

WINE News

Vintage Bordeaux from 1949 to 2017 to fête, taste and collect.



DECEMBER 10, 2018 FEATURES

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Bordeaux: This New Year, the Future is 2016

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

The picture above is our **Fête du Bordeaux** tasting and dinner in 2018. This coming January we are doing our 20th annual Fête event with the fantastic 2016s. Do not miss this special event—tickets are selling quickly at \$225 per person. Also please check page 3 for our 11th annual UGC tasting featuring 2016 Bordeaux.

Speaking of Bordeaux and 2016—the wine writers have gone bonkers over the quality of this vintage with several wines getting a perfect 100 points. Below are a few of our favorites—these wines will come into our store next year, with most in by August.

2016 Tour St-Christophe, St-Emilion (\$29.99) One of our biggest selling wines in 2014 and 2015, and now the 2016. **96-97 JS:** “This is superb: a triumph for the vintage considering how complicated it was in St-Emilion. Elegance with power.”

2016 Fonplégade, St-Emilion (\$42.99) Great crossover wine for California Cabernet lovers—modern style, but well-balanced. Spicy; blackberry flavors. Huge scores from many writers.

2016 La Gaffelière, St-Emilion (\$69.99) Here is a property to watch now and in the future—the terroir is fabulous and the new team is superb. This one has gotten several 95s from the writers.

2016 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$159.99; 6-pack OWC \$940.00) 98-99 JS: “Great wine. You want to drink it now!”

2016 Montrose, St-Estèphe (\$199.99; 6-pack OWC \$1,199.00) Northern Médoc was the star of 2016 Bordeaux. Steve Bearden: “This has that ethereal quality that the best Left Bank wines seem to possess in 2016.”

2016 Cos d’Estournel, St-Estèphe (\$199.99; 6-pack OWC \$1,199.99) Several 100s here. I predict this could be the 2019 *Wine Spectator* “Wine of the Year.”

2016 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$169.99) This is a study in quiet power—confident and self-assured. “Perhaps the best we have ever made from a technical perspective,” said Jean-Michel Cazes. Quintessential Pauillac, the wine is, so far, one of the standout wines of the vintage. **97-99 RP**

2019 Fête du Bordeaux

K&L’s annual **Fête du Bordeaux** will be held at One Market Restaurant in San Francisco on **Sunday, January 20, 2019**. The guest line-up includes proprietors and managers from Château Lynch-Bages, Langoa- and Léoville-Barton and Figeac. We will introduce the fabulous 2016 vintage of Figeac, Petit-Figeac, Mauvesin-Barton, Ormes de Pez, Langoa-Barton, Lynch-Bages and Léoville-Barton during our 6pm tasting. Dinner will follow with special wines including the 2017 Blanc de Lynch-Bages, the 2004 and 2011 Figeac, the 2007 Langoa-Barton, the 2006 and 2001 Lynch-Bages and 2004 Léoville-Barton. Guests of honor include Jean-Charles Cazes, Damien Barton-Sartorius and Frédéric Faye. This event sells out every year, so don’t wait to buy your **tickets (\$225.00)**. K&L will send an e-mail confirmation one week prior to event. Your name will be at the entrance, so no physical tickets will be needed. All sales are final!

The Bordeaux Gems of 2009 and 2010

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

There is no denying that 2009 and 2010 are great Bordeaux vintages.

The only question is which one is better? Ralph and I (the old cagey veterans) prefer the more approachable, sweet, and sexy 2009s, while most of Bordeaux, and the young bucks at K&L, like 2010 better. They are both great.

The 2009s

2009 Coufran, Haut-Médoc (750ml \$20.99; 1.5L \$44.99) At the very top of the Haut-Médoc, embedded in a sea of gravel just next to the Gironde River north of St-Estèphe, sits the anomaly of the Left Bank: Château Coufran, the “Pomerol of the Médoc.” We have what must be the final 100 cases of this super value, old school Bordeaux coming in. And we have magnums coming also. **92 JS**

2009 Sociando-Mallet, Haut-Médoc (\$49.99) There is no denying that this wine needs a lot of time in the cellar, or a couple of hours in the decanter, but it is a classic. The property is located just north of Saint-Estèphe. It was the first Bordeaux property I visited on my first trip to Bordeaux in 1985. The aromatics really open up after decanting. Leather, violets and incense. Quite an exotic combination. The palate is rich and elegant, with sweet plum, cassis fruit along with black olives.

2009 Bellevue, St-Émilion (\$69.99) Hubert de Bouiard from Angélus fame has purchased this small property across the street from Angélus. It is a fabulous terroir with only Merlot grapes grown there. Hubert will make this wine surely one of the best St-Emilions in a few years. Again, due to the opulence of the vintage, this wine needs decanting. Lush chocolate-covered cherries, cedar, exotic spices, nutmeg and plums. It is utterly pleasing. **93 RP, 93 JS**

2009 Langoa-Barton, St-Julien (\$74.99) “Tons of black cherry fruit. Elegant and delicious.” Those were my notes on tasting this lovely wine in 2010. The wine is still elegant and delicious, but it will cellar well for at least ten more years. **94 RP**

2009 Lascombes, Margaux (\$94.99) **92-94** points by all the point givers. Lascombes for a few years went too heavy on the oak treatment, but they are back on track now. The wine is lush, but well balanced with fine acidity.

2009 La Tour Carnet, Haut-Médoc (1.5L \$99.99) K&L's Jacques Moreira: “One of the many wines from Bernard Magrez. The luscious nature of the vintage is quite apparent here, but so is the firm structure of the wine. The rich fruit, framed by its ripe tannins, and the fact that it is in a magnum, makes it destined for cellaring, and that is what I would suggest.” **92 RP**

2009 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$289.99) What can you say here, other than that we have sold over 5,000 bottles of this wine. A perfect wine in the minds of most Bordeaux wine collectors. Maybe it is the first 105-point wine.

2009 Mouton Rothschild, Pauillac (\$949.99) **97** points Neal Martin's Wine Journal: “Tasted at the Mouton-Rothschild vertical in London, the 2009 Mouton-Rothschild is a stunning wine. But you know that already.” **99 RP, 98 DC**

The 2010s

2010 La Prade, Côtes de Francs (\$19.99) Château La Prade, just four-and-a-half hectares, was purchased by the Thienpont family in 2000. Despite the tiny size, part of the vineyards are on the limestone plateau and the rest is on a south-facing slope rich in iron. This somewhat unique terroir results in a rich Merlot-dominated blend with great structure. **90 WS**

2010 Fombrauge, St-Emilion (\$49.99) Another Bernard Magrez wine. We tasted this wine on our 2012 April trip to Bordeaux and fell in love with it. So delicious. Ralph, Trey, Alex and I all agree. Elegance personified. **92 WS, 91 RP**

2010 Alter Ego de Palmer, Margaux (1.5L \$219.99) Jacques: “One of the most elegant wines I have tasted this year. A delicate whiff of incense greets you on the nose, along with coffee beans, cocoa and even violets! Astonishing complexity, and the fact that it is in magnums makes it a great candidate for long-term cellaring, if you can resist its youthful charm.” **93 JS**

2010 Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan (\$189.99) One of my favorite properties, run by one of my favorite people (Véronique Sanders). I thought this wine would surely garner a perfect 100 point score—but alas it only got 98 points. One of the shining stars of Bordeaux for the last 20 years. **98 RP**

2010 Pichon-Baron, Pauillac (\$209.99) Administrator Christian Seeley thinks the 2010 is the greatest Pichon-Longueville-Baron he has ever made, equaling some of the estate's colossal wines from vintages such as 1989 and 1990. I was betting that the wine would receive 100 points—but it came up a bit short. It is still a tour de force. **97 RP, 97 WE**

2010 Le Petit Mouton Rothschild, Pauillac (\$249.99) I was blown away last month when I tasted this beauty. It has blossomed into a sweet and fruity wine—a bit on the masculine side with its rich tannins and full body. Four bottles of this or one of the next wine? **96 JS**

2010 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$289.99) One of the greatest collectibles from the incredible 2010 vintage. Give it time, but it will delight your palate for the next thirty years. The debate will go on for years—2009 or 2010? Tough deciding between perfect wines. But we have sold thousands. For the perfect gift—and buy one for yourself. **100 RP, 100 JS**

2010 Mouton Rothschild, Pauillac (\$999.99) You want a **100-point** score? You got it from James Suckling. For the person who has everything.



A Superb Vintage—2015 Bordeaux in Stock

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

By far, the best vintage since the duo of 2009 and 2010. Most wine are very fruity and forward on the palate. In other words, they taste great right now—but do cellar them for at least five years. First, some Left Bank favorites from two of the most successful regions in 2015.

Margaux and Pessac-Léognan

2015 Marsac Séguineau, Margaux (\$21.99) Watch this property—it is an up-and-comer for sure. A steal at this price.

2015 Le Thil, Pessac-Léognan (\$26.99) Now owned by the Cathiards of Smith Haut Lafitte fame. We have always loved the reds from this estate. 100% Merlot. **91-92 JS**

2015 Lespault-Martillac, Pessac-Léognan (\$26.99) **93 JS:** “Fresh caramel and chocolate aromas sit across crushed violets and blueberries. The palate has a very plush and fleshy core of blueberries and blackberries. A seductively fruited wine.”

2015 Labégorce, Margaux (\$32.99) One of the best values of *all* the 2015s. Elegant and refined; perfect balance. Sweet and sexy on the palate. It will sell out quickly. **94 JS**

2015 Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan (\$169.99) **97 RP, 98 JS** ...101 from Clyde Beffa. Get it while you can. Every bit as good as their 2010.

2015 La Mission Haut-Brion, Pessac-Léognan (\$499.99) For that someone special at Christmas time. **98-100** points by all.

Don't Miss St-Julien and Pauillac

2015 Langoa-Barton, St-Julien (\$54.99) **95 WE** and **94 JS**—even higher from Clyde Beffa. Tons of black cherry aromas and flavors. I love this wine—give it five years and hold onto the Léoville.

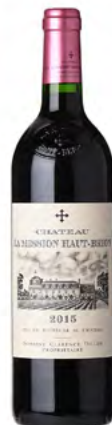
2015 Branaire-Ducru, St-Julien (\$64.99) One of the top wines in *Wine Spectator's* top 100 of 2018. So sweet and delicious. We surely will miss Patrick Maroteaux.

2015 Duhart-Milon, Pauillac (\$69.99) For me, the best-tasting young Duhart in 20 years. **93 JS:** “The smoke, almond, dark-berry and plum character is impressive to this young Duhart. Full body, round and silky tannins and beautiful fruit and spice undertones.”

Some Delicious Right Bankers

2015 Puy-Blanquet, St-Emilion (\$26.99) This is the best wine I have tasted from this property and I have tasted 20 vintages. So sweet with blackberry jam notes on the nose and the palate.

2015 L'Aurage, Castillon (\$29.99) **91 RP:** “The palate is medium-bodied with grainy tannin, crisp blackberry and bilberry fruit laced with allspice and clove, leading to a refined but quite long mint finish and a tang of white pepper on the aftertaste. Excellent.”



2015 La Cabanne, Pomerol (\$39.99) Great Pomerol for under \$40? Here it is. **JS 95:** “Rich, dense wine, powerful and balanced.”

2015 Barde-Haut, St-Emilion (\$44.99) **95 JS:** “Shows focus and power.” Hélène Garcin has this property of hers turning out great wines every year.

2015 Troplong-Mondot, St-Emilion (375ml \$64.99) **98 JS:** “Expressive, ripe dark plums swathed in aromas of mocha, toasted baking spices, graphite, blackberries and mulberries. The flavor-soaked palate arrives on suave, velvety tannins, delivering flavors of vibrant, concentrated dark plums, mulberries, dark chocolate and cocoa in a youthful, fresh style.”

2015 Clinet, Pomerol (\$159.99) **96** points Neal Martin: “The 2015 Clinet is just a brilliant wine from Ronan Laborde and his team. It has a refined bouquet that is extremely well defined, blackberry, briary, crushed stone and hints of black truffle developing with time.

2015 Figeac, St-Emilion (\$259.99) **98** points Neal Martin: “It has a captivating, very pure and refined bouquet with blackberry, bilberry, graphite and subtle violet scents. This feels so harmonious and so terroir-driven, exactly as I hoped for when tasting this en primeur.” **100 DC, 98 WE**



2019 UGC Tasting

K&L Wine Merchants will present the fabulous 2016 vintage from the members of the **Union des Grands Crus de Bordeaux (UGC)** at the City View at Metreon (135 Fourth Street, Suite 4000) in San Francisco on **Friday, January 25, 2019**. Guests will taste with more than 80 different château owners and representatives from 5:30pm to 7:30pm. **\$70 per person** (tax not included). No paper tickets will be mailed. Names will be on a guest list at the door.

Presenting châteaux: Domaine de Chevalier, Haut-Bailly, Malartic-Lagravière, Pape Clément, Smith-Haut-Lafitte, Canon-la-Gaffelière, La Gaffelière, Canon, Clinet, Rauzan-Ségla, Gazin, Brane-Cantenac, Cantenac Brown, Giscours, du Tertre, Kirwan, Beychevelle, Branaire-Ducru, Gruaud-Larose, Langoa Barton, Léoville Barton, Léoville Poyferré, Gloria, Clerc Milon, Grand-Puy-Lacoste, Pichon-Baron, Pichon-Lalande, Lynch-Bages and the best of the great 2016 Sauternes such as Guiraud, Suduiraut, Doisy Daëne, etc.

Best in Old and Rare Bordeaux

2018 was a banner year for Bordeaux sales—especially for old Bordeaux. Here is a sampling of some great wines and fine values.

1949 Cantemerle, Haut-Medoc (\$999.99) One of the greatest wines I have ever drunk—and I have been drinking since 1970! These last bottles come from the Mahler-Besse Cellars—the best in Bordeaux.

1970 Ducru-Beaucaillou, St-Julien (\$299.99) I have always loved this wine. It is holding up quite well after all these years. Sweet and lovely with a lingering aftertaste. A perfect five stars from Michael Broadbent: “One of the best of the 1970s.” **94** points John Gilman.

1981, 1986, 1990, 1996, 2001 and 2004 Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan (\$Inquire) We have at least 20 older vintages of Haut-Bailly, and they represent great buys. Most have just arrived from a great Bordeaux cellar.

1989 (\$249.99) and 1990 Beau-Sejour-Becot, St-Emilion (\$229.99) These rarities are direct from the property.

1998 Haut-Franquet, Moulis (\$19.99) We discovered this wine on our 2017 Bordeaux trip—it is a neighbor of Poujeaux. What they did in 1998 is commendable. This wine, like the Poujeaux, is elegant and fruit-driven. Our last 25 cases just arrived.

1998 (\$34.99) and 2000 Domaine de Viaud, Lalande de Pomerol (\$29.99) We discovered these wines in February and bought them on the spot. Old school labels, but fresh and vibrant wines for sure. Tons of blackberry fruit flavors on both, with the 2000 a bit more reserved.

1998 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$189.99) Some of the Left Bank '98s are a bit coarse—this one is fine. Plenty of pencil lead aromas and some cedar oak flavors mixed with cassis. **91** VN

1999 Haut-Batailly, Pauillac (\$69.99) The nose displays raspberry and black licorice aromas. On the palate you get really pure fruit and integrated tannins. Plump, attractive red raspberry fruit and super balance.

1999 Pibran, Pauillac (\$44.99) This fine property has well-priced wines—same winemaking team as Pichon-Baron. I love the purity of the 1999 Pauillacs. They are also understated.



1999 Gaudin, Pauillac (\$29.99) 2018 is surely the year for Gaudin. After all, I have driven by the property hundreds of times and I have even stayed next door at Château Bellegrave on a few trips. And so we get presented the 1997 and the 1999 and wow, we buy them on the spot. The 1997 is gone and this will also go quickly.

2000 Clos du Marquis, St-Julien (\$89.99) OK, so it is not the second wine of Las Cases, but a separate clos on the property. This wine is vibrant, lively, sweet and full-bodied. Perfect with your steak tonight.

2001 Coufran, Haut-Medoc (\$19.99) One of our standby properties for value. This is a medium-bodied, elegant wine offering up scents of plums, cherries and earth. Like many of the 2001s it has good sweetness, an attractive flavor profile, low acidity and ripe tannins. We have sold over 2,400 bottles of this gem, and our last delivery has arrived—enjoy it.

1999 (\$37.99) and 2003 Clarke Rothschild, Lustrac (\$36.99) We tasted these wines on our April 2018 Bordeaux trip—we were blown away by the high quality in both. Years ago the Clarke wines were tannic monsters; now, like other Lustrac properties, these wines have softened up and are affording excellent, well-priced, mature Bordeaux to drink.

2004 Moulin Haut-Laroque, Fronsac (\$24.99) These lesser-known 2004s are fantastic now and they will age well for several years. This Merlot-based wine is a bit old school and has blackberry aromas with a touch of oak. Full-flavored and classic Bordeaux on the palate. Some earthiness on the finish. Very good property making excellent value reds these days.

2005 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$219.99) 96 JS: “A meaty and decadent Lynch with very ripe currant aromas on the nose.” **96** WS, **96** WE

2005 Meyney, St-Estèphe (\$64.99) Ralph says: “Best I’ve ever tasted and showed superb at every tasting. Deep raspberry fruit on nose and palate, silky middle.”

2006 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$119.99) 95 DC: “Poised and impactful, with juicy and mouthwatering fruit. Punches far above the weight of the vintage, one of those get-a-straw-in-the-glass wines: among the best of the tasting. Here tension rises, and your mouth waters on the finish.”



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