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EDITORIAL

A MULTICOLOURED METROPOLIS



Bordeaux is a city, a region, and a wine full of surprises. It all began when I stepped off the train here for the first time, nearly forty years ago. This sooty city with its pitch-black façades was nothing like the romantic image I had of this world-famous wine metropolis.

The next surprise came when I wandered along the quays a few days later. The wide river not only changed direction every eight hours, it also suddenly overflowed its banks. The image of people on car roofs, waiting for the helicopter to rescue them from their awkward situation, has remained with me. Fortunately, I was spared the aerial view.

I was surprised once again by how willingly and quickly the supposedly unapproachable and snobbish kings of Bordeaux wine (queens were rare at the time) took me under their wing, this long-haired leftie with broken school-boy French. If I had listened to the gloomy predictions, these lines would never have been written. (Thank you to Lulu, who put me right). Because Bordeaux is not black and white. Bordeaux is multicoloured, it is in technicolour.

Some of my teachers from that time are no longer with us and are now represented by their descendants, others have become good friends. A good number are depicted in the portraits found within this issue.

The black and grey odd duck of the past has become a fair blonde, and one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. And the same goes for its wines. Bordeaux has given the world a real cultural asset: intoxicating nobility, elegance and harmony in the glass. For a long time, the fixed idea of this wine archetype perhaps only haunted the thoughts of a few obstinate individuals, but now it is back in favour. The last ten vintages have demonstrated this with great clarity, more colourful than ever and through all the short-term and long-term vagaries of weather and climate. The most recent vintage slumbering in barrels may confidently be taken as a sign that this is not going to change.

Rolf Bichsel

Legal notice

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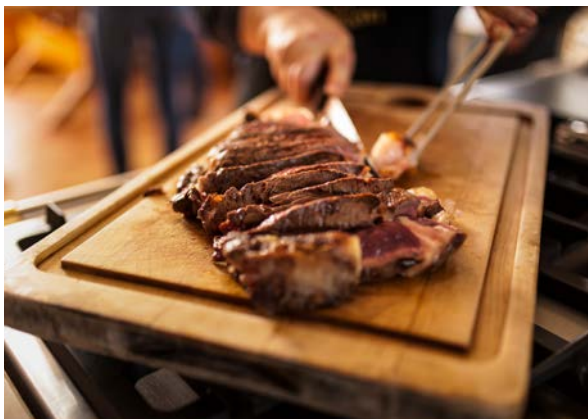
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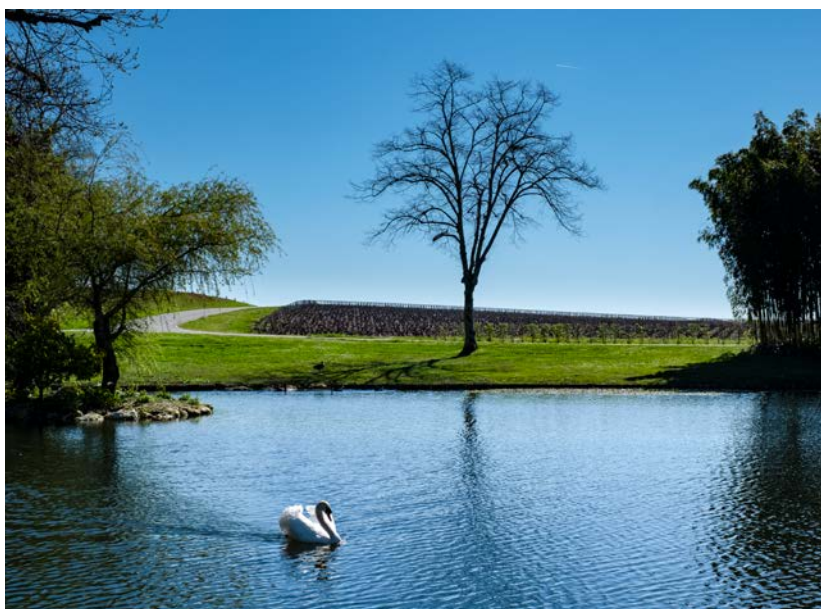


THE BIG SCOOP

A FOCUS ON NATURE

by Rolf Bichsel

Legendary Bordeaux wines not only impress with their harmony and freshness – thanks to greener cultivation, they have also become more individually expressive. The only problem is their sheer, almost unmanageable fullness.



Every new Bordeaux vintage has its particular scoop, and you never know whether this is a marketing ploy or real news, whether it has been intentionally pushed around or accidentally fell into the fertile rumour mill and began to happily spread. After 200% new barrels, malolactic fermentation in oak, double and triple selection of the harvested grapes, or second wines that no longer want to be second wines but rather brands in their own right, wine estate owners then blossomed virtually overnight into something approximating organic farmers, despite having recently been fully against the idea. A year later they were leasing a horse and cart to drive unhurriedly through the vines for en primeur week, to the delight of all the smartphone photographers. This was followed (in no particular order) by the fashion for plot-by-plot maceration or separating different qualities of press wine into barrels, using alternative containers such as concrete eggs, am-

phoras or 500-litre casks, or most recently 'agroforestry', i.e. planting hedges and groves in a plot or plots of vines to promote biodiversity. The scoop in 2022 was the 'big surprise', and was diligently being peddled as soon as the harvests were complete.

Of course, as always this was irrelevant to old hands like us. We only believe what we can taste and discover with our own palates. As always, we promptly set out on the en primeur tasting round, confidently holding the first, then second and third glasses under our nose with an ironic smile, became less sure of ourselves, took the first, second, third sip, and experienced... the big surprise. Judged against the climate conditions, Bordeaux has never had a vintage with so many intense yet also perfectly balanced, distinctive wines (more on page 126 onwards).

Of course, we were not the only ones wondering how such a miracle could have happened in one of the hottest,



driest years ever recorded by the weather services. Some people are confidently stating that the vine is a particularly adaptable plant that can cope with any climate-related requirements. The pessimists agree, but also warn against an overly naive approach, which they feel could result in an easing of efforts to establish greener growing policy. There would be a risk of landowners saying: 'why are we still investing in sustainable development if the vines can cope with any problems that come up? Quality is all that matters, by whatever means'.

We take a more nuanced view. We have no doubt that vines are fundamentally a strong plant able to handle many conditions well. However, we are also convinced that Bordeaux truly has become greener. Whether this is for ethical or financial reasons is in fact completely irrelevant – even the most 'conventionally' operating estates have started to show some environmental awareness. Nothing about that will change. In spite of all reservations: the fact that Bordeaux 2022 has managed to become a fine, maybe atypical, perhaps even trendsetting vintage is not down solely to the adaptability of the vines. It is also thanks to the winemakers and their efforts to refocus on the vines and their cultivation, and

the realisation that searching for the holy grail of the best possible wine should be conducted with rather than against nature. In terms of winery technology, virtually every major wine estate across the globe has the same equipment. They only differ in one area: the soil where the plants grow. This almost automatically puts nature back front and centre. Other than technical gimmickry that no-one falls for any more, it is only nature that can ensure a wine stands out from its compatriots. There is simply no room for a U-turn. This is guaranteed by critical consumers alone, who are prepared to spend their hard-earned money on a distinctive, truly great Bordeaux made in accordance with all the rules of modern winemaking, but not on a copy of a copy of such a wine. They are playing their part in ensuring that Bordeaux not only stands as a world-leading region for fine wine, but will also remain so.

The future will bring a whole new set of requirements – such as protecting against the constantly increasing risk of hail or spring frosts due to climate change, or preserving genetic diversity in the vineyard thanks to massal selection of old vines. But there are increasingly few of these. The lifespan of industrially propagated and graft-



*Frost protection (centre)
amid a continually green
vineyard landscape:
essential in today's world
of climate change.*



ed scions is becoming shorter and shorter (even using massal selection), and freshly planted vines are becoming increasingly vulnerable. There are also possible solutions to this, such as grafting directly in the vineyard onto rootstock that already has good growth. No one is being complacent.

Is Bordeaux the region protected from crisis? No, there are huge problems here as well. However, going into detail would be beyond the scope of this article. They affect not the large, mostly historic estates, but rather mid-range wines, such as the confusing wealth of unclassified Médoc wines, basic wines from Saint-Émilion and its satellites, Côtes, or 'plain' Bordeaux that no-one wants any more. They are not really benefiting from the fame of their legendary neighbours, to whom this special issue is devoted. On the other hand, demand for wine from the around 300 estates that sell 'en primeur' remains unwavering, despite an abundance of offerings of high-quality, stylish, precisely made vintages and wines, and despite their reputation for being particularly expensive. Connoisseurs have long been aware that this only applies to a certain extent, and the average price of great Bordeaux is comparable to other regions. The price of Bordeaux

(rather than the prices of fine Burgundy, for example) remains a common topic because, unlike Burgundy, it is genuinely available worldwide. The same applies for older vintages. Even when limited to the last ten years, the range on offer is huge: 2013 produced slender, very easy drinking wines that are particularly delicious at the moment. The 2014s, characterised by balance and finesse, are also hugely enjoyable, and the 2017s are just as well balanced and captivating as they were 'en primeur'. Despite their more corpulent style, frequently perceptible alcohol and rather harsh tannins, the first 2015s are already ready to be uncorked. Connoisseurs will find meaty yet crisp and fruity wines with an almost Mediterranean form of expression in the 2018 and 2020 vintages. And 2019, with its wines as full-bodied as they are juicy, well structured and harmonious, is the vintage that now feels like preparation for 2022. In between them sits 2021, the ideal vintage for fans of classic Bordeaux with moderate alcohol levels. Bordeaux fans really are spoilt for choice.

On the next page, I have listed what my perfect Bordeaux cellar for a desert island would be, encompassing all categories. The problem was not coming up with the fifty-wine target I set myself, but rather limiting it to fifty!

50 BORDEAUX WINES FOR A DESERT ISLAND

Our imaginary island cellar contains fifty great Bordeaux wines of all colours and from every corner of the region, including classics and trendy bottles, precious treasures and inexpensive bottles that anyone can afford.

Sauternes

Château Guiraud

Golden nature in the glass and now one of the most captivating sweet wines in the world.

Château Climens

Demonstrates that sweet wines can also be uniquely complex and elegant.

Château Doisy-Védrines

Sweet delight at an affordable price!

Dry white wines

Château Carbonnieux

Once a refreshing aperitif wine, now a top-class white – and still worth the price.

Château Couhins-Lurton

No other white Bordeaux has such minerality and exquisite sophistication!

Château Crabitey

Our favourite Graves, refreshing, fruity, mineral and very easy drinking from an early stage.

Château Clos Floridène

A particularly characterful, distinctive top-quality white.

Le Cygne de Fonréaud

Representing the white Bordeaux from the Médoc that is consistently increasing in quality.

Clos des Lunes

An easy-drinking, juicy, good-value Bordeaux from Sauternes that could even mature somewhat.

Fronsac

Château Moulin Haut-Laroque

An excellent tribute to a great, unsung wine-maker, that could mature for an age.

Château Villars

A wine that does not cost the earth, and represents friendship and joie de vivre.

Pessac-Léognan and Graves (red wines)

Château Brondelle Prestige

Like the white, the red wine from this Graves estate is of particular quality.

Château Haut-Bailly

No other Bordeaux triggers such emotion as this unique elixir.

Château Latour-Martillac

The rising star of the last three or four years and one of the best buys for 2022!

Saint-Émilion

Château Figeac

Remaining one of the most stylish, distinctive top Bordeaux wines, consistently delicious.

Château de Pressac

Precision, terroir, personality – describing both the wine and its maker!

Château Fonroque

Spirit, complexity, inspiration, ageing potential: offering unspoilt nature in the glass.

Château Trotte Vieille

After extensive ageing, gains unique complexity and approaches the style of Ausone.

Château La Gaffelière

Stylish, full-bodied, immensely elegant – a real flagship Saint-Émilion.

Château La Serre

Not a single unsuccessful vintage in 30 years: full-bodied, elegant, subtle.

Château Laroze

The rising star of Saint-Émilion over the past decade, characterful and spirited.

Pomerol

Château de Sales

Improves with every passing year: harmonious, tempting, smooth, elegant.

Clos René

Like Sales, offers absolutely excellent value for money, fruity and particularly harmonious.

Château La Conseillante

Expensive but unique in its expression, floral and silky with exemplary polish.

Château Beauregard

Now one of the best and most stylish Pomerols, full-bodied, velvety and dense.

Château Trotanoy

Offering indescribable depth and nobility: very expensive, but of unique class.

Clos du Clocher

A more affordable alternative to Trotanoy, needs to mature, hugely spirited and complex.

Moulis/Listrac/Haut-Médoc

Château Mauvesin Barton

Excellently made, good value for money, harmonious – now an ideal choice for small budgets.

Château Chasse-Spleen

Exceptionally made, welcome at any occasion, will be enjoyed by all.

Château Fonréaud

An utterly carefree wine, enjoyable young, slightly aged or after ten years in the cellar.

Margaux

Château La Gurgue

Has gained density and depth: the latest vintages are a must.

Château Ferrière

The vintages between 2000 and 2010 are currently tasting exceptional!

Château Monbrison

Another wine offering good value for money: Margaux elegance and finesse at its finest.

Château d'Issan

An absolute classic of a Margaux that needs a long time in the cellar.

Château Marquis de Terme

Absolute class at a (still) reasonable price, particularly over the last four years.

Château Brane-Cantenac

Has featured in our collection for every vintage since 2011: a delicacy year after year.

Château Durfort-Vivens

Stylistically the complete opposite of Brane, and thus the perfect complement: also wonderful in older vintages such as 2000 or 2001.

Saint-Julien

Château Talbot

Consistently exceptional for decades, as well balanced as it is well structured.

Château Léoville-Barton

Full-bodied, velvety, with potential, juiciness and spirit: every sip is an experience.

Château Langoa Barton

More accessible than its 'big brother', but no less bewitching!

Château Gloria

Like classified Saint-Pierre, one of the most consistent Bordeaux of them all.

Château Branaire-Ducru

Fans of real Bordeaux elegance and delicacy should snap this wine up.

Château Gruaud Larose

Offering character, minerality, sophistication and ageing potential, as well as subtle nobility.

Pauillac

Château Pontet-Canet

Combining power and depth with Burgundian sensuality and a pure expression of terroir.

Château Grand-Puy-Lacoste

Offers polish and exemplary balance, even in difficult years.

Château Pichon Baron

Particularly full-bodied and tart young, offering incomparable depth after 20 years of ageing.

Château Pichon Comtesse

Has the proverbial power and density of a Pauillac, but also particular polish.

Château Batailley

Needs – and deserves – time to mature, then gains polish and huge depth.

Saint-Estèphe

Château Phélan Ségur

Harmonious when young, gaining elegance and compelling charm with age.

Château Cos Labory

Robust and honest, but also particularly juicy and crisp, matures exceptionally well.



‘B-MOTIONS’

SIX WINES THAT MOVED ME

by Barbara Schroeder

There are some great Bordeaux wines with which Barbara Schroeder has a very special relationship – Bordeaux that also triggers positive vibrations, you might say. She calls these ‘B-motions’.

Of course, there are wines from other regions and countries that I also love. But I have a very special relationship with Bordeaux. After all, the region once welcomed me with open arms, and I have since spent the majority of my life here.

It is thanks to Bordeaux and its wines that I discovered this career. In doing so, I had to learn how to take a rational, analytical look at wine. For a long time I even believed in objectivity. Oddly enough, that is exactly what drove me away from wine. All this objectivity caused me to lose the simple joy in wine, and I ultimately came to the conclusion that subjectivity is no bad thing. An object has no soul, a subject has perhaps too much – which is a better fit for wine? ‘Wine is not an exact science’, the great Émile Peynaud once told me, ‘but rather a human one’. Wine is a product with a soul. This sets it apart from commonplace drinks.

Wine inspires passion. It triggers emotions – and these are by definition subjective. These are influenced by more

than what sits in the glass or bottle. The packaging can have an impact. History and stories. Encounters, memories, people. I value wines that have something to say, wines that whisper stories in my ear that go beyond the usual chit-chat. This may relate to their origins, their terroir, or their unique aromatic expression. It may be their particular style or an unusual combination of varieties, a certain something that gives them their unique character. Or their perfect harmony. I cannot imagine getting excited about a wine that lacks that.

I have also wondered if I could respond positively to a wine made by someone I do not like. Give it positive tasting notes, yes. But enjoy it? No. On the other hand, I am moved by wines made by people who I hold in particularly high regard for their merits in rebuilding an estate, because they do not follow short-term trends and gimmickry, but rather consistently, honestly make the wine they believe in, regardless of the risk in doing so. I will explain who these are over the next few pages.



PHÉLAN SÉGUR

REFINEMENT FROM SAINT-ESTÈPHE

If there is one wine estate that stands as the textbook epitome of Bordeaux finesse, then it is Phélan Ségur, which has for a long time been overseen by Véronique Dausse, who (just like me) lost her heart to the property.

Phélan is more than just the tale of a wine estate. Phélan is a tale of people and families. It all begins with the Phélans themselves. Like many major Bordeaux wine dynasties, they came from Ireland, and laid the foundations for the current estate in the 18th century. Phélan was looked after by the Gardinier family for around 30 years from 1985, and Philippe van de Vyvere is now the estate's lucky owner. He deserves particular thanks for the fact that he has kept faith (often whilst remaining discreetly in the background) with the unique spirit that reigns supreme at Phélan and can be felt at every turn. The 'esprit Phélan' is presented to the world by Véronique Dausse, who runs the estate, as if it were her own. This should really be followed by the names of all the

staff who, over the past hundred years, have helped ensure that this exceptional estate embodies the elegance and refinement of Bordeaux like very few others, as Phélan is one big family. 'We don't work at Phélan, we are Phélan', Véronique proudly says – and rightly so. But space is limited, so we should briefly talk about the wine. 'How do you always manage to identify Phélan blind and give it a top score every time?', Thierry Gardinier once asked Rolf Bichsel. Bichsel gave him an abashed look and said: 'Because no other Saint-Estèphe is so harmonious en primeur'. I can only agree. I have experienced thirty vintages of Phélan. All of these, whether greater or 'lesser', are touchingly stylish when opened after five or six years, or even after three decades.



LAROZE

THE ARTISAN FROM SAINT-ÉMILION

The Meslins have been growing wine in Saint-Émilion since 1610. Until 1920, they owned vines that now belong to Angélus. They remained at Laroze, where Guy Meslin is now bottling a truly special elixir.

I actually did not like Laroze very much. I did not understand this wine, with its particular spice and its certain tartness, when I first mulled it over en primeur. But then I came across an old vintage. It was ravishingly complex and particularly sophisticated. It moved me and brought me joy. I now taste it rather differently even en primeur. When I tried the 2022, which I tasted without knowing what was in the glass, I literally could not bear to spit it out. Offering boisterous power and depth, but with astonishingly velvety tannins and unique complexity, it is one of the most outstanding wines I have ever tasted in Saint-Émilion. And this is not only due to the fact that even stubborn old me has learnt something new. Of course, I now understand the

terroir better, the soils of silica over clay, which are more like those in Pomerol than the higher limestone soils. But thanks to Guy Meslin, who has been responsible for Château Laroze since 1990, the estate has improved tremendously over the past twenty years, both from a technical perspective and in terms of its expression. Guy is a real artisan. 'I can't draw, can't dance, can't paint, but what I express with my wine is like what a composer is trying to say with their music', he explains. He would never compromise to make his life easier. He knows what he owes to his family, which has been making wine in Saint-Émilion for 400 years, and seeks absolute truth, individuality and authenticity in his long-lasting wines.



LA SERRE

GENTLEMEN MADE OF VELVET AND SILK

Arnaud d'Arfeuille not only runs the tiny Château La Serre up on Saint-Émilion's limestone hill, but also passionately heads up Château Tessendey in Fronsac, which has become a real insider's tip.

La Serre enjoys an ideal location up in Saint-Émilion. From here you can enjoy magnificent views towards the south, to Ausone or Pavie Maquin. Château Trotteville stands in the background. This just seven-hectare estate with its fantastic terroir, which has thus far defied all takeover attempts, was acquired by Libourne's merchant family d'Arfeuille during the frosty year of 1956. Luc d'Arfeuille introduced me to La Serre many years ago. As a gentleman through and through, he insisted on taking me personally on a tour of the vines. When asked about the origins of the name ('la serre' means 'the greenhouse'), he mischievously replied: 'Because the sun still shines up here on the plateau when it is raining on Ausone'. I still do not know if he

was being serious or making a joke. One thing is certain: La Serre has never made sunburnt wines. Instead, the estate produces immensely tempting, velvety, fruity, exceptional wines, even in recent hot vintages.

Another gentleman has been responsible for La Serre for the past ten years: Luc's nephew Arnaud d'Arfeuille. Arnaud also passionately takes care of Château Tessendey in Fronsac, where his father lives. Apart from the top four or five estates, Fronsac has often disappointed me, so the fact that Tessendey is a commendable exception makes me even more delighted. Impeccably made, smooth and fruity, and also still good value for money, Tessendey has become a real insider's tip in recent years.



DOISY-VÉDRINES

A LOVE LETTER TO BARSAC

Anyone wanting to overcome prejudices against sweet wines should make a beeline for Doisy-Védrines, the Cru Classé that owes much of its excellence to Olivier Castéja (right) and his son-in-law Guillaume Lefebvre.

I grab sweet wines out of my cellar less often than red ones, but I almost always feel drawn to the corner where a couple of Doisy-Védrines vintages lie slumbering. The reason for this is simple. This Barsac in proper style is outstanding year after year (which is virtually a miracle in Sauternes), but its well-balanced interplay between sweetness and acidity also means that it tastes exceptional after just two or three years yet can still mature for a long time if required. As an exquisite rarity (fewer than 35,000 bottles are generally produced), it is also available at a price that almost feels like giving it away.

Even here in Bordeaux, I hear experts who really should know better boasting that they stay well clear of the fin-

est Sauternes and Barsac, because wines like these are so clumsy that there is never a good opportunity to open them. Anyone who says this is stuck in the 1980s and has also been opening the wrong wines – because even Doisy-Védrines from that period is still immensely elegant with delicate floral and dried fruit notes, a hint of cocoa or truffle, and a delicate bitter almond touch in the finish. Doisy-Védrines was almost predestined to be an exceptional wine thanks to its fantastic location in the upper part of Barsac, on a flat hill with clay over limestone soils. It is still neither clumsy nor oily, but rather bewitches with its silky fruitiness, perceptible minerality and controlled fullness. It is truly refreshing, even when enjoyed at an early stage.



SOCIANDO MALLET

A CREATION FROM THE FAR NORTH

Since Sylvie Gautreau took over Château Sociando Mallet in Saint-Seurin de Cadourne, the northernmost commune in Haut-Médoc, power and character have been joined by polish and elegance.

Sociando Mallet is generally associated with Jean Gautreau – and quite rightly so. After all, he discovered this top-quality vineyard site in Saint-Seurin de Cadourne, in the far north of Haut-Médoc and thus in the middle of nowhere. He reawakened Sociando Mallet and gained a global reputation for the estate. What began in 1969 with five hectares, a crooked fermentation cellar and a garage is now a proud estate of more than 80 hectares. One pretty part of it stands on gravel hilltops alongside the Gironde, the quality of which Jean Gautreau sniffed out beneath the heather with the certainty of a tracking hound. But without wishing to diminish the accomplishments of this past master, who died in 2019, Jean's daughter Sylvie has

also achieved great things in terms of the style and quality of the wines. She spent a long time working alongside her father and then took over in 2015.

I may be accused of solidarity among women, but I would say that Sociando Mallet has been becoming even more stylish over the past ten years. Jean, born in northern Médoc, was a typical representative of this little area, a Médoc winemaker of sterling qualities. The hugely structured wines he made, rather tart in their youth, reflected and resembled him. Under Sylvie they have gained greater polish and elegance, have become more precise, but have not lost any of their character. Anyone who has read this far will understand how much I value this approach.



FONROQUE

MASTERS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Alain Moueix is one Bordeaux's organic pioneers: both Château Mazeyres in Pomerol and Château Fonroque in Saint-Émilion have long held biodynamic certification.

What I particularly like about Alain Moueix is that you can talk to him about wine for hours, without ever talking about wine. He puts holistic thinking into practice. 'I do not reject the scientific side of winemaking. It inspires me. The same goes for the administrative side. But if I were to limit myself to these, I would be denying the part of me that believes in creativity and the power of nature', he says, and I know exactly what he means.

Building on ten years of experience as a winegrower, he began biodynamic cultivation in the late 1990s. Both of the estates he looks after now hold certification: Fonroque since 2002, Mazeyres since 2012. Although Alain sets little store by titles, gurus and sects, he is clearly

one of Bordeaux's organic pioneers. In Fonroque, he just has even commissioned a new fermenting room incorporating some of his principles: proportions in keeping with the golden ratio, orientation based on a bioenergy study, use of as many raw, noble construction materials as possible, natural light, avoiding unnecessary sources of noise, and much more.

All these principles add up to the right thing in the end: 'A winery like a poem, an ode to our wine', he explains while he silently opens a bottle of 2010. Its incomparable floral and spicy aroma alone brings tears of joy to my eyes, and I close them with emotion after the first brief sip.



1999 Henri Lurton took over Brane in 1992. Seven years later, he was able to commission a new winery made of natural building materials, which was nothing short of revolutionary for the time. This enabled more precise work. He also increased the period of maturation in barrels from 12 to 18 months. For the first time ever, Henri was able to show the quality of wine that his estate could produce. 1999 was very cool and rainy, and therefore far from easy, with one of the largest harvest volumes ever seen. Thanks to its menthol freshness, its slender, elegant structure, and its rounded tannins, the 1999 Brane-Cantenac is still impressive today.

2005 Years ending in five are always top vintages in Bordeaux, as the old adage goes. 2005 therefore had to be a top year, especially after four vintages whose quality was not beyond all doubt from the perspective of the time. Then, we seemed to be the only ones who did not rate 2001, 2002 or 2004 – with their elegant wines – any lower than the beefy 2005s. Nevertheless, despite its perceptible fullness and supporting structure, Brane is now pleasingly civilised and harmonious and very close to its Margaux style. It is already very enjoyable now but could still mature further.

2015 Brane was viewed as a great Margaux across the world from the turn of the millennium onwards. For us, the real turning point came ten years later. Brane was no longer impressing with density, fullness and the latest technological progress, but rather with absolute precision, bewitching fruitiness, delicacy, vibrancy, minerality and length – exactly what we love so much about Margaux wines. The 2015 is no exception to this. It is already offering huge aromatic complexity, and after swirling already proves astonishingly harmonious and easy drinking, although it could still mature for a lot longer.

2019 This vertical tasting took place a few weeks before the en primeur tasting. We therefore unanimously selected 2019 as the best Brane ever. Anyone who has already read our en primeur notes will know that we will now have to describe it as the 'best in bottle'. Many factors contributed to this fantastic result, including the fact that the 2019 Brane was made entirely from old vines in top locations, making up around 40 percent of the vine stock. Ideal balance between power, structure and spirit, perfectly polished tannins, huge aromatic complexity with an enormously lingering finish and huge ageing potential: a wine of the century.

VERTICAL TASTING

BRANE-CANTENAC

Over the last 25 years, this Deuxième Grand Cru estate has continually striven to keep up with the latest technology and winegrowing standards.

One thing has remained constant: the inimitable Margaux elegance.

Henri Lurton is a man of few words. He knows that his wines speak for him, and they have plenty to say. Our vertical tasting proves it: for nearly thirty years, he has been confidently producing fine wines that have been right at the top of the podium for a good ten years thanks to their sure style, elegance and precision. Part of this success is also down to the enthusiasm of his capable team. Henri has long understood that Brane's actual potential lies in its top-quality sites. He makes very effort to preserve this potential. 'Recent vintages have shown how well the vines adapt to changing climatic conditions. The same applies in

Bordeaux. The wines we make have never been so good. Not because we are sitting back and taking things easy, but because we are constantly questioning our approach. All of the top estates are now committed to sustainable winegrowing. We plant trees at Brane, even if this requires sacrificing valuable vineyard area', Henri explains.

Henri dedicated his latest vintage to his recently deceased father, who was able to embark on his journey to further pastures at Brane, where he lived. From there, he will continue to keep tabs on his son's work – and he can be very proud.





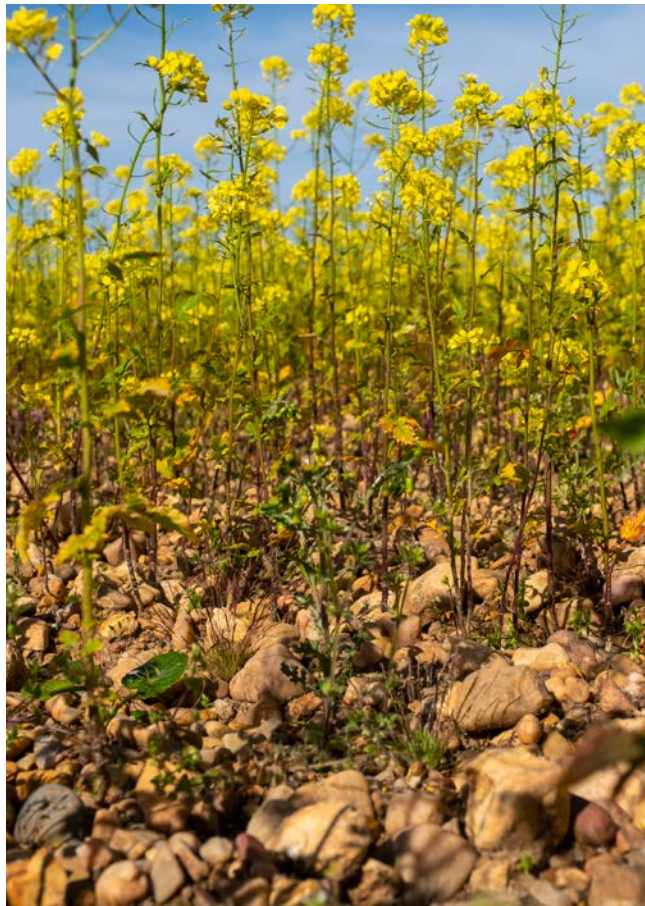
POMEROL

THE PROMISED LAND FOR CONNOISSEURS

This is the smallest of the major Bordeaux wine regions, and in some ways also the most rural. However, Pomerol's wines boast legendary status. Connoisseurs appreciate the particular fruitiness, smoothness and elegance of Pomerol, and describe this little corner as the 'Burgundy of Bordeaux'.



Two different plots of sand, clay and gravel at the heart of the plateau (top), the special clay soils at Pétrus (bottom left) and the particularly sparse gravel soils at Trotanoy (bottom right).



Everything is very different in Pomerol. Pomerol? Wine enthusiasts who stumble upon this little corner for the first time will most likely wonder where they really are – and rightly so. Pomerol may make waves as a legendary, world-renowned winemaking area, but visitors seeking a village worthy of this accolade will do so in vain. The village centre is essentially limited to a village hall, school, multi-purpose hall, post office, winegrowers' association – and of course the church, visible from afar. Hamlets and wineries, mostly consisting of just two or three buildings, are scattered around it. Catusseau, the second 'village' in the appellation, almost feels like a big city with its tobacco store, top-quality yet good-value restaurant, and a few stately homes. It is nothing short of a miracle that Pomerol has not been assimilated into neighbours such as Saint-Émilion or especially Libourne. However, a sense of independence and a right to forge your own path seem particularly well established here – and the same goes for winemaking. This may even be one of the driving forces behind this philosophy, which is manifested in so many ways.

An official classification? Not here. No Cru Classés or Grand Crus anywhere to be found. They simply seem not to have needed them here, thus avoiding disputes and jealousy, resentment and expensive legal fees.

Towering vineyards are nowhere to be seen here – at second glance, everything appears to be flat. The majority of Pomerol sits on a plateau with no real relief, around 30 to 40 metres above sea level and some 10 to 20 metres above the level of the Isle and Dordogne rivers. A few differences in altitude emerge on the edge of the plateau.

Ostentatious mansions like in the Médoc? Again, you will find nothing of the sort, even less than in neighbouring Saint-Émilion. Even the two or three 'real' wine chateaus seem almost unassuming by comparison. Most of today's 'chateaus' are more like elegant villas, distinguished country houses or handsome chartreuses. Even the best-known Pomerol estate has only had a building that could pass for a chateau for a few years. For a long time, it consisted solely of one small (and sparsely furnished) winery. This is all down to history: most estates were leased, and were rarely larger than ten hectares in size. Many grew grains before switching to wine.

The mysterious, often-mentioned terroir? Even that is good for a surprise at first. Anyone stomping their way through the vineyards of the legendary Château Pétrus during the winter months may not be risking life and limb, but they are endangering their footwear, which has a tendency to get sucked down by the stick mixture of clay and sand. Pétrus owes its position as one of the most valuable and sought-after wines in the world to a very particular soil type: a pocket of 'blue clay' (see map on pages 30-31). Countless wine estates all over the world are seeking to rival Pétrus and claim to have a comparable terroir. This is anything but representative of the appellation, but the Pomerol terroir is still top class. This applies not only to the small amount of pure clay soils, but also the various terraces of gravel mixed with sand and a little clay. Historically, Bordeaux

*A top-quality terroir?
Yes – but not just the one.
Pomerol's geological
structure is diverse, making
it particularly exciting.*

used soils with a higher clay content, particularly if they sit on limestone, or even the more fertile alluvial soils. However, wines from the gravel hilltops on the left bank began making waves from the 17th century onwards, also sparking an interest in gravel soils in Pomerol. In any case, these were too sparse for growing grain, and ultimately less profitable. The name of the well-known Trotanoy estate is an excellent representation of this: it is derived from the expression 'trop ennui', loosely translated as 'too much trouble'. In fact, Trotanoy has soils with a particularly high gravel content. However, switching to making 'fine wine' took longer in Pomerol than in the other well-known winegrowing areas.

A meteoric rise

Pomerol, a late bloomer? Perhaps, but at the speed of a moon rocket – because many connoisseurs now view Pomerol as leading the pack of great Bordeaux, at least one step ahead of all of the others. Following a prelude in the 18th century, this rise actually began shortly before the phylloxera crisis, so only really gained momentum in the 20th century. There are various ways of explaining this late start.

Pomerol is on the right bank of the Dordogne, Garonne and Gironde and for a long time was difficult to access. Bordeaux merchants, who were responsible for not only the global distribution of wines but also their maturation and bottling, therefore had to cross two wide rivers if they wanted to try a wine in Pomerol, and take three ferries on the out and return journeys. The first two bridges were only built in the 1820s. Furthermore, with a few exceptions, the average size of most estates here was very modest (and remains so today). This was not really conducive to global distribution. In addition, the location is relatively flat. The gravel soils, almost always mixed with some clay and often covered in sand, frequently gained stagnant water during the winter months, which was not exactly ideal for the vines. It took laborious drainage work to compensate for this disadvantage, which was not consistently implemented until the second half of the 19th century. And last but not least: the Merlot grape, now the star of the right bank, was already being cited as a quality variety in the late 18th century, but after the phylloxera plague it dominated the grape mix and gradually replaced varieties

such as Noir de Pressac (Malbec) and Bouchet (Cabernet Franc). Vine researchers suspect that this was due to the new practice of grafting on American rootstock, which made Merlot (but not Malbec) easier to cultivate and improved its quality.

Knights Hospitaller, Templars or Knights of Malta?

Looking back through Pomerol's history is not easy, as there is a lack of relevant documents. However, that makes things even more exciting. The ancient Romans may even have grown wine here. Where did they not! This does not even require starting an audacious chain of evidence based on the fact that the name Pomerol (also spelled Pomerols or Pomeyrols) has its roots in the Latin word 'poma', which means 'apple' but also 'pome fruit' in general, and thus grapes. Aquitaine was a flourishing colony at the time of the Roman Empire, and Libourne (Condate in Roman times), located at the confluence of the easily navigable Isle and Dordogne rivers, was already a key transport hub between the Atlantic and the interior (now Dordogne, Charante, Poitou and the Massif Central). In the immediate and wider surrounding area, there are numerous Roman estates that (as classic self-sufficient operations) would definitely have grown some wine.

The first written records of winemaking in Pomerol date from the Middle Ages, generally in the form of sale or gift deeds. At the time, Pomerol belonged to the 'seigneurie' (fiefdom) of Barbanne and Condat, which – like the whole of Aquitaine – was owned by the English crown. The English then bequeathed it to various lords for their beneficial use. In the 12th century, the Knights Hospitaller settled in the area and established a pilgrims' refuge in Pomerol thanks to donations from the local nobility.

The order of the 'Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem' was established in 1099. As well as looking after the holy sites in the East, it also sought to protect, house and feed pilgrims. When the Knights Hospitaller were forced to leave Jerusalem, they also settled in Cyprus and spent a while on Rhodes (and were therefore also known as the Chevaliers de Rhodes). They ultimately reached Malta and became the Knights of Malta. When the Order of the Templars was dissolved (in 1312), the Knights of Malta were also awarded their possessions, which often causes confusion.

However, we are primarily interested in the role they played in France in general and Pomerol in particular. They were best known for operating guest houses where pilgrims could receive accommodation, care and food along the various pilgrimage routes leading to Santiago de Compostela. One such pilgrims' refuge was also established in Pomerol. We do not know for sure where it was located, but there are clear written records of its existence: the earliest dates from 1289. These refuges were run by 'commanderies'. The 'commandateur' had the rank of a lord, meaning that they could collect taxes and lease payments, and were responsible for jurisdiction and thus the collection of fines. This was also the case in Pomerol, granting the area and its citizens a level

of independence. Indirectly (and sometimes directly, as we will soon see), they also promoted winemaking.

The 'Hospitallers' remained the lords of Pomerol until the French Revolution. However, at the end of the 14th century the 'commandateur' relinquished police power and jurisdiction to the Libourne town parliament. That might sound surprising, but it was linked to the loss of a significant proportion of their income. This was replaced by the taxes that winemaking generated – because in return, the commune was granted the right to import and sell their wines in the town of Libourne without a tax burden. Thus far, this privilege had only been afforded to town residents who owned vines in Pomerol. As well as the Knights of Malta, this development also benefited leaseholders and farmers. Incidentally, it also illustrates that in the late 14th century, Pomerol was already producing more wine than was consumed locally, and needed to look around for possible new markets. Flesh-and-blood 'hospitaliers' still oversee Pomerol and its wines, and ensure that the values of hospitality are preserved: the members of the 'Les Hospitaliers de Pomerol' wine fraternity.

Pomerol as the focus of conflict

A Knight of Malta as patron, a very sparse terroir that was nevertheless already producing exceptional wines, a sales market with connections to the Atlantic – fortune seemed to be on the side of the locals. But that was reckoning without outside forces. The Hundred Years' War between the British and the French began in 1337. Pomerol was located in the border area, and towards the end of the conflict was particularly affected by skirmishes between the English occupying forces and the French king's troops. Castillon, where the decisive battle won by the French took place in 1453, is not far from Pomerol. After the end of the war, the once flourishing vineyards lay fallow. As part of 'liberated' Aquitaine, Pomerol also belonged to the losing side.

No sooner was the Hundred Years' War over, than religious conflicts began between Protestants and Catholics. Once again, Pomerol was the focal point for confrontations that would last for nearly 200 years. Pomerol was also a conflict zone during the civil-war-like 'Fronde' in the mid-17th century. This explains why after a short heyday in the 14th century, Pomerol only began to enjoy a winemaking renaissance from the second half of the 18th century onwards.

As a local historian at the time put it: 'In rural Libourne, all you see is hardship of all kinds, the fruits of labour and income being stolen, houses being razed to the ground, mills in ruins, vines ripped up, and animals in the slaughterhouse to feed the soldiers'. First of all, enough grain had to be harvested to feed hungry mouths. Nevertheless, winemaking in Pomerol began a rapid resurgence in the mid-18th century, sometimes at positively breakneck speed. On the eve of the French Revolution, more than 400 hectares had already been converted to winemaking, with other cultivation (grain) having dwindled to fewer than 100 hectares. At the time, Pomerol was producing around 300 'tonneaux' of wine,



*Vieux Château Certan (left),
Nénin (centre) and Château
de Sales (bottom) are three
of the oldest 'wine chateaus'
in the appellation.*





Château Beauregard and views of the plateau

equating to 350,000 of our modern bottles. Yields were less than ten hectolitres per hectare! This is more than modest, even for the time, and once again illustrates the meagre nature of the soils. Pomerol was rare and expensive, and sold well.

Pomerol, transparent and delicate

What did Pomerol taste like during this period? Documents show that in the second half of the 18th century, Pomerol's vineyards were still planted not only with red varieties but also with white ones. One owner even noted that they blended three quarters of red varieties with one quarter of white for their wine. From this, it follows that grape varieties were harvested and sometimes even matured separately, but ultimately then blended together. Another source puts the ideal proportion of white varieties at around a sixth. In his 'history of Pomerol', J. A. Garde cites local historian Souffrain, who in 1806 accused Saint-Émilion winemakers of not using enough white varieties, 'at the expense of (transparent) colour and delicacy'. This seems to have been better understood in Pomerol. Souffrain also notes: 'Néac and Pomerol (are) two communes with soils that are slightly above the average level. (Here) where you can often see gravel with the naked eye, the wines often prove extremely delicate, especially the wines from Pomerol. A handful of the best wines are on a par with those from Saint-Émilion.' He also tells us which of these is the best: 'Pomerol's top wine is that made by Certan, owned by the Demay women.'

Another document notes that the red varieties 'Verdot, Noir de Pressac, Bouchet, Petit Cabernet, Coulon and Petit Coulon' and the white varieties 'Sauvignon, Rochelin, Malvoisie, Muscat and Folle Blanche' were planted. Noir de Pressac is Malbec and Bouchet is Cabernet Franc. Verdot most likely means our Petit Verdot, and Petit Cabernet is probably Cabernet Sauvignon. 'Merlau' or Merlot is still missing from this list, even though it was

described as excellent and profitable in a list of 34 red Libourne grape varieties that was produced for the governor of Bordeaux in 1784.

Winemaking was clearly paying off, as an increasing number of citizens from nearby Libourne began investing in Pomerol wine estates, using fortunes gained through trade. Some members of the old nobility, who also held virtually all of the town rights in Libourne, did the same. Landowners appointed underlings or tenants to cultivate their estates, and only lived there during the harvest (if at all). In the mid-18th century, Pomerol had 16 tenants managing estates ranging in size from 7 to 12 hectares, as well as 17 independent winemakers, but just one noble family that lived on their estate at least periodically: the Beauregards. However, their descendants the Chandos family were already living elsewhere by the end of the 18th century.

Many of the wine estates that we know today sprang up between 1750 and 1800. The successful Giraud family of brokers, for example, made wine at their estate 'Trop Ennuie', which they renamed Trotanoy. The Certan wines made by the Demays were already achieving high prices, enabling them to build a real chateau – the first (and essentially only) in Pomerol, which they then quite rightly renamed Vieux Château Certan. In 1754, the 'iron lady' Catherine Conseillan (who had been successful in the metal trade in Libourne) built a harvest home on her over 23-hectare country estate Belair la Pipaude. This estate also gained a new name and was henceforth known as La Conseillante. In 1793, a rich citizen of Saint-Émilion acquired Beauregard and its six hectares of vines for a substantial price, and (following a brief interlude behind bars during the French Revolution) built the small, particularly decorative chateau you see today. Other well-known estates such as Nénin, Petit Village, l'Évangile, Gazin and Pétrus, to name but a few, took shape during this period.

Things began looking up again for Pomerol wines in the 19th century. Together with their Saint-Émilion com-



Guardians of tradition: three 'hospitaliers' with one of the ancient border stones featuring the cross of the Knights Hospitaller



patriots, they were shipped out of Libourne harbour primarily to northern France and Belgium. In 1819, a merchant in Lille ordered a couple of tonneaux of white wine from Pomerol and two barriques of old wine (1815 vintage) from 'uncle Giraud at Trotanoy'. Thirty years later, Pomerol was celebrated as the 'Médoc of Libourne', with wines offering finesse comparable to the top examples from the left bank. Vieux Château Certan continued to dominate the hierarchy, but the competition (not least the estates listed above) was snapping at its heels.

The phylloxera outbreak seemed to even fuel Pomerol's rise, at least to begin with, as the pest did not particularly like its gravel and sandy soils. La Conseillante managed to preserve its old vines thanks to targeted (but also laborious and expensive) treatments with carbon disulphide, which was sprayed into the soil near the roots. The investment clearly paid off. However, later on when it became clear that scions grafted onto resistant American rootstock were not only producing good wines but also ensuring higher yields, Pomerol's vineyards were also replanted, with the favoured Merlot grape variety. This made the wines smoother, so smooth and velvety that white varieties were no longer added, in keeping with the trend of the times. The 20th century

was a time of intensely coloured, full-bodied fine wines. Lightweights had served their purpose.

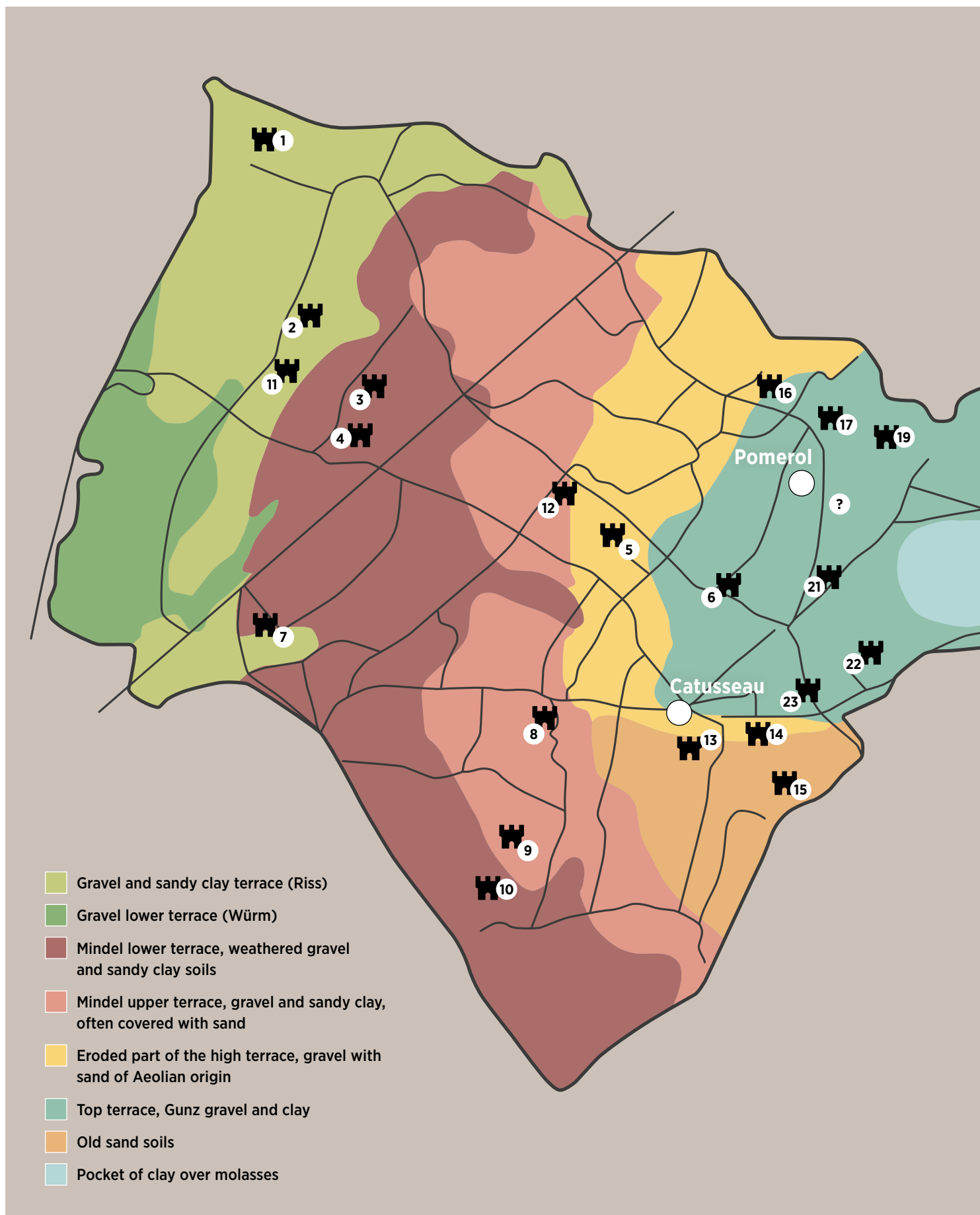
The future flagship grape variety produced particularly impressive wines even in the clay soils of Pétrus, the new star of the appellation. However, these initially created a stir, particularly on a local level. It required a prophet with vision and drive to make this special wine world-famous, flaunting not a long history but just a very special terroir – and its aromas and flavours. The role of prophet was passionately taken up by Corrèze wine merchant Jean-Pierre Moueix, who came to Libourne to make his fortune in the 1920s. Like other inlanders who chose to settle in Libourne and energetically campaigned for right-bank wines to be recognised, he began with literally nothing and ended up with a highly regarded trading house that has played a key role in modern Pomerol's success. Pétrus was the driving force from which the whole appellation benefited – and still does today.

Highly regarded American wine critic Robert Parker may also have played a role in the appellation's recent success, as he has particularly praised Merlot-heavy wines from the right bank (and especially Pomerols) that taste exceptional from an early stage. This may



have resulted in a change of style in appellations in the short term, but over the longer term it has above all enabled the necessary investment in wineries and vineyards, which is not a matter of course in Pomerol with its relatively small entities that are still often family owned. Despite a series of relatively climatically complicated years, Pomerol is now producing excellent wines that not only offer high technical quality but also have improved in terms of style. This particularly applies to the wines from the numerous 'smaller', lesser known estates. The fact that the areas on the edge of the plateau enable even ripening in a time of global warming may have contributed to this, but the real reason lies in the impeccable work being carried out by those in charge. They put barrels to sensitive use, give the fruit a chance, and seek out not bulk but harmony, freshness and even a certain minerality. Here, too, there is a growing recognition that natural cultivation (which often begins with soil tilling) is a good starting point for making fruitier, crisper wines. Pomerol is therefore not an appellation for snobs with fat wallets, but rather an interesting little corner offering a good number of affordable, high-quality wines with an almost Burgundian range, where any true wine enthusiast will find something to their taste.

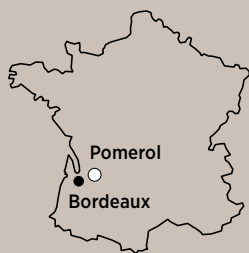
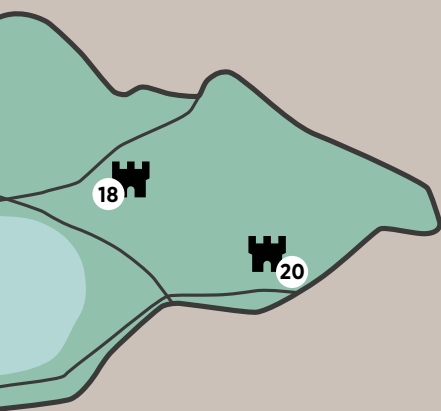
In Pomerol, vineyards cultivated in harmony with nature also produce substantial grapes and particularly fruity wines.



TERROIR AND GEOLOGY

THE CHATEAUS IN THIS ARTICLE

1. Château de Sales
2. Clos du Beau-Père
3. Clos René
4. Château Montviel
5. Château Trotanoy
6. Château La Violette
7. Château Bonalgue
8. Château Nénin
9. Château Ferrand
10. Château La Croix Ducasse
11. Clos 126
12. Château Bourgneuf
13. Clos du Clocher
14. Château Beauregard
15. Château La Rose Figeac
16. Château La Croix de Gay/
La Fleur de Gay
17. Château Le Gay
18. Château Gazin
19. Château La Fleur-Pétrus
20. Château Vieux Maillet
21. Château Certan de May
22. Château La Conseillante
23. Château Petit Village



The map opposite offers an overview of the appellation's different terroir areas and the locations of the 22 chateaus and wineries listed below. The vines may be located in a single, continuous piece of land near to the estate or in distant plots, i.e. spread all over the (small) appellation. An estate's location therefore only offers limited information about its terroir structure.

Pomerol stands on a flat plateau around 40 metres above sea level in the centre, and dropping down towards the edges. Altitudes vary by around 20 metres. At first glance, the geology seems very uniform: the plateau sits on a molasses subsoil ('molasse du Fronsandais') and contains arenaceous scree. However, this is made up of layers that were deposited in different geological eras. The oldest and highest is that in the centre, from the Gunz era. Historically, it is considered the best terroir for winemaking, and includes a pocket of clay. However, the more recent terraces do not lag far behind in terms of quality, at least not after the laborious drainage work carried out in the 19th century. The proportion of sand increases towards the edge of the plateau. This slows the ripening cycle somewhat, which is not inconvenient in this era of global warming. However, these are only broad brush strokes. The gravel soils vary in how compact they are and the proportion of sand changes from one plot to the next, also affecting the grape's ripening cycle and thus the fruit's substance and aromatic expression. Pockets of iron oxide in the subsoil also offer an additional wealth of aromas. This wide range of elements and their interplay is what makes Pomerol wines so exciting.

POMEROL IN FIGURES

Total vineyard area: 800 hectares

AOC since: 1936

AOC grape varieties: 80% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon

Average annual production: 30,000 hl or around 4 million bottles

Average yield: 35 hl/ha.

Number of estates: 130

Climate: Temperate oceanic, hot summers, mild winters.



With top wines such as Trotanoy, La Fleur-Pétrus and Hosanna, Christian Moueix (shown here with his Giacometti chair, highlighting his flair for culture and art in all its forms) and his son Édouard (right) are continuing a family tradition that was begun by Christian's father Jean-Pierre Moueix, who won global recognition for Pomerol.

A PROUD TRIO

LA FLEUR-PÉTRUS, TROTANOY
AND HOSANNA



They need no introduction. Everyone knows the family and the Moueix name has long been synonymous with exclusive Pomerol, and not least thanks to top-quality wines made from their own grapes.

'Etablissements Jean-Pierre Moueix' was founded by his father and the winery has been located on the Quai du Priourat in Libourne since 1937. Everyone in Pomerol knows just how much the appellation owes to this renowned trading house. A trading house? But so much more than that. Christian Moueix: 'Making wine is my passion. In Pomerol, I can indulge in it at our estates Hosanna, La Fleur-Pétrus and Trotanoy. But wines need to be marketed, whether that means our own bottles or those from our friends in Pomerol, Saint-Émilion, or (thanks to the work put in by my son Édouard) more recently from the Médoc. I am therefore happy to accept a divided life,

half as a wine merchant, half as a winemaker.' One of the first estates that his father acquired in Pomerol was Château La Fleur-Pétrus, in 1950. At the time, it comprised only around six hectares of vines in pure gravel soils. As a result, for a long time La Fleur-Pétrus produced a particularly elegant, refined, but also very lean wine. 'I spent a long time thinking about this. There was only one option: be on the lookout for plots with more clay, whose wines would provide greater fullness. It took twenty years of patient work to create the modern-day La Fleur-Pétrus. But the wait has paid off – La Fleur-Pétrus's wines have been offering more body and substance since around 2009.



Of course, purists claim that this is at the expense of the previous vintages' proverbial elegance. That may be, but I stand firmly behind our decision.' And he is right. Whilst the 'old' La Fleur-Pétrus lived up to the first part of its double-barrelled name, the new now does true justice to the second!

Unlike La Fleur-Pétrus, Hosanna is its own creation, even if the estate is based on the top-quality historic vineyards from the former Château Certan Giraud, which Christian Moueix was able to acquire in 1999. The Giraud family had pertinent reasons to ask him not to continue using their family name – and as a true gentleman, Christian Moueix of course respected their wishes. He nevertheless remained the owner of the old Château Certan brand. But there were already two Certans – so courtesy prompted him not to use this name either. This meant that a striking new brand name was urgently needed. 'I definitely wanted to find a name that ended with the letter "a". I had just been in Osaka, which sounded almost like "Hosanna!". So the name struck me like a bolt of lightning.'

Thanks to a proportion of around 30% of very old Cabernet Franc vines in top Pomerol sites, Hosanna offered a

very special wine right from the outset. Christian Moueix: 'But we are Merlot specialists!' It took us a few years to really understand Cabernet Franc. We were just harvesting it too early, in other words as soon as we had brought in the Merlot. Leaving a gap did not seem opportune for organisational reasons. But my son Édouard began doing just that: today, we only harvest the Cabernet Franc when it is fully ripe, no matter how long we have to wait. The extra effort pays off, as our progress has been truly spectacular! I am certain that Hosanna is a wine of the future!'

The third part of the trilogy is Trotanoy, which is no nimble dancer, but rather a truly characterful wine. 'Trotanoy is just 7.2 hectares in size. It consists of half relatively cool clay soils, and half rough gravel. Opposites attract here and complement each other – heat and coolness, fullness and spirit, density and depth. What's more, the location on the south west of the plateau enjoys particularly good airflow, which is excellent for the vines.' Trotanoy is a particularly well-structured, long-lasting wine for those prepared to wait. Anyone who uncorks a bottle after 20 or even 30 years in the cellar will be rewarded with a unique, incomparable moment of pleasure.

FERRAND

Jean-Pascal Gasparoux, with his brother Philipp and father Henry, looks after the 15-hectare estate that his grandfather acquired in 1934.

His family, like many in Pomerol, has its origins in Corrèze in central France. He runs Ferrand together with his brother, father Henry and son Matthieu, who looks after the technical winemaking side. Strictly speaking, Ferrand is made up of two estates: the historic plot of around four hectares lies around the actual estate building. In the 1980s and 1990s, his father and grandfather acquired numerous plots on the plateau, near to Evangile and La Fleur-Pétrus: Château Haut Ferrand. They have been producing around 100 bottles of a special wine entitled La Fleur Ferrand here for the past ten years.

Jean-Pascal Gasparoux is a veterinarian by profession and describes himself as an amateur winemaker. His brother is a doctor. His predecessors also did not earn their entire living from winemaking. 'That has pros and cons. But everything is changing with my son! He has winemaking in his blood and knows what he wants!'



CLOS 126

Eric and Richard Chevalier own four estates in and around Libourne: the smallest (and most perfectly formed) is a Clos in Pomerol, just 0.5 hectares in size.

'We are winemakers with our feet on the ground', explains Eric (top left in picture), 'and a real family company', adds Richard (bottom right). However, in Pomerol – where changes of hands and new arrivals are rare – they still feel like newcomers and immigrants: they only acquired their plot, cadastral number 126 and 127, in 2019. Eric: 'We only heard that it was available by accident. But when we stood in its top-quality terroir with its approximately 60-year-old vines, we were blown away.' Richard: 'We were like kids in a toy shop! The name Pomerol is associated with very special emotions. When we uncork a bottle of our Clos, our visitors' eyes light up!' Eric and Richard only produce around 3000 bottles of Pomerol, but they do not shy away from effort or expenditure, and are not afraid of comparisons with better known brands. 'If we do something, we do it right', Eric concludes – and we take him at his word.



UNIQUE TRIO

LE GAY, MONTVIEL, LA VIOLETTE

It all began with his mother. She boldly turned her desire to become a winemaker into a reality, and between 1985 and 2006 acquired three top-quality wine estates in Pomerol, now owned by Henri Parent.

Unlike Henri Parent, the first thing that an entrepreneur making wine with a pocket calculator would have done would be to combine the approximately 25 hectares of top-quality vines he has overseen in Pomerol for the past ten years, in order to make their life easier. But the Belgium-based owner, who has been responsible for the estates since 2013, would not even dream of doing so. 'I am absolutely convinced that a wine estate's terroir and history need to be treated with respect. Each of our three estates expresses its particular place of origin, separate history and personality. We set great store by cultivating every last detail, so that this remains the case.'

The Pomerol adventure began in 1985 at Château Montviel. The estate's previous owner sold all of his grapes to trading houses and Montviel, with its 17 plots covering twelve hectares, was therefore truly shaken out of hibernation. Montviel has long been a very good representation of the appellation with its particularly fruity, velvety style. It has now become even more precise thanks to the con-

struction of a new winery in 2019. Château Le Gay is the second estate in the set. Its approximately 12 hectares of vines (in a single stretch) are located on the much-heralded plateau, right by legendary estates such as Lafleur or Pétrus. Le Gay is vinified entirely in barrels. Following selection on a double sorting table, the grapes are put directly into more than 300 barrels with a capacity of 225 litres. Each barrel therefore serves as a mini fermentation tank, enabling particularly precise work. The winery was constructed in 2002, and was equipped with a special cooling system to enable this in 2014. 'This turns the whole winery into a refrigerator', Henri Parent happily explains. So it is no surprise that Le Gay is a particularly complex, characterful Pomerol that can be left to age for a long time. One real speciality is La Violette. This estate, just 1.68 hectares in size, also stands on the plateau near to Le Pin, just 700 metres or so from Le Gay. Destemming by hand, one grape at a time, produces an original, immensely floral, tempting rarity.



A unique trio with a happy face at the helm:
Henri Parent with his three top wines



Vincent Priou: Petit-Village and Beauregard will clearly retain their identity



BEAUREGARD & CO

A HAPPY WINE UNION WITH PROGENY

Beauregard and Vincent Priou – two names that are inextricably linked. In 2002, the happy pair – who have been loyal to each other for 33 years – adopted a gifted child: neighbouring estate Petit-Village.

Vincent Priou has been responsible for technical aspects at Beauregard since 1991. He was appointed general director in 2015, and has also been looking after neighbouring estate Petit-Village since 2020. No regrets, or desire for a change of scenery? Only people who don't know Beauregard would ask that. Vincent Priou: 'This is a magical place. It never fails to move people. In Pomerol with its changing history, there are only a handful of wine estates whose roots can be traced back to the 12th century. The park is home to a border stone marking the old pilgrim's path, harking back to the era of the Knights Hospitaller in Pomerol. Beauregard owes its name to a noble family – one of the few to reside in Pomerol. Their descendants sold the estate, which was already producing a sought-after wine, during the French Revolution. The elegant chartreuse with its wonderful park (designed by Victor Louis, the architect of the Grand Théâtre in Bordeaux) also hails from this period. An exact copy of this chartreuse can also be found on Long Island, built by the Guggenheim family.

These are just a few morsels from Beauregard's rich history.' It should be added that the estate owes its status as one of the appellation's top producers to two families: the Moulins, who own the legendary Galeries Lafayette department store chain, and the Cathiards (Smith Haut Lafite), who acquired Beauregard in 2014. The estate has held organic certification for more than ten years. Vincent also puts the experience he has gained here to use at Petit-Village, an estate that is worth keeping an eye on over the next few years. Vincent enjoys the full support of the owners. As well as facilitating Beauregard's unique new winery (which also offers guest rooms – the estate truly is a complete work of art!), they also enabled expensive drainage work, which is particularly important in Pomerol. And, like Vincent, despite the proximity of these two historic estates, they want to keep them and their very different wine styles separate. 'Beauregard is refined and elegant, Petit-Village full-bodied and meaty – and that is how they should remain.'

PHILIPPE CASTÉJA

DOMAINE DE L'ÉGLISE, LA CROIX DU CASSE

Philippe Castéja represents Bordeaux like no other. As well as successfully running a trading house, he also oversees a good number of legendary estates, including two real gems in Pomerol.



The Castéja family is an inextricable part of Bordeaux's history, just like their 'patriarch'. Philippe Castéja oversees an escalating number of wine estates owned by his family. These in particular include two real gems in Pomerol: Châteaux Domaine de L'Église and La Croix du Casse. Philippe Castéja: 'My father was a close friend of the Landard family. Their ancestors, the Bertins, acquired Domaine de L'Église – which had previously belonged to the church – in 1793. In 1972, Simon Landard expressed a wish to sell my father the seven-hectare estate with its top-quality soils almost in the shadow of the church tower. He seized the opportunity, and then bequeathed the estate to my sister Chantal Castéja Prében-Hansen and me.'

Philippe Castéja patiently made the investment required and restored Domaine de L'Église to life. However, trends pass him by. 'I only ever had one goal, for all of our estates: to use the best possible, highest quality methods to make the wine that fits its place of origin precisely. True connoisseurs will only find two common features shared by wines such as Batailley in Pauillac, Trotteville in Saint-Émilion or Domaine de L'Église in Pomerol: their impeccable quality and the authenticity of their terroir character.' So it is no surprise that Domaine de L'Église is now the absolute prime example of a highly nuanced, classic Pomerol from the heart of the plateau!

La Croix du Casse came into the family's possession in 1995, following inheritance issues with the former owners. However, this approximately nine-hectare estate with its firm gravel and sandy soils was in a relatively poor condition when it was handed over. Nearly a third of the vine stock had to be replaced. But the efforts paid off: La Croix du Casse has become a real find, well structured and juicy with unique polish and huge depth, and thus serves as the perfect complement to the majestically velvety, complex Domaine de L'Église.

CLOS DU BEAU-PÈRE

A LOVE STORY WITH A HAPPY ENDING

Jean-Luc Thunevin is the Bordeaux all-rounder, the man that broke down the Bordeaux hierarchy – and almost incidentally, the owner of a small wine estate in Pomerol.

With the creation of his Valandraud estate, now a celebrated Premier Cru Classé in Saint-Émilion, this successful self-made man and wine merchant proved that it does not take hundreds of years to establish a legendary chateau. Jean-Luc fulfilled an old, very personal dream with Clos du Beau-Père. 'That is actually thanks to Jean-Pierre Moueix. When I was working as a bank clerk, some of my clients included his staff. When I told him that I wanted to buy a couple of bottles of Pétrus, he declined and told me he couldn't sell me any – then gave me three bottles as a thank you for my work. These included an absolutely unforgettable 1955 – the year my wife Murielle was born... Murielle and I became impassioned Pomerol enthusiasts overnight and have remained so to this day. I am sure that there is no-one who knows Pomerol's old vintages blind as well as Murielle! Trochanoy 1970, Latour à Pomerol 1967, La Conseillante 1962, 1964 or 1966, Murielle has fallen in love with all of them!'

After Jean-Luc Thunevin had just acquired a wine estate in Margaux, he was also offered a Pomerol estate in 2006. Of all things, these were two hectares of the wine that launched his career as a wine merchant: Angélus à Pomerol. He did not hesitate for long, and two years later was able to acquire two hectares of an estate called Vieux Château Bourgneuf. The wines quickly tasted exceptional, full-bodied and smooth, as you would expect from a fine Pomerol. All that was missing was a suitable name. Jean-Luc Thunevin: 'Part of the estate is in the hamlet of René. That reminded me of my mother-in-law's first name, Renée. My parents-in-law mean a lot to me. I liked the idea of dedicating our new estate to them'. We agree, as the name perfectly illustrates what acquiring a Pomerol estate means to Murielle and Jean-Luc: the fulfilment of a genuine romance that they are living with heart and soul.





BOUROTTE-AUDY

CHÂTEAU BONALGUE & CLOS DU CLOCHER

Domaines Bourotte-Audy, as they are officially known, own around 45 hectares of vines in Libourne. Capable co-owner and manager Jean-Baptiste Bourotte is particularly proud of his two estates in Pomerol.

The most interesting thing about his work is that he manages two top-quality wine estates in Pomerol that could not be any more different. But he finds that fascinating. 'I do all I can to analyse these differences, but not to adapt them to each other, quite the contrary – instead, to be able to develop these differences with precision', Jean-Baptiste Bourotte explains.

Bonalgue is the archetypal Pomerol. And not without reason: the around ten hectares offer a balance of clay, gravel and sand. Merlot clearly dominates the blend with 90 percent. Bonalgue proves full-bodied and meaty with fruity spice right from an early age. 'At Bonalgue, we use

targeted winemaking methods – in particular soil management – to ensure that we are even better protected against any vagaries of the weather.'

At six-hectare Clos du Clocher at the heart of the plateau, with its top-quality blue clay and gravel soils, this is not necessary. Cabernet Franc, which makes up a good 30 percent here, likes sparse soils. With an erratic structure, top-quality tannins and a mineral, meaty texture, Clos du Rocher's wines are much more closed than Bonalgue's at an early age. 'We work on the wine's aromatic expression, without endangering the spirited tannins or unique character of Clos du Clocher.'

NÉNIN

WINE FOR EMOTIONS

As the 'Responsable d'exploitation', Antoine Mariau is responsible for technical matters at Château Nénin, acquired by the Delon family in 1997. He sees his human role as sitting in the background: wine is the focus.

Château Nénin is one of Pomerol's historic estates. Jean-Hubert Delon, who also owns Las Cases, Clos du Marquis and Potensac, acquired it in 1997. Expensive restructuring work then followed for both the vineyards and buildings. The elegant 19th-century chateau was tastefully renovated and furnished by Jean-Hubert's wife Corinne Delon, and has become a real architectural gem. The investment has paid off – Nénin is once again one of the top wines in the appellation. Antoine Mariau: 'Our 30-hectare vineyard, extensive by Pomerol standards, and the impressive chateau do not tell the whole story. The fine wine only comes from the very best plots up on the plateau.' Antoine

Mariau enjoys the full support of the family of owners in his work. Jean-Hubert Delon is more than just a quality fanatic – he is also a particularly experienced Bordeaux connoisseur. He has a very clear idea of how Nénin should be, and puts this into practice with masterly skill. 'A fine wine is much more than just a drink. It is an invitation to embark on a journey. It should convey unique emotion. As an exceptional quality Pomerol, Nénin possesses the silky smooth style characteristic of the appellation, but also offers structure and depth, as it needs to mature for a long time to develop its full aromatic complexity', Antoine Mariau concludes enthusiastically.





LA CROIX DE GAY

POMEROL IN THE BLOOD

Families rule the roost in Pomerol – and in some cases, have for hundreds of years. At La Croix de Gay, this is specifically the women: the estate has been handed down from mother to daughter for five generations.

Chantal Lebreton is assisted by her granddaughter Ninon. This is symbolic: La Croix de Gay has been run by five generations of women. 'This is going to change, as I have three sons and eight grandchildren. Twelve-year-old Ninon is the youngest, but she is already particularly enthusiastic about the estate, helping with the harvest or putting out the anti-frost candles!' Like many Pomerol estates, La Croix de Gay is also owned by a long-established family, documented in the area as early as 1477. And as is often the case, the vineyards are modest in size: two hectares in the legendary Lafleur sector produce La Fleur de Gay; 4.5 hectares are spread across the upper and middle sections of the plateau and form the basis for La Croix de Gay. Chantal Lebreton

was born into a wine estate. Literally. 'Giving birth in a hospital was rare. Wine is in my blood, right from the cradle. I quickly followed my father into the cellars.' From 1983 onwards she began working energetically alongside him, and now runs the small estate with great prudence.

La Croix de Gay is not just one of the most reliable Pomerols; with its velvety texture and full-bodied style, it has also long been one of the appellation's classics. And La Fleur de Gay has gained even greater charm in recent years. However, Chantal Lebreton also respects variation between vintages. 'My father said that every new vintage is like a newborn child with its own particular character. That has stayed with me.'

LA ROSE FIGEAC

A ROSY PRINCESS

The rose is her favourite flower – so it is no surprise that Nathalie Despagne feels a particular connection with her tiny estate in Pomerol, whose wines have become a real insider's tip virtually overnight.

When Natalie tells her story, it is impossible to shake the impression that you are listening to a modern fairy tale. In 2009 she became the owner of a Pomerol wine estate of less than five hectares, a gift from her parents.

Nathalie: 'An unfortunate fall left me bed-bound for four months. I had plenty of time to reflect on my life. I once dreamt of becoming a stylist, loved wine, perfume and plants, and believed in natural medicine, and I suddenly realised that I could combine all of this as a winemaker. It was of course a bold step. But sometimes, you just have to tempt fate.' Since 2013, therefore, she has been devoting her full attentions to the little estate, to

which her grandfather – then owner of La Tour Figeac in Saint-Émilion – gave the poetic name 'La Rose Figeac' and which has held organic certification since 2009. 'I was able to retain the certification, designed a new label, and found an oenological consultant who helped me make exactly the wine I was envisioning: elegant, fruity, refreshing, natural.'

Nathalie Despagne, who now lives in the manor house on the estate, turned this idea into a reality with flying colours. As an exquisite, tempting, intuitively made Pomerol, La Rose Figeac became a real insider's tip virtually overnight.





BOURGNEUF

TIMELESS HARMONY

The Vayron family has been in charge of Château Bourgneuf's destiny for eight generations. The historic estate has been run with great commitment by current owner Frédérique Vayron since 2008.

Bourgneuf is a Pomerol characterised by a straightforward style, balance and particular elegance. 'Just like my 1960s Knoll chair. It is timeless and functional, but also aesthetic and harmonious. We are fortunate enough to be working with a location and terroir that helps our Merlot grape variety express itself in an absolutely unique way. Our wines are full-bodied, even meaty, but also always silky and delicate. They possess charm, but can still mature for a long time', Frédérique Vayron enthusiastically explains.

Bourgneuf is 'only' nine hectares in size. However, as is often the case in Pomerol, the terroir is more complex than it first appears. Each plot plays its part in the character of the final blended wine. 'Bourgneuf is first and

foremost a family oeuvre. Every generation contributes to it, and I am doing all I can to continue this tradition', Frédérique Vayron notes. 'A great wine of course always bears the signature of its terroir. However, it also owes its unique style to the people who interpret these guidelines in their own personal way and combine them to create a whole.'

As the director of a family company, Frédérique is a real all-rounder. However, she views herself as a winemaker first and foremost, and spends a lot of time in the vineyard with his small team. She is omnipresent during the harvest, and personally oversees every stage in the wine-making process.

LA CONSEILLANTE

150 YEARS OF FAMILY HISTORY

For around ten years, winemaker Marielle Cazaux has been ensuring that La Conseillante remains faithful to its exquisite style. She enjoys the full support of the owning family, represented by Bertrand Nicolas.

Ah, Château La Conseillante! A dreamy wine of incomparable charm, already perfectly balanced at a young age, then offering transcendental complexity and refinement after a long period of maturation, one of the most legendary wines in the world.

'Pomerol is a bit like Bordeaux's Burgundy', says winemaker Marielle Cazaux. 'Outsiders view Pomerol and its imposing plateau as a single terroir. That is not strictly true, as Pomerol in fact consists of a range of different small areas. Despite sharing a fundamental character, there is no single Pomerol type but rather many different ones, perhaps as many as there are wine estates', Marielle continues. 'Precisely!', agrees Bertrand Nicolas, repre-

senting the sixth generation of the owning family, which acquired the estate in 1871. 'La Conseillante showcases its strengths in a blind tasting, where it seems to reflect the complex elegance of Pomerol even more. It has that certain something that stops you from ever confusing it with another wine. It could be that this is in no small way due to the fact that most estates remain in family hands. They cultivate their own personal wine style, and value and protect their independence.' The same goes for La Conseillante and its just under twelve hectares of vineyards (forming a single piece of land), with a plot map that has remained unchanged since the 18th century – and will stay that way.



CLOS RENÉ

ELEGANT AND REFINED

What would Pomerol be without Jean-Marie Garde? The appellation's calm president misses no opportunity to extol its virtues, sometimes forgetting that he also owns a top-quality wine estate.

Jean-Marie Garde has just one failing: as the energetic president of the appellation for over thirty years, all too often he forgets to talk about his own wine estate. If you compliment him on his wine, he self-consciously inspects his toes, changes the subject and eases things back to his favourite topic – Pomerol's appellation, history and winemakers. But there is plenty to be said about Clos René! This 15-hectare Clos is to the west of the appellation in the old hamlet of Reney, now spelled René. The family has been living there since at least the 17th century. The hamlet is separated from the heart of the plateau by the busy national highway to Périgueux. This means that visitors

often forget this bit of the appellation. However, Clos René with its long history as a historic wine estate shows that wine has been cultivated here for some time. Its excellent gravelly and sandy soils also bear witness to this. With his usual modesty, Jean-Marie describes his wine as 'smooth, in the style of the appellation'. To us it is much more than that: a particularly elegant, refined Pomerol, and still a real bargain in terms of value for money. Its particular harmony means that it tastes excellent from an early stage, but still has the meatiness and structure needed for a long period of laying down, which then gives it particular aromatic complexity.





CERTAN DE MAY

FROM MANOR PROPERTY TO MINI ESTATE

The de Mays once received the expansive Certan manor property from a French king. Only a small amount of this remains, but it stands on the best part of the plateau.

Jean-Luc Barreau is unparalleled in the history of Pomerol – which will only come as a surprise to people who do not know his family history. His mother's maiden name was Badar de May. The de May family has Scottish origins. The Certan manor property was awarded to them in the Middle Ages in return for services rendered to the French crown. However, the family lost the majority of the property during the French Revolution. Jean-Luc Barreau: 'The history of our wine estate can be traced back to the mid-17th century. The current area of five and a half hectares is just a tiny part of the original aristocratic estate.' Jean-Luc Barreau describes himself as 'co-gérant' and co-owner. The estate is

shared by five heirs. Jean-Luc looks after winemaking and sales, his brother Patrick is responsible for the vines. These grow in a top-quality location on the plateau, near to Vieux Château Certan and Pétrus. His son works alongside him in the winery. 'Despite our modest size, we try to keep up with the times. We refurbish the buildings around every 25 years. Work is currently underway on the fermentation room, so that we stay up to date in terms of winery technology.'

However, there have been no changes to the distinctive character of Certan de May, a true Pomerol classic, elegant and refined, particularly mineral and spirited with excellent ageing potential.



DE SALES

A HISTORIC WINE MONUMENT WITH SOUL

The seventeenth generation began working at Château de Sales in 2017. The new team, led by Marine Treppoz and Vincent Montigaud, has achieved spectacular success in record time.

Let's start with the bare facts: Château de Sales has been owned by the same family for nearly five hundred years, a record even for Bordeaux. The chartreuse was built in the mid-17th century, and has been a listed historic monument since 1996. With its around 90 hectares of land, including around 48 planted with vines, Château de Sales is also the largest wine estate in Pomerol. Marine Treppoz, company president: 'Our vision at de Sales can be boiled down to three elements: respect for family tradition, respect for the land and the terroir, and respect for the people who till this land. Château de Sales is more than just a wine estate. Château de Sales is also a biotope – unique in

Pomerol – of vines, forest, an extensive park and a bamboo grove.' Vincent Montigaud, general director of the estate: 'Protecting the environment, biodiversity, flora and fauna is particularly important to us. We work in harmony with nature.'

Marine and Vincent began working here in 2017. With unequivocal liquid results: de Sales has grown into an absolutely top Pomerol in record time. In 2022, it even stands as one of the best wines in the appellation. Marine: 'There are 14 of us family members. We all feel connected at de Sales. De Sales is a wine estate with a real soul. I'm sure that comes through in the wine.'

GAZIN

POMEROL MADE OF VELVET AND SILK

The largest estates in Pomerol are also family owned – and Château Gazin, whose name is a reference to a pilgrims' refuge, is no exception. It is managed by Nicolas de Baillencourt and his niece Elise.

Gazin, the estate owned by the de Baillencourt dit Courcol family, is not a chateau in the proper sense, but rather a small hamlet. Elise de Baillencourt-Fournier: 'From the 12th century until the French Revolution, Pomerol belonged to the Knights of Malta. They maintained lodgings here in Pomerol, where pilgrims could rest en route to Santiago de Compostela, as recorded in a document dating from 1288. We can only speculate on its precise location. Nevertheless, Gazin definitively stands on the pilgrim's path. The name Gazin is old and seems to originate from the word 'casa' ('house'). Why not a guest house for tired pilgrims?' The de Baillencourt family hails from northern France. Their great-grandfather, Louis Soualle, came to

Bordeaux in 1918 as a successful wine merchant and soon acquired two wine estates, La Dominique in Saint-Émilion (later sold for inheritance reasons) and Gazin, where Nicolas de Baillencourt and his family now live, together with his sister Inès. Château Gazin's winery and manor house stand on the edge of the Pomerol plateau. 17 of the total of 24 hectares of vines are located at the centre of the plateau, in an ideal location between Pétrus and Evangile. The Merlot grapes are instrumental in producing the fine, particularly full-bodied, mineral and spicy wine with wonderfully velvety Merlot tannins for which Gazin is world-famous. The remainder are used for the second wine L'Hospitalet de Gazin.



LAFLEUR ST.-JEAN

A NATURAL WINERY MADE OF RAW SOIL

On one of his travels, François Janoueix discovered the ancient African technique of rammed earth, which served as the template for the winery walls at his micro-estate in Pomerol.

The name Janoueix alone shows that, like the members of other right-bank wine dynasties, François Janoueix is a 'Corrézien' – hailing from Corrèze in the Massif Central. François Janoueix: 'Yes, yes, I am a Corrézien, my origins stick to me like a limpet. My descendants may have come from Corrèze, but I have had nothing in common with that region for a long time.'

François Janoueix was born in Libourne, into a family of successful winemakers and wine merchants. He remained in Libourne and also works as a wine merchant here. One of the gems in his extensive range is Lafleur Saint-Jean. His cultivated miniature vineyard (more a wine garden in scope) of just 1.2 hectares stands at the

heart of the plateau, split across three plots, surrounded by illustrious neighbours. In the vineyard and the winery, Lafleur Saint-Jean is made according to all the rules of modern winemaking and matured entirely in new oak. The shrewd winemaker came up with something very special when building the winery: it is made of rammed earth, or raw soil mixed with clay and slaked lime. The walls (which are around a metre thick) guarantee François Janoueix a particularly natural environment for the wine, as well as offering perfect insulation against environmental influences. 'Of course, everyone thought I was crazy. But my wines gained considerable precision and expression!'





VIEUX MAILLET

A TOP ESTATE WITH POTENTIAL TO DEVELOP

On behalf of owner Frédéric Stévenin, Bruno Lacoste whipped de Saint-Pey in Saint-Émilion into shape – and now he is slowly but surely awakening Vieux Maillet (acquired in 2022) from its slumber.

Pomerol fans have long been aware that Vieux Maillet is a wine estate with particular untapped potential to develop. Frédéric Stévenin must have realised this too: the finance professional, who also owns estates including Château de Saint-Pey in Saint-Émilion, decided to buy Vieux Maillet in 2022.

Bruno Lacoste, general director and winemaker: 'Over time, Frédéric Stévenin developed a real passion for Pomerol. He wanted to expand his activities in the wine sector and jumped at the opportunity to acquire a top-quality estate with potential that was nowhere near fully tapped.' Vieux Maillet has just under nine hectares of vines. Some

of these are located in the hamlet of Maillet itself, in gravel and clay soils, whilst others are on the outskirts of Libourne at the other end of the appellation, in a plot of land called 'Cantereau' with sandy and gravel soils.

In the past, the two very different terroirs were vinified on a plot-by-plot basis but ultimately blended into a single wine. In the future, the two will be bottled separately, as Château Vieux Maillet and Château Cantereau. Bruno Lacoste: 'I believe in great terroirs. You can spot them by the finesse and particular polish of their tannins. The more clearly you can bottle the terroir, the more precise its expression. That is exactly what we are working on.'



Never short of a new idea: Stéphanie de Bouïard-Rivoal, managing director of Angélus



ANGÉLUS

A GOLDEN FUTURE

with Stéphanie de Boüard-Rivoal

‘Angelus’ means a prayer recited three times a day, a winery surrounded by three churches, and an ambitious work of art that astonishes even the gods themselves!

But to understand where we are going, we need to understand where we come from. I represent the eighth generation of the de Boüard de Laforest family. I have been running Angélus since 2012. It is a commitment, a huge honour – and an immense joy. Our ancestor Jean de Boüard de Laforest, a member of the royal guard, acquired a patch of land in Saint-Émilion in 1782 and entrusted it to his daughter. My great-grandfather Maurice, together with my great uncle, was responsible for the subsequent move towards winemaking. As a trained wine specialist and consultant with huge amounts of experience, my father Hubert not only revitalised the vineyards and winery: he also put huge amounts of work into the estate’s reputation and the distribution of its wines. Angélus owes him a lot.

I grew up in this bustling atmosphere. I wanted to run Angélus from the age of seven. Of course, my father and

uncle initially declined and said I should work hard in school first. I then studied finance and spent seven years working in England. My dream has now become a reality. However, I did not just want to sit back and enjoy the rewards of my predecessors’ hard work – that is not me. I had a clear vision for our company’s future, and I am proud to have got a fair way towards it in recent years.

To begin with, I of course wanted to consolidate Angélus’s position in the wine world. This means paying attention to every last detail. Angélus also had to form the centre of an overall project, a mini universe where each element is subject to the same quality and aesthetic requirements as Angélus itself.

First of all, I wanted to expand the winegrowing operations. When I took charge, we were cultivating just under 30 hectares of vines – this is now 85 hectares across three different Saint-Émilion terroirs. They are primarily used for

'Angélus (right) forms the centre of a complete oeuvre that includes two restaurants, which we can now supply with ingredients produced ourselves!'

Stéphanie de Boüard-Rivoal



our other wine, Carillon, which has gradually established its own style and identity. It is now vinified and matured in a separate, ultra-modern, architecturally impressive winery in Saint-Magne-de-Castillon, which enables particularly precise and gentle work. However, we have also continued honing the Angélus style. For example, we now mature our Cabernet Franc in four large oak tanks. This has increased its aromatic purity and finesse.

Next, I worked on the distribution of our wines, which used a large and thus confusing number of channels that we could not always supply in sufficient quantities. I restricted distribution to top-quality trading partners who shared our philosophy.

I was then able to focus on my vision of Angélus as a complete oeuvre: we needed a restaurant for our many visitors. We therefore took over 'Logis de la Cadène' at the heart of Saint-Émilion, the oldest restaurant in the town. And I found young chef Alexandre Baumard, who I got along with right away. However, the project went in a different direction to the one I anticipated: after three

years we had a Michelin star and had acquired a second restaurant in a top Bordeaux location, 'Le Gabriel', which now also has its own star.

This gave me an opportunity to turn another vision into reality. Our approach has long been guided by a holistic, sustainable perspective, as this is indispensable in winemaking. I just wanted to take this one step further. Historically, winemaking has been an agricultural activity, and many wine estates grew out of mixed farms. We had two Michelin-starred restaurants using as much local produce as possible – so why not grow it ourselves? So without further ado, I acquired some land where we could establish a farm. It is located between Saint-Émilion and Bordeaux, around the same distance away from both restaurants, where we can now use our own vegetables, fruit and even meat. And mushrooms! Button mushrooms, morels, oyster mushrooms, turkey tail mushrooms! We grow these in the tunnels running under our park, which were once used to mine limestone. As you can see, I will not be getting bored for a long time yet!



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HAUT-BAILLY

25 YEARS RIGHT AT THE TOP

with Véronique Sanders

Thanks to major investment, Haut-Bailly has become even more precise. However, nothing about its fundamental style has changed: Haut-Bailly is still one of the most refined wines in the world.

We live in a world that is going off the rails in terms of global politics, economics and society. A difficult time, but I am sure it will result in a form of renaissance. This has already begun in Bordeaux: there has never been such a widespread awareness of the importance of the environment and the soil. We know only too well that a wine like Haut-Bailly is born of a terroir, not a fashion. It would have been so easy to follow the siren call and head off down the oaky path! We never did, and do not regret our choice. We have stuck to our principles and nurtured harmony, reticence, honesty and expression of terroir. This is now the fashion – but it has been our guiding star for 25 years.

2023 is a very special vintage. At Haut-Bailly, we are celebrating 25 years of being owned by the Wilmers family. And this is my 25th vintage here. Anyone fortunate enough to taste all 25 editions of our wine will feel at home with every single one of them. Despite all the

nuances of vintage, the Haut-Bailly style is timeless. The particular commitment and ongoing investment provided by the Wilmers family has above all enabled us to further increase our precision whilst also offering an incomparably comfortable workplace for our teams in the winery. We have gained precision and thus come even closer to this expression of terroir and absolute top quality. We have never betrayed our style. To me, respecting tradition does not mean sticking to dusty nostalgia, but rather stimulating it via ongoing innovation.

Our modern, light, architecturally impressive, high-tech winery promotes biodiversity and respects the environment. It fits perfectly within the landscape and serves as a link between our ‘croupe de graves’, the magical gravel hilltop to which Haut-Bailly owes its quality, and the actual estate building, the historic symbol. The whole team evidently and quite simply feels happy in this new environment – and I am sure the same goes for the wine.



Véronique Sanders with her 25 children –
all tasting exceptional!



Past and future brought together: Alexandre de Malet Roquefort with mosaic and white wine



LA GAFFELIÈRE

BOUND TO HISTORY!

with Alexandre de Malet Roquefort

Over the last twenty years, La Gaffelière has grown from a well-made Saint-Émilion into a unique, characterful, high-end wine. Alexandre de Malet Roquefort was not entirely uninvolved in this.

To me, the future of Bordeaux began some ten years ago, around the time that I took over running of Château La Gaffelière, which belongs to me, my brother and my sister. Bordeaux has taken its experience in making top wines and exported it all over the world. This means that as well as creating competition for ourselves, it has also resulted in a level of standardisation, including here in Bordeaux itself. Today, every estate is once again working purposefully to establish its own real identity. This involves a lot of work, especially in the vineyard. Our vines were replanted after the frosts of 1956 and were slowly becoming long in the tooth. We restructured everything, chose the best rootstock and replanted more Cabernet Franc, which contributed to the legendary La Gaffelières made between 1920 and 1955. It has once again been making up 40 to 50 percent of the vines since 2016. We have of course also adapted our technical facilities and established a structure for welcoming our many visitors.

Incidentally, talking of work: when my father began replanting in 1969, fifteen mosaics were uncovered. Laborious scientific work by experts showed that this was the remains of a 4th-century Roman villa. La Gaffelière is therefore somewhere that has been making wine for 1700 years. That comes with obligations, including for the future!

We have often been told that we cultivate an almost Burgundian style at La Gaffelière. Perhaps that is why we are now also making a Chardonnay white wine! We had a plot between Pavie and La Gaffelière that never made the red wines we wanted. There used to be white wine in Saint-Émilion – so why not plant the 70 ares with white-wine vines? And since we are outside the AOC, why not use Chardonnay, in keeping with the Burgundian model? The grapes have proven incredibly juicy and fruity! My father thought that we were wine revolutionaries, but what would life be without some fun and adventure?



PRESSAC

TWICE AS ECO FOR HALF THE PRICE

with Jean-François Quenin

Jean-François Quenin is not only responsible for the downright phenomenal renaissance of Château de Pressac in Saint-Émilion – he has also become a specialist in recycling barrels.

I have held various jobs during my life: I worked in high finance, was the managing director of Darty, and finally became a winemaker. I have been looking after Château de Pressac in Saint-Émilion for 26 years. I do not mean 'winemaker' in the figurative sense – half-heartedness is not my thing. That is why, at the age of 48, I went back to school to get a winemaking diploma. I sat in the cafeteria with young people a third my age. I gradually rebuilt, renovated and replanted Pressac, and expanded it from 25 to 40 hectares. I replanted the top-quality hillside plots that had run wild following mechanisation, built a new winery and barrel store, and much more.

And to keep me from being bored, I am changing jobs once again: I am becoming a cooper! OK, that is only half true – I am still the winemaker at Pressac. However, I have acquired a small cooperage. Oak barrels are used for a maximum of three years, and then become firewood. And everyone is talking about recycling and sustainability! Bar-

rels are made from oak trees that are 200 to 300 years old. Demand is rising and wood is becoming increasingly expensive. There are methods for refurbishing barrels, but thus far they have had rather bad press. Barrels have only been successfully refurbished for brandy production. So why not use apply this method to red wine barrels?

We started by testing this here at Pressac. We have now mastered the process, which consists of planing the staves and treating them with ultrasound. In a second phase (also here at Pressac), we tested the refurbished barrels. We then had them tested by wine experts who were not convinced by our methods. As they have been working impeccably well so far, we will soon be beginning phase three: building a factory.

Our method could double the shelf life of barrels without any loss of quality. This uses half as many trees. We are therefore calling it 'Double Eco': twice the shelf life for half the price.



Saving twice over: Jean-François Quenin with a 'Double Eco' recycled barrel.



Responsible for Vignobles Silvio Denz:
'directeur d'exploitation' Vincent Cruège



PÉBY FAUGÈRES

ART AND TERROIR

with Vincent Cruège

The projects undertaken by Swiss entrepreneur Silvio Denz are characterised by a sense of ancient craftsmanship and contemporary aesthetics, including the new winery at Château Péby Faugères designed by Mario Botta.

I have no real worries about the future of Bordeaux – Bordeaux was created by visionaries, and visionaries will continue to develop Bordeaux. And precisely because the region has always remained at the cutting edge of wine technology, aesthetes and poets have also been offered a chance to speak, ensuring that a fine Bordeaux wine is not just exceptional in terms of quality and flavour, but also stimulates emotions awakened by few other wines. Château Péby Faugères is the perfect illustration of this. The estate owes its name to Pierre-Bernard Guisez, fondly known as Péby by his wife, based on the initials from his first name. The Guisez family hailed from Paris and worked in the cinema business. They inherited Château Faugères in Saint-Émilion in the 1980s and quickly fell in love with its high-quality wines. The Guisezs noticed that some plots of Merlot produced particularly special wines, so began handling these separately and created a brand just for them: Péby Faugères. It is thanks to an energetic

entrepreneur with vision that Péby is now a complete separate entity: Silvio Denz, an art collector and wine enthusiast with a great fondness for Saint-Émilion, owner of the legendary and historic crystal glass and design company Lalique (among others), and creator of 'Vignobles Denz – Art et Terroir', which in addition to Faugères and Péby also includes Lafaurie-Peyraguey in Sauternes.

Péby cultivates just under eight hectares of vines. The functional yet impressively aesthetic winery, made by Mario Botta from local raw materials, produces just 12,000 or so bottles of the top wine and some 8,000 bottles of the second wine Le Merle de Péby Faugères. Péby has held organic certification since 2020. We vinify some of the harvest in barrels and some in small concrete or stainless steel tanks, and during the development stage do all we can to ensure that the grapes retain their particular expression and are bottled in as pure a form as possible.



MALARTIC LAGRAVIÈRE

SUSTAINABILITY AND THE METAVERSE

with Séverine Bonnie

Alfred and Michelle Bonnie acquired the Cru Classé Malartic-Lagravière in Léognan 25 years ago and awoke it from its deep slumber. A second generation is now successfully continuing their work.

As the PR manager, I have been able to track the development of Château Malartic-Lagravière – now run by my husband Jean-Jacques Bonnie and his sister Véronique – over the course of twenty years. Outsiders could not imagine the effort and investment that was required to transform this one-time Cinderella into a radiant princess. The benefit of a family-owned wine estate, especially in such an arduous reconstruction phase, is that even difficult decisions can be made very quickly. Families make longer-term plans and think of their children and grandchildren. The current generation at the helm also has a clear vision for the future and knows exactly the path on which they wish to set Malartic-Lagravière over the coming decades.

When we began our work, we first of all had to improve the purely technical side of things, in both the vineyard and the winery. Once we had achieved this initial goal, we worked primarily on the personality and distinctive ex-

pression of both the red wines and the dry whites. Based on the enthusiastic notes from Vinum, among others, we have not done at all badly.

Of course, not everything is achieved in the winery alone, but above all outside in the vineyards. Sustainable viticulture has also become vital here. We plant trees and shrubs, cultivate the rows of vines using horses, and our flock of sheep has gained some new arrivals with the birth of 15 lambs. 25 sheep now graze here in Pessac-Léognan, where there is definitely no shortage of neighbours! We are slowly but surely moving from monocultural winegrowing to polyphonic agriculture. However, our long-term vision includes not only sustainability, but also incorporating the digital world. We have created a collection of 150 magnums from the 2022 vintage with digital certificates (NFTs). An innovative, historic wine estate like Malartic can also happily be interested in the metaverse or Web3!



Not afraid of new adventures: Séverine Bonnie, husband Jean-Jacques and his sister Véronique



Knows what he owes to wine lovers:
Carbonnieux's co-owner Eric Perrin



CARBONNIEUX

PRECISION AND GUARANTEED ENJOYMENT

with Eric Perrin

Carbonnieux has long been producing exceptional red wines – and one of the best dry whites in the world. Both can mature for a long time, and in doing so gain silky polish and aromatic complexity.

It's a strange thing. Our wines are tasted and sold 'en primeur', i.e. after just a few months in barrels and long before they are bottled: but I cannot shake the impression that no-one is interested in them any more. Only a few experts taste the wines once bottled, and even fewer follow their development in the bottle. That causes me headaches. We send our wines all over the world, quickly lose sight of them and do not know what becomes of them.

One of the key markers of great Bordeaux is its huge ageing potential. The same also applies for dry whites. Only some time in the cellar can give them the harmonious polish and aromatic complexity that makes them so unique. I want to safeguard the future of our wines, I want them to taste perfect after five, ten, twenty years, whether they are uncorked in Bordeaux, Hong Kong or New York. We have put a lot of thought into this. We are and will remain a family company. My brother Philibert,

who looks after the winery and the vineyards, and I make a perfect team. I can count on the support of both of my sons. I was trained in the 1980s and 1990s, and sometimes it is hard to change your way of thinking. Contact with my sons makes this easier, and this exchange of knowledge has prompted us to adapt how we work. As an example: the dry whites were previously vinified using a very oxidative process, which was ideal for the en primeur tasting but not really for further maturation, but we are now working increasingly reductively, even if this makes the wines seem more reserved 'en primeur'. We are also using corks with a tighter grain. What good is the best, most precisely crafted wine if it develops a fault after bottling? But we also need to pay more attention to how our wines are served, at what temperature, in what decanter, in what glass! We owe it to wine lovers all over the world!



DOMAINE DE CHEVALIER

PERSPECTIVE AND EXPERIENCE

with Olivier Bernard

Olivier Bernard has been running Domaine de Chevalier for 40 years. The estate now produces not only one of the finest wines in the world, but also a particularly harmonious, truly gourmet bottle.

I have now been looking after Domaine de Chevalier for exactly 40 years. A long period of time for a person, but a short one in the history of the wine! Of course, I wonder how wine (and particularly fine Bordeaux) might be being made in 40 years' time. It is clear to me that organic and biodynamic cultivation will be essential. One thing is certain: humans have been making wine for 6000 years. Vines have been grown 'organically' for 6000 years, and 'conventionally' for just under 50. That says it all. Don't get me wrong: I am not an organic ayatollah, and I hope that we will find a natural replacement for copper as soon as possible. I will not mourn the loss of copper, it should become redundant. However, I would rather use copper than a synthetic product that cannot be found in nature.

Either way, the future is built on experience gained in the past. I think that we have made great progress over the past 40 years, including here at Domaine de Chevalier. When I first arrived here, Bordeaux was being ac-

cused of making unapproachable wines that needed to mature for an age. Things are rather different today. Even 'en primeur' or just after bottling, our wines are harmonious with subtle, precisely defined aromas. They improve as they mature, can be laid down for an age, yet still taste exceptional at an early stage. That is in keeping with the current times. I would say that fine wines are simply more accomplished today. The vision of a fine wine is designed and implemented from A to Z. I often say that I like everything except the superfluous. We have dusted off our wines, removed anything unnecessary. This has made them more precise, and means that they taste excellent at every stage of their lives. We work in harmony with nature, harvesting more substantial grapes that contain all you need to create the expression of a fine wine. There is no need for exaggerated extraction, artificial fullness, or excessive lashings of oak. Perfect harmony is all that matters.



Hates the superfluous, loves everything
that tastes good: owner Olivier Bernard



A winemaker with his feet on the ground: Cantenac Brown's managing director José Sanfins



CANTENAC BROWN

ONWARDS INTO THE EARTH

with José Sanfins

Cantenac Brown has long been producing stylish Margaux, and under the new owners, it is likely to become even more precise. The first step in this is a newly built winery, made from rammed earth.

Vision is to do with outlook, with the future. You do not have to be an astrologer to know where the future of winemaking is heading, even here in Bordeaux: back towards the earth. And that means onwards into sustainability and the responsible use of natural resources. The rake I have on my shoulder is used to pull up dead vines and make holes to plant new ones. This might be easier with a tractor, but I still need it from time to time.

This symbol also makes me think about my origins. I come from a winemaking family with its roots firmly in the ground. My parents came to Bordeaux from Portugal in 1965. They worked at Pedesclaux. I grew up amid the vines and worked at various places including Lynch-Bages, until 1989 when I moved to Cantenac Brown, where I am still running things as winemaker and managing director. I have experienced quite a few things here, but the best times have only just begun. I get on particularly well with the new owners, especially Tristan Le Lous, who is

looking after Cantenac Brown on behalf of his family. He is brimming with ideas for new projects (such as expanding the vineyards, building a new fermentation cellar, wine tourism), wants to implement them quickly and has the resources this requires. Cantenac Brown has long been producing an exceptional, particularly stylish Margaux. This is due not least to the fact that in recent decades, we have been primarily devoting our attentions to improving work in the vineyards. Our fermentation cellar worked, but was slowly but surely becoming elderly. The new, environmentally friendly winery was made from wood and earth – natural, pressed earth mixed with some clay and sand. We use as little concrete as possible and in particular keep our carbon footprint as small as we can. This is not about nostalgia, but rather sustainability. Bordeaux is now producing wines with a precision never before seen in this pampered region. This is only possible because we have never rested on our laurels.



D'ISSAN

A WINE OF THE WORLD

with Emmanuel Cruse

As a scion of an old wine dynasty, Emmanuel Cruse is not just the tireless ambassador for the legendary Château d'Issan in Margaux – he also looks after three top estates in Pauillac and Saint-Estèphe.

Ancient wisdom says that the world is constantly changing: you can lament it but you cannot prevent it. In Bordeaux, and especially here in the Médoc, it is becoming increasingly difficult for a family to maintain a large historic wine estate, for various reasons. I have experienced this for myself. In early 2013, some of my cousins sold their shares. Fortunately, they were purchased by a representative of another family. Jacky Lorenzetti is a Parisian entrepreneur and wine enthusiast, who acquired Lilian Ladouys in Saint-Estèphe in 2008, Pédesclaux in Pauillac a year later, and recently also Lafon-Rochet in Saint-Estèphe. I have been working for him as a consultant since 2010 and now also manage the other three estates on his behalf.

Of course, my heart is still particularly attached to Château d'Issan, which I have known and loved since I was a child, a historic Cru Classé in Margaux that my grandfather acquired in 1945. However, I admit that being able to work in three different appellations is not half bad. It gives you a different, more universal perspective, which is particularly

important in our profession. My father, who I began working with in 1993, saw himself more as a wine merchant than an estate owner, and was quite astonished when I travelled all over the world to talk about d'Issan. Previously this was the merchant's role. This has now changed – heads of major estates probably spend half of their lives on the road! This is extremely important for an estate's identity. Why should a customer buy wine from d'Issan rather than one of its neighbours? A wine merchant with both bottles in their selection may be slow to reply, but an estate owner cannot!

Even if it sounds a little old fashioned, families quite simply embody a large, historic estate better than an institution can. As a wine lover, you can identify with them, something that I love. Decision-making channels are also generally shorter. And there are decisions to be made, especially on less well-known estates. Wine consumption is declining all over the world. Anyone unable to produce top wines will soon be out of business, for better or worse.



Taking Château d'Issan around the world:
Bordeaux ambassador Emmanuel Cruse



At the top with Marquis de Terme:
managing director Ludovic David



MARQUIS DE TERME

A SHINING EXAMPLE OF A FINE WINE

with Ludovic David

With delicacy, depth and true Margaux elegance, Marquis de Terme has come from behind to overtake the field and is one of the most successful rising stars of recent years.

I would say that everyone has their own vision of the future of Bordeaux. Personally, I hope that we lose the gulf between what connoisseurs experience on their palate and the image of Bordeaux that they have in their mind. We are unbeatable in the glass, but our image is lacking. Bordeaux has long deserved to regain its reputation as a shining example of fine wine, and I would say the same for Marquis de Terme. I want to be judged on the quality of the soils, which are particularly homogeneous for Margaux, and by the wines we are bottling today, and not by prejudices and fixed ideas that have long been a thing of the past. Anyone looking for historical evidence to re-examine their prejudices should try Thomas Jefferson, who described Marquis de Terme as one of the best wines in the Médoc in 1787!

This quality was the first thing I noticed when I took over here in 2009: the homogeneity of the terroirs, astonishing for Margaux. It therefore made sense to use this

natural advantage and realign the vineyards accordingly – via replanting, resumption of soil tilling by machine, suitable fertilisation tailored to the plants' needs, and natural plant protection. Clearly, it took time for this to impact the style of the wines. However, today I rival any other Cru Classé in terms of quality and expression of terroir. The only thing you can accuse me of is having pursued balance, refined tannins and fruit elegance right from the outset, as well as polish and depth rather than superficial weight and fullness.

I wanted to improve our image via our increasingly broad range of wine tourism services. Rather than elitist, this needed to be mainstream and cosmopolitan, yet still offering the highest levels of quality. People of all ages now frolic on the grass. They drink a glass of wine, take a look at the well-stocked shop, or visit our (generally fully booked) restaurant. And soon, they will also be able to book rooms in our new hotel.



GISCOURS

A VALUABLE MARGAUX BIOTOPE

with Alexander van Beek

The task with which Alexander van Beek was entrusted when he arrived at Giscours in 1995 has not changed: to keep the estate as one of the top ten in the Médoc. Which he has very successfully achieved!

You have to look at Giscours as a whole to truly understand it. With around 400 hectares, Giscours is one of the largest estates in the Médoc. 160 hectares are planted with vines (100 in Margaux AOC, 60 in Haut-Médoc AOC). Giscours also includes an extensive park with a considerable number of trees, small lakes and ponds, stables, cows and heifers, 100 sheep, a good number of chickens, and a large vegetable garden. All of this serves to feed not only the 20 families who still live on the estate, but also some of our 82 employees. And since we are talking about figures, last year we celebrated the 450th vintage produced at Giscours, and in 2023 we are celebrating the hundredth birthday of our plot called Casino!

It almost goes without saying that Dennis, Derk and Valérie Albada Jelgersma have not strayed off the path laid down by their father Eric when he took over Giscours: making not only the best possible Margaux, but also maintaining this colourful diversity and incredible biotope. It

may be a modern trend, but to us it is history. We have long understood that fine wine is made not in the winery, but in the vineyard.

One of our strengths is the age of our vines. Plots are not just dug up, instead we replace individual vines. This is known as 'complantation' in French. In 2018 we began splitting our vines into three age categories, marking them accordingly, measuring the ideal ripeness for each age category, and harvesting them separately. This method has been used for the entire Margaux appellation since 2020. It has a particular impact on tannin quality. Our wines have lots of character, can mature for a long time, and thus develop their proverbial Margaux elegance. Previously they were very defiant and closed in their youth. The last three vintages have become more precise and expressive, thanks to smoother, clearly defined tannins. The work involved has been immense and was only made possible by highly motivated staff who put their heart and soul into what they do. But it has really paid off!



450 years of Giscours: Alexander van Beek with a historic bottle



Pierre-Antoine and Emeline Borie with the 'Caisse Variation': a double magnum, two magnums and four bottles



GRAND-PUY-LACOSTE

THEME AND VARIATIONS

with Emeline Borie

Grand-Puy-Lacoste in Pauillac has legendary status as one of the most consistent of all the great Bordeaux wines. Every vintage here is like a variation on a theme by a talented composer.

Our vision for the Bordeaux of the future? Staying true to our principles yet continuing to develop further, so that future generations can benefit from our unique wines. There are a few challenges. For us as a family, these include passing the estate on to our children and grandchildren. Here in France, that is like running the gauntlet. Climate change throws up challenges for the technical side of wine. But we have already overcome various other problems. We will adapt our growing practices, stay innovative in the winery, and therefore hopefully still be able to offer fine wines in fifty years' time.

Grand-Puy-Lacoste is a real family estate. I grew up here and went to primary school in Pauillac, and we only moved to Bordeaux when I was a bit older. However, my parents have been spending most of their time here again since 2020. I look after matters like marketing and communications, my brother covers some of the sales and the links

with trade. He is also responsible for the company 'Cave Briau', a wine shop in Bordeaux with an online business, which we took over in 2013.

Direct contact with wine lovers is vital. We realised how many customers ask about exclusive gifts. That is why we created the 'Caisse Variation'. Rather than the usual 12 bottles, you get a double magnum, two magnums and four normal bottles. We offered it 'en primeur' for the first time in 2020, both for Grand-Puy-Lacoste and for our second wine, Lacoste Borie.

My siblings and I grew up in an environment where top wines were a part of everyday life. We could not imagine that there were people who could only dream of visiting our estate. I later travelled a lot and lived in Asia for a while. That opened my eyes. For example, I discovered that there are fine wines elsewhere, and that they do not necessarily have to cost a fortune.



CHASSE-SPLEEN

IN THE SERVICE OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

with Céline Villars-Foubet

Largo the dog is our family mascot. He is quite simply a part of Chasse-Spleen. He is smart and friendly, welcomes visitors contentedly, and everyone loves him! The same goes for Chasse-Spleen!

I am absolutely happy here at Chasse-Spleen, where I am now celebrating my 23rd vintage. Chasse-Spleen is hugely well-known and respected, not least here in France where more than half of our production is sold. I would say that the name alone is a stroke of genius: the wine that chases spleen away! It dates from 1863 and comes from a poem by Charles Baudelaire. My grandfather acquired the estate in 1976, and I am eternally grateful to him for it.

We have one issue at Chasse-Spleen that others presumably envy us for: demand exceeds production. We have had to expand several times. In 2003 we were able to acquire our neighbour Gressier Grand Poujeaux, which originally belonged to Chasse-Spleen but was split off as part of an inheritance. And very recently we were able to incorporate another of our neighbours, Château Brillette. Connoisseurs will know that Brillette has exceptional vineyards, but the brand itself is unfortunately not very strong. Even our Héritage de Chasse-Spleen sells better. We will

therefore probably put the brand on the back burner for a bit. Expansion has only improved Chasse-Spleen! With more than 125 hectares of vines, we are the largest estate in Moulis and one of the largest in the Médoc. Expanding our cultivation area was urgently required, as our yields have fallen drastically as a result of global warming. We once harvested up to 55 hectolitres per hectare, but now it has settled at 30 to 40 hectolitres – not to mention years like 2017, where we lost half the harvest to frost, or 2018, when we had to contend with downy mildew. But these are hectares of land I am talking about, not of vines. Chasse-Spleen is a total of 270 hectares. The vines are surrounded by meadows and forest. We now take a much more natural approach in the vineyards by cultivating grass cover between the rows of vines. We also promote biodiversity by planting trees and hedgerows. We must never forget that we are only here for a short time, and in the service of future generations!



Happy at Chasse Spleen: Largo the dog
and his owner Céline Villars-Foubet



Achieving his vision of timeless elegance
right down to the decanter: Branaire co-owner
François-Xavier Maroteaux



BRANAIRE-DUCRU

DELICACY AND TIMELESS ELEGANCE

with François-Xavier Maroteaux

After years of the fashion for power and juiciness, everyone has started wanting to bottle elegant Bordeaux once again. Branaire-Ducru, which has been run by François-Xavier Maroteaux since 2017, never really abandoned this style in the first place.

Branaire-Ducru is first and foremost a vision of a particularly harmonious wine. The description that I think best characterises Branaire-Ducru is 'timeless elegance'. A glass of Branaire-Ducru should be refreshing, and delight with its delicate and fruity style. Of course, a great Saint-Julien also needs structure and therefore ageing potential. However, this does not necessarily have to be angular and awkward, even in a very young wine. Harmony is timeless. Literally. But by 'timeless', I also mean not tied to a time or a fashion. My father, who left us in 2017, stayed loyal to the style of balance and delicacy even in an era when this was anything but 'in'. A few years ago, we developed a decanter in keeping with the Branaire-Ducru style: simple, crystal, but hugely elegant. It is similar in shape to the bottle, with an engraved label, so sits discreetly in the background. The actual spotlight stays on the wine, which tastes even better when enjoyed from this decanter. However, Bra-

naire-Ducru is more than just a wine of exquisite character: Branaire-Ducru is also a very special location that we feel a connection to, with a house, park and orangery, surrounded by our historic vineyards, which we cultivate like a garden. And again, here we do all we can to allow reticence and harmony to reign supreme. The actual chateau is also more than just an empty façade: my mother lives there.

I began working at Branaire-Ducru in 2015. Eight whole years ago! They have flown past. My main goal was to do justice to our style year after year, despite all the vagaries of the climate. This took a level of precision that was difficult to achieve in our old fermentation cellar with its large tanks. The new vat house (refurbished in 2021) has made our work easier, especially in climatically difficult years. Now we have more than 75 fermentation tanks tailored to the size of the plots, i.e. exactly twice as many as before the refurbishment.



LÉOVILLE BARTON

THE UNDERRATED BABY BROTHER

with Damien and Lilian Barton Sartorius

Everyone knows Langoa and Léoville Barton – but fans of their wine should also take a look at the wines of Mauvesin Barton in Moulis, where the Barton clan now live.



Damien: 'Our mix of generations is our strength. My parents provide their experience, whilst my sister Melanie and I offer our energy and new momentum. We are at a turning point in history. The environment and sustainability are becoming increasingly important, and even in winemaking these are topics that we frequently discuss. My mother's greatest strength is her patience. She listens.'

Lilian: 'And then does whatever she wants? But seriously: I also began working with my father very early on. Like Damien, at the time I also focused on the commercial side. If I could choose now, I would probably study oenology like Melanie. And in terms of momentum, buying Château Mauvesin in Moulis in 2011 was a bold idea – as unfortunately, people are now only interested in Bordeaux that is legendary and prohibitively expensive.'

Damien: 'That's true. As Barton, we are primarily judged

on our two top estates Langoa and Léoville. Initially, no one was interested in a "lesser", inexpensive Moulis, no matter how good it was. It took a lot of hard convincing. Nevertheless, things have been looking up considerably since 2018. Firstly, Melanie – who is responsible for winemaking – is doing a fantastic job, and recent vintages have been truly excellent. And secondly, word is slowly getting around. The Bordeaux trading hub is responsible for global distribution, and backs safe bets. Mauvesin first had to earn its place in the sun.'

Lilian: 'We were well aware what we were letting ourselves in for when we moved into Mauvesin with its 60 hectares of vines and 150 hectares of park, forest and meadows. We needed room for a big family, even if our two children only sometimes live here, with our nine horses, seven dogs, thirteen peacocks, thirty chickens, one rabbit, various cats, canaries and a guinea pig!'



Winemaking in the blood: Jean Triaud with a portrait of his grandfather Henri Martin.



GLORIA/ SAINT-PIERRE

A PIONEER AND HIS GRANDCHILDREN

with Jean Triaud

Henri Martin is a legendary figure in the Médoc and one of the pioneers of modern Bordeaux. Both of the cult wine estates he has built in Saint-Julien are in good hands with his heirs.

Bordeaux may have a reputation for being an elitist wine region, but it has actually been slowly democratising and becoming younger and more cosmopolitan. I hope that I am living proof of this! Believe me: Bordeaux is not just a stronghold of expensive wines and stinking rich investors. Lots of extremely good-value wines are made here at a high technical level by people driven by particular passion. Neither Saint-Pierre nor Gloria are the most expensive wines in their category, despite their outstanding reputations and excellent quality. Bordeaux remains an innovative global leader when it comes to winegrowing and winery technology. No top estate can now afford not to show an interest in organic cultivation. We opted for it in 2021. I stand by this decision, even if it involves financial risk and loss of income.

We are now seeing the second Bordeaux wine revolution. The first was headed up by pioneers like my grandfather, who created 'Domaines Henri Martin', consisting

of Châteaux Gloria and Bel Air Gloria as well as the Cru Classé Château Saint-Pierre. I look after these estates with my mother Françoise and my sister Vanessa. We are and will remain a family company, where my wife also works.

The Martins hail from Saint-Julien Beychevelle, where we are still based today, and have been involved in winegrowing for generations. They did not own any vines. However, my grandfather believed in a viticultural renaissance, even during the crisis years. Between 1930 and 1960 he acquired every row of vines that he could get his hands on in a top Saint-Julien terroir, and thus created Château Gloria. The purchase of Saint-Pierre was the crowning moment of his career.

I was born in 1983. Henri Martin left us in 1991. This means that I only knew him as a mischievous old man who bounced me on his knee and was never short of a joke. I have been told that he was also quite a character. He would never have achieved what he did otherwise!



TALBOT

SYMPATHY AND CONFIDENCE

with Jean-Michel Laporte

The Cordier family has been guiding the destiny of this Cru Classé with its exceptional Saint-Julien vineyards for more than a hundred years. Winemaker Jean-Michel Laporte is responsible for the excellent quality of the wines.

Someone said to me recently: 'Talbot, c'est un vin rassurant' (Talbot is a reassuring wine). So you can see exactly what it is I want for the future of Bordeaux: for our wines to inspire confidence because you can trust them blind. Sometimes it astonishes even us how much Talbot is appreciated in the 112 countries where it is available around the globe. Talbot always tastes exceptional, is not too expensive, yet still has the aura and technical quality of a top wine. The positive reaction that our wines receive is hugely valuable, and we spare no effort in trying to live up to it. This is similarly overseen by the owner family, who are also customers – they order a few boxes of every single vintage!

A cap is also visible in the picture opposite: it comes from the San Francisco 49ers, an American football team. To me this is symbolic, in more ways than one. I discovered the fascinating world of wine in 1996 during a traineeship

in California, and suddenly knew that was what I wanted to do with my life. Like football, winemaking is about passion and team spirit, and the desire to do your best every single day.

At Château Talbot, we now have technical facilities (fermentation room, spacious barrel store, etc.) that others can only dream of. But that is not the reason for our success. We also have a unique terroir: 110 hectares of vines forming a single piece of land in the best parts of the appellation – unusual even in the world of Médoc Crus Classés. Our soils are immensely homogeneous and consist of a mixture of gravel and clay. The gravel gives them good natural drainage whilst the clay provides water-storing properties. That was hugely valuable to us in a year like 2022. Of course, we are continuing to work on improving our wines. However, that happens in small increments on an estate of our size. We cannot afford any mistakes.



Top quality with team spirit and passion:
managing director Jean-Michel Laporte



100 years of Léoville Poyferré:
Sara Lecompte-Cuvelier with the
screen-printed anniversary wine.



LÉOVILLE POYFERRÉ

INSIDER'S TIP AND LEGEND

with Sara Lecompte-Cuvelier

Sara Lecompte-Cuvelier took over from her cousin Didier in 2018, and as well as Léoville Poyferré in Saint-Julien also heads up Le Crock in Saint-Estèphe, the first Bordeaux estate that her family acquired.

My ancestors were wine merchants in Lille. From 1804 onwards they purchased barrels of Bordeaux, bottled it and sold it on, especially in northern France, Belgium and England. In 1903, the family decided to acquire properties including Château Le Crock in Saint-Estèphe. The very fact that they chose this particular estate at a time when the distant Médoc municipality was still reached by horse and cart, despite there being no shortage of other suitable options, speaks to the top quality of the soils. I am not the only one lamenting the fact that Le Crock and its exceptional wines are still treated as an insider's tip. It is said that the owner at the time eschewed classification because he did not want to be considered biased, as a member of the judging panel. Although we benefited from the 1855 classification at Léoville Poyferré, my wish for the future of Bordeaux is for wine enthusiasts to once again pay greater attention to top unclassified wines as well. Le Crock and Moulin Riche benefit from the same approach and re-

sources as our classified estate, which the family acquired in 1920, together with Château Moulin Riche, which is also in Saint-Julien. Yes, the 2020 vintage at Léoville Poyferré (the latest to hit the market) marks a hundred years of the Cuveliers in Saint-Julien, with a special screen-printed bottle being dedicated to this anniversary.

Léoville Poyferré benefits not only from its classified status, but also directly from its reputation as one of the appellation's legendary estates. We do not have any problems with sales. Top restaurants all over the world put our wine on their wine lists. However, this has never prompted us to rest on our laurels. Public relations work is important. My sister Anne has been responsible for welcoming people to the estate since 2005, and has already significantly expanded our services for visitors, not least by opening a shop in 2014. We are brimming with additional plans in this area and have already begun putting them into practice.



LAGRANGE

WINE WITHOUT BORDERS

with Matthieu Bordes

Winemaker and managing director Matthieu Bordes has been working on this Saint-Julien estate since 2006, one of the few classified estates to still have the same plot map as it did 400 years ago.

Lagrange is the highest estate in Saint-Julien, a whole 24 metres above sea level! Of course, that is not the only factor that gives Lagrange its distinct personality. People and nature living harmoniously side by side has long been the guiding principle for our Japanese owners, the Suntory family, represented by Mr Saji. The monumental amount of investment made over the past 40 years bears witness to this. At Lagrange, five oenologists and two agricultural engineers work to realise the vision of creating (as sustainably as possible) not only the best possible wine, but also a bottle with a clearly defined, precise identity in keeping with its terroir and appellation. I will say it once again: Lagrange should not resemble anything else! Respect for nature and the surroundings is an absolute must.

Despite their size, the Lagrange vineyards are cultivated like a garden, sometimes by hand. We have long since given up on weedkillers and insecticides. Protecting biodiver-

sity was a focus for us long before it became fashionable. We are tackling our carbon footprint and will continue to do so. This is made easier by the fact that we are not under any financial pressure whatsoever. Our owners have long since shown us that Lagrange is not just a short-term, speculative project.

Visitors often wonder why Lagrange is not 'more Japanese'. This is also thanks to our owners, who wanted to respect Lagrange as a historic Cru Classé and thus a French cultural asset. They have never put themselves in the spotlight. However, Japanese influence shines through in our corporate culture, respectful and friendly dealings, thorough approach to implementation, long-term thinking, and hospitality. In the picture, I have placed two glasses next to the bottle to symbolise the fact that wine is something to share with others. Not even borders should prevent this.



Never short of a second glass:
Lagrange winemaker Matthieu Bordes



Alfred Tesseron, Justine Tesseron-Carret:
there is nothing like plant protection from
your own herbal dispensary



PONTET-CANET

NETTLES, HORSETAIL, CHAMOMILE

with Justine Tesson-Carret

Alfred Tesson did pioneering work at Pontet-Canet, with his vision of leaving a healthier world behind for future generations. His daughter Justine is continuing his legacy.

On paper, I am currently the managing director of Pontet-Canet. But although I have been gradually taking the reins and learning the ropes of this role over the past seven years, I can still rely on the support of my father Alfred, whose advice and experience are invaluable. Our family company represents more than just Pontet-Canet – it also includes Tesson Cognac and Pym-Rae Tesson Estate, our wine estate in the Napa Valley. I therefore travel a lot, take care of promotional activities, serve as a link with the trading hub of Bordeaux, and am responsible for all of the red tape.

We cannot suppress a smile when we hear what people in Bordeaux are currently saying about their vision for the future. Sustainability, biodiversity, organic cultivation, bio-dynamics... My father introduced practices like these at Pontet-Canet when almost no-one believed they were practicable, especially not at a Cru Classé of our size. He was called a fool for his way of thinking. However, he rigorously imple-

mented his ideas from 2004 onwards, as he was convinced that it was the only way to make fine wines with a genuine terroir character. In 2010 Pontet-Canet was awarded official certification for organic cultivation, the first Cru Classé in Bordeaux to do so. Our plant protection only uses products that are based on preparations made from our own herbs, including nettles, horsetail, chamomile and alder buckthorn.

I have been at Pontet-Canet long enough to know that natural plant protection is anything but easy. In 2018 we were caught short by the sudden onset of downy mildew and lost two thirds of the harvest. Following this, we established our own 'tisanderie', or herbal dispensary. This enables us to respond extremely quickly. In the past, we were less well organised – the preparations were housed in one spot, and the energising barrels in another, so we just lost too much time. Believe me: every minute counts if you want to successfully cultivate 81 hectares in line with organic principles!



MONTROSE

SYNERGY, SUSTAINABILITY, GROUP DYNAMICS

with Pierre Graffeuille and Charlotte Bouygues

Charlotte Bouygues, shareholder and development director of parent company SCDM, and managing director Pierre Graffeuille are the driven duo breathing new life into the Bouygues family's top estates.

Pierre Graffeuille: 'Montrose is naturally the flagship of the Bouygues wine estates. The family acquired this Deuxième Cru Classé in 2006. However, it was quickly joined by other estates: the long underrated Château Tronquoy, also here in Saint-Estèphe, with its exceptional soils, Clos Rougeard in the Loire, and Domaine Henri Rebourseau in Gevrey-Chambertin in Burgundy. We also have a presence in the Cognac region and grow truffles in Chinon. Naturally, our aim first and foremost is to do justice to our very special locations with top quality wines. This applies to both the legendary Cru Classé Montrose and the other estates. But we wanted to do this as sustainably as possible.'

Charlotte Bouygues: 'When my father founded the group with my uncle, the successive purchases were always more about a special encounter than a well-developed strategic plan, but each one was a real occasion.'

Every purchase began as a love story, with either a terroir or a family. My father and uncle only had two obsessions: to create the best possible product, and to do so as naturally as possible with an ecological footprint they could be proud of.'

'To begin with, my role was to work with Pierre to establish some kind of group dynamic. At first glance there is not much synergy between a business in Cognac, a truffle farm and a Cru Classé in Saint-Estèphe! However, there is synergy between Pierre and me. He knows Bordeaux very well, is unparalleled on a technical level, and is also an outstanding taster. A lot of investment has been made in the quality of our wines over the last fifteen years, and I trust the team to continue this pursuit of excellence. The goal now is to further increase awareness of this wine, especially among the younger generation. This is an exciting challenge that we are tackling together!'



Representing synergy and group dynamics:
Pierre Graffeuille and Charlotte Bouygues



A fan of whites both sweet and dry:
Christian Seely, managing director of
AXA Millésimes



SUDUIRAUT

SOME LIKE IT DRY!

with Christian Seely

As managing director of AXA Millésimes, the group that in addition to Suduiraut also owns Pichon Baron in Pauillac and Quinta de Noval in Portugal, Christian Seely is guiding the future of Sauternes with a sure touch.

Let me give you a real scoop: the future of Bordeaux is white! I do not mean that in the figurative sense – dry white wines are on trend, and Bordeaux has some exceptional white wine sites. Of course, I do not mean that we should stop making any more red or sweet wines. However, top-level dry whites are a welcome addition to our current offerings, even in Sauternes.

Château Suduiraut has been part of the group since 1992 and I have been personally responsible for it since 2001. This Premier Cru Classé in Sauternes is a genuine wine monument, making it particularly dear to us.

Any wine enthusiast knows how difficult it is to produce fine sweet wines year after year. However, we are the only major wine region in the world essentially doomed to do so, since the Sauternes appellation is reserved entirely for sweet wines. Suduiraut is renowned for having one of the finest terroirs to produce these. Nevertheless, we wondered if a dry white wine made with all due care and

attention would turn out well here. We therefore started producing small quantities of dry white wine in 2004, initially made of around 70 percent Sauvignon Blanc.

However, Suduiraut is planted with 90 percent Semillon, Sauternes' secret weapon! We therefore also started using more Semillon for our dry whites. With astonishing results! Now we know that in a unique terroir like Suduiraut, when vinified as a dry wine, Semillon also produces complex, juicy whites with particular vibrancy and energy as well as impressive ageing potential. We therefore now offer three dry whites alongside our flagship sweet wine: the particularly refreshing, value-for-money Lions de Suduiraut, the rare and exclusive Château Suduiraut Vieilles Vignes Grand Vin Blanc Sec made from old vines and the dry counterpart to our fine Sauternes, and a Château Suduiraut Pur Semillon Grand Vin Blanc Sec made from 65-year-old vines, and only available in a very limited production run of 2000 bottles.



MILLÉSIMA

MILLÉSIMA

with Fabrice Bernard

With 13,863 wines and a warehouse holding nearly three million bottles, Millésima in Bordeaux is the most successful mail-order retailer of fine wines from all over the world.

If my sister Hortense and I have one vision for Millésima, it is this: we want to ultimately become an exclusive showcase for the best wines across the world. We are based in Bordeaux. However, we are already selling top wines not just from France's other major wine regions, but also from the most important wine regions in other countries such as Italy, Greece, Germany and even Switzerland!

Millésima was founded in the mid-1980s by our father Patrick Bernard. He quickly realised that the time was ripe for change in the wine trade, and initially began experimenting privately and then also publicly with his very special vision: providing an exclusive clientèle with the finest Bordeaux via mail order. When France experienced a wave of strikes, he decided that limiting operations to France was not a good idea, and opened up Millésima to international customers. My father was and is a huge wine enthusiast. He loves fine wines from all over France. The next

step was obvious: today, Millésima – the family company that I now run and where Hortense serves as director of marketing and sales – offers more than 13,000 wines. Our historic cellars on the quays of Bordeaux, which we have extensively renovated and expanded in recent years, now hold nearly three million bottles! We remain in constant, close contact with producers, which also allows us to cater to special requests when needed. We only buy wines directly, thus guaranteeing that all of the wines we ship are genuine and of high quality. I can personally vouch for the fact that Millésima does not have any mediocre bottles or counterfeits! The quality of our services is also ensured by around 80 employees here in Bordeaux and our 13 staff in the USA. We now reach 20 million people via digital channels. Of course, not all of these are buying wine – many use Millésima as an information platform, and our content is constantly being updated.



Delivering top wines to 100 countries with Millésima:
director Hortense Bernard, president Fabrice Bernard

BORDEAUX 2020

SOLAR POWER?



Will the wines of the 'wild trio' that was 2018/2019/2020 go down in history as a symbol of climate change in a few decades' time? Or will they become the norm?

Either way, although the three vintages differ in some aspects, 2020 (like 2018 and 2022) was a year of burning sun and searing heat. Following a mild winter, early-summer conditions set in as early as March. The grapes emerged dangerously early, around three weeks before the long-term average. As in previous years, some estates in Sauternes and Graves were hit by late frosts. The dry month of May created good conditions for even flowering, but a rainy June caused issues for winemakers, just like it did in 2018. From July to mid-September, things remained hot and dry. However, the vines did not suffer from much drought stress thanks to good water reserves. Unlike 2022, the autumn was extremely wet: this meant that there was little point delaying the harvests, either for red varieties or for grapes being used to make dry or sweet whites.

That's the theory. After the en primeur tasting in our offices, conducted under very unusual conditions, we were of course particularly excited to take another close look at the wines now they have been bottled. Our initial impressions were largely confirmed, although with a few slight adjustments. These particularly related to the develop-

ment of top wines from the big village appellations in the Médoc: after around two years of ageing, a good number of cautiously graded fine Margaux, Saint-Julien, Pauillac and Saint-Estèphe wines are now displaying better balance, and proving astonishingly classic and harmonious. Only the second wines and less coddled unclassified examples occasionally offered up slightly harsh tannins.

The Crus Classés from Saint-Émilion remain the winners in terms of points, as does Pessac-Léognan, followed by Pomerol. On the right bank, we were occasionally bothered by the extremely high alcohol levels. Unlike the Médoc, with its average of 13.5% ABV, profiles here were a good percentage point higher. Only producers including more Cabernet Franc in the blend achieved more moderate alcohol levels. The impression that we were tasting Tuscan-style Bordeaux, with fruitiness and fullness yet also acidity and well-proportioned, crisp tannins, therefore also held true in bottle. Fans of this style can happily pick up a few more bottles of this vintage, which has not increased in price. Notes and analysis for the dry and sweet white wines can be found in a separate section following this one.

We have presented the wines in alphabetical order for ease. The words 'Clos' and 'Château' have not been included in this alphabetical ordering.

RED WINES

CHATEAUS FROM A TO Y

A

Château Agassac **Haut-Médoc**

15.5 points | 2025 to 2035

A refreshing, appealing, fruity wine with very fine-grained tannins still shaped by development.

Château Andron Blanquet **Saint-Estèphe**

16 points | 2025 to 2035

Juicy, fruity and fresh with crisp tannins, fun, the type of wine that anyone can afford – and that all will enjoy.

Château Angelus **Saint-Émilion**

18 points | 2030 to 2050

Subtly shaped by maturation, dense and full-bodied in style with top-quality tannins, vibrant and lingering with well-proportioned alcohol; matches the en primeur impression exactly.

Angelus, Carillon d' **Saint-Émilion**

16 points | 2026 to 2035

Beautifully shaped by oak, spirited and impressively full.

B

Château Balestard La Tonnelle **Saint-Émilion**

16 points | 2028 to 2035

Fruity and juicy in the attack, full-bodied development into compact tannins and a tart finish, characterful, could mature.

Château Barde-Haut **Saint-Émilion**

16 points | 2028 to 2035

Compact in the attack, well-balanced structure, full-bodied with ripe, polished tannins.

Château Batailley **Pauillac**

17.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Matching the en primeur note, pairs the spirit of a Saint-Julien with the weight of a Pauillac, but also particularly full, with tannins that shape but do not dominate the finish. Will improve further as it matures.

Batailley, Lions de **Pauillac**

15.5 points | 2025 to 2032

Substantial, but with a rather dusty, tart finish at this stage.

Château Beau-Site **Saint-Estèphe**

15 points | 2027 to 2035

Very tart, angular, robust, needs to mature.

Château Bel-Air **Pomerol**

15.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Fruity in the attack, juicy in style with tart tannins and a finish still rather shaped by development.

Château Bélair-Monange **Saint-Émilion**

18 points | 2030 to 2040

Interesting aromatic potential with berry and spice notes, elegant in the attack with dense, even mineral development, tannins that provide polish and density, and a hugely lingering finish; sophisticated.



Château Beaugard **Pomerol**

19 points | 2028 to 2040

An immensely full-bodied wine of particular aromatic complexity, with top-class tannins, vibrant and exquisitely lingering; one of the frontrunners of the vintage, but absolutely must be left to mature.

Bélair-Monange, Annonce de **Saint-Émilion**

15.5 points | 2025 to 2030

Compact, well made, crisp: a second wine in the style of the grand vin, could mature somewhat.

Château Belgrave **Haut-Médoc**

17 points | 2026 to 2040

Particularly fruity and juicy with tannins that are tart but not dry; perfectly lingering with exceptional balance, pleasant.

Château Bellevue Mondotte **Saint-Émilion**

15 points | 2028 to 2035

Herbaceous touches and stewed fruit notes, still rather tight and closed, with a spicy finish.

Château Berliquet **Saint-Émilion**

16 points | 2026 to 2034

Develops as it did en primeur, fruity with rather tart, herbaceous tannins that balance out the reticent headiness well.

Château Beychevelle **Saint-Julien**

17 points | 2028 to 2040

Particularly fruity with lovely chocolate notes, juicy and fruity on the palate with top-quality tannins, even weighty with a powerful finish; one of the best vintages so far, surpassing its en primeur score.

Château Bonalgue **Pomerol**

16.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Robust and intense in style, angular and tart, particularly characterful; we like it a lot. Will mature well.

Château Bourgneuf **Pomerol**

16.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Pleasing aromatic potential with spicy and fruity notes, compact in the attack, crisp with a classic structure, firm and polished tannins, and a decidedly lingering finish; successful in the style of the vintage.

Château Bouscaut **Pessac-Léognan**

16 points | 2028 to 2038

Spicy nose, powerful in the attack, firm in style with angular, well-integrated tannins and a fresh finish; a classic.

Château Boyd-Cantenac

Margaux

16.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Closed and shaped by development, with perceptible acidity right from the attack, and thus very spirited with well-integrated tannins; characterful in a pleasingly traditional style, could mature.

Château Branaire-Ducru

Saint-Julien

18 points | 2028 to 2045

Particularly refined even on the nose, with delicate berry aromas, then crystal clear in the attack with particularly elegant development, slender yet vibrant with polished tannins and an exquisitely lingering finish; a fine wine that does not need to flex its muscles.

Château Brondelle

Graves

16.5 points | 2025 to 2035

Reticent yet very clean maturation notes with fruity touches, full-bodied and juicy in style with polished tannins, well-integrated alcohol and a fruity finish; has improved with age.



Château Brane-Cantenac

Margaux

19 points | 2030 to 2045

Has lost none of its tempting style, its huge aromatic complexity, elegance and finesse, or its particular vibrancy, depth and length; exquisite and stylish even in this vintage.

C

Château Cadet-Bon

Saint-Émilion

16 points | 2028 to 2035

A fruity, youthful nose, meaty in the attack with a rich structure, polished tannins and a lingering finish; stylish and successful.

Château Calon-Ségur

Saint-Estèphe

17 points | 2030 to 2040

Immensely meaty and juicy, weighty, also full-bodied, rich in extract, matching the impression from the en primeur tasting.

Château Camensac

Haut-Médoc

16.5 points | 2025 to 2035

A particularly fruity nose, smooth in the attack, easy drinking, developing perfect proportions; pleasingly successful, even better than en primeur.

Château de Candale

Saint-Émilion

15 points | 2028 to 2034

Spicy nose, rather coarse and tart tannins, and a very lingering finish.

Château Canon la Gaffelière

Saint-Émilion

18 points | 2028 to 2045

A pleasingly complex, particularly tempting nose even at this early stage, then exceptionally spirited and fresh on the palate with vibrancy and elegance, yet also substance and depth; one of the best wines from this estate!

Château Cantemerle

Haut-Médoc

16 points | 2027 to 2040

Very shaped by development again at this stage, with the perceptible barrel notes currently prompting a rather dry finish.

Château Cantenac Brown

Margaux

17.5 points | 2026 to 2040

Exceptionally made, dense, juicy, spirited with top-quality tannins and a hugely lingering finish; perfectly matches the impressions from en primeur.

Château Cap de Mourlin

Saint-Émilion

16 points | 2028 to 2035

Perceptible but not disruptive oak aromas, full in the attack with smooth, fresh tannins and a lingering finish; more harmonious than en primeur, pleasing development.



Château Canon

Saint-Émilion

19 points | 2028 to 2040

Already offering striking complexity and precision on the nose, then remarkable depth on the palate, supported by refreshing, top-quality tannins; elegant despite the also perceptible fullness granted by the vintage.

Château Capbern

Saint-Estèphe

15.5 points | 2026 to 2035

Juicy and full, with tannins that have gained significant polish; a powerful wine, enjoyable young but could still mature.

Château Carbonnieux

Pessac-Léognan

17.5 points | 2028 to 2045

Subtle nose, perceptible minerality and spirit right from the attack, dense development into ripe, perfectly polished tannins and a lingering finish; exceptionally harmonious once again in this vintage.

Château Caroline

Moulis en Médoc

15.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Rather tart and tight, as it was en primeur, but with well-balanced alcohol.

Château Certan de May de Certan

Pomerol

17 points | 2028 to 2040

One of those wines that is not just fruity and opulent to match the vintage, but also offers minerality, spirit and character, so is recommended.

Château Chasse-Spleen**Moulis en Médoc****17 points | 2028 to 2035**

Interesting, promising spicy maturation aromas on the nose, straightforward in the attack, pleasantly slender, but with seamlessly dense development into fine-grained tannins and a perfectly lingering finish; appealingly well balanced and elegant for the vintage.

Château Chauvin**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Shaped by maturation on the nose, robust in the attack, compact in style in the mid-palate with angular tannins; currently very closed.

Château Cheval Blanc**Saint-Émilion****19 points | 2028 to 2050**

Superb nose with delicate fruity and floral touches, perceptible elegance right from the attack, smooth structure, well balanced with silky tannins and a perfectly lingering finish; harmonious and particularly refined.

Clerc Milon, Passtourelle de**Pauillac****16 points | 2022 to 2026**

Interesting floral, herbal and fruity style with cassis notes, smooth and refreshing on the palate but with perceptible fullness; a vivacious wine, fun.

Clos 126**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2028 to 2035**

Fruity with perceptible oak spice, imposing in the attack, bulky structure, rich in extract, spicy with robust tannins.

Château Cos d'Estournel**Saint-Estèphe****18 points | 2030 to 2045**

Very expressive nose with pastry spice aromas, weighty and full-bodied with perceptible alcohol, but also hugely fruity with top-class tannins; the opulence has remained, just slightly at the expense of elegance at this early stage.

Château Cos Labory**Saint-Estèphe****17.5 points | 2030 to 2040**

Interesting nose thanks to the well-balanced use of oak; compact in the attack, densely woven with tart but well-integrated tannins and a lingering finish; once again exceptionally made.

Château Couhins**Pessac-Léognan****16.5 points | 2026 to 2036**

Spicy, shaped by development; fresh in the attack, well-balanced structure, lively tannins, pleasantly lingering, stylish.

Château Couhins-Lurton**Pessac-Léognan****16 points | 2027 to 2035**

Initially offering herb touches on the nose, then fruity and spicy; also juicy and fruity on the palate with nicely-integrated, well-rounded tannins and a perfectly lingering finish; appealing in the best sense and exceptionally made.

Château Couvent des Jacobins**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Fruity in the attack with meaty development and ripe, crisp tannins, lingering perfectly with well-integrated developmental notes.

Château Crabitey**Graves****16 points | 2026 to 2034**

Immensely fruity nose of cassis and forest berry aromas, full in the attack, meaty development yet also perceptible acidity and crisp tannins, with a pleasantly lingering, just rather heady finish at this stage; livelier than en primeur, needs to mature somewhat.

Château Croizet-Bages**Pauillac****16 points | 2027 to 2035**

Precisely in keeping with its style of a compact, classic, reliable, unobtrusive retro-Pauillac.

D

Château d'Agassac**Haut-Médoc****15.5 points | 2025 to 2035**

A particularly refreshing, appealing and fruity wine with very fine-grained tannins still rather shaped by development, and a pleasantly lingering finish; a lovely wine for this vintage.

Château d'Aiguilhe**Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux****15.5 points | 2027 to 2034**

Still very closed on the nose with maturation notes, robust in the attack with rather angular development into grainy tannins, but a pleasantly spicy berry finish.

Château d'Armailhac**Pauillac****17 points | 2028 to 2040**

Immensely fruity and full-bodied with particular spice, velvety tannins and a lingering, fruity yet also juicy finish; has lost none of its verve, but gained further expression. Fun.

Château d'Issan**Margaux****18 points | 2030 to 2045**

A characterful and particularly classy Issan, perhaps more closed and 'classic' than other wines, with spirit and a distinct personality; needs to mature.

Château Dalem**Fronsac****16 points | 2030 to 2040**

Still has present oak notes following maturation, weighty in the attack with impetuous development and a finish shaped by the high extract; an imposing but harmonious and exceptionally made wine that absolutely needs to mature.

**Château Clerc Milon****Pauillac****18 points | 2030 to 2050**

Particularly refined on the nose with floral and herb spice aromas, fruity in the attack, muscular development into top-class, silky tannins, astonishing minerality; outstanding, distinctive, definitively one of the top wines of the year.

Château Dassault
Saint-Émilion**16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Still rather closed on the nose, intense in the attack, firm structure, square-shouldered tannins and a very lingering finish; development has done it good.

Château Dauzac
Margaux**16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Still very dominated by oak at this stage, with an extremely dry feel that currently massively drowns out the expression of fruit, and a very heady finish.

Domaine de Chevalier
Pessac-Léognan**18.5 points | 2028 to 2040**

A very intense yet also complex nose of pastry spice, berries and fresh herbs together with well-proportioned oak, then corpulent in the attack, hugely vibrant and impressively dense, spirited and lingering; of exquisite class, one of the best wines of the vintage.

Château de Ferrand
Saint-Émilion**16.5 points | 2027 to 2035**

Tempting maturation aromas, full in the attack, straightforward on the palate, well balanced with smooth tannins, a perfectly lingering finish and ideal balance; pleasing and once again better than en primeur.

Château de Fieuzal
Pessac-Léognan**17.5 points | 2026 to 2040**

Tempting maturation aromas, paired with fruity cherry touches, then straightforward in the attack with well-balanced development, smooth tannins and a decidedly lingering finish picking up the notes from the nose; very successful, sophisticated and elegant.

Clos de la Vieille Église
Pomerol**15.5 points | 2026 to 2034**

Compact in the attack, firm structure with tart, still very lively tannins, and a finish rather dominated by oak at this stage.

Château de Lamarque
Haut-Médoc**16 points | 2028 to 2040**

Lovely maturation notes that give way to berries and some liquorice once swirled, compact and rather tart in style on the palate, yet also meaty, spirited and pleasantly lingering; pleasingly 'classic' for the vintage.

Château de Malleret
Haut-Médoc**16 points | 2026 to 2034**

Will be appreciated for its particularly well-balanced style, velvety tannins, commendable balance and easy-drinking nature.

Château de Pez
Saint-Estèphe**17 points | 2028 to 2035**

Reticently fruity, elegant structure, polished tannins, perfectly lingering finish; stylish, exceptionally made.

Château de Pressac
Saint-Émilion**18.5 points | 2030 to 2045**

Still rather shaped by maturation and very closed, as is usual at this stage for this powerful wine, but also gains particular aromatic complexity after extensive swirling; exquisitely sophisticated and offering immense density, depth and length on the palate, in a class of its own once again for this vintage. Pressac has earned its place among the upper echelons of Saint-Emilion wines.

**Clos de l'Oratoire**
Saint-Émilion**17 points | 2028 to 2040**

Appealing nose, not least thanks to the elegant maturation aromas; full in the attack with lively tannins and a lingering finish; sophisticated and spirited, and thus precisely in keeping with its en primeur score. A wine worthy of attention!

Château de Sales
Pomerol**17 points | 2026 to 2033**

Interesting herb and spice nose with a touch of mocha and pastry alongside well-proportioned oak, followed by tart and thus crisp tannins; vibrant, spirited and characterful despite the fullness, needs to mature.

Château de Valois
Pomerol**15.5 points | 2028 to 2035**

Well made with smooth, fresh tannins, a lingering finish and well-proportioned oak. The Cuvée L'Eclat is of a similar calibre.

Clos des Jacobins
Saint-Émilion**15.5 points | 2028 to 2035**

Spicy barrel aromas, straightforward in the attack, firm structure and a pleasantly lingering finish with lots of oak; has potential.

Château Desmirail
Margaux**16.5 points | 2028 to 2035**

Sample shaped by maturation, rather overly pronounced oak that causes dryness on the palate; otherwise successful, if rather in the style of the 2000s.

Château Destieux
Saint-Émilion**15.5 points | 2028 to 2034**

Spicy, currently rather angular in style with bare, rather dry tannins and a tart finish; needs some time in the cellar.

Château Deyrem Valentin
Margaux**16 points | 2028 to 2040**

Reticently shaped by oak, full in the attack with meaty development and still rather grainy tannins; a weighty yet fruity Margaux that has benefited from maturation time.

Le Clos du Beau-Père
Pomerol**16 points | 2026 to 2035**

Still currently rather dominated by oak, so rather tight and dry at this stage; however, still a good start, just needs some time to mature or to be properly aerated before serving.

Clos du Clocher
Pomerol**18 points | 2030 to 2045**

Maturation has reduced good potential to a common denominator: meaty and juicy, yet also substantial, immensely complex and with exemplary spirit. Absolutely must be left to age.

Château du Domaine de l'Église**Pomerol****17.5 points | 2028 to 2040**

Closed at this stage, but with great potential; huge spirit thanks to the crisp tannins that keep the headiness in check, hugely sophisticated, built to mature for a long time.

Château du Tailhas**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2025 to 2032**

Straightforward, medium structure, very appealing for the vintage.

Château du Tertre**Margaux****17 points | 2026 to 2035**

Interesting lilac and fresh berry nose, full in the attack with velvety structure, well-rounded and smooth tannins, and a lingering finish; appealing in the best sense.

Château Duhart Milon Rothschild**Pauillac****15.5 points | 2025 to 2032**

Fruity and spicy with smooth tannins, pleasingly elegant.

Château Durfort-Vivens**Margaux**

The note for the first wine can be found in a separate box. The following three wines are single-vineyard bottles from the estate, an excellent illustration of the huge diversity of different Margaux sites:

Durfort-Vivens, Les Plantes**Margaux****16 points | 2023 to 2026**

Fruity, smooth, downright refreshing: a Margaux that does not need to mature!

Durfort-Vivens, Le Plateau**Margaux****16 points | 2024 to 2028**

Powerful, juicy, full and spirited: generous and full-bodied, could mature somewhat.

Durfort-Vivens, Le Hameau**Margaux****16 points | 2025 to 2030**

Compact and well structured in style, perceptible minerality, still very closed.

F

Château Faugères**Saint-Émilion****15.5 points | 2028 to 2038**

Weighty in the attack, high extract with perceptibly grainy tannins and a full-bodied finish.

**Château Durfort-Vivens****Margaux****19.5 points | 2026 to 2040**

Superb aromatic expression, huge complexity with hints of berries, herbs and spice, full in the attack, almost silky development and an immensely lingering finish; once again offering absolute harmony, elegance, finesse and class in this vintage.

Château Faurie de Souchard**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Fruity in the attack, straightforward development into crisp tannins, well-balanced oak.

Château Fayat**Pomerol****16 points | 2025 to 2032**

Smoky nose with herb aromas, slender in the attack, pleasingly spirited with a lingering fruity finish; successful.

Château Ferrand**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2030 to 2050**

Closed nose with herbal aromas, acidity-driven in the attack and thus a slender impression on the palate, with a spicy, fruity, fresh finish

Château Ferrière**Margaux****18 points | 2030 to 2045**

The most full-bodied, 'robust' Ferrière we have ever tasted, with top-quality, very present tannins, perceptible minerality and a hugely lingering finish, currently owes more to power than elegance, for which it will need

some time in bottle; a vintage that should not be opened too soon and could mature for almost an age.

Château Feytit Clinet**Pomerol****15 points | 2028 to 2035**

As is often the case, shaped by high extract, with angular tannins and a heady finish.

Château Figeac**Saint-Émilion****19 points | 2032 to 2050**

As always, aromatically unusual with its fruity blueberry aromas, framed well by top-quality oak notes; spirited and juicy in the attack with immensely dense, crisp development into an impressive supporting base of tannins, huge depth and a fantastically lingering finish thanks to the perfectly proportioned alcohol. A magnificent wine, in a class of its own and a particular hit in this vintage.

Château Fleur Cardinale**Saint-Émilion****16.5 points | 2028 to 2040**

Powerful in style, but also fruity and crisp, spirited and juicy with perceptible but well-controlled fullness; pleasing development and confirming its en primeur score.

Clos Floridène**Graves****16.5 points | 2025 to 2032**

Has digested its maturation well; juicy in the attack, dense development with polished tannins and a good, crisp finish; spirited and sophisticated, remaining utterly recommended.

Château Fombrauge**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Powerful in the attack, firm style with tart but well-integrated tannins and a lingering finish. Successful in the style of the brand.

Château Fonplégade**Saint-Émilion****16.5 points | 2026 to 2035**

Tempting maturation nose, smooth in the attack, corpulent development with polished tannins and a lingering finish; well made.

Château Fonréaud**Listrac****17 points | 2026 to 2040**

A particularly tempting, complex nose of berry and spice aromas, meaty but also with a top-quality foundation of tannins, and a juicy, very lingering finish; a wonderfully harmonious wine without excess weight.

Château Fonroque
Saint-Émilion

18.5 points | 2030 to 2050

As always, a hugely complex nose of berry and herb aromas with a mineral touch, then full in the attack with juicy development, tannins that indicate its sophistication, and a hugely lingering, fruity finish; a characterful, unique, archetypal wine that could mature for a long time.

Château Franc Maillet
Saint-Émilion

15 points | 2025 to 2032

Compact and tart, even rather rustic.

G

Château Giscours
Margaux

17.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Slightly reductive, needs some swirling; substantial, as suits its style, dense, characterful and spirited, with the tannins more refined than 'en primeur' – maturation has done it good.

Château Gloria
Saint-Julien

17 points | 2028 to 2034

Subtle, top-quality maturation notes on the nose, compact in the attack with a firm, dense structure, superbly juicy and polished tannins and a hugely lingering finish; a stylish wine, even better than en primeur.

Château Grand Corbin
Saint-Émilion

16.5 points | 2026 to 2035

Just like en primeur, immensely reliable and well made, juicy and spirited with supporting tannins; pleasant.

Château Grand Corbin Despagne
Saint-Émilion

17 points | 2028 to 2040

Almost everything about this exceptionally made wine is just right: intense fruit, exceptionally well-integrated oak, top-quality tannins – the (high) alcohol level may be more prominent than en primeur, but it is astonishingly well integrated.

Château Grand Mayne
Saint-Émilion

16.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Tempting maturation aromas, full in the attack, velvety development into top-quality tannins and a lingering finish; meaty, full and spirited, could mature.



Château Gazin
Pomerol

18.5 points | 2030 to 2040

Aromatic potential, juicy, sophisticated, vibrant and lingering, supported by top-class tannins; has gained polish with age, a Pomerol with unique character, one of the great wines of the vintage.

Château Grand-Puy-Ducasse
Pauillac

17 points | 2030 to 2040

Well made, weighty, spirited and dense with well-integrated maturation notes and just a slightly tart finish; nevertheless enjoyable and stylish. Suitable for aging.

Château Grand-Puy-Lacoste
Pauillac

19 points | 2028 to 2050

Hugely classy aromas, unique density and top-quality tannins, weighty yet still extremely elegant; once again impressively stylish, a wine you can buy blindfolded.

Château Grange Neuve
Pomerol

15.5 points | 2027 to 2035

A still rather closed yet still pleasingly fruity nose, compact in the attack, full-bodied in style with still rather fuzzy tannins.

Château Gruaud Larose
Saint-Julien

18 points | 2030 to 2050

Reticent but promising, an almost erratic structure, with impressive spirit, density and depth, and a hugely lingering fruity finish; a top-class Gruaud.

Château Guadet
Saint-Émilion

15.5 points | 2026 to 2035

Perceptible acidity in the attack, straightforward style on the palate with not unpleasantly tart tannins and a very lingering finish.

H, J, K

Château Haut-Bages Libéral
Pauillac

18 points | 2028 to 2040

Initially rather reductive and shaped by maturation, needs some swirling, then becomes clean, interesting, spicy and fruity; crystal clear and direct in the attack with fruity, mineral development and a particularly lingering, astonishingly elegant finish; exceptionally made, in keeping with recent outstanding vintages.

Haut-Bages Libéral, La Chapelle de
Pauillac

15.5 points | 2023 to 2028

Fruity, crisp and fresh with smooth tannins, already pleasingly easy drinking, transparent; exceptionally made.

Château Haut-Bages Monpelou
Pauillac

16 points | 2028 to 2035

In compact, classic Pauillac style, spirited and characterful; could mature somewhat.

Château Haut-Bailly
Pessac-Léognan

19 points | 2030 to 2050

Bewitching nose even at this stage, floral, fruity and spicy, then creamy in the attack with a velvety structure and smooth yet enormously firm tannins and an endless, harmonious finish with black berry notes; hugely stylish and elegant, leads the field by some margin and easily one of the best wines of the vintage!

Haut-Bailly, II
Pessac-Léognan

17 points | 2025 to 2032

Harmonious despite the fullness and perceptible headiness, with polished tannins and a perfectly lingering finish; outstanding for a second wine, could even mature somewhat.

Château Haut-Batailley
Pauillac

16 points | 2028 to 2035

Compact and dense structure with robust, classic Pauillac tannins and a lingering finish; could mature somewhat.

Château Haut-Brion**Pessac-Léognan****18 points | 2030 to 2050**

Combining weightiness and spirit, polish and fullness, yet also particular juiciness, depth and length thanks to its impressive foundation of tannins; a characterful Haut-Brion.

Haut-Brion, Le Clarence de**Pessac-Léognan****16 points | 2026 to 2035**

Juicy, crisp and fresh over a full-bodied structure; has gained fruitiness and polish, needs to mature somewhat.

Château Haut-Madrac**Haut-Médoc****15 points | 2023 to 2028**

Smooth in the attack, but ending rather tight and tart, and very shaped by maturation.

Château Haut-Ferrand**Pomerol****15 points | 2028 to 2035**

Age has given it wonderful harmony without impacting its character; needs to mature.

Château Haut-Maillet**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2025 to 2032**

A particularly corpulent, fruity wine not lacking in structure, reminiscent of a wine from the south.

Château Haut Roc Blanquant**Saint-Émilion****15 points | 2023 to 2026**

Tart, slender and well made: an uncomplicated Sunday wine that is already enjoyable.

Château Haut-Sarpe**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Interesting nose with herbal spice aromas, dense in the attack, firm style with a still bare, dense texture and an oak-dominated finish.

Château Hosanna**Pomerol****17 points | 2026 to 2035**

Polished and with the beginnings of elegance, rounded out well by the well-measured oak; as always, particularly tempting, smooth and exceptionally made.

Château Jean Faure**Saint-Émilion****17.5 points | 2030 to 2045**

Still very closed at this stage, needs more time and aeration than most other wines, but then offers up particular aromatic complex-

ity, huge sophistication and a healthy tartness; a characterful wine.

Château Kirwan**Margaux****17 points | 2026 to 2035**

Has gained not only expression but also polish, with the maturation notes already perfectly integrated, offering pleasant spice and a fruity style.

L**Clos l'Église****Pomerol****15.5 points | 2027 to 2034**

Perceptible extract right from the attack, powerful structure, heady finish, lots of oak; precisely in keeping with this style.

Château La Lagune**Haut-Médoc****18 points | 2030 to 2050**

Initially very closed, then subtle maturation aromas; perceptible minerality right from the attack, juicy structure, top-quality tannins, hugely sophisticated and lingering; in a class of its own, just like en primeur.

**Château L'Enclos****Pomerol****17 points | 2026 to 2035**

Apart from the top-quality but very perceptible oak notes at this stage, this is utterly enjoyable, fruity, with almost chiselled tannins, even very elegant for the vintage; an estate worth keeping an eye on.

Château La Cabanne**Pomerol****16 points | 2026 to 2032**

Reticently shaped by maturation, smooth, fruity and well balanced with ripe tannins, well-integrated oak and a pleasantly lingering finish; has improved, fun.

Château de la Commanderie**Lalande-de-Pomerol****16 points | 2026 to 2032**

Lots of sweet oak, but also very fruity aromas, then full in the attack with dense development into top-quality tannins; pleasing, in very contemporary style.

Château La Commanderie**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2026 to 2034**

Herb nose with spicy touches, refreshing in the attack, medium structure, lively tannins, a very lingering finish.

Château La Conseillante**Pomerol****19 points | 2028 to 2040**

Pleasing aromatic complexity, fruity with floral touches, exquisitely harmonious on the palate, elegant and very lingering with perceptible, refreshing acidity; a great wine, very Burgundian in its expression.

Château La Couspaude**Saint-Émilion****15 points | 2027 to 2034**

As was the case en primeur, dominated by its maturation, so difficult to assess. The score is on the condition of positive development.

Château La Création**Pomerol****16 points | 2028 to 2038**

An appealing, spicy nose, red berry notes in the attack, extremely lively style on the palate, tart with perceptibly grainy tannins and a lingering finish; more closed than en primeur.

Château La Croix**Pomerol****17 points | 2026 to 2035**

Very closed at this stage, and thus exceptionally robust, substantial and hugely lingering; improves significantly after swirling, becoming more harmonious, so needs a few years in the cellar. Recommended.

Château La Croix de Gay**Pomerol****16.5 points | 2026 to 2035**

Particularly straightforward and compact in style with robust but well-integrated tannins, utterly enjoyable.

Château La Croix du Casse**Pomerol****17 points | 2028 to 2035**

More closed than en primeur, currently with rather more angular tannins, but still absolutely recommended.

Château La Croix Toulifaut**Pomerol****16 points | 2024 to 2030**

Slender, fruity, pleasingly well balanced, straightforward; well made.

Château La Dominique**Saint-Émilion****16.5 points | 2028 to 2040**

As it was en primeur, very corpulent and heady, with very tart tannins at this stage; currently struggling to find its balance, so would benefit from some time to mature.

Château La Fleur de Gay**Pomerol****17 points | 2026 to 2034**

A particularly appealing, well made wine with polish, and no lack of elegance despite its fullness; fans of this wine will not be disappointed.

**Château La Gaffelière****Saint-Émilion****18.5 points | 2028 to 2040**

Superb berry, flower and herb nose, full in the attack with juicy and fruity development, firm and particularly polished tannins, and a lingering and fresh red berry finish; exceptionally made, inspired.

Château La Fleur-Pétrus**Pomerol****17 points | 2028 to 2040**

Reticently shaped by maturation, full in the attack with weighty, meaty development and a heady finish; a child of its vintage, as always exceptionally made.

Château La Grave**Pomerol****16 points | 2026 to 2032**

Fruity texture, well-balanced structure with well-integrated tannins and a perfectly lingering finish; pleasing development.

Château La Marzelle**Saint-Émilion****17 points | 2025 to 2036**

Lovely barrel aromas, slender and fruity in the attack with well-integrated, crisp tannins and a fruity finish; pleasingly well balanced for the vintage.

Château La Mission Haut-Brion**Pessac-Léognan****18 points | 2028 to 2040**

Still rather shaped by maturation on the nose, hugely full but also with supporting, robust, perfectly integrated tannins; a particularly meaty, impressively weighty wine that gets astonishingly close to Haut-Brion.

La Mission Haut-Brion, La Chapelle de**Pessac-Léognan****16.5 points | 2023 to 2028**

Temptingly fruity, meaty and juicy, substantial yet with verve; the best La Chapelle of all time.

Château La Mondotte**Saint-Émilion****17.5 points | 2028 to 2045**

Full-bodied, even meaty, backed up by tart, firm tannins, and currently with a very oak-dominated finish; impeccably made.

Château La Rose Figeac**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2025 to 2035**

Lovely maturation notes, pleasing balance for the vintage, slender yet dense, with currently rather tart tannins that we are happy to accept; absolutely must be left to age, could improve its score.

Château La Serre**Saint-Émilion****17 points | 2030 to 2040**

Very closed, and as it was en primeur, extremely shaped by maturation, yet substantial, spirited and with a top-class structure: age has done it good. Suitable for laying down.

**Château La Gurgue****Margaux****17 points | 2026 to 2034**

Overwhelmingly fruity nose, top-quality tannins, astonishingly vibrant and dense, with exceptional balance; the best La Gurgue of all time and an illustration that first-class organic Margaux does not have to cost the earth.

Château La Tour Carnet**Haut-Médoc****16 points | 2026 to 2035**

Maturation has brought more polish, with the ripe Cabernet notes providing shrewd herbal tea aromas; the tannins have smoothed out, and the wine has a whole remains harmonious. Don't leave to age for too long.

Château La Tour Figeac**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2026 to 2034**

Tempting fresh raspberry aromas, in crisp, juicy, pleasantly tart style on the palate, harmonious and appealing.

Château La Truffe**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2024 to 2030**

A decidedly spicy, compact, tart yet not rustic, very appealing wine that does not need to mature for an age.

Château La Violette**Pomerol****16 points | 2025 to 2030**

The floral oak dominates (as is often the case), making it rather tighter than en primeur, with a rather tart, perceptibly heady finish.

Château Lafite Rothschild
Pauillac

18 points | 2028 to 2040

As often, very subtle at this stage, with smoky aromas, then compact in the attack, hugely dense yet with exceptional, fruity fullness, particularly perceptible in the lingering finish.

Lafite Rothschild, Carruades
Pauillac

16.5 points | 2026 to 2035

Offering structure and freshness, with well-integrated, fine-grained tannins, a fruity finish, and well-proportioned alcohol.

Château Lafleur du Roy
Pomerol

15.5 points | 2026 to 2034

Fresh in the attack, rich structure with tart, still rather fuzzy tannins and a pleasingly lingering finish; reliable and cleanly made.

Château Lafleur-Gazin
Pomerol

16 points | 2028 to 2036

Spicy in the attack, juicy development into a rich structure with polished tannins and a lingering finish; pleasing spirit and class.

Château Lafon-Rochet
Saint-Estèphe

17 points | 2026 to 2040

Very closed, yet pleasingly fruity on the nose, straightforward and juicy on the palate with smooth tannins, appealing and will be genuinely easy drinking very soon.

Château Lagrange
Saint-Julien

16.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Still very tart at this stage with slightly dry tannins; needs to mature somewhat.

Château Lagrange à Pomerol
Pomerol

16 points | 2024 to 2032

Compact in style, meaty with crisp tannins, appealing with style and character.

Château Langoa Barton
Saint-Julien

17.5 points | 2026 to 2040

Decidedly fruity with subtle maturation aromas, full in the attack with smooth, perfectly integrated tannins and a beautifully lingering finish; stylish and utterly successful.

Château Laniote
Saint-Émilion

15.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Concentrated and powerfully structured, with perceptibly grainy tannins and thus a tart finish.

Château Larcis Ducasse
Saint-Émilion

16 points | 2028 to 2036

Compact, very shaped by maturation as it was en primeur, tart finish, angular tannins.

Château Larmande
Saint-Émilion

14.5 points | 2025 to 2030

Rather erratic and imprecise, as has often been the case in recent years.

Château Laroque
Saint-Émilion

16 points | 2030 to 2040

Berry and top-class oak aromas, very closed, compact and dense with robust tannins; would benefit from some time in the bottle.

Château Laroze
Saint-Émilion

17.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Has lost none of its aromatic complexity, with hints of herbs, pastry spice and ripe berries, then juicy in the attack with a crisp structure, robust supporting tannins and a lingering, fruity finish; an excellent wine and well worth the indulgence.



Château Lascombes
Margaux

17.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Tempting maturation aromas of ripe berries and spice, spectacularly sophisticated on the palate, hugely vibrant and lingering with spirit, polish, perfectly integrated oak and top-quality tannins.

Château Latour à Pomerol
Pomerol

17 points | 2026 to 2035

Still very shaped by maturation at this stage, as many wines are, but after swirling becomes pleasantly fruity and floral, full-bodied, even weighty, with supporting tannins.

Château Latour-Martillac
Pessac-Léognan

17 points | 2027 to 2040

Spicy nose, dense and almost creamy in the attack with tart yet dense development and a finish still rather shaped by development; excellent once again in this vintage.

Château Le Bon Pasteur
Pomerol

16 points | 2026 to 2035

Beautifully shaped by oak, juicy structure, polished tannins, full and fresh; in the exuberant style of the vintage, will be very enjoyable very soon.

Château Le Caillou
Pomerol

15 points | 2025 to 2032

Perceptible sweet fruit aromas framed by oak, and a tart, rather bare finish.

Château Le Chatelet
Saint-Émilion

16 points | 2028 to 2035

Currently very shaped by maturation with rather tart tannins, beginning rather slender and ending very heady; absolutely must be left to mature.

Château Le Chemin
Pomerol

16.5 points | 2027 to 2035

Tempting maturation aromas on the nose, full in the attack with dense, powerful development into perceptibly rustic tannins and a lingering finish; reliable and well made.

Château Le Gay
Pomerol

16 points | 2028 to 2035

The substance is there, and it feels like an interesting starting product, but the dominating oak currently results in a dry finish.

The score is in the hope that it will gain greater harmony as it matures.

Château Le Pape
Pessac-Léognan

16 points | 2025 to 2032

Easy drinking, smooth, well balanced despite the perceptible headiness, an uncomplicated wine that does not require you to wait for an age.

Château Le Prieuré
Saint-Émilion

16.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Reticent nose, appealingly slender style for the vintage, harmonious, with well-integrated tannins.

Château Léoville Barton
Saint-Julien

18.5 points | 2030 to 2050

Huge aromatic complexity, full in the attack, slow development into top-quality tannins, impressive density and depth; an excellent wine, even better than en primeur.

Château Léoville Las Cases
Saint-Julien

18.5 points | 2030 to 2050

Particularly stylish, harmonious, even elegant, refined, exceptionally fruity, but as well structured as always, with outstanding quality tannins and perceptible minerality, ensuring a long life.

Léoville Las Cases, Clos du Marquis
Saint-Julien

17 points | 2026 to 2035

Stylish, with astonishing freshness and elegance for the vintage, polished tannins and a hugely lingering finish; successful.

Château Léoville Poyferré
Saint-Julien

17.5 points | 2030 to 2045

Still shaped by maturation, rich in extract, in keeping with its style, with tart tannins, but harmonious and exceptionally made.

Château Lilian Ladouys
Saint-Estèphe

16 points | 2028 to 2040

Smoky and fruity, still very shaped by maturation and thus very closed; full in the attack, a powerful, even rather angular structure, robust tannins and a lingering finish, but still needs to mature somewhat.

Château Lynch-Bages
Pauillac

17.5 points | 2028 to 2038

Compact and tart with rather powdery tannins but well-proportioned alcohol;

well made, if not quite on a par with the stunning 2021.

Château Lynch-Moussas
Pauillac

17 points | 2028 to 2040

Very shaped by maturation once again at this stage, needs to digest the oak so should be left to mature somewhat, as it also offers substance, power, body and spirit.

Lynch-Moussas, Les Hauts de
Pauillac

15 points | 2028 to 2040

Offering sophistication and a certain freshness.

M, N

Château Malartic-Lagravière
Pessac-Léognan

18 points | 2030 to 2040

Perceptible aromatic potential with fruity and floral aromas, elegant in the attack, slowly developing huge sophistication via tannins of particular polish and silky freshness, and a lingering finish picking up the notes from the nose; perfectly balanced.

Château Malescot Saint-Exupéry
Margaux

17 points | 2030 to 2040

Initially very shaped by maturation, even rather reductive, becoming fruitier when swirled, then full in the attack with weighty development but very robust, even angular tannins at this stage; this means it should not be taken out of the cellar too early.

Château Margaux
Margaux

19 points | 2030 to 2050

Full-bodied, even meaty, well structured, but also offering particular charm and bewitching elegance and harmony; a textbook Margaux on a par with the best wines ever bottled here, made with evident care.

Châteaux Margaux, Pavillon Rouge du
Margaux

18 points | 2026 to 2035

Reticently shaped by maturation, offering not just density and depth thanks to the top-quality tannins, but also particular class; one of the best Pavillon Rouges ever.

Clos Marsalette
Pessac-Léognan

16 points | 2026 to 2032

Juicy and wonderfully fresh with crisp tannins and a fruity finish; appealing and easy drinking in the best sense.



Château Marquis de Terme
Margaux

18 points | 2030 to 2045

Needs some swirling, then develops tempting ripe berry aromas, imposing and particularly fruity in style with perceptible but well-controlled extract, vibrant and hugely lingering; an impressive wine in keeping with recent years.

Château Mauvesin Barton
Moulis en Médoc

16 points | 2026 to 2035

Reticently shaped by maturation on the nose, with fruity elegance despite the crisp style of the tannins, which also provide pleasing polish to the still perceptible development notes that remain until the finish.

Château Mazeyres
Pomerol

17 points | 2026 to 2035

A particularly full-bodied wine that is uniquely fruity (even for this estate) and downright meaty, with a good supporting structure that also provides juiciness and freshness: trendy in the style of the vintage, yet also harmonious and exceptionally made.

Château Meyney
Saint-Estèphe

17 points | 2030 to 2045

A reticent yet promising, complex nose, compact in the attack, meaty development into particularly firm, top-quality tannins, and a hugely lingering finish; yet another top-class 'unclassified' wine from the Saint-Estèphe appellation.

Château Monbousquet**Saint-Émilion****15.5 points | 2028 to 2035**

Perceptible oak aromas, rather bulky and broad tannins, very compact, even angular.

Château Monbrison**Margaux****18 points | 2027 to 2040**

Subtle, tempting maturation aromas of cocoa, red berries and spice, offering exemplary delicacy even in this vintage, full-bodied, smooth, with silkily polished tannins and a hugely lingering fruity finish; best enjoyed very soon, although it could still mature.

Château Monregard la Croix**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2025 to 2032**

Appealing, juicy, rich with polished tannins and a fruity finish; fun.

Château Montrose**Saint-Estèphe****19 points | 2030 to 2050**

An interesting, uniquely complex nose, full-bodied in the attack, developing huge density and depth with absolutely top-quality, rich, robust tannins and an immensely lingering fruity finish; an excellent Montrose, one of the best wines of the vintage.

Château Montviel**Pomerol****16 points | 2025 to 2032**

Appealing, fruity, juicy, even with a certain elegance and freshness; fun.

Château Moulin du Cadet**Saint-Émilion****16.5 points | 2026 to 2035**

Lovely maturation aromas with fruity notes, juicy in the attack, fruity development into silky yet also pleasantly herbaceous tannins, perceptible fullness and a lingering finish; harmonious.

Château Moulin Riche**Saint-Julien****17 points | 2028 to 2038**

Subtle maturation aromas of top-quality oak, followed by fruity notes; meaty in the attack, but very well-balanced development into top-quality, very fine-grained tannins, polished and sophisticated.

Château Moulinet**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2026 to 2034**

Appealing nose, spicy in the attack, dense structure, well-integrated tannins.

Château Mouton Rothschild**Pauillac****18.5 points | 2028 to 2050**

Particularly opulent, meaty and spectacularly fruity, even downright weighty, dense, with full extract and an impressively lingering finish: Mouton squared!

Mouton-Rothschild, Petit Mouton**Pauillac****17 points | 2024 to 2030**

Has gained significant polish with age, remaining opulent, appealing and well rounded, already fun now.

Nénin**Pomerol****17.5 points | 2026 to 2036**

Particularly fruity and juicy, full-bodied with velvety tannins and an impressively lingering berry finish; utterly appealing and recommended.

O, P

Château Olivier**Pessac-Léognan****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

A closed nose currently very shaped by maturation, then surprisingly grainy, even rather harsh tannins and thus a tart, slightly dry finish and perceptible alcohol; does not currently entirely match the impressions from en primeur.

Château Palmer**Margaux****18 points | 2030 to 2040**

Reticently shaped by maturation, complex and promising, then compact in the attack with dense development and top-quality, ripe tannins, hugely vibrant and lingering, juicy, muscular, immensely fruity, superb.

Palmer, Alter Ego**Margaux****15.5 points | 2024 to 2028**

Compact and dense, crisp with robust tannins, pleasing amounts of character for a second wine.

Château Pape Clément**Pessac-Léognan****18.5 points | 2030 to 2045**

Complex nose with present yet well-proportioned, smoky oak aromas, perceptible extract right from the attack, full-bodied and powerful structure, angular yet perfectly integrated tannins and a fresh finish; authentic and decidedly sophisticated.

Château Pavie**Saint-Émilion****17.5 points | 2030 to 2050**

Tempting nose, mineral and shaped by oak with forest berry aromas; perceptible extract right from the attack, offering depth, density, polished and fresh tannins, and a decidedly lingering finish.

Château Pavie-Decesse**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2040**

Tempting black berry nose, powerful in the attack, rich and dense with a firm structure and a tart, fresh finish; absolutely needs to mature.

Château Pavie Macquin**Saint-Émilion****18 points | 2032 to 2050**

Particularly complex floral and herb nose with pink grapefruit touches, crystal clear in the attack, tart development, perceptible sophistication and minerality, yet also great spirit and a very lingering finish; a rarity that absolutely needs to mature.

Château Péby Faugères**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2040**

Imposing, weighty, heady, with polished tannins, literally drowning in bulk

Château Pédesclaux**Pauillac****17 points | 2026 to 2035**

Velvety and juicy in style with well-integrated tannins and a fruity finish, will be enjoyable at an early stage.

Château Petit Faurie de Soutard**Saint-Émilion****16 Punkte | 2026 bis 2034**

Slender and lithe on the palate, pleasantly well balanced with smooth, fresh tannins and a perfectly lingering finish.

Château Petit Village**Pomerol****16.5 points | 2026 to 2034**

Rather more angular than en primeur, with plenty of fruit but also a rather dry finish at this stage, needs to mature somewhat.

Château Pétrus**Bordeaux****18.5 points | 2030 to 2050**

Subtly fruity to begin with, gaining more complex floral and spice aromas after a few minutes in contact with the air; particularly smooth in the attack, developing surprising elegance, substance and depth; a classy,

perfectly balanced Pétrus that will be enjoyable soon but could still mature.

Château Peymouton

Saint-Émilion

15 points | 2025 to 2030

Fruity, particularly appealing, refreshing, already enjoyable.

Château Phélan Ségur

Saint-Émilion

17.5 points | 2026 to 2040

A wonderful, particularly tempting, complex nose, elegant in the attack with bulky development into top-quality tannins and a hugely lingering finish; once again exemplary.

Château Pibran

Pauillac

16.5 points | 2025 to 2035

Immensely fruity, elegant, polished, pleasant and true to its style.

Château Pichon Baron

Pauillac

18 points | 2030 to 2050

Very reticent, with perfectly controlled expression, muscular but not fatty, hugely vibrant, lingering and spirited, totally in keeping with its impression en primeur.

Pichon Baron, Les Griffons de

Pauillac

16 points | 2026 to 2032

An appealing Griffon, juicy, robustly dense and astonishingly sophisticated in the style of the grand vin; needs to mature.

Pichon Baron, Les Tourelles de Longueville

Pauillac

15.5 points | 2024 to 2028

Appealing and pleasantly fruity, already very harmonious; an easy-drinking Pauillac in the style of a Saint-Julien.

Château Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande

Pauillac

18 points | 2028 to 2045

Still very spicy and shaped by maturation at this stage, but time has given it greater polish, with the top-quality tannins truly coming into their own and supporting the lingering finish; pleasing development.

Pichon Comtesse, Réserve

Pauillac

16 points | 2024 to 2028

A fruity and spicy nose with lovely, well-proportioned maturation notes, smooth, appealing and easy drinking.

Château Pierhem

Pomerol

15.5 points | 2028 to 2035

A spicy nose shaped by maturation, perceptible extract right from the attack, intense, tart, with perceptibly grainy tannins and a very lingering finish.

Château Plince

Pomerol

15.5 points | 2026 to 2034

Fruity development into powdery tannins, well-integrated headiness, lingering finish.

Château Plincette

Pomerol

15.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Perceptible oak on the nose, robust structure with still bare, rather fuzzy tannins and a hugely lingering finish.

Château Pomeaux

Pomerol

15.5 points | 2026 to 2032

Medium structure with grainy tannins that offer a welcome tartness, and a spicy finish with well-applied oak; a reliable Pomerol that needs to mature somewhat.

Château Pontet-Canet

Pauillac

19.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Sets itself apart from other wines right from the astonishing, complex nose of flowers, ripe berries and herbs with a mineral touch; hugely meaty and full on the palate, velvety with an impressively lingering finish; at most a touch headier than in recent years, thus not quite so erratic, which does not compromise its quality: once again in a class of its own.

Château Porte Chic

Pomerol

16 points | 2026 to 2032

Shaped by maturation, with currently just slightly dominant liquorice aromas, then straightforward on the palate with tight development and a heady finish; well made, in the style of the vintage.

Château Potensac

Médoc

16 points | 2025 to 2036

Lovely minerality with polished tannins and thus very well balanced, fun.

Château Pouget

Margaux

15.5 points | 2028 to 2034

Rather angular, tart, tight style at this stage, more robust than usual, nevertheless characterful.

Château Prieuré-Lichine

Margaux

17.5 points | 2026 to 2040

Particularly tempting nose of fresh, ripe berries, cassis and lilac, utterly harmonious on the palate, meaty yet also hugely elegant with top-quality, ripe tannins; perfectly combines the expression of the vintage with the typical style of the wine.

Q,R

Château Quinault

Saint-Émilion

16.5 points | 2026 to 2035

Lovely red berry nose, straightforward in the attack with smooth, fresh tannins and a lingering finish; stylish and elegant, made with flair.

Château Rauzan-Gassies

Margaux

16.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Ripe cherry notes, elegant in the attack with slender yet dense development into rather dry tannins.

Château Rauzan-Ségla

Margaux

18 points | 2028 to 2040

Still rather reticent at this stage with subtle maturation aromas, silky in the attack with slender yet dense development, a well-proportioned complex of sweetness and a lingering, delicately fruity finish with fresh raspberry notes; stylish and exceptionally made.

Clos René

Pomerol

17 points | 2028 to 2040

Interesting nose with herb, spice and berry aromas, also very 'Burgundian' in style on the palate, hugely full, yet also spirited and appealingly tart, providing length in the finish; particularly pleasing development, we definitely underrated this wine en primeur.

Château Ripeau

Saint-Émilion

15 points | 2028 to 2035

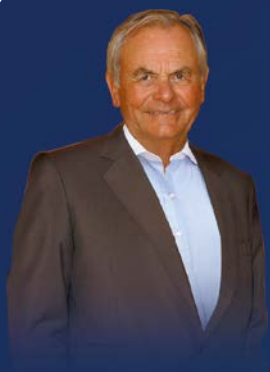
Well made, angular, robust and spicy, with still rather fuzzy tannins.

Château Rochebelle

Saint-Émilion

15.5 points | 2028 to 2034

Temptingly fruity, powerful in the attack, robust in style with a lingering finish and well-balanced use of oak.



Bernard Magrez

GRANDS VIGNOBLES

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Bernard Magrez



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Château Rocheyron
Saint-Émilion

15.5 points | 2026 to 2034

Tempting nose, a juicy, appealing, harmonious wine, fun.

S

Clos Saint-Martin
Saint-Émilion

16 points | 2026 to 2035

As always lots of oak, therefore tart and rather dry at this stage; needs to mature.

Château Sansonnet
Saint-Émilion

18 points | 2028 to 2040

Hugely weighty and full and thus immensely fruity; an imposing wine, a heavyweight with a heart.

Château Ségur de Cabanac
Saint-Estèphe

17 points | 2027 to 2035

Elegant and well-proportioned maturation aromas, straightforward in the attack, slender development into polished tannins and a lingering, elegant finish; exceptionally successful for the vintage, worthy of particular recommendation.

Château Sociando-Mallet
Haut-Médoc

16.5 points | 2030 to 2035

The top-quality, tart tannins balance out the alcohol well, providing sophistication despite the particular fullness and huge density; definitely needs to age for a long time.

Château Soutard
Saint-Émilion

16.5 points | 2025 to 2034

Very present maturation notes yet also fruity, crisp, juicy and appealingly lingering with well-balanced alcohol; pleasant.

T

Château Taillefer
Pomerol

16 points | 2027 to 2032

Spicy nose, well-balanced development into lively, still youthful tannins and a hugely lingering finish.

Château Talbot
Saint-Julien

17.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Still reticent, but promising; full in the attack, with compact, dense development on the



Château Saint-Pierre
Saint-Julien

18 points | 2028 to 2040

A very clean nose reticently shaped by maturation, slender yet dense in the attack with leisurely development into top-quality tannins and a lingering fruity finish; once again of remarkable class in this vintage.

palate into concentrated, hugely dense tannins and a fantastically lingering, fruity finish; utterly enjoyable.

Château Tour Maillet
Pomerol

15.5 points | 2027 to 2035

Classic structure, lively and dense tannins, with a pleasingly lingering, if rather heady finish.

Château Tronquoy-Lalande
Saint-Estèphe

17 points | 2030 to 2045

Tempting nose of top-quality maturation aromas with berries and spice, straightforward in the attack with dense yet astonishingly elegant development into top-quality tannins and a hugely lingering finish; a classy wine that needs to mature.

Château Trotanoy
Pomerol

19 points | 2030 to 2045

Reticent, but with perceptible aromatic complexity, then velvety on the attack with leisurely development into particular depth, sophistication and density, and a lingering finish backed by the top-class tannins; as

always, particularly characterful, one of the top wines of the vintage.

Château Trotte Vieille
Saint-Émilion

17.5 points | 2030 to 2045

As always very reticent, but with perceptible aromatic complexity, then velvety on the attack with leisurely development into particular depth, sophistication and density, and a lingering finish supported by the top-class tannins; as always, particularly characterful, one of the outstanding wines of the vintage.

V

Château Valandraud
Saint-Émilion

17 points | 2025 to 2034

As always, lots of oak, and thus superficial polish, but top-quality tannins and a harmonious whole: fans of this wine will not be disappointed.

Clos Vieux Taillefer
Pomerol

15 points | 2028 to 2035

Intense nose, compact, spicy with fine-grained tannins and a lingering fresh finish; a perfectly balanced wine.

Château Villars
Fronsac

16.5 points | 2028 to 2040

An interesting, slightly smoky, also floral and fruity nose, then weighty on the palate, yet also spirited thanks to the juicy tannins; maturation has done it good, could even improve further as it matures.

Château Villemaurine
Saint-Émilion

16.5 points | 2025 to 2035

Exquisitely polished tannins, harmonious despite the fullness; an exceptionally made wine, particularly balanced and easy drinking and thus fully recommended.

Château Vray Croix de Gay
Pomerol

17 points | 2028 to 2040

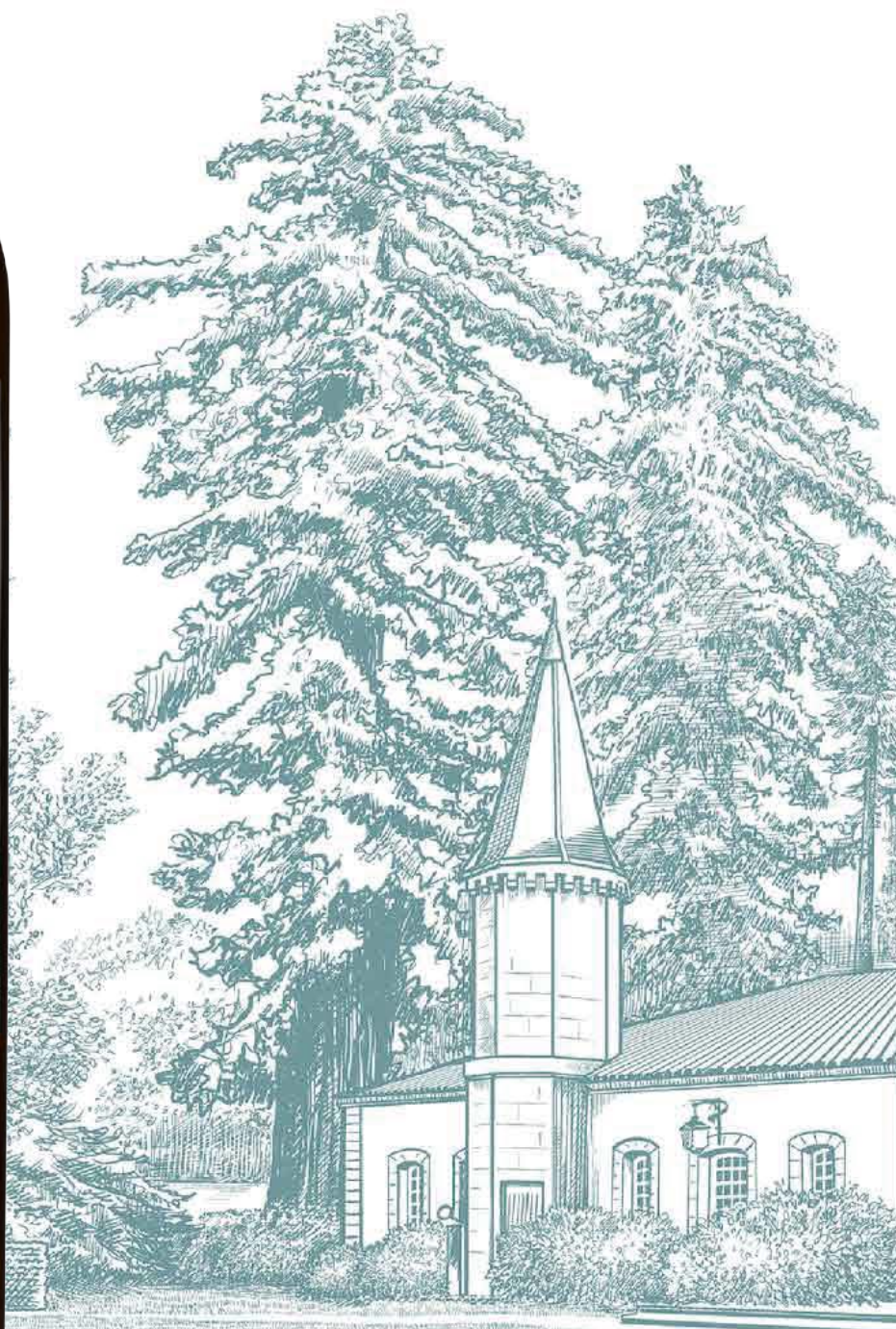
Once again a safe bet in this vintage, and one of those Pomerols that offers not only fruity fullness and headiness, but also particular sophistication and pleasing character.

Château Yon-Figeac
Saint-Émilion

16 points | 2028 to 2035

Shaped by maturation on the nose, corpulent and rich in the attack with tart, even rather fuzzy tannins and a lingering finish.

A craft wine from
an outstanding
terroir



WHITE WINES

DRY AND SWEET



The people behind the well-known Médoc estates have long understood that the future of Bordeaux also includes dry white wines. Spurred on by the likes of Caillou Blanc (Talbot) or Pavillon Blanc (Margaux), an increasing number of estates have been planting white grapes in recent years. The spark of revolution has spread to Barsac/Sauternes: after years of successful experimentation, this region is slowly but surely gaining a truly unique style of dry whites using Semillon, pleasingly different from anything made elsewhere. As it currently stands, these new wines still have to be labelled 'just' white Bordeaux. However, efforts are underway in both Médoc and Sauternes that will deservedly soon result in two separate AOCs.

Driven by this development, white Pessac-Léognans have improved hugely in terms of both style and quality in recent years, and last but not least, even sweet wines are benefiting from this extremely pleasing trend. Thus far, Barsac/Sauternes has been the only wine region in the world condemned to live (or die) by its sweet wines. This makes dry whites not only a welcome, lifesaving alternative, but also a welcome addition and expansion to what is currently on offer.

For decades, the general rule was that there would be three or four top Sauternes vintages per decade. How-

ever, not a single one of the most recent vintages has missed a step. The same applies to dry whites, although 2022 represents a particular milestone for this type of wine. Winemakers have been able to clearly demonstrate that when the vines are treated properly, the right harvest date is chosen and the wines are meticulously vinified under apparently difficult climatic conditions, fine (dry) white wines are still possible.

The full-bodied 2020s and the refreshing 2021s impressed us in many places, but the best 2022s – especially in Pessac-Léognan – we literally could not bear to spit out. Never before have they offered this unique blend of spirit, minerality, sophistication and fullness without a hint of clumsiness. The best wines from Sauternes are also remarkable. In 2020, estates that were not hit too hard by the late frosts achieved respectable success. However, the 2022s eclipse them completely.

Given this positive development, we have devoted an entire section to white wine, split up by wine type and region. Since dry white wines are delivered in forms varying from a few months old to after several years in the barrel or bottle, and are not always available 'en primeur', this category includes all of the vintages we have tasted.

PESSAC-LÉOGNAN/GRAVES

Château Bouscalt 2020

16 points | 2022 to 2026

Very shaped by development at this stage, ripe and well rounded in style, currently very heady with a medium finish; best enjoyed young.

Château Bouscalt 2022

17 points | 2026 to 2040

Initially rather reductive, then astonishingly mineral with fruity and floral touches, particularly juicy and hugely crisp on the palate, but also astonishingly sophisticated and lingering; one of the best whites we have ever tasted from here.

Château Brondelle 2021

17 points | 2023 to 2030

An interesting Sauvignon nose with fruity notes and floral, herb spice touches, then juicy and spirited, vibrant, mineral and lingering; a top-quality white wine that is already enjoyable but could still mature.

Château Carbonnieux 2020

18 points | 2024 to 2040

An interesting nose of herbs and flowers with a mineral touch, full in the attack with rich, dense development, vibrant and spirited, weighty and lingering with a never-ending bitter note; once again one of the best whites of the vintage, some time in the cellar would not do it any harm.

Château Carbonnieux 2022

19 points | 2025 to 2045

Reticent but hugely complex with floral, herbal notes, full in the attack with almost oily yet also ethereal, almost unbelievable dense development and an extremely lingering mineral and fruity finish with hints of eucalyptus; an astonishing Carbonnieux, like a white wine from another dimension.

Château Couhins 2020

17.5 points | 2024 to 2040

Top-quality, subtle lime notes, crystal clear in the attack with particularly juicy, spirited development, particularly weighty padded by stunning minerality and a superbly lingering finish; top class, one of the best wines ever bottled here.

Château Couhins 2022

17.5 points | 2025 to 2035

Tempting exotic fruit notes, particularly straightforward in the attack with taut, fruity development and a perfectly finish; a well proportioned, dense, utterly successful wine.



Château Carbonnieux 2022

19 points | 2025 to 2045

Subtle development notes, full in the attack with oily, dense yet also ethereal development and a hugely lingering mineral and fruity finish with eucalyptus touches; an astonishing white Carbonnieux from another dimension.

Château Couhins-Lurton 2020

18.5 points | 2028 to 2040

A particularly interesting, saline bouquet developing floral notes, then also stunningly mineral on the palate, hugely dense and spirited with an endlessly lingering finish of floral, fruity, smoky and mineral components with a perfectly integrated complex of sweetness; the best dry white of the year.

Château Couhins-Lurton 2022

19 points | 2025 to 2040

Huge aromatic complexity with perfectly integrated maturation, full in the attack with astonishingly dense, very meaty development, but also perceptible minerality and a lingering, impressively aromatic finish; an exceptional, vibrant, world-class wine.

Domaine de Chevalier 2020

18 points | 2026 to 2040

Very reticent, even closed, but with definite potential; juicy in the attack with leisurely, particularly lively development and perceptible acidity; age has provided positive development, astonishingly sophisticated for the vintage.

Domaine de Chevalier 2022

17.5 points | 2026 to 2040

Complex, reticent maturation notes, becoming fruitier after being swirled, then full in the attack with rich, meaty development, very well proportioned, supportive acidity and a hugely lingering finish; an exceptionally well made, very harmonious wine.

Château de Fieuzal 2022

17 points | 2026 to 2040

A very reticent yet also very clean nose; like its red counterpart, the white is also decidedly elegant and harmonious in this very particular vintage; appealing and easy-drinking, but sophisticated.

Domaine de la Solitude 2022

16 points | 2026 to 2040

Fruity, refreshing, well balanced; a particularly successful, easy-drinking wine that does not cost the earth.

Château Haut-Brion 2020

18 points | 2023 to 2030

Surprising, tempting touches of fresh pink grapefruit, then full in the attack with juicy, spirited development, weighty and lingering with delicate bitter touches in the finish; exceptional and even better than en primeur.

Château Haut-Brion 2022

18 points | 2026 to 2040

A stunning, complex floral, spicy and fruity nose, offering sheer sophistication on the palate, particularly dense and impressively lingering; one of the best white Haut-Brions in the last 40 years!

Haut-Brion, Clarté 2020

16 points | 2023 to 2025

Meaty and full, ending with lovely fresh fruit and herb notes.

Haut-Brion, Clarté 2022

16 points | 2024 to 2028

A lovely expression of Sauvignon, hugely fresh and nicely lingering; very successful.

Château La Louvière 2022

17 points | 2023 to 2030

Lovely blackcurrant blossom and citrus fruit notes, then full-bodied, juicy and crisp on the palate with a perfectly lingering finish, very successful.

Château La Mission Haut-Brion 2020

18 points | 2024 to 2040

Superb nose of exotic fruit and flowers, spirited, sophisticated and full with an impressively lingering finish; has lost none of its class.

Château La Mission Haut-Brion 2022**18.5 points | 2024 to 2040**

Initially rather reductive, very reticent, but on the palate it proves hugely sophisticated, rounded and dense with some depth; could be enjoyed young or left to mature.

Château Latour-Martillac 2020**17.5 points | 2026 to 2035**

As en primeur, this is particularly full-bodied, compact and dense with almost erratic minerality; needs to be laid down for a long time.

Château Latour-Martillac 2022**18 points | 2026 to 2035**

Reticently fruity nose, yet also particularly mineral, then elegant in the attack with delicate yet powerful development, hugely vibrant and lingering, a wonderfully elegant, refined wine: top class!

Château Lespault-Martillac 2022**16 points | 2023 to 2024**

Pleasingly fruity and juicy, well structured with a lovely grapefruit finish.

Château Malartic-Lagravière 2020**17 points | 2024 to 2030**

Very shaped by development at this stage, with pastry spice, anise and clove aromas, then straightforward in the attack with juicy development and a fruity finish; a spicy wine that needs some swirling if it is to be served young.

Château Malartic-Lagravière 2022**18 points | 2024 to 2030**

Reticently shaped by development, weighty and dense in the attack, developing huge spirit but also perceptible minerality, huge vibrancy and a lingering finish of ethereal notes; a fine white wine that needs to mature.

Clos Marsalette 2022**16 points | 2024 to 2030**

Temptingly fruity, smooth on the palate, fresh and harmonious with a pleasingly lingering finish; appealing.

Château Olivier 2020**17 points | 2024 to 2035**

Gains lovely citrus aromas after swirling, full in the attack with creamy development into a firm, mineral texture; in the style of the vintage.

Château Olivier 2022**19 points | 2028 to 2045**

Very reticent on the nose, lands like a bomb on the palate, staggeringly vibrant, dense, spirited and lingering; an impressive, stylish white wine, one of the best we have ever tasted here.

Château Pape Clément 2020**17 points | 2023 to 2028**

An enjoyable, aromatic, slender and spicy wine with a lovely finish of herbs and citrus fruit; one of the best whites ever from Pape Clément.

Château Pape Clément 2022**17.5 points | 2028 to 2040**

A closed sample very shaped by development, needs swirling; compact in the attack with tight, even rather tart acidity at this stage that shapes the otherwise lingering finish; has a pleasing amount of character in the style of the red wine, so absolutely needs to mature.

BORDEAUX BLANC SEC, MÉDOC

Château Brane-Cantenac, Blanc 2021**16 points | 2023 to 2028**

Delicate citrus fruit and floral aromas with gooseberry touches, particularly refreshing in style on the palate, juicy and vibrant with a perfectly lingering finish thanks to the perceptible acidity; best served with seafood and other dishes that value acidity.

**Château Tronquoy, Blanc sec 2021****17 points | 2024 to 2034**

Particularly promising developmental aromas followed by grapefruit notes, then compact and mineral on the palate, particularly dense, as if carved in marble, lingering, exceptional, characterful; one of the best white Bordeaux wines ever!

Château Chasse-Spleen, Blanc 2022**16.5 points | 2023 to 2028**

Full-bodied yet juicy with lovely peach notes in the finish; a wonderful wine that everyone will enjoy.

Cos d'Estournel Blanc 2022**17.5 points | 2025 to 2035**

An interesting fruity and floral nose, tempting, also complex, astonishingly mineral and spirited, astounding for a vintage with summer heat, juicy and very lingering. A distinctive, fine white that could mature.

Cos d'Estournel, Pagodes Blanc 2022**16 points | 2023 to 2026**

Compact and juicy with perceptible acidity, refreshing and exceptionally made.

Château Talbot, Caillou Blanc 2021**17 points | 2023 to 2030**

Particularly fruity aromas of preserved fruit, with a meaty, even imposing structure, ideal balance of acidity and a perfectly lingering finish; an impressive white wine best enjoyed young with high-quality cheese.

Château Lagrange, Arum 2021**16 points | 2024 to 2030**

Very shaped by development and subtle at this stage, very well balanced on the palate, silky with reticent, well-proportioned acidity and a pleasingly lingering finish; enjoyable.

Château Lynch-Bages, Blanc 2022**17 points | 2023 to 2028**

Stunningly fruity and juicy, hugely spirited and lingering thanks to perceptible acidity; a superb white that could be enjoyed now or after some ageing.

Château Margaux, Pavillon Blanc 2022**18 points | 2025 to 2035**

Particularly concentrated, spirited and deep with an endlessly lingering finish; an utterly distinctive dry white wine with no peers.

Château Mouton Rothschild**Aile d'Argent 2021****17.5 points | 2025 to 2032**

A still very reticent, but promising floral nose with a hint of pastry spice and peach, then spirited and vibrant with minerality, density and a very lingering finish; hugely sophisticated, needs to mature somewhat.

Château Mouton Rothschild**Aile d'Argent 2022****17.5 points | 2024 to 2035**

Superb exotic fruit aromas, voluminous, juicy, well structured, tonic despite the power and fullness; exceptionally made.

BORDEAUX BLANC SEC, SAUTERNES

Château Coutet, Opalie 2022

17.5 points | 2025 to 2035

Floral and citrus fruit aromas, fresh in the attack with fruity development, impressively full with a supporting structure, perceptible minerality and a perfectly lingering finish; exceptionally made and brimming with character.

Château d'Arche, Blanc sec 2020

16 points | 2023 to 2028

Tempting nose of citrus and acacia blossom, pleasingly spirited thanks to the supportive but well-integrated acidity, well balanced and already very easy drinking.

Château d'Arche, Blanc sec 2022

16.5 points | 2023 to 2028

Particularly juicy and dense, vibrant and lingering with a refreshing citrus finish; utterly successful.

Clos des Lunes, Lunes d'Argent 2020

16.5 points | 2023 to 2030

An interesting, slowly emerging nose, then crisp and particularly juicy on the palate with herb and stone fruit notes in the finish; Clos de Lunes has properly grown up and offers huge amounts of character for the price, can be enjoyed young or left to mature.

Clos des Lunes, Lunes d'Argent 2022

16.5 points | 2023 to 2032

Compact, juicy, well made with a crisp structure and huge, fruity freshness; fun, utterly in keeping with its style, so could be enjoyed young or after some time in bottle.

Clos des Lunes, Lune d'Or 2022

17 points | 2024 to 2030

Lovely, unobtrusive barrel notes, very harmonious on the palate, smooth, fruity, even elegant, pleasantly lingering in hugely clean style; classy.

Château Doisy Daëne, Blanc sec 2021

17 points | 2024 to 2034

Tempting citrus fruit aromas, crisp and dense in style with a long finish offering a supporting, elegant bitter note; not only impeccably made, but also of particular class.

Château Doisy Daëne, Blanc sec 2022

17 points | 2025 to 2036

Subtle, youthful nose of floral and herbal aromas, well structured, pleasingly tart with a supporting structure of acidity; a characterful dry white wine with potential.



Château Sigalas Rabaud, La Sémillante 2021

17.5 points | 2024 to 2035

Particularly distinctive pastry spice nose with a touch of eucalyptus, bitter almond and nuts; immensely dense, vibrant and mineral, including on the palate, with a supporting bitter touch; a characterful wine that could mature for a long time.

Château Guiraud, Grand Blanc 2022

17.5 points | 2026 to 2035

Fruity aromas of fresh Mirabelle plum as well as herbal touches, developing structure and finesse, particularly fresh and perfectly lingering thanks to the delicate, elegant bitter note. Elegant and refined, without a doubt one of the best dry white Bordeaux wines from Sauternes.

Château Lafaurie-Peyraguey, Blanc sec 2021

17 points | 2025 to 2035

Interesting nose of fresh herbs, followed by grapefruit and lime aromas; compact in the attack with dense, mineral development over a supporting structure of acidity, and a lingering finish with a delicate bitter touch; classy, could withstand some time in the cellar.

Château Lafaurie-Peyraguey, Blanc sec 2022

17 points | 2027 to 2035

A superb, promising citrus fruit nose, full in the attack with a dense, meaty structure, particularly vibrant and lingering thanks to the distinct supporting structure of acidity; as in 2021, exceptionally successful, offers character and could mature.

Château Rieussec, R 2021

16.5 points | 2024 to 2030

Reticently fruity nose, pleasingly juicy and crisp in style on the palate, well structured with a subtle bitter note and grapefruit touches in the lingering finish; could mature somewhat.

Château de Rayne Vigneau, le Sec 2020

17 points | 2025 to 2032

Still very youthful nose with a hint of stone fruit and fresh herbs, vibrant, juicy and spirited with a lingering finish of crisp citrus notes; polished, sophisticated and elegant.

Château de Rayne Vigneau, le Sec 2022

17.5 points | 2024 to 2030

Initially very shaped by development but quickly becoming pleasantly fruity, followed by tempting floral aromas; full in the attack with spirited, even weighty development, but supporting acidity and an elegant bitter note.

Château Sigalas Rabaud, Demoiselle 2022

16 points | 2025 to 2030

Full-bodied and dense, also juicy with a refreshing bitter touch in the finish; a very closed sample.

Château Sigalas Rabaud, La Sémillante 2021

17 points | 2028 to 2038

Unique aromatic expression with pastry, herb and stone fruit aromas, full in the attack, becoming meaty and juicy with depth and a lingering finish; characterful and exceptionally made.

Suduiraut, Lions de 2022

15.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Compact, well balanced, appealing, fruity, to be enjoyed soon.

Château Suduiraut, Grand Vin Blanc sec, Vieilles Vignes 2022

17 points | 2026 to 2035

Particularly compact in style with perceptible acidity and some sophistication, currently still very closed so absolutely needs some time in the cellar.

Château Suduiraut, Pur Sémillon 2022

17 points | 2026 to 2035

Particularly interesting nose of spices (anise, cardamom), herbs (eucalyptus) and flowers (chamomile), then full in the attack with huge density and depth; astonishing, distinctive, but would benefit from some more time in bottle.

SAUTERNES/BARSAC

2020

Château Coutet**17 points | 2030 to 2040**

Reticent nose with interesting developmental notes, offering oily fullness on the palate with a present complex of sweetness and a perceptible, delicate bitter touch that also brings freshness to the finish; still very closed, so would benefit from some time in bottle.

Château d'Arche**16 points | 2024 to 2032**

A lovely wine in keeping with the estate's style, with the creaminess and oily density of the vintage, but also a pleasingly fruity finish and a certain transparency; best enjoyed young.

Château de Myrat**17 points | 2027 to 2034**

A complex, spicy nose, then oily fullness and perceptible volume on the palate, with a supporting core and a fruit-driven finish of dried fruit with interesting bitter almond touches; still in its infancy, so could happily still mature somewhat.

Château de Rayne Vigneau**16.5 points | 2024 to 2030**

Fruity, jammy nose, oily in the attack with bulky, even meaty, but well-rounded development and a lovely finish of preserved fruit; perfectly reflects the style of the vintage.

Château Doisy Daëne**17 points | 2024 to 2030**

Lovely stewed fruit and fruit salad nose, full in the attack, hugely rich on the palate, perfectly lingering with a wonderfully refreshing, fruity finish; not a wine to lay down for a long time.

Château Doisy-Dubroca**17 points | 2024 to 2034**

Tempting nose of pear and Mirabelle plum aromas, full in the attack, offering oily fullness but also perceptible density and a hugely lingering aromatic finish; pleasing for the vintage.

Château Filhot**15.5 points | 2024 to 2030**

Still rather taciturn on the nose, oily and sweet in style on the palate, pleasantly lingering, reliable in the style of the vintage.

Château Guiraud**18 points | 2025 to 2035**

A complex, particularly promising, still very youthful floral and fruity nose with delicate fresh herb touches, beginning dense, silky and fruity on the palate, slowly developing a wonderfully juicy supporting structure that provides a decidedly lingering finish: once again in a class of its own in this vintage.

Clos Haut-Peyraguey**17 points | 2024 to 2032**

An interesting, reticent nose of preserved fruit with a touch of botrytis, fruity in the attack with rich, oily development, creamy and opulent on the palate without being clumsy, even displaying a certain elegance in the finish; stylish and utterly successful.

**Château Doisy-Védrines****18 points | 2024 to 2034**

A promising, delicate nose of flowers, exotic fruit, herbs and spices, then elegant and refined, hugely harmonious and authentic, could mature yet is already enjoyable; exceptionally successful.

Château La Tour Blanche**17 points | 2025 to 2035**

A superb fruity and spicy nose, a particularly full, dense, yet also pleasingly harmonious and nicely lingering wine, exceptional for the vintage.

Château Lafaurie-Peyraguey**17 points | 2025 to 2035**

An interesting floral and fruity nose of stewed fruit with some lovely herbal tea touches, full in the attack, dense structure with well-proportioned sweetness, offering volume, structure and intensity; successful for the vintage, could mature.

Château Lamothe-Despujols**15.5 points | 2024 to 2030**

Full-bodied, sweet and fruity, reliable, cleanly made, currently just a touch clumsy.

Château Lamothe Guignard**16 points | 2024 to 2030**

Tempting candied fruit aromas, well-rounded and oily on the palate, appealing, pleasantly lingering; has gained harmony with age. Enjoy young.

Château Rabaud Promis**17 points | 2025 to 2035**

Interesting dried fruit notes with perceptible botrytis; has the oily fullness characteristic of the vintage, weighty with a distinct complex of sweetness, but not lacking depth or spirit. Suitable for laying down.

Château Rieussec**16 points | 2024 to 2030**

Rather taciturn developmental notes that also shape the wine on the palate; offering volume and viscous sweetness, corpulent rather than lingering.

Château Romer du Hayot**16 points | 2025 to 2030**

Tempting nose of exotic fruit and honey aromas; has the fullness of the vintage, with a sweet, fruity finish.

Château Suduiraut**16.5 points | 2026 to 2032**

Displaying the oily style of the vintage, with rather viscous sweetness and a raisin and dried fruit finish. Could therefore happily be left to mature somewhat.

SAUTERNES/BARSAC

PRIMEUR 2022

Château Broustet**15.5 points | 2024 to 2028**

Very well balanced in its way, well rounded, cleanly made.

Château Caillou**17 points | 2025 to 2035**

Nose with a touch of botrytis, smooth yet dense on the palate with well-integrated sweetness and a lingering finish; harmonious.

Château Climens**18 points | 2030 to 2045**

Immensely oily texture in the attack, but as it develops this wine's particular characteristics shine back through in its minerality, spirit, elegance and particular spice; a weighty, even slightly heady finish. A wine of character.

Château Coutet**17 points | 2030 to 2040**

Interesting nose with botrytis aromas, meaty and weighty on the palate, generous and lingering; an opulent Coutet that should be left to mature somewhat.

Château d'Arche**16.5 points | 2025 to 2032**

Bewitchingly fruity with a good structure of acidity and sweetness, offering cosy fullness and elegant development notes; pleasingly successful and well made.

Château de Myrat**18 points | 2025 to 2035**

Interesting nose, compact, juicy, dense, with spirit, structure and length; astonishing and excellent for the year.

Château de Rayne Vigneau**18 points | 2026 to 2040**

Particularly fruity nose with citrus aromas, full in the attack, juicy and spirited development, hugely lingering; generous, exceptionally made.

Château Doisy Daëne**17 points | 2025 to 2032**

Particularly fruity and juicy with perfectly balanced sweetness, will be enjoyable from an early stage.

Château Doisy Dubroca**18 points | 2028 to 2038**

An interesting, reticent nose, then juicy on the palate with perfectly balanced sweetness

**Château Guiraud****19 points | 2025 to 2035**

Incredible aromatic complexity, particularly dense on the palate, hugely spirited and taut with an immensely lingering, fruity finish; a magnificent wine, distinctive and full of character, exemplary once again in this vintage.

and a perfectly lingering finish; will already be enjoyable young.

Château Doisy Védrières**18 points | 2028 to 2040**

A reticent yet very complex and promising nose, pleasingly slender yet also very dense structure, a lingering finish, and perceptible minerality even in this vintage; once again first class. Will gain further expression as it matures.

Château Filhot**16.5 points | 2023 to 2030**

Very shaped by development, then also offering interesting dried fruit aromas, well structured on the palate with well balanced sweetness and a finish of apricot jam and perceptible barrel notes; good prospects, tasted at a difficult time.

Clos Haut Peyraguey**17.5 points | 2024 to 2035**

Reticent notes of exotic fruit with a hint of botrytis; immensely juicy and crisp on the

palate, well proportioned complex of sweetness, perfectly lingering.

Château La Tour Blanche**17 points | 2028 to 2040**

Botrytis with lactic notes, compact structure, well-integrated sweetness, good length.

Château Lafaurie Peyraguey**17 points | 2025 to 2035**

A particularly compact, floral nose; on the palate it impresses with the powerful, oily sweetness that means it is at most somewhat lacking support in this sample and at this early stage.

Château Lamothe Despujols**16 points | 2025 to 2032**

Compact slender, medium density and length; reliable and well balanced.

Château Lamothe Guignard**17 points | 2026 to 2035**

Lovely developmental notes, full, juicy, pleasingly spirited and lingering.

Château Nairac**15 points | 2025 to 2030**

Not entirely house-trained on the nose, oily in style on the palate with a pronounced complex of sweetness, still somewhat lacking balance.

Château Rieussec**17 points | 2028 to 2034**

Opulent with a powerful complex of sweetness, boosted by the perceptible alcohol.

Château Romer du Hayot**15 points | 2025 to 2030**

Astonishingly fresh on the palate with almost sparkling acidity; also somewhat lacking clarity.

Château Sigalas Rabaud**18 points | 2028 to 2040**

An impressive nose of lime blossom and citrus aromas, oily and meaty in the attack, developing full but well supported sweetness, and a very lingering finish; stylish, authentic, worth giving it some time in bottle.

Château Suduiraut**17.5 points | 2028 to 2035**

A reticent, interesting nose of dried fruit and pineapple candy; full-bodied, immensely dense, creamy, even viscous, with digestible sweetness despite the oily style.

BORDEAUX 2022

THE WINE WUNDERKIND?



2022 is a year that we will remember for a long time – everyone for different reasons. For some it was a year of senseless slaughter, for others one of endless burning sun and water shortages, and for us here in Bordeaux, it saw the worst forest fires in 80 years. Fortunately no vineyards were damaged, and the grapes only taste burnt in bad jokes. The real issue for winemakers was the extreme drought that lingered for a year (only lifting in early 2023). However, unlike the record-breaking heat, this did not affect all areas equally. The south of the region experienced a very dry and mild winter that (as always) ended with late frosts that caused localised damage, and then had to make do with fewer than 30 millimetres of rain in June. In the northern Médoc, on the other hand, storms brought some 120 millimetres of rainfall and some hail damage.

Three heatwaves followed from June to August, each lasting for days – although at least mitigated somewhat in August by the relatively cool nights. As a result, the harvests began earlier than ever: white wine grapes were harvested from mid-August onwards, and the majority of the red grapes had been brought in by mid-September. The drought and heat meant that the grapes were small, thick-skinned and lacking in juice: the yields for red wine rarely exceeded 30 hectolitres per hectare. Anyone with experi-

ence of Bordeaux knows what this means: high alcohol levels, low acidity and vast amounts of harsh tannins, amounting to a combination of 2003 and 2010, seasoned with a touch of 1975. So we don't really need to do the tasting at all, wouldn't you say?

Of course things are in fact somewhat different, and soothsayers have once again been left out in the cold. Because the wines currently slumbering in barrels represent the most astonishing Bordeaux vintage ever, which surprisingly also applies equally to dry and sweet whites. What particularly sets 2022 apart from everything we have tasted over the last half a century, including 2018, 2019 or 2020, is the astonishing balance of its wines, the inconceivable class of their tannins (which generally possess a mineral polish that is hard to put into words), and the often remarkably high (and in fact mostly natural) acidity values and resulting low pH values, despite high alcohol levels that nearly always exceed 14% ABV. The result is immensely generous, meaty, fruity, juicy and wines the like of which Bordeaux has never seen, or at least not at these quantity or quality levels.

Bordeaux enthusiasts must decide for themselves whether they want to buy the 2022 vintage 'en primeur', but there is no doubt that any real connoisseur's cellar will gain a few bottles of 2022 sooner or later.

RED WINES

CHATEAUS FROM A TO Y

A

Château Angelus **Saint-Émilion**

18.5 points | 2030 to 2050

Reticent but promising development notes, wonderfully juicy and mouthfilling tannin, perceptible extract but also particular depth, with a spicy finish of chocolate notes; once again excellent, and pleasingly harmonious despite the weighty style of the vintage.

Angelus, Carillon d' **Saint-Émilion**

16.5 points | 2027 to 2032

Juicy, very meaty and delicious with crisp tannins, utterly successful.

Angelus, N° 3 d' **Saint-Émilion**

15.5 points | 2027 to 2032

Smooth, juicy, appealing; fun.

Château Ausone **Saint-Émilion**

19.5 points | 2030 to 2050

Temptingly fruity and mineral, absolutely sophisticated finesse, fresh, dense and spirited with imposing but elegant texture and a lingering, never-ending finish: the sublime Ausone style in an astonishingly accessible version!

Ausone, La Chapelle d' **Saint-Émilion**

17 points | 2026 to 2035

Tempting nose, the second wine also combines freshness and extract with fruitiness and minerality: the tannins herald sophistication and depth, whilst the acidity ensures tension despite the alcohol.

B

Clos Badon **Saint-Émilion**

16 points | 2026 to 2032

Rich structure, fruity and easy drinking with a lingering finish; a pleasing wine that will be enjoyable from an early stage.



Château Bélair-Monange **Saint-Émilion**

19.5 points | 2034 to 2050

Bewitching mineral and fruity nose, slowly developing huge density and depth on the palate over a base of velvety, silky tannins, sophisticated and offering unique harmony and elegance despite the concentration.

Château Balestard La Tonnelle **Saint-Émilion**

16.5 points | 2028 to 2038

Black berry notes, juicy and rich with well-integrated tannins and a fruity finish. Pleasant and recommended.

Château Barde-Haut **Saint-Émilion**

16 points | 2028 to 2035

Meaty, full-bodied, well made, juicy.

Château Batailley **Pauillac**

17.5 points | 2030 to 2045

Reticently shaped by development, decidedly full and spirited with impressive structure, just with the otherwise good impression slightly impaired by what is a very heady finish at this stage; will gain balance as it develops.

Batailley, Lions de **Pauillac**

15.5 points | 2027 to 2035

Compact and rather tart in style, lots of oak.

Château Beau-Séjour Bécot **Saint-Émilion**

17.5 points | 2030 to 2040

Crisp and juicy, well balanced with wonderfully polished tannins and a lingering fruity finish: the increasing proportion of Cabernet Franc provides pleasant freshness.

Château Beau-Site **Saint-Estèphe**

16.5 points | 2030 to 2040

Immensely powerful, huge density and depth, and a lingering finish; a real bargain if it is like this in the bottle!

Château Beauregard **Pomerol**

19 points | 2032 to 2050

Reticently fruity with interesting touches of spice and herbs, particularly smooth in the attack, then slowly developing not just density and depth, but also particularly mineral polish thanks to top-quality, perfectly integrated tannins and barely perceptible alcohol, ending with a very lingering finish picking up the fruity and spicy notes from the nose; once again one of the best wines in this region for this vintage.

Clos Beauregard **Pomerol**

15.5 points | 2029 to 2035

A compact, robust wine with tart, even slightly dry tannins and lots of oak.

Château Beauséjour Duffau-Lagarrosse **Saint-Émilion**

19 points | 2030 to 2040

Lots of fruit, fresh, spirited and long: everything fits in this complete, exceptionally successful wine with a substantial proportion of Cabernet Franc.

Château Bel-Air **Pomerol**

15.5 points | 2030 to 2035

More compact than lingering, juicy and fruity but with perceptible alcohol.

Château Belgrave **Haut-Médoc**

17 points | 2030 to 2040

A subtle but tempting fresh berry nose, fruity in the attack with juicy development, vibrant tannins and a perfectly lingering finish; exceptionally made, in the style of the wine and the year.

Château Bellegrave**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2028 to 2035**

Full in the attack, but quickly gaining angular, tart tannins; reliable and well made.

Château Beychevelle**Saint-Julien****17.5 points | 2031 to 2045**

Well-measured, floral oak, pleasingly slender in the attack, gaining huge density and depth via the top quality tannins, and well-proportioned alcohol; pleasingly successful, the best Beychevelle for 50 years!

Château Bonalgue**Pomerol****16.5 points | 2030 to 2040**

Compact and meaty in style, juicy, full-bodied, crisp with robust tannins, successful and recommended.

Château Bourgneuf**Pomerol****17 points | 2029 to 2040**

A particularly tempting floral and spicy nose, full in the attack with juicy development incorporating top-quality tannins and a generous, lingering finish; appealing in the style of the vintage.

**Château Bouscaut****Pessac-Léognan****17.5 points | 2030 to 2040**

Reticent, promising developmental notes, astonishingly mineral with finely polished tannins and a lingering fruity finish not dominated by alcohol; excellent, undoubtedly the best red wine we have ever tasted from Bouscaut.

Château Boyd-Cantenac**Margaux****15.5 points | 2028 to 2034**

Tannins roughened up somewhat and thus left feeling prickly by the keen, even rather dominant acidity; lacking balance.

Château Branaire-Ducru**Saint-Julien****19 points | 2032 to 2045**

Immensely complex, fruity nose, impressively spirited thanks to exemplary quality tannins, hugely vibrant and lingering, a superb wine that literally left us speechless.

Château Brane-Cantenac**Margaux****20 points | 2030 to 2050**

Hugely pure aromatic expression and astonishing harmony on the palate; as with other exceptional wines, this similarly astonishes with the sheer minerality of its tannins, the unique polish, the particularly sophisticated aromatic expression, and its elegance and lingering finish despite its power. An outstanding wine.

Brane-Cantenac, Baron de**Margaux****16 points | 2025 to 2030**

Immensely juicy despite the volume, astonishingly mineral tannins, a lingering finish, and well proportioned alcohol that only becomes noticeable right at the end.

C**Château Cadet-Bon****Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Full-bodied, juicy and dense without dominant alcohol; pleasantly well balanced.

Château Calon Ségur**Saint-Estèphe****17 points | 2030 to 2040**

Interesting spicy nose, compact in the attack, developing very robust, tart, angular tannins, well-masked alcohol, and an abrupt finish shaped by the tannins.

Château Camensac**Haut-Médoc****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Compact on the palate, fruity and meaty with well-integrated tannins and perfectly proportioned alcohol; just slightly overly dominated by oak at this early stage.

**Château Cantemerle****Haut-Médoc****17 points | 2030 to 2045**

Tempting nose, juicy in the attack with fruity development into crisp tannins and a lingering, fruity finish, precisely made; the best Cantemerle of the last four decades and thus a real bargain!

Château Canon la Gaffelière**Saint-Émilion****18 points | 2028 to 2050**

Subtle nose with floral and mineral touches, wonderfully harmonious and elegant on the palate thanks to the refined, finely polished tannins and the refreshing fruity finish; an utter delight.

Château Cantenac Brown**Margaux****18 points | 2030 to 2045**

Reticent, promising developmental notes on the nose, full in the attack with meaty development, top-quality tannins and a perfectly lingering finish; stylish and absolutely recommended.

Château Cap de Mourlin**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2030 to 2038**

Compact and rather tart yet also juicy style at this stage, but with no dryness thanks to the robust tannins.

Château Capbern**Saint-Estèphe****15.5 points | 2030 to 2038**

Compact and robust with tart tannins, good length and well proportioned alcohol.

Château Carbonnieux**Pessac-Léognan****17.5 points | 2030 to 2045**

Impressive aromatic complexity with cherry and chocolate aromas, meaty in the attack, exceptionally weighty yet also fruity development incorporating chocolatey, particularly fine-powdered tannins and a lingering, heady finish; immensely opulent, yet still harmonious.

Château Chantealouette**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2027 to 2035**

Fruity and juicy with a powerful finish; a well made Pomerol for newcomers from Château de Sales, in the style of the vintage.

Château Chasse-Spleen**Moulis en Médoc****17.5 points | 2028 to 2040**

Interesting fruity and spicy nose, particularly juicy and spirited structure with top-quality, rather broad, polished tannins and a perfectly lingering finish picking up the notes from the nose; exceptionally made and utterly enjoyable.

Château Chauvin**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Chocolatey development aromas on the nose, compact structure with high extract and perceptible headiness.

Château Cheval Blanc**Saint-Émilion****19 points | 2032 to 2050**

Reticent, with good aromatic potential; particularly rich and meaty, but also sinewy and uniquely spirited with elegant tannins and a wonderfully fruity finish; a fantastic Cheval Blanc built to last for an eternity, so absolutely must be left to age.

Château Clerc Milon**Pauillac****18 points | 2030 to 2045**

Reticent, but with the usual complexity; voluminous in the attack with meaty structure and top-quality tannins perfectly supporting the meatiness, and a very lingering, fruity, and perceptibly but not disruptively heady finish.

Clerc Milon, Passtourelle de**Pauillac****16 points | 2024 to 2028**

Juicy, fruity, crisp, with wonderfully smooth tannins: uncomplicated, enjoyable.

Château Corbin Michotte**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

A cultivated appearance with a dense, full-

bodied structure and a lovely blackberry finish.

Château Cos d'Estournel**Saint-Estèphe****19.5 points | 2030 to 2050**

A fantastic, masterfully made Cos, perfectly balanced with excellent, elegantly polished tannins, huge minerality, enormous tension, and elegance despite the substance and fullness; also worthy of 20 points.

Cos d'Estournel, Les Pagodes**Saint-Estèphe****17 points | 2025 to 2035**

Immensely precise, magnificently well balanced, elegant and refined: a smoother version of Cos, with all the characteristics of the estate and the vintage.

Cos d'Estournel, 'G'**Médoc****16 points | 2025 to 2035**

Immensely juicy and crisp, fresh and fruity, enjoyable, easy drinking, exceptionally made: once again demonstrating that excellent wines can be made in northern Médoc.

Château Cos Labory**Saint-Estèphe****17 points | 2030 to 2045**

The usual robust, honest, powerful style with excellent quality tannins and a juicy finish; as always, a safe bet.

Cos Labory, Charme**Saint-Estèphe****15.5 points | 2026 to 2032**

Reticently shaped by development, compact, powerful, a touch rustic, with a tart finish.

Château Côte de Baleau**Saint-Émilion****15.5 points | 2027 to 2034**

Immensely fruity with fresh, robust tannins that are just slightly dry towards the finish.

Château Couhins**Pessac-Léognan****17.5 points | 2028 to 2040**

Perfect balance between playful fruitiness, comforting fullness and juiciness, with perfectly polished tannins; utterly successful, the ideal accompaniment for creative cuisine in a few years' time.

Château Couhins-Lurton**Pessac-Léognan****17 points | 2032 to 2040**

Interesting fruity and spicy nose, immensely fruity in the attack with particularly juicy development, an excellent structure of tannins and a hugely lingering, weighty and heady finish; particularly successful in its new style.

Château Couvent des Jacobins**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Fruity in the attack with meaty development and ripe, crisp tannins, perfectly lingering with well integrated developmental notes.

Château Croix de Labrie**Saint-Émilion****15.5 points | 2027 to 2034**

Pleasingly dense and lingering, with refreshingly tart tannins and a precise expression of fruit.

Château Croizet-Bages**Pauillac****16 points | 2026 to 2030**

Robust, compact and medium density, in keeping with its style.

D

Château d'Aiguille**Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux****15.5 points | 2028 to 2035**

Fresh and juicy, pleasingly dense, with what is currently a rather harsh finish.



Château Certan de May de Certan
Pomerol**18 points | 2028 to 2040**

Promising fruity and floral nose, particularly spirited and astonishingly fresh on the palate with the vibrant tannins characteristic of the vintage, and a juicy, decidedly lingering finish; a top-quality Pomerol!

Château d'Issan**Margaux****18 points | 2032 to 2050**

Reticent, but particularly complex and hugely sophisticated; dense and meaty in the attack, gaining weight and depth, lingering, spirited, even properly heady, yet not clumsy; an archetypal wine built for eternity.

d'Issan, Blason**Margaux****15 points | 2026 to 2032**

Robust, tart, even rather herbaceous, yet still fruity, could mature somewhat.

Château Dalem**Fronsac****16.5 points | 2030 to 2040**

Compact and dense with tightly knit tannins, refreshing acidity and huge density and length; particularly successful, but needs to mature.

Château Dassault**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Perceptible but well-balanced extract, well-integrated tannins and a perfectly lingering finish, particularly enjoyable and successful.

Château Dauzac**Margaux****16 points | 2030 to 2035**

Lively, juicy, weighty, with perceptible new oak notes; trendy in a somewhat outdated style, although better balanced than in the past.

Domaine de Chevalier**Pessac-Léognan****17.5 points | 2028 to 2040**

A sample very shaped by development, requiring a lot of swirling. Meaty in the attack with fruity development into a lingering, crisp finish; spirited, juicy and sophisticated.

Château de Ferrand**Saint-Émilion****17 points | 2028 to 2038**

Pleasantly well balanced and elegant even in this vintage, with fine-grained tannins, stylish and exceptionally made.

Château de Fieuzal**Pessac-Léognan****17.5 points | 2027 to 2040**

A particularly fruity nose of fresh berry aromas, slender in the attack, gaining depth but remaining very elegant, harmonious and fruity, with perfectly polished tannins, a hugely lingering finish, fruity finesse and excellent harmony.

Château de Fonbel**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2026 to 2034**

Lovely cherry aroma, fresh and fruity with rich tannins, and a medium finish in keeping with its fruity, fresh style.

Clos de l'Oratoire**Saint-Émilion****17 points | 2030 to 2040**

Immensely crisp, fresh and tart, an almost classic structure with a lovely berry finish. Enjoyable, as has been the case for the past three years.

Château de la Dauphine**Fronsac****15.5 points | 2028 to 2035**

Full-bodied, crisp, juicy, with a firm structure and alcohol that is only perceptible in the finish.

Domaine de la Solitude**Pessac-Léognan****16 points | 2027 to 2035**

An immensely fruity, clean nose, a refreshing style on the palate, smooth and well balanced; a particularly successful, easy drinking Solitude that will be enjoyable young.

**Château d'Armailhac****Pauillac****18 points | 2028 to 2040**

Bewitchingly fruity nose, juicy and crisp in the attack with substantial development into excellent tannins, incredibly sophisticated and hugely lingering; the best d'Armailhac ever comes astonishingly close to Mouton in this vintage.

Clos de la Vieille Église**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2027 to 2035**

Good aromatic potential, straightforward on the palate, supported by tart tannins with perceptible grain.

Château de Pez**Saint-Estèphe****17 points | 2028 to 2040**

Impressively full, yet also juicy and crisp thanks to wonderfully refreshing tannins, very lingering with well proportioned oak; a true reflection of the vintage.

Château de Pressac**Saint-Émilion****19 points | 2032 to 2050**

As is often the case, closed in terms of aromas at this stage, but complex and extremely clean; particularly weighty in the attack with immensely dense yet also powerful development incorporating top-quality juicy tannins and a hugely lingering, particularly fruity finish: once again a cut above and one of the best wines of the vintage.

Château Tour de Pressac**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2025 to 2030**

Particularly juicy and fresh with smooth, powerful tannins and a lingering finish; lovely and easy drinking, recommended.

Château de Sales**Pomerol****18 points | 2032 to 2045**

An interesting, subtle nose of spices and herbs, with floral lilac touches, then straightforward and uncomplicated in the attack with perceptible density thanks to tightly knit, granite, seamlessly dense tannins, and a decidedly lingering finish without intrusive alcohol; an exceptional, characterful wine that can be left to mature, not just the best wine we have ever tasted from here, but also one of the real blockbusters of the vintage, more than worth its price tag.

Château de Valois**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2027 to 2034**

Smoky nose with dark chocolate notes, full in the attack, dense development with well-integrated tannins.

de Valois, L'Eclat**Pomerol****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Perceptible oak spice, powerful in the attack, firm style with robust tannins and what is just currently a slightly dry finish shaped by development.

Clos des Jacobins**Saint-Émilion****15.5 points | 2028 to 2035**

Sample dominated by maturation notes; powerful in the attack, with meaty development into powerful tannins, and a spicy, very heady finish.

Château Desmirail**Margaux****16 points | 2030 to 2038**

Lovely but rather overly intrusive new oak aromas, full in the attack, juicy development into broad tannins, and a rather abrupt finish disrupted by the oak.

Château Deyrem Valentin**Margaux****16 points | 2030 to 2040**

Reticently shaped by maturation, juicy in the attack with compact, dense development into robust tannins and a spicy, lingering finish; reliable and well made.

Domaine de Compostelle**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2028 to 2035**

Fruity in the attack, pleasingly dense texture, and a refreshing, juicy finish.

Clos du Clocher**Pomerol****19 points | 2034 to 2050**

Its development offers good potential for an immensely complex nose; once again managing to combine power, density and fullness in this vintage, with utterly sophisticated tannins that support the meaty structure and provide a hugely lingering mineral and spicy finish. Once again one of the best wines in the region.

Château du Domaine de l'Église**Pomerol****17 points | 2030 to 2040**

The slight reduction and dominant development on the nose do not detract from the quality of the sample; dense and full on the palate, yet also sinewy and lingering with polished tannins, stylish and authentic.

Château du Tailhas**Pomerol****15 points | 2028 to 2035**

A very closed sample; juicy, fruity and robust on the palate.

Ducru-Beaucaillou, La Croix de**Saint-Julien****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Exceptionally made, full-bodied, juicy with smooth, mineral tannins and just a slightly heady finish.

**Château Ducru-Beaucaillou****Saint-Julien****19 points | 2034 to 2050**

Huge aromatic complexity, superb structure, dense and very sophisticated, the fullness deftly kept in check by the mineral freshness of the top-quality tannins; one of the best wines we have ever tasted from Ducru.

Ducru-Beaucaillou, Le Petit Ducru de Saint-Julien**16 points | 2024 to 2030**

Compact and juicy with excellent, smooth yet firm tannins.

Ducru-Beaucaillou, Madame de Beaucaillou**Haut-Médoc****15.5 points | 2024 to 2030**

Appealing, smooth, very well balanced, exceptionally made, fun.

Château Duhart Milon Rothschild**Pauillac****17 points | 2028 to 2040**

Interesting spice, berry and herb nose, meaty in the attack with dense development and a juicy, lingering finish; exceptionally made.

Château Durfort Vivens**Margaux****20 points | 2030 to 2050**

One of those wines you just want to sit patiently and take in with your eyes closed rather than come up with dreary notes, as it has much more to say than can be put into words, with its aromatic complexity, its particular vitality, its velvety and silky tannins,

and its incredibly lingering finish; a bewitchingly sensuous wine offering both power and unparalleled depth, in a class of its own.

Château Enclos Haut Mazeyres**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2028 to 2034**

Interesting oak spice, concentrated, compact, opulent with perceptible alcohol.

F

Château Faugères**Saint-Émilion****16.5 points | 2029 to 2040**

Hugely rounded yet also very juicy, with velvety tannins and well-integrated headiness; appealing in the best sense, exceptionally made and recommended.

Château Fayat**Pomerol****16 points | 2029 to 2036**

Weighty, compact, with tart tannins, currently very shaped by development, but with commendable prospects.

Château Ferrière**Margaux****18 points | 2034 to 2050**

In keeping with the style of recent years (due to the involuntarily low yields), meaning hugely concentrated, powerful, dense, deep and lingering as well as particularly juicy, but absolutely needs to be left to mature long enough to develop its proverbial elegance.

Château Feytit Clinet**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2030 to 2038**

As always very shaped by development, with tart, powdery extract, also roughened up by the oak.

Château Fleur Cardinale**Saint-Émilion****17 points | 2030 to 2045**

Compact and very dense with perfectly integrated tannins, and pleasing, commendable balance between extract and alcohol; utterly successful, does justice to its exceptional terroir – a real delight.

Château Fonplégade**Saint-Émilion****16.5 points | 2028 to 2040**

Very concentrated with smouldering headiness, but also has the potential for elegance thanks to its polished tannins.

Château Fonroque
Saint-Émilion

18.5 points | 2030 to 2050

A very reticent, but as is often the case also very interesting nose with hints of herbs and spice; on the palate it offers up the weightiness of the vintage, but also impressive spirit, borne up by velvety tannins and perceptible acidity that lead into an exciting, lingering finish. An archetypal wine that absolutely must be left to mature.

Clos Fourtet
Saint-Émilion

18 points | 2028 to 2040

Floral and fruity on the nose, with a full, smooth, creamy structure, velvety tannins and a perfectly lingering finish; combining charm with depth. The first vintage using the best sites from the now fully reintegrated Grandes Murailles plots.

Fourtet, La Closerie de
Saint-Émilion

15.5 points | 2026 to 2032

Enjoyable, well balanced, refreshing, appealing and easy drinking; harmonious and utterly recommended.

G

Château Gazin
Pomerol

18.5 points | 2032 to 2050

A complex, promising nose, fantastically spirited on the palate with particularly crisp tannins and an endlessly lingering finish that is as generous as it is fruity; a spirited, unique Gazin that will be ideal for cold winter evenings in a few years' time!

Château Giscours
Margaux

18 points | 2032 to 2045

Reticent, promising nose, then immensely fruity, smooth and juicy on the palate, slowly developing supporting structure and depth, with a lingering finish of very fruity notes; stylish, exceptionally made.

Château Gloria
Saint-Julien

17 points | 2030 to 2038

A very closed sample that needs some swirling, then offering noticeable aromatic quality; perceptible density right from the attack, full-bodied development incorporating a supporting structure of well-integrated tannins, pleasingly spirited and lingering; has potential but absolutely needs to mature.

Château Grand Corbin Despagne
Saint-Émilion

17 points | 2029 to 2045

As always a particularly velvety, fruity wine that nevertheless also offers huge freshness and even spirit, with perfectly proportioned, well integrated alcohol and a harmonious, utterly enjoyable whole; one of the best wines we have ever tasted from this estate.

Château Grand Mayne
Saint-Émilion

16 points | 2028 to 2040

Sample very shaped by development, with caramel and pastry notes; interesting prospects (fruitiness, tannin quality) but these are not yet truly coming into their own, ending with a tart, even rather dry finish. The score is therefore conditional on and in expectation of positive changes.

Château Grand-Puy-Ducasse
Pauillac

17 points | 2030 to 2040

Reticently shaped by development with well proportioned oak, compact in style with tannins that are angular but not harsh, and a well balanced whole; pleasing in the style of the vintage and the wine.



Château Fonréaud
Listrac

17 points | 2026 to 2040

A particularly tempting, complex nose of berry and spice aromas, meaty but also with a top-quality foundation of tannins, and a juicy, very lingering finish; for wine enthusiasts who value enjoyment over investment.

Château Grand-Puy-Lacoste
Pauillac

18.5 points | 2030 to 2045

Interesting, reticent nose, compact in the attack, hugely fresh and spirited, taut and lingering; once again astonishingly stylish, reticent and enormously harmonious, with no hint of showing off.

Grand-Puy-Lacoste, Lacoste Borie
Pauillac

15.5 points | 2024 to 2028

Appealingly smooth, very well balanced and elegant, appealing, enjoyable young.

Château Grange Neuve
Pomerol

15 points | 2028 to 2035

Dense and full, but also with a very heady finish still shaped by development.

Château Gruaud Larose
Saint-Julien

19 points | 2034 to 2050

As always elegantly reticent, hugely distinguished, once again offering impressively unique quality tannins with the particular polish and minerality of the vintage: once again a top-class, perfectly balanced Gruaud.

Château Guadet
Saint-Émilion

15 points | 2028 to 2033

Rather clumsy extract, powdery tannins and a dry finish.

H, J, K

Château Haut-Bages Libéral
Pauillac

19 points | 2034 to 2050

Bewitching nose with lilac and fresh berry aromas, crisp in the attack, juicy development into top-quality, seamlessly dense tannins, hugely deep, sophisticated and lingering; once again an absolute hit, and even better than its predecessors.

Château Haut-Bages Monpelou
Pauillac

16 points | 2028 to 2038

Dense, particularly spirited and lingering with a heady finish, characterful and sophisticated.

Château Haut-Bailly
Pessac-Léognan

19 points | 2034 to 2050

Immense aromatic complexity, hugely weighty in the attack with leisurely development into top-quality, perfectly integrated



tannins and a fruity, hugely lingering finish with perfectly absorbed headiness; a special Haut-Bailly of almost biblical dimensions, absolutely must be left to mature.

Haut-Bailly II
Pessac-Léognan
17 points | 2028 to 2038

Appealing herb and berry aromas, full in the attack with generous development incorporating top-quality, refreshing tannins and a perfectly lingering finish; would benefit from some time in bottle.

Château Haut-Batailley
Pauillac
17 points | 2032 to 2040

Reticent maturation aromas, fruity in the attack with meaty development into top-quality, seamlessly dense, fine-grained tannins, hugely taut and lingering, exceptionally made, the best Haut-Batailley in recent decades.

Château Haut-Brion
Pessac-Léognan
18 points | 2035 to 2050

Complex, promising maturation notes, full in the attack with dense, even rather tart devel-

opment into angular, robust tannins and a lingering, very heady finish; very closed at this stage, needs to mature.

Haut-Brion, Le Clarence de
Pessac-Léognan
16 points | 2027 to 2035

Lovely barrel notes, tart and very slender in style with robust, even rather herbaceous tannins, needs to mature somewhat.

Château Haut-Ferrand
Pomerol

16 points | 2030 to 2035

Juicy and crisp with perceptible acidity, tart tannins and well-balanced alcohol; could mature somewhat.

Château Haut-Madrac
Haut-Médoc

15 points | 2026 to 2035

Compact and dense with angular tannins, characterful despite the very oak-driven finish.

Château Haut-Maillet
Pomerol

16 points | 2027 to 2035

An appealing fruity nose, rich in the attack, becoming smooth and meaty, with well-balanced alcohol.

Château Haut-Sarpe
Saint-Émilion
16 points | 2029 to 2035

An impressive, meaty structure and pleasantly lingering finish with black berry notes; well balanced, appealing, exceptionally made.

Château Haut-Simard
Saint-Émilion
16 points | 2028 to 2035

Complex nose, with perceptibly tart but also extremely well-balanced tannins.

Château Jean Faure
Saint-Émilion
17.5 points | 2032 to 2045

An idiosyncratic floral and fruity expression right from the nose, then lively on the palate, concentrated and weighty with crisp tannins and perceptible headiness; distinctive character.

L

Clos L'Église
Pomerol
15 points | 2030 to 2035

Lots of oak, which also dominates on the palate and leaves a dry finish.

Château L'Enclos
Pomerol
17.5 points | 2030 to 2040

Reticently fruity and spicy, then hugely full and dense on the palate with top-quality, polished tannins, weighty and lingering with exceptionally well-integrated alcohol; balance despite its bulk, utterly enjoyable, and absolutely recommended, as has been the case for the last two years.

Château La Lagune
Haut-Médoc
18 points | 2032 to 2050

Immensely complex aromas, weighty in the attack with leisurely development into a perfectly solid, immensely fine-grained, yet still granite structure and a lingering, spirited finish; a wonderful Lagune of almost biblical character.

Château La Cabanne
Pomerol
15 points | 2026 to 2032

Astonishing fig jam nose with hints of fresh herbs, also a somewhat erratic sample on the palate, compact and corpulent with a medium finish.



Château La Clémence**Pomerol****15 points | 2028 to 2034**

Appealing nose, fruity in the attack, rich structure, fresh tannins despite the headiness.

Château de la Commanderie**Lalande-de-Pomerol****16.5 points | 2026 to 2032**

Immensely fruity and tart with full-bodied tannins, dense, juicy, refreshing acidity in the finish. Pleasant and recommended.

Château La Commanderie**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Fresh, compact and juicy in style, with well-proportioned, ripe, crisp tannins, a lingering finish and well integrated alcohol; utterly enjoyable.

Château La Conseillante**Pomerol****19 points | 2030 to 2050**

Captivates once again this year with its particularly floral and fruity nose of berries, mint and lilac, then slender in the attack with elegant development into particularly fine-grained yet also silky tannins and a hugely lingering finish; once again offering pleasing, exemplary harmony.

Château La Couspaude**Saint-Émilion****15 points | 2027 to 2034**

As always, unfortunately heavily shaped by maturation – a bitter, very extracted sample that was difficult to assess.

Château La Création**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2030 to 2036**

Full-bodied and fruity with tart, even slightly bitter tannins that provide freshness.

Château La Croix**Pomerol****17 points | 2030 to 2040**

Reticent developmental notes; a noticeably, particularly elegant sample despite the vintage, with tart yet well-integrated tannins, perfectly proportioned alcohol and a lingering finish; charming and particularly classy.

Château La Croix de Gay**Pomerol****17 points | 2028 to 2036**

Sample very dominated by oak and thus rather closed; when swirled it becomes pleasantly well balanced and stylish, with polished tannins and well proportioned alcohol.

**Château La Gaffelière****Saint-Émilion****18.5 points | 2032 to 2050**

Impressive nose of fresh berry, herb and herbal tea aromas, full in the attack, juicy and fruity development, velvety and firm tannins with particular polish, and a hugely lingering finish of fresh red berry notes: superb!

Château La Croix du Casse**Pomerol****17 points | 2029 to 2040**

Particularly fruity and meaty in style with powdery, well-integrated tannins and well-balanced alcohol; confirming its class.

Château La Croix Saint-Georges**Pomerol****18 points | 2030 to 2045**

Subtle, very clean nose, then full in the attack, huge density and depth, lots of fine-grained tannin and an endlessly lingering finish; one of the best wines ever made here, and thus an absolute bargain.

Château La Croizille**Saint-Émilion****15.5 points | 2028 to 2034**

Opulent with grainy tannins and perceptible alcohol.

Château La Dominique**Saint-Émilion****17 points | 2030 to 2040**

Chocolatey oak and fresh berry aromas, well proportioned on the palate, astonishingly smooth and elegant, with just slightly overly perceptible alcohol at this early stage, but overall pleasingly stylish.

Château La Fleur de Gay**Pomerol****17 points | 2027 to 2035**

Despite its fullness, this wine still develops elegance thanks to its particularly polished tannins, with the overall impression just slightly impaired by the oak-dominated finish.

Château La Fleur de Plince**Pomerol****15.5 points | 2028 to 2040**

Spicy oak and pastry spice notes on the nose, then distinctly full and heady on the palate.

Château La Fleur-Pétrus**Pomerol****18 points | 2030 to 2045**

La Fleur-Pétrus also offers particular class with its well-integrated oak notes, astonishing juiciness and spirit, impressive body and smouldering headiness.

Château La Fleur Peyrabon**Pauillac****15 points | 2025 to 2030**

Powerful, juicy and spirited with tart tannins, and perceptible alcohol in the finish.

La Gaffelière, Clos**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2026 to 2032**

Cultivated style; fruity and harmonious with fine-grained tannins.

Château La Grave**Pomerol****16.5 points | 2028 to 2034**

Particularly fruity with smooth tannins, pleasingly full, appealing and very successful.

Château La Gurgue**Margaux****17 points | 2030 to 2045**

Particularly crisp, juicy and fresh, spirited and lingering, even better than the already excellent 2020!

Château La Louvière**Pessac-Léognan****17 points | 2030 to 2038**

Fruity with mineral peaks, particularly juicy and hugely spirited with top-quality tannins and a lingering, heady finish; hugely successful.

Château La Mission Haut-Brion**Pessac-Léognan****18 points | 2030 to 2050**

Interesting, promising, complex and spicy nose, then compact in the attack with leisurely development into an astonishingly

mineral, immensely dense texture, and a lingering finish picking up the notes from the nose, with perfectly balanced headiness; sophisticated and lingering.

La Mission Haut-Brion, La Chapelle de Pessac-Léognan

16.5 points | 2025 to 2032

Incredibly fruity nose with blackberry and cherry aromas, offering perceptible concentration borne up by top-quality tannins, and a lingering, heady finish; another superb Chapelle that can be enjoyed young or briefly matured.

Château La Mondotte Saint-Émilion

18 points | 2030 to 2040

Impressively full-bodied, with huge depth, top-quality, perfectly integrated tannins and a lingering finish; perfectly proportioned extract.

Château La Serre Saint-Émilion

17.5 points | 2030 to 2040

Maturation notes as tempting as they are complex, with hints of fresh berries; velvety development into top-quality tannins, with a weighty, lingering finish. A child of its vintage, owing more to power than elegance, but harmonious and exceptionally made.

Château La Tour Carnet Haut-Médoc

16 points | 2028 to 2035

In its usual robust, compact style, with crisp, well-integrated tannins; reliable and authentic.

Château La Tour Figeac Saint-Émilion

17 points | 2028 to 2035

Dominated by lovely fresh berry aromas on the nose even in this vintage, undoubtedly very meaty on the palate, but with very well-rounded tannins and perfectly proportioned alcohol; once again enjoyable.

Château La Truffe Pomerol

16 points | 2028 to 2034

In fruity, juicy and rich style with a blackberry finish; well made, lovely, in the style of the vintage.

Château La Violette Pomerol

17 points | 2028 to 2035

Like Le Gay, La Violette is less superficial, undoubtedly concentrated but also fruity, and pleasingly well proportioned despite the perceptible alcohol.

Château Lafite Rothschild Pauillac

18 points | 2032 to 2044

Superb violet and lilac nose, followed by astonishingly fruity cherry notes, then decidedly juicy in the attack with hugely fruity development and a lingering, powerful finish; astonishes with its exceptionally fruity, open style.

Lafite Rothschild, Carruades de Pauillac

16 points | 2028 to 2035

Robust and tart in style, dense, compact, with potential for elegance; utterly Pauillac.

Château Lafleur du Roy Pomerol

16 points | 2030 to 2038

Promising nose, juicy in the attack with crisp, tightly knit tannins and perceptible headiness in the finish; characterful.

Château Lafleur-Gazin Pomerol

16.5 points | 2028 to 2036

Delicate, elegant oak spice, very well balanced, even elegant, with fine-grained tannins and perfectly integrated alcohol; appealing and harmonious.



Château La Rose Figeac Pomerol

17 points | 2030 to 2040

Tempting, clean developmental notes; impressively fruity and juicy with top-quality tannins, good balance despite the fullness, perfectly made. An excellent wine worth keeping an eye on, a real bargain.

Château Lafon-Rochet Saint-Estèphe

17.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Particularly complex nose, offering striking precision on the palate, with depth, density and huge sophistication, but remaining easy drinking and harmonious thanks to the high fruit content.

Lafon Rochet, Les Pelerins de Saint-Estèphe

15.5 points | 2028 to 2034

Robust and compact in style, well structured, even broad, but harmonious; could mature somewhat.

Château Lagrange Saint-Julien

17.5 points | 2032 to 2040

Stylish Lagrange, the characteristic expression of fruit, meatiness and juice are supported by top-quality tannins that balance out the perceptible alcohol well.

Château Lagrange à Pomerol Pomerol

16.5 points | 2027 to 2034

Immensely juicy and fruity despite perceptible maturation notes, with wonderfully fine-grained tannins and well-integrated alcohol.

Château Langoa Barton Saint-Julien

18 points | 2030 to 2050

Offering particular meatiness and juicy fullness, supported well by the top-quality tannins, with a fruity, perfectly lingering finish; a thoroughbred Langoa that is guaranteed to delight.

Château Laniote Saint-Émilion

15.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Dense and robust, spirited and characterful.

Château Larcis Ducasse Saint-Émilion

16.5 points | 2028 to 2038

Juicy and hugely fruity with tart, firm, supportive tannins and a lingering finish.

Château Larmande Saint-Émilion

16.5 points | 2025 to 2030

Appealing and astonishingly slender in style, fruity with utterly smooth, fresh tannins; offers a hint of the good old Larmandes.

Château Laroque Saint-Émilion

17 points | 2030 to 2040

Reticently fruity with lovely maturation aromas, compact in the attack, dense develop-

ment into top-quality tannins and a lingering, fruity, just slightly heady finish; pleasing balance in the style of the vintage.

Château Latour
Pauillac

18 points | 2028 to 2040

A top-quality Latour, astonishingly fruity, yet also hugely sophisticated, exciting and lingering. (Not available 'en primeur', score is for information only.)

Latour, Les Forts de
Pauillac

18 points | 2035 to 2050

Offering sheer density and sophistication, hugely lingering, a powerful, juicy wine with top-quality, seamlessly dense tannins; one of the best Les Forts of all time. (Not available 'en primeur', score is for information only.)

Château Lascombes
Margaux

(16 points | 2028 to 2040)

The nose is dominated by a lot of oak, and on the palate you have to struggle through the opulent bulk to a finish dominated by headiness; (too) much of everything in this sample, which is unpleasantly reminiscent of times past. Score is given with reservations.

Château Latour à Pomerol
Pomerol

18 points | 2030 to 2045

Interesting, complex maturation notes, full in the attack with velvety development into top-quality, fine-grained, rounded tannins and a generously lingering, fruity finish; a wonderful wine that is absolutely worth its price tag.

Château Latour-Martillac
Pessac-Léognan

18 points | 2030 to 2045

Reticently shaped by maturation, immensely juicy in the attack with meaty development, polished tannins, a hugely lingering finish and perfectly proportioned alcohol; astonishing precision and perfect balance, the best Latour-Martillac red wine we have ever tasted.

Château Le Bon Pasteur
Pomerol

16.5 points | 2028 to 2038

Lots of new oak; sophisticated and dense with polished, well-integrated tannins, well-proportioned alcohol and a lingering, fruity finish. Trendy, successful.

Château Le Caillou
Pomerol

15.5 points | 2027 to 2034

Compact and tart in style, good length, juicy; will be enjoyable from an early stage.

Château Le Chatelet
Saint-Émilion

16 points | 2028 to 2035

Well made, very fruity, with still slightly fuzzy tannins at this stage that nevertheless balance out the perceptible alcohol well; can only improve its score as it matures.

Château Le Chemin
Pomerol

16 points | 2028 to 2036

Lovely developmental notes; full and tart structure, lingering juicy finish, reliable and well made.

Château Le Clos du Beau-Père
Pomerol

16.5 points | 2028 to 2036

Lovely, trendy, very fruity aromas, then a well-balanced and juicy structure on the palate, picking up the notes from the nose; a well made wine, appealing in the best sense, guaranteed to delight.

Château Le Clos Grangeneuve
Pomerol

15.5 points | 2027 to 2035

Pleasingly fruity, refreshing and appealing in style; fun.

Château Le Crock
Saint-Estèphe

17 points | 2028 to 2040

Reticently fruity; crisp in the attack, with bulky development into top-quality, astonishingly fresh supporting tannins; once again outstanding and a real bargain even in this vintage.

Château Le Gay
Pomerol

17.5 points | 2029 to 2040

Temptingly fruity nose without dominant oak, juicy in the attack, perfectly proportioned on the palate, dense but also immensely sinewy, offering particular minerality and already perceptible headiness; a real delight and the best Le Gay in a long time.

Château Le Moulin
Pomerol

15.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Tart texture, lingering fruity finish, dominated by maturation notes.

Château Le Prieuré
Saint-Émilion

16.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Reticently fruity with interesting floral touches, offering fullness and foundations, but also sophistication and even minerality; a sleek, harmonious wine with the features of the vintage.



Château Laroze
Saint-Émilion
18.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Reticently fruity with perfectly proportioned oak aromas, intense structure with top-quality, immensely juicy tannins and a lingering fruity and spicy finish; an exceptionally made, perfectly balanced, particularly characterful, fine wine.

Château Léoville Barton
Saint-Julien

19.5 points | 2035 to 2050

Superb berry and spice nose with even some floral touches, full in the attack, leisurely development into immensely dense, perfectly polished tannins and an endlessly lingering finish; a unique, sensual, truly top-class wine that could mature for an age, once again in a class of its own.

Château Léoville Las Cases
Saint-Julien

19 points | 2030 to 2050

Reticent maturation notes, meaty in the attack, weighty development into wonderfully rich, robust tannins, immensely taut, spirited and impressively lingering; a great Las Cases, masterfully made and perfectly balanced.

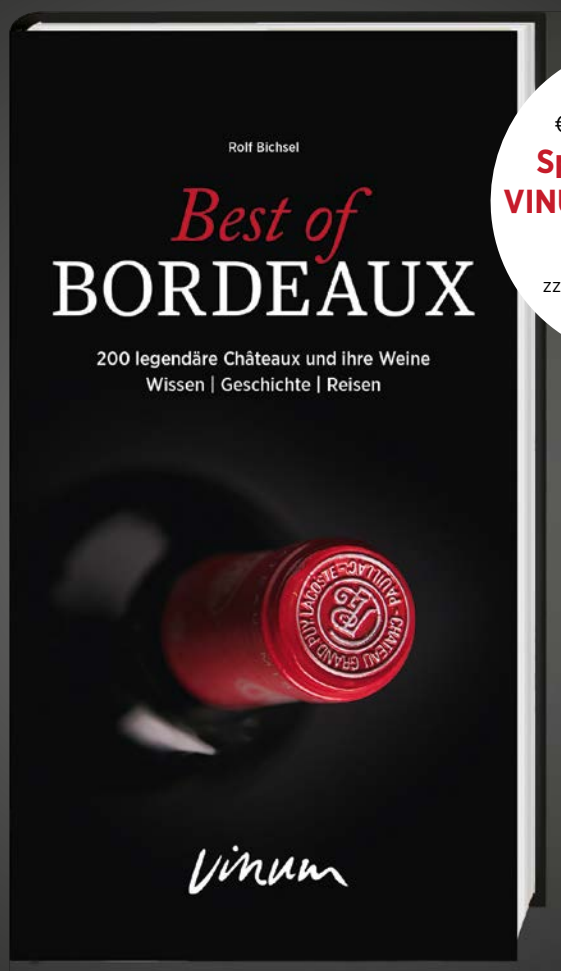
Léoville Las Cases, Clos du Marquis
Saint-Julien

17.5 points | 2030 to 2040

Reticently fruity and spicy on the nose, offering extract and particular sophistication, vibrancy, length, and tannins with bite; exceptionally successful.

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Léoville Las Cases, Le Petit Lion
Saint-Julien

16 points | 2025 to 2032

Spirited, pleasingly lingering, with crisp tannins; enjoyable young but could still mature somewhat.

Château Leoville Poyferré

Saint-Julien

18 points | 2032 to 2045

Reticent oak and black berry nose with lovely floral and violet notes, weighty in the attack, powerful development incorporating top-quality tannins, and restrained headiness in the finish; combining the style of the vintage with the typical features of the estate.

Leoville Poyferré, Pavillon de
Saint-Julien

18 points | 2028 to 2035

Very shaped by development at this stage, compact with rather harsh tannins, medium length.

Château Les Ormes de Pez
Saint-Estèphe

16.5 points | 2030 to 2040

Crisp and juicy with perfectly integrated tannins, vibrant and lingering.

Château Lespault-Martillac
Pessac-Léognan

15.5 points | 2028 to 2034

Juicy and fruity with well-rounded tannins, compact rather than lingering; appealing, fun.

Château Lilian Ladouys
Saint-Estèphe

16.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Meaty and juicy, but also astonishingly fresh with a lingering fruity finish; exceptionally made.

Château Lynch-Bages
Pauillac

18 points | 2032 to 2045

Reticently fruity, a huge but also immensely vibrant wine offering meatiness, structure and excitement, hugely lingering aromas and perfectly integrated tannins; wonderful, perfectly made.

Lynch-Bages, Echo
Pauillac

15.5 points | 2027 to 2035

Compact with rather harsh, powdery tannins, but offering substance and definite depth.

Château Lynch-Moussas
Pauillac

17 points | 2028 to 2040

Interesting nose with floral oak aromas, robust in style with still rather clumsy tannins roughened up by the oak, and a weighty finish; still rather defiant, but will gain greater balance as it matures.

M, O

Château Maillet

Pomerol

16 points | 2029 to 2035

Compact, robust, but with pleasingly well-integrated alcohol; reliable, could mature.

Château Malartic Lagravière
Pessac-Léognan

18 points | 2032 to 2035

An interesting fruity and spicy nose, meaty in the attack, fruity development, with top-quality, finely powdery tannins and a lingering finish; spirited and sophisticated.

Château Malescot Saint-Exupéry
Margaux

16 points | 2030 to 2040

A very reductive, animalistic sample that was difficult to taste; well-proportioned alcohol, rather rustic finish. Very traditional in its style: score given with reservations.



Château Monbrison
Margaux

18 points | 2030 to 2045

Tempting fruity and spicy nose, dense, even meaty, but also particularly harmonious thanks to incredibly refined tannins, immensely lingering; an absolute blockbuster, an exceptional vintage for Monbrison.

Château Mangot
Saint-Émilion

15.5 points | 2027 to 2034

A solid structure, offering sophistication, density and a fruity finish with the perceptible alcohol typical of the vintage.

Château Margaux

Margaux

19 points | 2032 to 2050

The beginnings of a thoroughbred wine on an almost Californian scale, but with extremely elegant development into elegantly polished tannins, offering superb length and depth.

Château Margaux, Pavillon Rouge du
Margaux

18 points | 2028 to 2040

Particularly fruity with excellent tannins, astonishingly sophisticated and lingering; astonishingly close to the level of the Grand Vin, one of the best Pavillons of all time.

Château Marquis de Terme
Margaux

19 points | 2032 to 2045

A particularly clean, reticently fruity nose, crystal clear in the attack, dense structure, offering particular depth thanks to the exquisite tannins, exemplary polish and minerality, and a lingering finish; astonishingly well balanced and harmonious, powerful and elegant – the greatest, most stylish Marquis de Terme we have ever tasted!

Château Mauvesin Barton
Moulis en Médoc

16.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Dense, astonishingly intense, with polished tannins and exceptional balance; the best red wine we have ever tasted from here, skilfully made, a real bargain for any budget.

Château Mazeyres
Pomerol

17.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Complex floral and fruity nose, particularly dense on the palate thanks to hugely refined tannins, but also decidedly elegant with barely perceptible alcohol; superb and utterly successful.

Château Montlabert
Saint-Émilion

15.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Cultivated developmental nose; full in the attack, high extract, powdery tannins and a lingering, rich finish.

Montrose, La Dame de
Saint-Estèphe

16 points | 2030 to 2050



Château Montrose
Saint-Estèphe
19.5 points | 2030 to 2050

Delicately spicy, fruity and floral on the nose, crystal clear in the attack with leisurely development into supportive, firm, almost granite tannins, hugely deep, vibrant and lingering; a magnificent Montrose, one of the top wines of the vintage.

A robust, intense, even rather tart wine that needs to mature somewhat, but also crisp without excessive alcohol.

Château Montviel
Pomerol
16.5 points | 2026 to 2035

Lovely and fruity in style with perceptible acidity, and thus a feeling of great freshness, vibrancy and length, with well cushioned alcohol.

Château Moulin du Cadet
Saint-Émilion
17 points | 2030 to 2040

Superb fruity nose, meaty but also exquisitely polished thanks to the immensely fine-grained tannins and well-proportioned alcohol, with a lingering, harmonious finish; pleasingly harmonious.

Château Moulin Riche
Saint-Julien
16 points | 2030 to 2038

Particularly full-bodied in style, immensely fruity with a lovely, if slightly heady finish of berry and oak notes.

Château Moulin Saint-Georges
Saint-Émilion

16.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Complex aromas of spice and chocolate, juicy and dense with crisp tannins, decidedly lingering.

Château Moulinet
Pomerol
16 points | 2028 to 2036

Particularly fruity with lovely violet notes, pleasantly slender in style with smooth tannins and a lingering finish; a particularly elegant, easy drinking wine that will be enjoyable from an early stage.

Château Moulinet-Lasserre
Pomerol

15.5 points | 2028 to 2036

Dense and crisp with polished tannins and a juicy finish; successful.

Mouton-Rothschild, Le Petit Mouton de Pauillac

17 points | 2026 to 2036

Once again lives up to its name: meaty and juicy with top-quality tannins and perfect balance; just a slight peak of alcohol and hint of oak suggesting a second wine.

Château Nenin
Pomerol

17.5 points | 2026 to 2036

Reticently spicy nose, juicy structure with dense but particularly refreshing tannins and a lingering fruity and spicy finish. Hugely successful in the style of the vintage, worth 18 points in the bottle: Nenin is definitely one to keep an eye on.

O, P

Château Olivier
Pessac-Léognan
18 points | 2032 to 2045

Reticent, perfectly integrated maturation notes followed by fruity aromas, crystal clear in the attack with meaty development into particularly juicy tannins, vibrant and particularly lingering; a precisely made, utterly successful wine.

Château Palmer
Margaux
19 points | 2030 to 2040

A reticent but also incredibly complex nose of violets, flowers and herbs, astonishingly slender in the attack with huge density and depth, astonishingly mineral tannins, huge length and absolute precision – a cut above in this vintage.

Palmer, Alter Ego
Margaux
16.5 points | 2026 to 2034

Full-bodied, crisp and juicy with top-quality tannins and well-proportioned alcohol; one of the second wines definitely worthy of attention in this vintage.

Château Pape Clément
Pessac-Léognan
19 points | 2032 to 2050

We have never tasted such a Pape Clément that is so enormously fruity yet rich in extract: the tannins are top quality and offer juiciness and length, but the wine still possesses astonishing harmony despite its weightiness; a wine of the century, offering awesome precision and unique class.

Château Pavie
Saint-Émilion
18 points | 2030 to 2050

Complex developmental nose, full-bodied on the palate, developing weight and particular concentration, with a rich, endlessly lingering finish; in keeping with its style of a wine that is extravagant, rich in extract, but perfectly made, hence the score.



Château Mouton Rothschild
Pauillac
20 points | 2028 to 2050

This wine once again left us speechless: meaty but also hugely elegant, with incredible depth thanks to stunning quality of tannins, endlessly lingering with exemplary precision and balance; the best Mouton of all time.

**Pavie, Arômes de
Saint-Émilion**

15 points | 2026 to 2034

Floral nose with herbal aromas, compact, smooth, with violet notes in the finish.

**Château Pavie Macquin
Saint-Émilion**

18 points | 2034 to 2050

Characteristic fresh herb nose, superb structure, dense, compact, with top-quality tannins, hugely fresh, spirited and lingering; exceptionally made.

**Château Péby Faugères
Saint-Émilion**

17 points | 2032 to 2045

Definitely extremely concentrated, but also astonishingly polished with juicy tannins that balance out the high alcohol levels well; a perfectly made, modern, weighty wine that also offers spirit and character. As with Faugères, the best wine so far from this estate!

**Château Pédesclaux
Pauillac**

17 points | 2028 to 2038

Particularly well structured compared with earlier, much smoother wines, top-quality tannins and a lovely berry finish; a superb wine, stylish and very appealing.

**Château Petit Faurie de Soutard
Saint-Émilion**

15.5 points | 2028 to 2032

Slender to begin with, then developing some spirit, but ending with a very candy-like finish of raspberry cordial and caramel notes.

**Château Petit Village
Pomerol**

16.5 points | 2029 to 2037

Rather angular 'en primeur', very fruity with fresh raspberry aromas; the raspberry notes also impress on the palate, and work with the floral but well deployed oak to create an impression of sweetness, alongside polished tannins. A trendy, successful wine.

**Château Peymouton
Saint-Émilion**

15.5 points | 2027 to 2034

Firm structure, robust tannins, refreshing acidity in the hugely lingering finish.

**Château Peyrabon
Haut-Médoc**

15 points | 2024 to 2028

Juicy and crisp, pleasingly spirited, but above all very appealing and easy drinking.



**Château Pontet-Canet
Pauillac**

20 points | 2028 to 2040

Extremely dense, thoroughbred and rich yet as fresh as a spring wind, even juicy thanks to the impressive minerality of the tannins, hugely lingering; exquisite precision paired with unique inspiration.

**Château Phélan Ségur
Saint-Émilion**

17.5 points | 2030 to 2040

Late frosts caused harvest losses on this estate – but Phélan is once again very successful: particularly meaty yet also juicy and refreshing with perfectly ripe tannins, offering polish and smooth elegance without a hint of clumsiness.

**Phélan Ségur, Frank Phélan
Saint-Émilion**

15.5 points | 2026 to 2032

Compact and juicy, with astonishing quality of tannins for a second wine.

**Château Pibran
Pauillac**

16.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Temptingly fruity nose, crisp and particularly fresh on the palate, compact, juicy, perfectly proportioned with perfectly integrated alcohol; once again pleasing.

**Château Pichon Baron
Pauillac**

19 points | 2035 to 2050

Also astonishes with its sheer sophistication and the mineral polish of its tannins, its par-

ticularly lingering fruity finish, its exemplary precision, its aromatic complexity and its wonderful balance.

**Pichon Baron, Les Griffons de
Pauillac**

16 points | 2028 to 2038

A clear Pauillac, with broad tannins, juiciness and spirit; needs to mature.

**Pichon Baron, Les de Tourelles
Pauillac**

15.5 points | 2025 to 2032

Lots of fruit, juicy and fresh with controlled fullness, harmonious and elegant.

**Château Pichon Longueville,
Comtesse de Lalande
Pauillac**

19 points | 2030 to 2045

Fits well within a series of excellent vintages in recent years at Pichon Comtesse: beginning immensely fruity, developing fullness and juiciness over an excellent supporting base of tannins, and hugely lingering aromas; masterly balance.

**Pichon Comtesse, Réserve
Pauillac**

16 points | 2025 to 2032

Fruity, full-bodied, very spirited, with polished tannins and good length, exceptionally made.

**Château Pierhem
Pomerol**

15.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Fruity and robust, but not rustic.

**Château Plince
Pomerol**

16 points | 2026 to 2034

Crisp, fruity, full-bodied, with tannins rounded out well by the oak, fruity and spicy.

**Château Plincette
Pomerol**

15.5 points | 2030 to 2036

In appealingly fresh, fruity, tart style.

**Château Porte Chic
Pomerol**

16 points | 2026 to 2032

Compact and tart style, pleasantly lingering, juicy and easy drinking.

**Château Potensac
Médoc**

16.5 points | 2028 to 2038

In its usual compact and dense style, with particularly juicy tannins, and a pleasingly lingering fruity finish thanks to the perfectly balanced alcohol; exceptionally made.

Château Pouget**Margaux****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

As compact as a Madeira cake, as always with slightly rough-and-ready tannins, but also very fruity and juicy in the finish.

Château Poujeaux**Moulis****17 points | 2030 to 2040**

Reticent developmental nose, well made, well balanced, dense and creamy with well-integrated tannins and a lingering finish.

Château Prieuré-Lichine**Margaux****18 points | 2028 to 2045**

Tempting fruity nose with floral touches, top-class tannins and a hugely lingering fruity finish: once again in this vintage, the wine manages the feat of gleaming with elegance, charm, fruitiness and freshness.

Château Puy-Blanquet**Saint-Émilion****15 points | 2028 to 2035**

Smooth, juicy, appealing, with polished, robust tannins.

**Clos René****Pomerol****17.5 points | 2030 to 2040**

Particularly fruity on the nose, full in the attack with juicy development into top-quality tannins of mineral freshness, and with a lingering, bewitchingly fruity finish without dominant alcohol; utterly enjoyable and hugely recommended!

Q, R

Château Quinault**Saint-Émilion****17 points | 2028 to 2038**

Particularly precisely made, dense with smooth tannins, lingering; true class.

Château Rauzan-Gassies**Margaux****16.5 points | 2030 to 2038**

Rather broad but also juicy in style with polished tannins and then a rather heady finish; still somewhat lacking in balance.

Clos René**Pomerol****17.5 points | 2030 to 2040**

Particularly fruity on the nose, full in the attack with juicy development into top-quality tannins of mineral freshness, and with a lingering, bewitchingly fruity finish without dominant alcohol; utterly enjoyable and hugely recommended!

Château Ripeau**Saint-Émilion****15.5 points | 2030 to 2036**

Compact in the attack with a robust, full-bodied, even rather angular structure and a good length; needs to mature.

Château Rol Valentin**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2038**

Compact in the attack, robust structure, good length; needs to mature somewhat.

S

Clos Saint-Julien**Saint-Émilion****15.5 points | 2026 to 2035**

Juicy structure with refreshing acidity in the finish, well made and particularly easy drinking.

Clos Saint-Martin**Saint-Émilion****16 points | 2028 to 2038**

Behind the top-quality barrique notes stands a wine offering juiciness and spirit.

Château Sansonnet**Saint-Émilion****17.5 points | 2032 to 2045**

Particularly concentrated and very heady right from the attack, but vibrant and hugely sophisticated thanks to top-quality tannins; once again particularly weighty in 2022. With all due respect to the work done, perhaps a little less might be more here.

**Château Saint-Pierre
Saint-Julien****18.5 points | 2032 to 2050**

Feels somewhat more closed than other wines at this stage, nevertheless offering particular sophistication and huge depth on the palate, with top-quality tannins and a very lingering, astonishingly fruity finish; an excellent Saint-Pierre built to last an eternity, recommended!

Château Séraphine**Pomerol****16 points | 2028 to 2035**

Compact and well made with polished tannins and no dominant alcohol; an honest wine in the style of the vintage.

Château Sociando-Mallet**Haut-Médoc****17.5 points | 2035 to 2050**

A reticent, promising nose of berry and delicate maturation notes, particularly straight-lined in the attack with leisurely development incorporating pleasingly polished tannins, hugely sophisticated and dense yet with impressive elegance and complex spice; a top-class Sociando, and a must for fans of this wine.

Château Soutard**Saint-Émilion****16.5 points | 2028 to 2036**

Tempting nose of fresh berry, lilac and vanilla pastry aromas, juicy structure, crisp and supportive tannins, and a lingering fruity finish; as always very appealing, easy drinkable, and thus successful.

T

Château Taillefer

Pomerol

16 points | 2028 to 2035

A structure as smooth as it is juicy, with supporting body and good length; fun.

Château Talbot

Saint-Julien

18 points | 2032 to 2045

Compact and dense with a top-quality supporting structure and perfect balance; exceptionally successful, respecting the style of both the estate and the vintage.

Château Tessendey

Fronsac

15.5 points | 2027 to 2035

Offering volume, juiciness and density, with well measured oak and a tart finish.

Château Tour Baladoz

Saint-Émilion

15.5 points | 2028 to 2035

Fruity and spicy nose with blackberry notes, solid structure, tart tannins.

Château Tour Maillet

Pomerol

15.5 points | 2028 to 2036

Perceptibly tart and fresh, with still rather bare tannins.

Château Tour Saint Christophe

Saint-Émilion

15 points | 2027 to 2034

Full-bodied, with refreshing herb and spice notes and a tart structure.

Château Les Trois Croix

Fronsac

15.5 points | 2032 to 2040

Rather broad-shouldered wine with tart tannins, shaped by development.

Château Tronquoy

Saint-Estèphe

17.5 points | 2030 to 2045

Retentive, very promising floral and fruity nose, crystal clear in the attack with dense development into precisely defined, almost chiselled, crisp tannins, hugely vibrant and lingering; an exceptional wine, and a real bargain on a par with the Cru Classés.

Château Troplong Mondot

Saint-Émilion

17 points | 2030 to 2045

Spirited, fresh, vibrant and deep, with a lingering fruit and spice finish; sophisticated, exceptionally made.

Troplong Mondot, Mondot

Saint-Émilion

16 points | 2025 to 2032

A full, well-balanced structure, well-integrated tannins and a juicy, crisp finish.

Château Trotanoy

Pomerol

19.5 points | 2030 to 2045

Remaining subtle on the nose, complex and spicy, gradually opening up and becoming fruitier than usual; then offering astonishing density and immense depth on the palate, with particularly refined tannins and a hugely lingering finish. Combines fruitiness and meatiness with unique character and almost erratic power.

Château Trotte Vieille

Saint-Émilion

19 points | 2034 to 2050

Retentive developmental notes on the nose, strikingly spirited on the palate with incredibly dense, velvety yet still firm tannins and an immensely lingering finish; an impressive Trotte Vieille, one of the blockbusters of the vintage.

Trotte Vieille, Dame de

Saint-Émilion

15.5 points | 2027 to 2035

Dense and compact with a juicy berry finish.

V

Château Valandraud

Saint-Émilion

17 points | 2030 to 2040

Powerful and full structure with dense tannins, tart freshness and a heady, juicy finish.

Valandraud, Virginie de

Saint-Émilion

16 points | 2026 to 2034

Compact with smooth yet firm tannins, reliable and well balanced.

Château Vieux Maillet

Pomerol

16.5 points | 2029 to 2040

Elegant oak spice, compact and dense in style on the palate with tart, well-integrated tannins; reliable and well made.

Clos Vieux Taillefer

Pomerol

15 points | 2027 to 2035

Tart, fresh, not rustic, offering potential.

Château Villars

Fronsac

16.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Strikingly well balanced and smooth in style, fruity, crisp, very appealing.

Château Villemaurine

Saint-Émilion

15.5 points | 2025 to 2035

High extract, powdery tannins, and a rather dry, heady finish; somewhat lacking balance in this sample.

Château Vray Croix de Gay

Pomerol

16.5 points | 2028 to 2040

Although we had to fight our way through the present oak notes to reach the wine, it turned out to be pleasantly velvety, rounded and rich with tart but well-integrated tannins.

What do our scores mean?

Wines have long been about more than just numbers. As a matter of principle, we only publish wines that we can recommend: in other words, any wine gaining 15 points or more might be of interest. Wine fans should therefore be guided first and foremost by their personal taste. If you find your favourite wine listed, you should definitely get hold of a couple of bottles. The only thing to consider is whether it is really worth its price tag. If a 15-point wine costs 15 to 25 euros, that is great. But if it is two or three times that, then maybe only spend the money if you are positive that you genuinely enjoy it, even if it clearly does not suit the palates of VINUM's tasters.

Wines with 17 points or more are world class, but do not necessarily have to cost the earth – because top wines of international class are available in Bordeaux from 30 euros, sometimes even less. However, they can cost four times that.

People buying Bordeaux as an investment are best off turning to the most widely known, most sought-after and thus most expensive brands. Their price is less related to the enjoyment they offer than to their status as an artwork traded on an international scale. However, whether speculating with wine is a worthwhile endeavour remains to be seen.

SPECIAL 2023

WORLD OF BORDEAUX

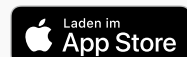


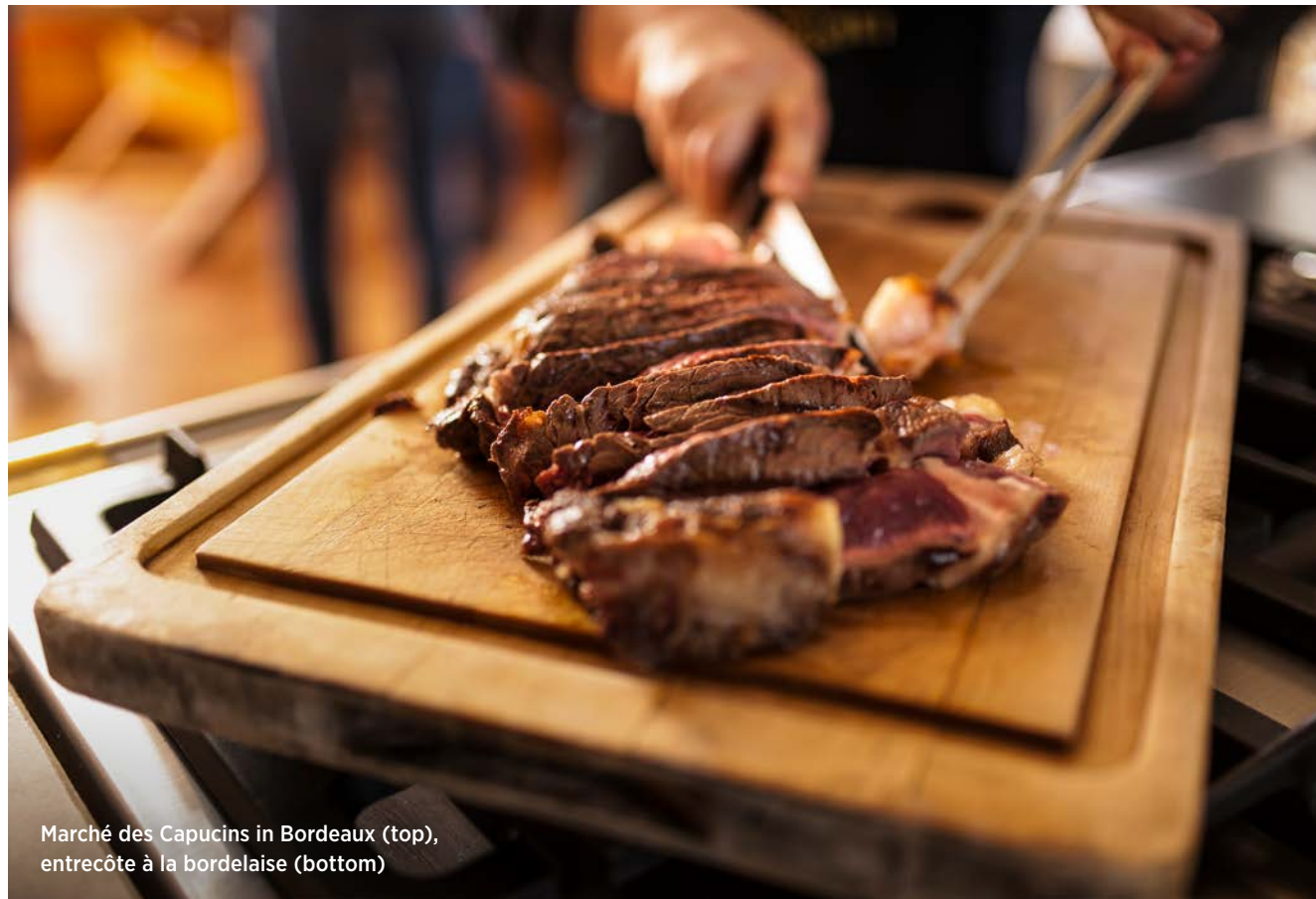
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Marché des Capucins in Bordeaux (top),
entrecôte à la bordelaise (bottom)

FEASTING IN BORDEAUX

ON THE HUNT FOR REGIONAL CUISINE

by Barbara Schroeder

Why is there no real Bordeaux cuisine? Quite simply, because Bordeaux does not need its own real cuisine. The actual secret to local gastronomy lies in the wealth of top-quality basic produce.

Stop a couple of passers by on the street in Bordeaux and ask them to name a real Bordeaux speciality – after a long hesitation, they will most certainly reply: ‘entrecôte à la bordelaise’. I tried it myself. Five times, the answer was Bordeaux-style entrecôte. Three people named the sweet pastry ‘cannelé’, as well as ‘magret de canard’, roasted duck breast. ‘Lamproie à la bordelaise’, or lamprey in red wine sauce, gained one vote, as did ‘tabbouleh’, suggested by a particularly witty young man.

Let's take a closer look at this rather meagre yield. Tabbouleh, a bulgur salad with parsley, raisins, mint and lemon that is very popular across France, comes from the Maghreb. Lamproie à la bordelaise is a very savage-looking, hearty stew consisting of pieces of lamprey cooked in red wine with onions, leeks, garlic and bacon. For a long time, it was a dish frequently served by Bordeaux wine estates, as it was supposedly the only fish dish that went well with red wine. It was probably introduced into the region's cuisine by Portuguese domestic workers. It is completely missing from the 1898 book ‘La Cuisine Bordelaise’ (‘Bordeaux cuisine’), which we will return to shortly. Magret de canard, a whole roasted duck breast, was invented by chef André Daguin in 1959 in the département of Gers. As in the south west, ducks provided foie gras, confit, boiled thighs and wings, but no-one was interested in the breast, Daguin's invention was just what was needed.

The cannelé, an egg custard pastry with rum and vanilla that is surrounded by countless legends, is apparently also a form of ‘recycling’. It is supposed to be centuries old, and to have been made to use up the numerous egg yolks left over after the whites were used to clarify the wines. When I came to Bordeaux in the 1980s, it was essentially unknown – the sticky item only came into fashion when tourism in Bordeaux started to boom. That leaves entrecôte à la bordelaise. That really does come from here. Chef, cookbook author and cookery school teacher Alcide Bontou wrote in his cooking guide ‘La Cuisine Bordelaise’, first published in 1898: a thick beef steak, ideally from the neck, is grilled over wood from old barrel staves and sprinkled with a mixture of finely chopped bone marrow, shallots and parsley. Vines were also permitted as a substitute

material to make a fire, and experts used old barrel staves made of chestnut, as it had a particularly lovely smell. Bontou wrote that only ignorant Parisians would think of serving entrecôte à la bordelaise in red wine sauce, as stated in old cook books. One even used Burgundy for the dreaded red wine sauce! Bontou, who gave his courses for Bordeaux housewives while dressed in a suit to show that cooking was an entirely clean activity, provides hundreds of recipes in his reference work. Just three or four were of these were described as ‘à la bordelaise’, such as eel and aubergines simply fried in oil, or delicate peas with ham and cooked lettuce.

It would therefore seem that Bordeaux does not really have any true regional dishes. But that would be a misconception typical of people from the north, where basic products often only taste halfway good after careful preparation. Bordeaux does not have any regional recipes because it does not need them. Here, all of the basic ingredients taste so delicious that the best option is to prepare them as naturally as possible, with no added frippery.

Bordeaux is more than just a major wine region. Bordeaux sits like a spider at the heart of a tightly woven net of producers of top-quality agricultural products. Legendary markets are not restricted to the city itself, but can also for example be found in Libourne, Langon or Blaye. The south of the département, or ‘Haute Lande Girondine’, produces top-quality poultry: tender pigeon, tasty guinea fowl, plump duck and more. Cattle are fattened in the meadows in accordance with strict regulations, before taking on a new life as ‘boeuf de Bazas’ or hitting the roasting pan even earlier as juicy ‘veau sous la mère’, suckled veal. The bays around Arcachon and Cap Ferret provide excellent oysters, the Gironde produces shrimp and eels, and the Atlantic offers up sole and red mullet, as well as countless other fish and seafood products. Other legendary produce includes asparagus from Blaye, artichokes from Macau, melons from Nérac, tomatoes from Marmande, strawberries and prunes from Agen and much more. The list goes on and on!

THE (FINAL) FINAL WORD



Okay folks, so here we are. Happy and contented with no regrets, at the end of a journey that has lasted for several decades. Countless experiences and adventures richer, and a few thousand pages of paper and ink lighter. No, I will not miss the job at all. My work here is done. I will forever be grateful and indebted to the people who have accompanied me on my journey. My two colleagues here in Bordeaux, who have put up with me for so long – believe me, for that alone they deserve a medal. My family, for the same reason.

But my thanks also go to all of the estate owners, winemakers and their staff, without whose trust, commitment and patience this monster issue would not be possible. And to the organisers of our challenging photo reporting and tasting tour, as well as the representatives of winemaking organisations who always have an answer to my questions. Not to mention my teachers here in Bor-

deaux, who kindly and with open hearts, once embraced the odd duck who flew into their nest by accident and offered him both liquid and spiritual nourishment. Thierry Manoncourt, who taught me that in life, you should always show where you are going. Anthony Barton, Jean Sanders and Peter Sichel, without whom I would not understand what a great Bordeaux tastes like, since with corkscrew and glass in hand, they have drawn on countless examples to show me that elegance, harmony and refinement are immortal and wine is first and foremost there to be devoured with delight. Alfred Tesseron, who patiently put up with ten years of harsh criticism of his wines, and ultimately had the last laugh. But also Thierry, Claire, Gonzague, Véronique, Céline, Michel, Bernard, Jean-Luc, Pierre and many, many more. Yes, friends. This was my last special issue, my last-ever final word. Keep your chin up! Rolf Bichsel

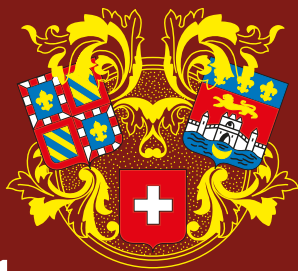
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