

MAISONS MARQUES & DOMAINES



Château Pichon Comtesse

Château Pichon-Lalande

Pauillac, France
Vintage: 2019

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 2007, Maison Louis Roederer began 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

Notes of cedar, cocoa and custard immediately evident on the nose followed by a release of pure and intoxicating notes of blackcurrant and peony. Long and intense, the aromatic structure evolves from classic notes of citron and spices (cloves, black pepper), to luscious tones of praline and blackcurrant. At first, well-balanced and smooth in the mouth, moving onto a very open mid-palate and a rich, savory long-lasting finish, thanks to silky, refined and well-integrated tannins.

Harvest Notes

The years go on ... but they are never the same! This is what makes our wine profession so rich: we are constantly adapting and questioning ourselves to truly reveal the soul of our terroir. 2019 was a very sunny year with major drought. This vintage is characterized by a vibrant and mineral tension, a fullness and balance between power and elegance: a new interpretation of Pauillac by Pichon Comtesse...

With temperatures above seasonal averages, the Winter was mild and unusually dry. Under these conditions, the bud break was particularly early, from March 20th. The coolness and rainfall in the Spring slowed down the development of the vine, and adjusted back to its average period of flowering between the end of May and the beginning of June. The unstable Spring weather, caused slight coulure on the Cabernet, around mid-June. The heat and the sun then settled in for the duration. A little rain in mid-July and early August favoured a rapid and homogeneous veraison from the 9th to 14th August. Slow ripening, with dry, very sunny conditions and cool nights allowed the harvest to start on September 16th in a very healthy vineyard. Weather instability returned at the end of September and lasted until the end of the harvest on October 8th, without impacting on the quality of our grapes.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals: 71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc
Wine Alcohol: 14.12%
pH: 3.75
Soil Composition: Gravel, clay and sand
Average Vine Age: 35 years
Aging: 18 months in 60% new oak barrels