

L'École

No 41

TOP AWARDS AND REVIEWS

2020 Apogee, Pepper Bridge Vineyard Walla Walla Valley

96 PTS

JamesSuckling.com, Andrii Stetsiuk - May 2023

This has a gorgeous nose of blackcurrants, sandalwood, cloves, violets, cracked pepper and black raspberries. It's full-bodied, beautifully balanced and structured, with a firm, solid tannin frame and waves of black fruit and spice. Vibrant backbone of acidity. Firm and compact. 56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Merlot, 12% Malbec and 4% Cabernet Franc. Try in 2026.

95 PTS

JebDunnuck.com, Jeb Dunnuck - June 2023

Moving to the Bordeaux varietal releases, the 2020 Apogee Pepper Bridge Vineyard checks in as 56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Merlot, 12% Malbec, and the rest Cabernet Franc. Its ruby/plum color is followed by a beautiful wine offering medium to full-bodied aromas and flavors of red and black currants, dried tobacco, loamy earth, and lead pencil shavings. Balanced, layered, and elegant on the palate, it has terrific tannins, a great mid-palate, and a great finish. It's a beautiful, elegant, seamless wine from this estate with tons to love. It's going to evolve for 15 years or more.

95 PTS

OwenBargreen.com, Owen Bargreen - September 2023

The 'Apogee' has been made by L'École since 1993. This edition combines 56% Cabernet Sauvignon with 28% Merlot and smaller parts Malbec and Cabernet Franc. Stored in 40% new French oak for 22 months, this offers tar, tobacco leaf and red bell pepper notes on the nose with blackberry pie. The palate is fresh and lithe with a polished texture. Showing good weight, this offers nice pencil lead and espresso ground flavors alongside a dense core of dark fruits. A beautiful wine made in a tough vintage, savor this now and over the next seven years to come. Give this an hour or two in the decanter if enjoy in its youth. Drink 2023-2030.

93 PTS

Wine & Spirits, Patrick J. Comiskey - October 2023

The minimal handling of this Cabernet blend shows in its lumbering start, weighted by reduction and formidable structure. With air, the wine captures classic Walla Walla savor in notes of sundried tomato, tobacco, cedar and plum, with coffee-scented tannins lining the middle, firm and powerful.

93+ pts

Robert Parker, Anthony Mueller - March 2024

The 2020 Apogee Pepper Bridge Vineyard blends 56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Merlot, 12% Malbec and 4% Cabernet Franc. The nose is generously layered with fresh and complex aromas, featuring graphite, pencil shavings, spiced cherry compote, mocha and spiced cinnamon. At the same time, herbal notes and dusty plums subtly release from the glass. Full-bodied and with 14.5% alcohol, the palate offers complexity and layers, showcasing bitter dark chocolate, blackberry skin and fine-grained tannins. The wine ends with a firm and succulent finish that promises to remain food-friendly for over a decade. The wine aged in 100% French oak, with 40% new and barrel aged for 22 months.

92 pts

Wine Spectator, Tim Fish - Fall 2023

This handsome red is deftly structured, offering appealing black cherry, stony mineral and black tea flavors that build richness toward big but refined tannins. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2031.

91 PTS

Wine Enthusiast, Michael Albery - October 2023

This Cabernet Sauvignon-driven blend saw time in 100% French oak, 40% new. Muddled mint and dark raspberry aromas are joined by tiny notes of balsa and seared steak. Grippy tannins make for a chewy texture while supporting blackberry, espresso and crème brûlée flavors.