

MAISONS MARQUES & DOMAINES



Château Pichon Comtesse

Château Pichon-Lalande

Pauillac, France
Vintage: 2018

Overview

Founded in 1689, Château Pichon-Longueville Comtesse de Lalande has quite a spectacular history. The quality and elegance of the wines have been the maxim of all the château's owners since master winemaker Joseph de Pichon Longueville's reign in the 18th century.

For over thirty years, owner May Eliane de Lencquesaing modernized the château's installations in the truest respect for tradition. Her indefatigable passion elevated Pichon to a level equaled only by its consistency all over the world. In October of 2006, Lencquesaing joined forces with Champagne Louis Roederer, thus opening a new chapter in the long and magnificent history of Château Pichon-Longueville Comtesse de Lalande.

The vast majority of the vineyards are Gunzian gravel mounds of the classic Pauillac composition, with the deep bed of gravel placed over a substrata of clay and limestone. The commitment to sustainable farming practices extends throughout the 220 acres of vineyards, with over 27 acres fully converted to organic viticulture, and 37 acres farmed biodynamically.

Winemaking

After reception of the harvest, destemming and crushing, the grapes are placed in temperature-controlled wooden or stainless-steel vats, of variable capacity, allowing a precise and rigorous selection by plot. The heating and cooling system enables the alcoholic and malolactic fermentations to be controlled with precision. The vatting period ranges from 18 to 24 days depending on the year. Frequent pump-overs are performed to extract maximum colour and tannins from the skins.

Once blended, the wine is aged in oak barrels sourced from the Allier and Nièvre forests in France. The oak refines the wine, adding its own aromas and tannins, whilst allowing it to acquire the soft richness that is lacking in its youth, thanks to the gradual, natural contact with air through the pores of the wood.

The Grand Vin of Château Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande is aged 18 months in oak barrels; a little more than half are brand new; the other half are second-fill barrels. The barrels have a medium toast, which enhances their aromas. A harmonious balance of oak and wine is always sought.

Racking takes place every three months up to the bottling. Traditional fining with egg whites is still carried out to clarify the wine.

Tasting Notes

A typical Pauillac wine on the nose, offering a complexity of cedar and tobacco, but also blackcurrant, raspberry and a hint of clove and violet. The same flavors in the mouth of raspberries, violet and peony but not overpowering. This fine wine, distinguishes itself between a balance of great flavor and density. The tannic structure is distinct, fine and firm, with a long, soft, savory finish.

Harvest Notes

There are vintages that traverse time and remain a true point of reference for our estates. At Pichon Comtesse, 2018 will undoubtedly and in every sense be one of those! A vintage in all extremes, uniting several vintages in one, 2018 is a delight, an enrichment of experience and cultivation of our passion for winemaking, a vector of emotions.

After a cold and wet Winter, the bud break was late, around mid-April. A relatively mild April to June allowed for flowering at the end of May, marked by several storms in this period creating an unparalleled pressure of mildew. Pichon Comtesse vineyard, thankfully had little coulure and was spared hail damage. Hot and dry weather from mid-July resulted in a uniform veraison; beginning on July 28th for the Merlot, it finishes on August 14th for the Cabernet and Petit Verdot. From September 13th to October 11th, the harvest was carried out in excellent conditions and each parcel was picked at optimum ripeness.



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals: 71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot
Wine Alcohol: 14%
pH: 3.85
Soil Composition: Gravel, clay and sand
Average Vine Age: 35 years
Aging: 18 months in 50% new oak barrels