

LAFLEUR LAROZE

SAINT EMILION GRAND CRU

WINE FACT SHEET

2004

THE GROWING YEAR IN 2004

After quite a cold and dry winter, a cool, damp April, the week's delay we still had at the half-way flowering stage continued on until the middle of the initial colour change in the grapes. The gap between "technological" maturity and phenol ripeness widened because August was lacking in sunshine and temperature and produced 50% extra rainfall.

This weather pattern enabled sugars to be produced, but the skins and pips only ripened later on in the season, explaining the overall late harvest: we picked from 22nd September to 7th October. The skin aromas were relatively undamaged by the summer sun, which promises a vintage with especially exciting aromatic potential.

After two years of small harvests in 2002 and 2003, when the vines gathered reserves, Nature was very generous in 2004, presenting us with large numbers of bunches, bigger than usual. Early green fruit elimination ("green harvesting") was therefore essential, but despite this the harvest was still abundant, yet of high quality with easily extractable, plentiful colour. We even discarded excess juice from our tanks and were able to achieve ideal concentration of the musts.

THE HARVEST

At Château Laroze we picked our grapes from 22nd September to 4th October. While 2003 was two and a half weeks early, 2004 was late ripening! Yields were adequate at 4,600 litres of wine per hectare, which is good for morale after two consecutive years when we only harvested half the usual amount (2,300 litres per hectare in 2002 and 2,400 in 2003).

Our four-input harvest system has been especially effective in terms of selection. It has enabled us to eliminate the dirty juice and to separate round grapes from slightly damaged, crushed ones, which can be directed to separate wine-making tanks.

On top of this, we carry out ordinary manual screening to remove all traces of plant matter from the grapes.

Making all these categories into separate wines, makes it possible to perform very precise blending later on and to highlight our finished wines' fruity character.

The vintage in figures

MID-FLOWERING DATES	Merlots: 5 th June	Cabernets: 6 th June	
DATES FOR MID-POINT OF COLOUR CHANGE	Merlots: 8 th August	Cabernets: 9 th August	
LEAF REMOVAL	Yes		
THINNING OUT	Yes		
HARVESTING DATES	Merlots: from 22 nd Sept to 30 th Sept	Cabernets: from 30 th Sept to 7 th Oct	
WINE YIELD	4,600 litres per hectare		
LENGTH OF BARREL AGEING	14 months		
%AGE OF NEW BARRELS	50% 1-year-old barrels	50% in vats	
FINING	1 st wine: yes	2 nd wine: yes	
FILTRATION	1 st wine: no	2 nd wine: no	
BOTTLING	End of May 2006		
NUMBER OF BOTTLES	1 st wine: 106,000 bottles	2 nd wine: 39,000 bottles	
%AGE 1 st and 2 nd WINE	1 st wine: 73%	2 nd wine: 27%	
BLEND (approximate)	80% Merlots	15% Cab. Francs	5% Cab. Sauv.

TASTING NOTES

2004

- Limpid, deep garnet red with a very slight change of hue on the rim.
- The nose is open, average intensity, clean and fresh with hints of red berries. After swirling, the red fruit appears riper and more intense, while heralding spicy and menthol aromas.
- On the palate, the attack is soft, fresh and aromatic. It then evolves with a pleasant sensation of volume and tight tannins that marry in nicely, while still displaying a touch of firmness. Light, mellow wood blends into the tasty whole.
- The fresh, spicy finish makes your mouth water, with its red fruit and good aromatic length.
- After being aired, this wine is already open enough to be enjoyed, but will improve further in the coming months. It could keep for four to six years in proper conditions. (2007 - 2012)

(Tasting notes on 6th February 2007 an hour after decanting)



Château Laroze

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