cherries, followed by hints of licorice, crushed rocks, wood smoke, and tapenade, with a waft of red roses. Medium-bodied, the palate is beautifully knit with lots of black fruit, floral and savory layers, framed by firm, ripe, grainy tannins, & fantastic tension, finishing long and mineral-laced."
- LPB, Wine Independent

"Lovely reduction at first that gives an ashy feel to the red berries, crushed stones, subtle cream, hibiscus, and some dark-colored fruit. The medium- to full-bodied palate unleashes plenty of fine-grained tannins. Fresh, bright, and more vertically structured than many of its peers from this vintage, but it remains polished and textured. Lingering finish."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"A very precise and curated wine with ultra-fine tannins that run the length of the wine. Medium body. Dark berry and dark chocolate flavors and a creamy finish. Classy."
- JS, JamesSuckling.com

"Cask sample. Bright crimson hue. Elegant demeanor with perfumed, red-berry fruit aromas and layered fruit on the palate. Tannins present but finely honed. Long, persistent finish. Drink 2028 - 2042."
- JL, JancisRobinson.com

"Succulent and supple, sugary, ripe, jammy tannins hit the palate with such a buzz and energy. It's not so complex at this point but I like the upfront nature: it's bright and bold, with bitter, salty minerality also coming through at the end - liquorice sticks, cedar, graphite. Clean, crisp, and very enjoyable. Tannins are so smooth and just perfectly integrated. Will be great in time, and I love the cool mint aspect on the finish."
- GH, Decanter.com

"Showing well in bottle, with creamy raspberry, a lightness of touch coupled with good concentration and balance. Plenty of appellation limestone signature, this is good quality, one to look out for, delicate but with character and lift. Not tasted En Primeur, and enjoyable to get to know now. This is also a vintage with a

Reviews *footnote in history for Gaffelière, as it will be the last one bottled as a Premier Grand Cru Classé, after stepping down from the system in 2022. Drink 2026 – 2041.”*
- JA, janeanson.com

“Plummy, polished, soft, and fresh, the floral characteristics in the nose make an impression before you experience the multiple layers of sweet, ripe, juicy, dark plums, espresso, and chocolate in the mid-palate and in the round, soft, silky, long finish. Drink from 2023-2050.”
- JL, thewinecellarinsider.com

“Deep ruby colour. Deep, rich, and smoky black fruit on the nose with a hint of liquorice and allspice. On the palate, the fruit has an almost liqueur-like quality, sweet, smoky, and ripe. There is an earthy quality to the spicing of oak on this wine, adding depth and character. The tannins are rich and chalky against the fruit, giving a long and pithy finish.”
- TP, Farr Vintners

“There is a healthy 42% Cabernet Franc here. The nose is quite open with black cherry, blueberry, and touches of violet and peony; the oak is nicely integrated. In the mouth, this is medium-bodied with fine delineation, good focus and real midpalate weight. Conveying good intensity and vibrancy, this continues a strong run for this Saint-Émilion estate.”
- NM, Vinous

“The 2021 La Gaffelière is a wine of sublime elegance and understated finesse. Aromatic and pliant, the 2021 shows the more delicate side of the year, yet all the Gaffelière signatures are present. Lavender, mocha, spice, dried herbs, and leather are some of the many notes that grace this exquisite Saint-Émilion. The balance here is mind-blowing. Give this time, as it won't be ready to drink anytime soon. Drink 2031 – 2061.”
- AG, Vinous

“The 2021 La Gaffelière is a wine of extraordinary finesse and class. Time in the glass brings out striking depth and complexity. The aromatics alone are beguiling but everything about the 2021 speaks to elegance. Crushed red berry fruit, rose petals, blood orange, mint and saline notes punctuate the finish.”
- AG, Vinous

“Gorgeous cassis and black raspberry-like fruit as well as flowers, cedary herbs, and graphite all define the aromatics, and it hits the palate with medium-bodied richness, a silky, layered, elegant mouthfeel, gorgeous tannins, and outstanding length. It's clearly up with the top handful of wines in the vintage and will have 15-20 years of overall longevity.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“One of the gems out there, the 2021 Château Canon-La-Gaffelière is well worth seeking out. Giving up ample blue fruits, medium to full-bodied richness, ripe tannins, and complex, pure aromatics of violets, iron, and tobacco, it shines for its balance and elegance while bringing terrific depth of fruit. Count me impressed.”
- Jeb Dunnuck

“This is a wine that will require patience and an iron will because there is a gentleness to the fruit that must be allowed to emerge some time down the track. With a powerful attack and nothing left to the imagination, this could be a little off-putting, but the fruit is stalwart enough to hold firm, and the oak, while quite raw and rugged, seems to be content with its lot. In the meantime, I imagine that most people will find the hectic fruit and forest of oak a little too much to handle. 17.”
- Matthew Jukes

“Deep, dark ruby core with purple tinge to narrow rim. Delicate nougat, black cherries, a touch of plum and orange zest, fine noble wood spices. Juicy, fresh, dark berries and a little cassis, integrated tannins, cloves, chocolatey touch on the finish. Certainly, has ageing potential.”
- PM, Falstaff Magazine