



CHATEAU PICHON LONGUEVILLE

COMTESSE DE LALANDE

2010

After a cold and dry winter, bud break took place early April, later than usual, but under excellent climatic conditions.

However **flowering** occurred early June, under a difficult climate. Important rainfalls had significant adverse effects on pollination (coulure and millerandage) particularly in Pauillac.

We then decided **to thin out the affected bunches**. The adverse effect on yields was in fact marginal, but the effect on quality was significant since small millerandage-affected berries would have given more acidity and astringency to the wine.

Summer was characterized by sunny days followed by cool nights which allowed the grapes to mature in perfect conditions. Unlike 2009, temperatures remained regular and moderately high but **drought conditions** during the summer played an important role in the outcome of the vintage. From the beginning of April until the harvest at the beginning of October, only 181 millimetres of rain fell. That is less than half of the so-called normal seasonal average rainfall of the last 30 years. There was an early stop in vine vegetation growth due to the very dry growing season. As a result, mid-point for veraison was early (beginning of August), which enabled the grapes to start their ripening process quite early.

At Pichon, the average age of the vines is 35 years, the sub-soils are made up of deep layers of gravel, and the top soils are ploughed. All these factors work in favour of the terroir and the production of high quality wines. In these conditions the water constraints created by drought can generate higher wine quality, as long as the vine doesn't suffer stress.

Late summer weather provided ideal conditions for the grapes to reach perfect ripeness. Fine and dry weather, not too hot in the day and cool during the night brought about concentration in the berries, ripe tannins, very high levels of anthocyanins and perfectly healthy berries. The weight and the size of the berries were small. The berries to juice ratio was therefore high, and the volume of juice was low, and the wines were concentrated in substance.

The good conditions of the season allowed us to take the necessary time to stagger our **picking** according to the results of our ripeness tests.

We began on **September 22nd** in an early-ripening Merlot plot. We then paused and only resumed on September 27. We paused again on September 30 when we had finished the harvesting of the Merlot. We continued the picking on October 4 for interplanted vines, before harvesting the Petit-Verdot and Cabernet Franc. It was not until October 6 that we began picking the Cabernet Sauvignon.

The harvest finished on October 13th, after 14 days of effective picking.



	CS	M	CF	PV
Bud break	April 14th	April 7th	April 16th	April 12th
Mid-flowering	June 3rd	June 3rd	June 3rd	June 3rd
Mid-véraison	August 11th	August 3rd	August 9th	August 23rd

The wines in vat showed a powerful intensity of tannic structure (IPT between 65 and 82) and colour (anthocyanins between 1000 mg/l and 1300 mg/l). Natural alcoholic degrees were quite high (14° for the Merlot and 13° for the Cabernets). We had Merlot that was fresh and powerful, Cabernet Franc which was dense and refined, Petit Verdot which was showing very well and Cabernet Sauvignon which was long on the palate, flavoursome and without astringency.

Yield: 40 hectolitres per hectare.



	CS (%)	M (%)	CF (%)	PV (%)
Grand Vin	66	24	7	3
Reserve de La Ctsse	51	46		3

	TAV (%)	AT (g/l H2SO4)	AV (g/l H2SO4)	pH	IPT
Grand Vin	13.6	3.6	0.26	3.73	73
Reserve de La Ctsse	13.4	3.6	0.24	3.76	68

Ageing in French oak barrels for 18 months for the Grand Vin and 12 months for the Réserve de la Comtesse.

Tasting comments:

Pichon 2010 is a very fine, lean, elegant and dense wine. It develops with lovely energy on the palate and is fresh and full of flavour. It is a statuesque wine. Its aromatic palette is varied, fruity, and deep with hints of cherries, blackberries, raspberries, cinnamon and violets.

Réserve de la Comtesse 2010 has a refined attack on the palate, which develops with a lovely mouth-feel that is supple, silky and juicy all at the same time, with polished fine-grained tannins as well as notes of strawberries, redcurrants and roses.