



# CHÂTEAU ROCHEYRON 2020

## Saint-Émilion Grand Cru

*“We have been blessed with three wonderful  
vintages in a row.”*

**Peter Sisseck, May 2021**

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### ROCHEYRON: THE TENTH VINTAGE

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Doesn't time fly? It seems like only yesterday that we gave customers a sneak preview of “a new Saint-Émilion from Peter Sisseck” at our C&B Tower of London tasting. That was the inaugural 2010 vintage of Château Rocheyron.

One of the requirements for election to Saint-Émilion Grand Cru Classé status is ten vintages of production. Peter now has this (having skipped the tricky 2013), so stand by for another notch on Rocheyron's belt.

Peter's story is now so well known, the briefest recap should suffice: the young Danish winemaker, nephew of Peter Vinding-Diers (see our recent video [here](#)), who after studying in Bordeaux, goes to Spain's Ribera del Duero, where he founds Dominio de Pingus.

Château Rocheyron was therefore a return to Bordeaux for Peter who, with his friend and business partner Silvio Denz, has brought back to life this wonderful property, located on the edge of Saint-Émilion's limestone plateau.

Peter, who took the decision to retain the château's historical name, recently unearthed a reference dated 1625, which revealed that Rocheyron was the name of the family who owned it at that time.

Other developments include the recognition as *Régisseur* of Mathieu Raveraud, Peter's 'man on the ground in Saint-Émilion' since 2011. The estate was also certified organic for the 2020 vintage and is in the process of biodynamic conversion.

In Peter's words (watch Will's interview with him below), 2020 is a “synthesis”, or a “hypothetical blend”, of 2018 and 2019 – it has the freshness and nerve of the former, with the opulence of the latter. If that's not a good mix, I don't know what is.

**Guy Seddon**  
May 2021



# THE VINEYARD



The 7.4 hectare vineyard comprises two main plots. The larger of these, covering around three quarters of the total area, is home to the younger Merlot vines, which are planted on hard limestone soils. The other, a plot called La Boutisse, is on more fractured limestone and is planted with 80+ year old Cabernet Franc and Merlot, bringing up the average vine age to over 45 years.

Three passes through the vineyard are made to harvest young Merlot, old Merlot and finally Cabernet Franc, which are all then vinified separately. Yields are around 25-35hl/ha. 2020 falls within this range, at the lower end, despite spring mildew and the mid-summer heat.

As at Pingus, organic and biodynamic practices hold sway here. Organic certification was obtained in 2020 and the estate is in the process of Biodyvin biodynamic conversion. Peter is not an advocate of green harvesting, saying he would rather encourage a natural balance in his vines.

He has fostered biodiversity, planting bushes and shrubs at the borders of the vineyards. In his words, “I think there is a lot that can be done in Bordeaux to improve the environment.”

# THE CELLAR

Peter’s aim is to produce a classic, *terroir*-focused style of Saint-Émilion. The manageable size of the estate, with its modern, functional cellar, allows for vinification by parcel and vine age.

Fermentation takes place at a moderate 22°C, so as not to extract too much from Rocheyron’s very concentrated grapes. As Peter diplomatically puts it, “excess concentration is not really the way forward.”

His comments on alcohol are also interesting – the higher the alcohol, the greater the extraction, which needs to be borne in mind, especially with Bordeaux’s increasingly warm summers. (Also of interest is that Peter says the effect of climate change on his corner of Bordeaux has so far been beneficial.)

Following 30 days in vat, the 2020 is now being aged in 50% new oak. This is up from 40% last year – Peter says he values the influence of oak in Rocheyron, despite going the other way at Pingus. The wine will remain in barrel for 18 months and will be bottled without filtration.



From Saint-Émilion’s limestone plateau

Average vine age to over 45 years

10th Vintage

Organic certification and Biodyvin biodynamic conversion



## 2020 VINTAGE NOTES

*“If 2020 were a car...?”*

*It would be a Morgan – a classic, with a good engine.”*

**Peter Sisseck** (indulging a frivolous C&B interview question)



2020 was a vintage full of contrasts, that got off to a difficult start. The year began with an exceptionally rainy winter, followed by a very mild spring. Protecting the vines against mildew under such conditions was a real struggle, according to the vineyard team.

The dry, warm conditions of May enabled what estate manager Vincent Cruège described as “the first miracle”, in the form of a very early flowering, two weeks ahead of schedule, at mid-month.

The “second miracle” occurred on 19th June, when the rain stopped and a long dry, cool period started, which lasted through to *véraison* (colour change) in mid-July.

Summer then started properly, with periods of intense heat through to mid-August when thunderstorms provided some relief, allowing the Merlot berries to swell. Cruège relates how the later ripening Cabernet Franc grapes “remained the size of blueberries until harvest”.

Harvest, in mostly sunny conditions, took place around 10 days earlier than usual, from 21st to 23rd September, with the remainder on 30th September. The yield was 25hl/ha. Both the Merlot and Cabernet were rich in tannin, with lots of colour.

The equivalent of 16,000 bottles has been produced.

## 2020 TASTING NOTE

### CHÂTEAU ROCHEYRON 2020

Saint-Émilion Grand Cru

80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc. Inky, glass staining ruby-purple colour. An intricately lifted nose of violets, roses, peonies, blueberries and redcurrants, with a bitter chocolate richness beneath. The palate is crunchy and flavour-packed on the entry, tightly coiled yet brimming with raspberry, wild strawberry and bitter cherry fruit, lifted by fresh, taut acidity. Fine, chalky tannins frame the mid-palate whilst allowing its joyful fruit full rein. A sublime Rocheyron, with a newfound resonance and definition. 50% new oak.

Corney & Barrow Score 18+

Recommended drinking from 2026 – 2040+

£335 /CASE OF 6 BOTTLES

£115 /CASE OF 1 MAGNUM

£255 /CASE OF 1 DOUBLE MAGNUM

£485 /CASE OF 1 IMPERIAL

£750 /CASE OF 1 SALMANAZAR

£990 /CASE OF 1 BALTHAZAR

£1,235 /CASE OF 1 NEBUCHADNEZZAR

£1,505 /CASE OF 1 MELCHIOR

All prices are quoted in bond UK