



2008 Bordeaux

SPECIAL REPORT

2008 Bordeaux THE PRICE IS RIGHT OR "THE GLOBAL COOLING" VINTAGE



Clyde Beffa Jr.
Co-owner/Bordeaux Buyer

June 20, 2009—It was the worst of times, it was the best of times...We have not seen it so bad—mood-wise and sales-wise—in Bordeaux since the scandals of the early-1970s. On the one hand, the negociants are complaining that the property owners are making too much money and that sales are at a standstill. The owners say they take all the risks and the negociants simply push paper and get good commissions and that sales are at a standstill. Both owners and negociants say the brokers make too much money while

doing virtually nothing and that sales are at a standstill. Throw in a global recession, a three-year Bordeaux cooling pattern, an extremely small 2008 Bordeaux harvest (the smallest since the frost vintage of 1991), and Bordeaux sales are at a standstill. Then, on May 4th, 2009, one of the world's leading Bordeaux importer/exporters, Diageo Château and Estates, sent a neat, concise email to the main Bordeaux châteaux stating that they would not buy any 2008 Bordeaux futures! Are you starting to get my drift?

On the other hand, the 2008 vintage for Bordeaux has turned out to be quite good, quality-wise. Robert Parker has been waxing poetic about the vintage, the châteaux owners have, mostly, lowered their prices substantially from the 2007 vintage, and the dollar has gained a little strength. Suddenly, despite all the gloom there's a rather successful futures campaign under way for the 2008 Bordeaux. Life is good.

Why VineExpo After the Futures Campaign?

These circumstances were the backdrop for my June 2009 Bordeaux trip. For the first time since 1988, and for a variety of reasons, I did not go to Bordeaux in late-March/early-April to assess the new Bordeaux vintage. But I always planned to attend VinExpo so I could taste many of the 2008s.

The 2008 futures campaign, which until early April very few people in Bordeaux thought would ever happen, really came about for two reasons. First, the early-opening properties (Angélus was first) came out with reasonable prices compared to the last few years. The second reason was that many wine writers penned good reviews of the vintage, culminating with a glowing report from Robert Parker at the end of April. Actually, some people say that the fact that K&L did not attend the April festivities and tastings was the third reason for a futures campaign, and what a successful one at that! From June 20th through June 25th, I tasted as many 2008 Bordeaux as I could. I tried the most wines at the UGC tasting on the 22nd and also visited most of the top estates before evening parties at several châteaux (Haut-

Brion, Pichon-Baron, Palmer, Angélus, Ducru and Issan). I really concentrated on tasting as many of the wines we bought for K&L. I was able to try about 120 wines from 2008, and I must say that I was duly impressed.

The 2008 Vintage: It Starts With 2007

The 2008 Bordeaux vintage surprised quite a few people. Why? Well, starting way back in June 2007, and during that vintage's wet summer, the weather conditions seemed to discourage the vines from producing a large number of embryos for the 2008 vintage. So the resulting small crop for 2008 Bordeaux is more a reflection of the crop of 2007—sort of like a father-son vintage relationship.

The wet winter of 2007/2008 was not very memorable, just another winter without huge spikes in temperature. There were lots of small storms, but no major weather problems. The warm and rainy early spring got the vines off to a premature start, but from then on out, the vines took their sweet time developing. There were some spotty frost problems, but nothing major.

The summer months were much like 2007, cool and drab. Since the weather conditions of summer 2008 were so similar to the summer of 2007, very few wine merchants in the USA and in the UK (K&L included) thought a trip to Bordeaux to taste would be fruitful or even worthwhile. After all, the world economy was heading into the tank (where it remains), sales of high-priced Bordeaux were non-existent, and the hopes of reasonable opening prices for 2008 were dim.

The quality of the 2008 Bordeaux vintage also surprised some châteaux owners, many Bordeaux negociants and almost all of the wine writers who came to taste them in early April. It seems that July was a key month for the crop, and what happened in July 2008 in the vineyards virtually went unnoticed by most producers. This rather dull, drab and cool but dry month was noticed most by the sun-worshipping tourists who complained about the not-so-great beach weather. In the vineyards, meanwhile, the vines stopped producing leaves and green growth, sending the much needed nutrients to the grape bunches. The tannins and the phenols were synthesized during this period, much like July of 2000. The bunches were already sparse from lack of a great early spring and summer, so the grapes that were present received an extra dose of concentration. The damp and cool August was not welcome and, as the weather was not very good through September 10th, the mood of the châteaux owners deteriorated daily. In fact Hubert de Boüard of Angélus fame said that if there had been another few days of this type of weather, the 2008 vintage would be non-existent. But fortunately the weather changed dramatically the weekend of September 13th, turning clear and warmer through October 27th.

In the end, this long growing season and short crop made for fine wine in most regions. The lazy days of the 2008 vintage life cycle were to prove just what the doctor ordered. As a side note, the embryos produced in 2008 for the 2009 vintage were in greater abundance, and this June I saw the vines displaying many big, healthy bunches. 2009 should be a big crop.

Where is Global Warming?

So while 2006, 2007 and 2008 were vintages produced under cooler than normal conditions (maybe we are heading into an Ice Age?), and the 2007 and 2008 had very similar summer weather conditions, the vintages are very dissimilar. The smaller crop wines of 2008 are much more concentrated than the easy-going, elegant 2007s. Both vintages were saved by a fabulous autumn weather change, but 2008 had the added benefit of that good stretch in July.

Château Lynch-Bages's vintage report ended with this: "Far from being a sign of global warming, 2008 is classed among the late, cold and slow-ripening vintages. It shows the difference that an elitist viticulture applies to the best terroirs can make on the production of *grands vins* and, without a doubt, confirms the proverb: Rome wasn't built in a day."

Speaking of the weather, our VinExpo visit in June was marked by the best weather I have ever seen in both Paris and Bordeaux. Cool to warm, but never hotter than 80 degrees, with a slight, cool breeze each day. If this weather holds, and the *vendage verte* is done correctly, we could be in for a great 2009 vintage.

The Wines and the Bordeaux Market

When I asked Jean Guillaume Prats, director of Cos d'Estournel, on June 25th, if he was surprised about the vintage, he said he was *not* at all surprised by the quality of 2008. He knew that 2008 was a very good vintage from the day they started picking, but he was surprised by the fact that there

was a rather exciting futures campaign considering the state of the world economy. Of course, the lower prices offered by the properties had a lot to do with the campaign's success. The dollar's modest gains in March and April helped sell the wines in the US.

In my opinion, 2008 is a very good vintage for most of Bordeaux. I would say the reds are not as good as the 2000s or 2005s, as they do not have the massive concentration and layers of fruit of these two superstar vintages. But then again, the 2008s are much less expensive than these two other vintages. I would also say that the 2008s are better than the 2007s. They are more in league with the 2006s—some better and some not as good. When asked to compare 2008 with another vintage, the cagey negociant Bill Blatch suggested it was like a combination of two recent late-harvested vintages—1978 and 1988—with some 1983 and 2001 thrown in. Whatever that means! Bill says: "The best of the 2008s will certainly have a darkness of color, a concentration of middle-weight and strength of ripe tannin that these vintages don't have, whilst retaining that fundamental slightly sharper character of all the late-harvet vintages." For me, it is hard to compare the reds of 2008 with another recent vintage. Maybe 2006 with more elegance. The 2008 whites and Sauternes, while good, are not in the same league as the 2006 or 2007 whites and 2007 stickies.

The Next Winemaking Improvement in Bordeaux!

With the construction of a fabulous new winemaking facility at Cos d'Estournel, I believe a new era is about to take Bordeaux by storm. The pump producers will not be happy, as the new Cos facility uses all gravity flow—from the time the grapes are brought in to the second-year cellar. Watch for more properties starting to do this. But note, it's expensive, and that means the wines may go up in price! If the 2008 Cos is any indication of the use of all gravity flow, though, I vote for all châteaux go for it 100%.

Clyde Beffa Jr

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Jean-Michel Cazes and Clyde Beffa in front of Ormes de Pez in St-Estèphe.



Jean Guillaume Prats of Cos d'Estournel and Clyde in front of Cos d'Estournel's new chai—a cool \$34 million.

2008 Bordeaux Tasting Notes Taken June 20th–25th 2009

These prices are good for July and August 2009. Many of the wines are available in 375ml and 1.5L formats. Check our website, KLWines.com, for up-to-the-minute information.

ST-ESTÈPHE

Calon-Ségur, St-Estèphe \$44.99
80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18% Merlot and 2% Petit Verdot. Not tasted.

Pagodes de Cos, St-Estèphe \$34.99
*+ The nose is a bit closed, but the wine comes around after some airing. This is full-bodied, rich and powerful. A little oaky and tannic on the finish. Black fruit flavors.

Cos d'Estournel, St-Estèphe \$104.99
*** 85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot and 2% Cabernet Franc. A big crop with 22,000 cases; 78% of crop in *grand vin*. The new *chai* is amazing and 2008 was first wine produced in it. All gravity flow, no pumps. A seamless wine with laser-like focus. Asian spice, smoky aromas and red currants abound on the palate. This is as good as it gets. It rivals their 2005 in flavor and richness. A stunning wine.

Dame de Montrose, St-Estèphe \$24.99
Montrose, St-Estèphe Inquire
65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot. I did not taste these two wines. Good reports though.

Ormes de Pez, St-Estèphe \$24.99
* to *+ 51% Cabernet Sauvignon, 39% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. At Lynch-Bages: Black fruit aromas turn into red currant flavors. Spicy, gritty, old school wine. Long finish. At UGC: Ripe and exotic. Tannic on the palate. Very full-bodied. Superb for this fine property.

Phélan-Ségur, St-Estèphe \$28.99
*½ 60% Cabernet Sauvignon and 40% Merlot. Ripe and lush for St-Estèphe. A full-flavored, very well-made wine. Very nice and a good value.

PAUILLAC

Carruades de Lafite, Pauillac Not Available
* Spicy, elegant nose. Sexy wine with silky texture.

Duhart Milon, Pauillac \$49.99
*½ 73% Cabernet Sauvignon and 27% Merlot. This has a deep, spicy nose tending toward nutmeg and Asian spices. Great entry. Fine structure and a sweet finish.

Lafite-Rothschild, Pauillac Sold Out
***+ 51% Cabernet Sauvignon, 45% Merlot, 3% Petit Verdot and 1% Cabernet Franc. Blackish color. Closed at first, this opens with air to a huge boysenberry nose. Packed with flavor and lush at the same time. Very intense and concentrated. Some bittersweet chocolate notes.

Clerc-Milon, Pauillac \$37.95
* to *+ 42% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, 16% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. Red berry flavors, soft and elegant. A touch of acidity. At the property: Reserved a bit and holding back. Very tannic finish. Hard to taste.

d'Armailhac, Pauillac \$34.99
*½ to *½+ More blackberry flavors and a superb mid-palate impression. A lovely wine. Extremely fruity. At the property: Blackberry jam and vanilla oak aromas. Intensely sweet on the palate. Blackberry flavors with rounded tannins covered by ripe fruit. Very good. I prefer this to Clerc-Milon.

Mouton-Rothschild, Pauillac Inquire
**½ 83% Cabernet Sauvignon and 17% Merlot. Spicy, cedary aromas with tons of vanilla oak. Very upfront and forward on the palate. Mid-palate tannin and red berry fruit. Very woody at back end. Ager here.

Haut-Bages-Libéral, Pauillac \$26.99
*+ Red fruit flavors with lots of cassis on the nose. Well-made. A great value!

Les Forts de Latour, Pauillac Inquire
*½? Deep color. 13.5% ABV. Again, very sweet. A big brute on the palate. Has taken on a lot of oak right now. Hard to taste.

Latour, Pauillac Inquire
**½ 94% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Merlot and 1% Cabernet Franc. Black color. All cassis on the nose. Broad shoulders here. Focused. The copious amounts of red berry fruit covers the tannins. Will go and go for a long time. Layered.

Lynch-Bages, Pauillac Inquire
** 78% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. At property: Showing spice and peppery nuances on the nose. Lots of red currant flavors. Big wine. At UGC: Blackish color. Creamy, perfumy nose with a touch of grit on the palate. Expansive mid-palate. Sweet and fine and long. Excellent.

Lynch-Bages Blanc, Bordeaux Not Available
* 12.9% ABV. 50% Sauvignon Blanc, 45% Sémillon and 5% Muscadelle. Citrus flavors with undertones of Boxwood. Rich and round up front and crisp on the back end. Some honeysuckle aromas.

Pibran, Pauillac Not Available
55% Cabernet Sauvignon and 45% Merlot. Sweet red fruit flavors and aromas. Deep color. Fine and forward. Buy on delivery.

Pichon-Baron, Pauillac \$69.99
*½+ to ** 72% Cabernet Sauvignon and 28% Merlot. Deep color and red fruit aromas. Very precise and delineated. Sweet like 2001, but with broader shoulders. At UGC: More blackberry fruit showing today. Lush with good balance and still a bit tight at back end.

Tourelles de Pichon-Baron, Pauillac Not Available
*+ 60% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Cabernet Franc. Blackberries and cream. Very fruit forward. Extremely sweet and lush. Some smoky bacon nuances. Buy on arrival.

Reserve de Comtesse Lalande, Pauillac

Not Available

*½ My notes: Get this. It should be a great value. Elegance personified.

Pichon-Lalande, Pauillac

Inquire

**+ to **½ 63% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 3% Cabernet Franc. At UGC: A lot of Cabernet this year. Cedar oak nose with some pencil lead aromas. Long on the palate and so elegant. Soft and engaging flavors of cassis and Asian spice. Heavenly wine. My style. At property: 13,500 cases produced, which is quite low. Denis Dubourdieu is consultant here these days. The trend here is to have more Cabernet in the blend than before. Tons of spice and cedary oak aromas. Toasty cassis flavors. Great wine. Much better than their 2005!

Pontet-Canet, Pauillac

\$84.99

**+ Very spicy nose. A huge wine but not overextracted. Everything in harmony. Big time cellar candidate with so much fruit and tannin. A spicy monster.



From left to right: Négociant Pierre Lawton, Clyde and Frederic Engerer, managing director of Latour.

TASTED JUST BEFORE THE PARTY AT DUCRU-BEAUCAILLOU

Ducluzeau, Lustrac

Not Available

* Bruno's charming mother lives here, and this property is making super good value wines from an underrated commune. Try their 2005, which we just brought in. This 2008 is soft and elegant, especially from this often rustic part of Bordeaux. This wine is as polished as a bald man's head. Tastes great right now.

Croix de Beaucaillou, St-Julien

Not Available

* Blackberry aromas follow to the palate. Round tannins and good mouthfeel. Solid wine that finishes soft and elegant.

Lalande-Borie, St-Julien

Not Available

*+ One of the better values in Bordeaux to buy on arrival. Full of blackberry aromas. Some black cherry and clove spice evident. Vibrant finish.

Ducru-Beaucaillou, St-Julien

Inquire

**½ 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot. Bruno Borie is doing wonders at Ducru-Beaucaillou. Red berry, currant and cassis aromas. The Cabernet really shines through here. Toasty, modern vanilla oak undertones. Lively and sexy on the palate. Great depth of flavor. Layers of fruit. Huge wine with soft, round tannins masked by fruit. Fabulous lingering finish.

ST-JULIEN

Branaire-Ducru, St-Julien

Inquire

** 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot and the rest Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Great spicy red fruit aromas that follow to the palate. Some licorice and Asian spices. Touch of clove. Long and lovely.

Clos du Marquis, St-Julien

Inquire

** 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 41% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot. 13.5% ABV. Boysenberry aromas. Lush and rich on the palate. Super sweet wine with lingering finish. Outstanding wine!

Léoville-Las Cases, St-Julien

Inquire

**½ 78% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Cabernet Franc and 10% Merlot. Enticing nose of black currants, cassis and minerals. Layers of fruit that mask the tannins. FABULOUS! Lingers on the palate for a minute.

Gruaud Larose, St-Julien *\$39.99*

*½+ 57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot and 9% Petit Verdot. This is very good and shows very well right now. Spicy aromas; sweet and juicy on the palate. No hard edges. Finish lasts for 30 seconds. An exceptional value.

ONE OF MY FAVORITE PROPERTIES

Langoa-Barton, St-Julien

\$32.99

** 67% Cabernet Sauvignon, 27% Merlot and 6% Cabernet Franc. Black cherry and blueberry aromas. Tons of Merlot-infused fruit. Extremely sweet on the mid-palate. Shows some oaky nuances. Smooth tannins. Quite concentrated wine with a creamy texture. Structured to age. Killer wine. At UGC: Very creamy texture, sweet and lovely. Has plenty of guts for 10 years-plus cellaring.

Léoville-Barton, St-Julien

Inquire

**½ to **+ 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot and 2% Cabernet Franc. At property: Intense nose of Asian spice and, curiously, more blackberry fruit than red berry fruit. Black licorice undertones, with mouthcoating fruit and tannins. Huge wine for the cellar. Great. At UGC: Super intense on the nose and palate. A brooding wine ready to unleash on your palate in a few years. Tons of cassis and red berry flavors.

2006 Langoa-Barton, St-Julien

\$49.99

** Black cherry cola aromas. Extremely spicy on the palate with great fruit. Long and lingering. Classic style. This will go into my cellar for my kids.

Lagrange, St-Julien

\$34.99

*+ Very ripe and oaky on the nose. Sweet and oaky flavors. A bit short but overall showing nicely. Napa Cab style; semi New World.

Léoville-Poyferré, St-Julien

Inquire

*½+ 64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 5% Petit Verdot. More blackberry nuances here. Fine palate entry. Some black licorice and cola aromas. Finishes with red fruit flavors. On the elegant side.

2006 Léoville-Barton, St-Julien

Inquire

**++ Blackberry fruit. Deep, concentrated and layered. This is as good as their 2005 for my palate. Fine concentration and structure.

MARGAUX

d'Angludet, Margaux

\$24.99

*½+ Old school with tons of fruit packed into this beauty. Red raspberries and some cherry notes. A very solid wine that coats the mouth. A value!

Brane-Cantenac, Margaux

Not Available

* 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Merlot and 2% Cabernet Franc. Sweet and lovely. A very elegant wine. They're on a roll here.



from left to right: Clyde, producer Alex d'Andrea with his wife, actress Kelly Lang, with Daniel Cathiard of Smith-Haut-Lafite at the Haut-Brion tasting.



At Lafite with managing director Charles Chevalier and negociant Pierre Lawton.

Clos des Quatre Vents, Margaux

Not Available

*+ Smoky, toasty nose. An exotic wine with good balance. Black fruits abound. Lovely and vibrant.

d'Issan, Margaux

\$37.99

Did not taste this, missed it somehow.

Dauzac, Margaux

Not Available

* New wave. Rich and flashy. Quite nice in its modern garb.

du Tertre, Margaux

Not Available

* to *+ 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc. At UGC: A spicy, new wave wine. I love its vibrancy and spiciness. Very good. At Haut-Bailly: Very spicy black licorice aromas. Oaky, elegant and forward.

Giscours, Margaux

Inquire

*? to *½ 65% Cabernet Sauvignon and 35% Merlot. At UGC: Quite substantial and rich on the palate. This is a very well-balanced wine with tons of red berries. Tannic on the finish. At Haut-Bailly: Toasty aromas and muted flavors. Was it the sample? Better at UGC.

Labegorce, Margaux

Not Available

*+ 45% Merlot and 55% Cabernet Sauvignon. Wow, this wine is as elegant as it gets. The style has gone from super old school to semi-new school, and the change has been done well. Very fresh and lively. Red fruit flavors. Fine structure and a core of sweet fruit.

Lascombes, Margaux

\$49.99

*+ Blackish color. Bitter orange aromas and lots of extracted fruit flavors. Almost over the top, but well made. Toasty.

Malescot-St-Exupéry, Margaux

\$37.99

Not tasted, but we hear great things about this wine. This is a can't-miss wine for the price.

Alter Ego de Palmer, Margaux

\$39.99

*+ 52% Merlot and 48% Cabernet Sauvignon. Black licorice spice. A wonderful nose. Tannic on palate and at back end. Mid-weight; great mouthfeel.

Palmer, Margaux

Inquire

**½ 51% Merlot, 41% Cabernet Sauvignon and 8% Petit Verdot. 7,000 cases produced. Deep, but reserved red licorice aromas. Explosive on the palate with tons of ripe fruit. Very concentrated wine that is velvety on the palate. An "iron fist in a velvet glove" type wine. Layers and layers of fruit that coat the mouth and mask the high tannin content. Heavenly wine.

WAYS A PLEASURE TO VISIT CHÂTEAU MARGAUX

Pavillon Rouge de Margaux, Margaux

\$44.99

*½ 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot. Silky aromas of black fruits with black cherry nuances. Red fruit flavors close up at the back end.

Margaux, Margaux

Inquire

**+ 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot, 1.5% each Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Cabernet reigns here and the Merlot just helps soften its intensity. Deep purple-black color. (Apparently there's no problem getting color anymore in Bordeaux.) Cassis aromas and flavors. Bittersweet chocolate and some black pepper on the palate. This is a very aromatic wine that is extremely focused.

2006 Margaux, Margaux

Inquire

**½+ Has both power and elegance wrapped up in a classic Margaux wine. Fabulous length on the palate—super long finish. Delicious.

Pavillon Blanc de Margaux, Bordeaux

\$94.99

*½ 100% Sauvignon Blanc. ONLY 14% ABV. Melon and white flower aromas. Some sweetness on the palate. Quite round and supple. Great. Vibrant and fresh on the finish.

HAUT-MÉDOC/MÉDOC

Beaumont, Haut-Médoc

\$12.99

Bad sample. Judgement reserved.

Camensac, Médoc

Not Available

* Very polished for this property. Some woodiness showing through but the wine is more elegant than powerful. I like it.

Cantemerle, Médoc

\$24.99

*½ 55% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Petit Verdot and 7% Cabernet Franc. This has blackberry aromas that explode from the glass with forward, black fruit flavors and rounded tannins on the palate. A great value. Much better than their 2005 and 2007. On par with their 2006. At UGC: Old school wine. Big wine with tons of blackberry flavors.

Chasse-Spleen, Médoc

Not Available

*+ Orange peel aromas and sweet, red fruit flavors. Fresh and vibrant. Very upfront-oriented palate.



Ch. Cantemerle, Clyde's home away from home while at VinExpo.



Clyde and Gildas d'Ollone at Pichon Lalande.

Clarke, Listrac

Not Available

*++ This has as spicy, meaty nose. Some oaky undertones. A very well-made wine, and a great value to buy on arrival.

La Lagune, Médoc

\$44.99

Bad sample. Judgement reserved.

Potensac, Haut-Médoc

\$21.99

*½ 42% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon and 18% Cabernet Franc. 13.2% ABV. Blackish color. This wine tastes fabulous already. Vanilla oak aromas and lots of sweet fruit on the palate. Sweeter than usual with great balance.

Poujeaux, Moulis

\$23.99

*+ 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot and 5% Cabernet Franc. Elegant wine with sweet, forward fruit. Quite lush. Red fruit flavors dance on the palate. Long finish. This tastes great now.

PESSAC-LÉOGNAN

Branon, Pessac

\$64.99

50% Merlot and 50% Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Not tasted.

Carbonnieux Rouge, Pessac

Not Available

* This property is making great value-priced red wines. Very minerally on the palate. Nice length.

Domaine de Chevalier Rouge, Pessac-Léognan

\$42.99

*½ Elegance personified. Packed with minerals and ripe red fruit flavors. Rounded tannins. An excellent value!

Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan

Inquire

*+ 70% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Merlot. At the property: Only 6,000 cases produced. Harvested from Sept 25–Oct 26. The vines here were harvested very late and under perfect conditions. Very ripe, elegant violet aromas. Extremely lush cassis fruit flavors. Dense and concentrated. Super sweet on the palate. Creamy texture and a lingering finish. Fabulous! At UGC: Elegant with extremely ripe fruit flavors. Fabulous. One of the best wines of the vintage.

Haut Bergey Rouge, Pessac-Léognan

\$25.99

65% Cabernet Sauvignon and 35% Merlot. Wow! All international style here, but also in balance. Very ripe and exotic aromas. Very sweet black cherry fruit on the palate.

La Louvière Rouge, Pessac-Léognan

Not Available

Sweet and toasty on the nose. Good palate entry. A touch short on finish.

Larrivet Haut-Brion Rouge, Pessac-Léognan

\$27.99

*+ Elegant wine with earthy notes and plenty of minerality on the palate. Soft and very ripe.

ITS ALWAYS FUN TO TASTE WITH PRINCE ROBERT OF LUXEMBOURG

Le Clarence de Haut-Brion, Pessac

\$56.99

*+ 45% Merlot, 41% Cabernet Sauvignon and 14% Cabernet Franc. This used to be called Bahans Haut-Brion. What is a Bahan? Red currant flavors and lots of finesse. Some boysenberry undertones. Light and elegant.

La Chapelle de la Mission, Pessac

\$37.99

* 39% Merlot, 56% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Cabernet Franc. Elegant wine upfront with a chunky finish. Deep black fruit flavors.

La Mission Haut-Brion, Pessac

Inquire

** 51% Cabernet Sauvignon, 43% Merlot and 6% Cabernet Franc. Gritty and tannic impression. Red berry fruit flavors. Red licorice on the nose. Deep wine, but not too extracted. Fine-plus.

Haut-Brion Rouge, Pessac

\$259.99

**½ 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 41% Merlot and 9% Cabernet Franc. 7,000 cases produced. Pencil lead aromas with earthy, mineral nuances. Elegant style and super long on the palate. Ginger ale notes and ginger spice flavors. Lovely.

Haut-Brion Blanc, Pessac

Inquire

** 55% Sémillon and 45% Sauvignon Blanc. Quite fresh and acidic on the nose. Tons of expressive Sauvignon Blanc aromas. This is squeaky clean and elegant. Lingering lemony flavors.

Laville Haut-Brion, Pessac

Inquire

*+ 79% Sémillon, 21% Sauvignon Blanc. Honey notes on the nose. The Sémillon richness shows through here. Melon flavors on the mid-palate that turn to zippy, crisp Sauvignon Blanc notes on the finish. Quite full-bodied.

“It did not take me long to realize that the 2008 vintage was dramatically better than I had expected. It had all the qualities that make an excellent and in some cases, a great vintage so special: exceptionally dark opaque colors, gorgeously ripe fruit, stunning purity almost across the board, great freshness (because it was a cool year), slightly higher acids than normal, and remarkable density as well as concentration.”

—Robert Parker on the 2008 Bordeaux

Malartic-Lagravière Rouge, Pessac-Léognan \$35.99
Not tasted for some reason.

Pape-Clément Rouge, Pessac-Leognan *Inquire*
*½? 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, 3% Petit Verdot and 2% Cabernet Franc. Mealy nose and flavor. Sample was bad. Hard to judge.

Smith-Haut-Lafitte Blanc, Pessac-Léognan *Not Available*
*+ 90% Sauvignon Blanc, 5% Sauvignon Gris and Sémillon. Very nice grapefruit aromas and flavors. The oak is restrained. Three superb years in a row. Has fine balance and length on the palate.

Smith-Haut-Lafitte Rouge, Pessac-Léognan \$49.99
** 30% Merlot. Deep, dark crimson color. Smoky, toasty, coffee aromas with hints of tobacco. Sweet palate entry with rounded tannins. Wow, these 2008s could be serious wines. Like 2006 with more finesse. Minerals on the palate. Should be great in 10 years. Very nice. At UGC: Orange peel aromas and oak flavors.

CÔTES DE CASTILLON

d’Aiguilhe, Côtes de Castillon \$19.99
Joanin Bécot, Côtes de Castillon \$20.99
Usually two of our favorites, but I did not taste their 2008s.

ST-EMILION

Angélu, St-Emilion *Inquire*
**+ 58% Merlot and 42% Cabernet Franc. Big, expansive nose with black fruit flavors. Very structured wine with tons of sweetness and spice. Another winner here.

Barde-Haut, St-Emilion \$29.99
65% Merlot and 35% Cabernet Sauvignon. Not tasted.

Beausejour Becot, St-Emilion \$46.99
*½ Deep aromas of spice and toast. Tons of fruit; perfumy on the nose. International style, but well-balanced. Structured for the cellar.

Canon-La-Gaffelière, St-Emilion \$54.99
*+ Black color. Tight on the nose. Big entry on the palate. Tons of rounded tannins that soften when decanted. Long on the palate.

Cheval Blanc, St-Emilion \$469.00
50% Merlot and 50% Cabernet Franc. Not tasted.



Clyde at Hait-Bailly with managing director Veronique Sanders and technical manager Gabriel Vialard.

Clos Fourtet, St-Emilion \$44.99

*½ Sweet and lush on the palate—more red fruits and black cherry aromas. Seems more elegant than most ‘08s. A very voluptuous, sexy wine. I love it.

Figeac, St-Emilion *Inquire*
*+ A sexy wine that’s vibrant and lively. Lush with lots of oaky flavors showing through.

Fonroque, St Emilion \$24.99
Not tasted.

Grand Mayne, St-Emilion *Not Available*
Sweet and lush. Black raspberry flavors.

La Clotte, St-Emilion *Not Available*
** 80% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon. A tiny property. Blackberry aromas follow to the palate. Semi-new wave. Fabulous richness.

La Gaffelière, St-Emilion *Sold Out*
*? Blackish color. Ripe, almost overripe, and prune on the nose. Maybe sample is bad?

Larcis Ducasse, St-Emilion *Sold Out*
**+ Big and rich wine. Long on the palate. Mouthcoating texture. Super structure. Some dryness at back end. Powerhouse wine. An ager.

Larmande, St-Emilion *Not Available*
*+ These guys are on a roll. New wave, spicy with flashy, ripe fruit.



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Pavie Macquin, St-Emilion *\$47.99*

*½ One of the superstars from the Right Bank. Blackish color and tons of blackberry fruit aromas that lead to the palate where Asian spice and exotic flavors abound. Semi-new wave but perfectly balanced. An ager.

Pavie, St-Emilion *Sold Out*

**½ 70% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. Not tasted. I heard it was very good from negociant Bill Blatch. Not over the top like a few previous vintages.

Troplong Mondot, St-Emilion *Inquire*

** Extremely ripe and round on the palate. Tannic and woody on the finish. A huge wine that's big and balanced. Super-sweet on the mid-palate.

POMEROL

Beauregard, Pomerol *Not Available*

Soft and elegant. Very ripe and lively. Very balanced with a lingering finish.

Clinet, Pomerol *\$66.99*

** Smoky nose and flavor. Intriguing wine. A bit international in style, but I like it very much.

Gazin, Pomerol *Inquire*

** Spicy, lush blackberry aromas follow to the palate. A fabulous wine. Rich wine with creamy texture. Seamless. To die for.

La Conseillante, Pomerol *\$74.99*

** 86% Merlot and 14% Cabernet Franc. Elegant, almost Burgundian in texture and mouthfeel. Tons of perfumy aromas. There's finesse written all over this wine.

Nenin, Pomerol *Not Available*

*+ 81% Merlot and 19% Cabernet Franc. Closed at first, but this opens with air. Boysenberry and blackberry aromas. A big, gutsy wine on the palate. Will need time.

Petit Village, Pomerol *Not Available*

* 74% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Sauvignon and 4% Cabernet Franc. Deep purple color. Blackberry fruit. Rich and forward. Very clean with a long, lingering finish.

Vieux-Château-Certain, Pomerol *Inquire*

70% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. Unfortunately not tasted.

SAUTERNES

Climens, Sauternes *\$89.99*

Not tasted.

Doisy-Védrières, Sauternes *\$29.99*

*+ Pineapple fruit abounds. Very spicy and quite nice, as usual.

d'Yquem, Sauternes *\$249.99*

Not tasted.

Guiraud, Sauternes *Inquire*

*+ Mineral nose and flavor. On the rich side with tons of sweetness. Not cloying.

Rieussec, Sauternes *Inquire*

Not tasted.

Sigalas Rabaud, Sauternes *Not Available*

*+ Only 14 hectoliters per hectare. Some coconut aromas. Very intense wine that is very sweet on the palate, but with fine acidity.

Suduiraut, Sauternes *Inquire*

* to *+ Fat and rich. A heavyweight wine that's a bit chunky but with decent acidity. Value-priced! At UGC: Sweet and sour. Pineapple and grapefruit. Intriguing.