

January 21, 2019

WINE News

From value faves to future classics, we're bringing the Bordeaux wines in 2019.



JANUARY 21, 2019 FEATURES

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The Fête Goes On

By Clyde Beffa Jr.



Our recent Fête du Bordeaux dinner was held on January 20, and our good friends from Bordeaux have poured their great 2016s for the attendees. Remember that the Northern Médoc and St-Emilion had glorious a year in 2016, and the wines are sublime. Here are the pre-arrival prices for some of these gems. The wines are starting to arrive in February.

2016 Ormes de Pez, St-Estèphe (\$39.99) 58% Merlot. The Merlot did exceptionally well here. Powerful wine; plenty of stuffing for long aging. Black currant aromas and flavor. Very sweet finish, long and lingering. Good value here. I prefer this to their 2015.

2016 Petit Figeac, St-Emilion (\$Inquire) Crafted to be a stylistic introduction to Figeac itself, Petit Figeac is a micro-cuvée coming from some of Château Figeac's best parcels. This exceptional wine encapsulates the unique style of Figeac's Cabernet, combined with a touch of Merlot, ensuring a silky texture thanks to a very gentle barrel aging in French oak. The 2016 may be their best effort to date.

2016 Langoa-Barton, St-Julien (\$54.99) 93 RP: "The 2016 Langoa Barton is medium to deep garnet-purple colored and opens with cedar, red and black currants, kirsch and menthol with smoked meats. The palate is medium to full-bodied, firm, grainy and packed with youthful, energetic fruit, finishing long and perfumed."

2016 Leoville-Barton, St-Julien (\$99.99) 97-99 WE: "This is a powerful wine, with superb tannins and blackberry fruits. It has a dense texture

allied to stylish fruitiness and acidity. The result is a wine with the potential to age over a long period of time, while probably showing well starting in 2028." This wine blew us away when we tasted it out of barrel.

2016 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$169.99) A study in quiet power, confident and self-assured. "Perhaps the best we have ever made from a technical perspective," noted owner Jean-Michel Cazes. A wine of extraordinary concentration—one of the wines of the vintage. **97-99 RP**

2016 Figeac, St-Emilion (\$239.99) My notes when tasting it from the barrel: "Off the charts here—top ten of the vintage. A must-buy. These guys are on a roll—fabulous wines." **97+ RP:** "Medium to full-bodied, the palate is practically quivering with energy, offering glimpses at tightly wound black fruit and mineral/ferrous layers, framed by very firm, ripe tannins and wonderful tension, finishing long with the spices coming through. This will need a good 7-8 years to come round and then should cellar for 40+ years. Very serious, beautifully poised and sophisticated personality this vintage."

One of the wines has just landed and it is offered as in stock:

2016 Mauvesin Barton, Moulis (\$17.99) This is Lilian Barton's home and the property's third year of production. Their best to date with a spicy and lively entry and red fruit flavors on the palate. It has great balance of fruit, tannin, and acid.



Classic Bordeaux—In Stock and On the Way

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

The cream of the crop here. Some are on pre-arrival and some have just arrived.

Pre-Arrival

2005 Latour, Pauillac (\$950.00; 6-pack OWC \$5,750.00) This is a 2017 release from the property—and proof-tagged. **100 JS, 100 Wine & Spirits, 100 WE:** “A great wine, the summation of a great vintage in Bordeaux.”

2009/2015 d’Yquem, Sauternes (2-pack OWC \$950.00) A bottle each of these 100-point d’Yquems in a special wooden box. The perfect dessert wines that will cellar well for several more decades.

2009 Haut-Brion, Pessac (\$999.99; 3-pack OWC \$2,990.00; 6-pack OWC \$5,980.00) **100 JS, 100 RP:** “What a blockbuster effort! Atypically powerful, one day, the 2009 Haut-Brion may be considered to be the 21st century version of the 1959.”

2009 Les Forts de Latour, Pauillac (6-pack OWC \$1,725.00) This is a 2018 release from the property. **95 JS:** “The aromas are so floral, with currants and blueberries as well. Succulent. Full and very balanced, with super velvety tannins and a long and lovely finish... I like the word gorgeous as well.”

2015 Lafite Rothschild, Pauillac (\$699.99; 6-pack OWC \$4,140) **100 WE:** “This is a great vintage from Lafite. The profile is rich in feel, with a seriously firm tannic structure. Solid, complex and with great authority, this Cabernet Sauvignon-dominant wine, is impressively dense in dark-fruit tones.”

In Stock

1949 Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$999.99) One of the greatest wines I have ever drunk—and I have been drinking since 1970! These last bottles come from the cellars of Mähler-Besse—the best in Bordeaux. Buy four bottles and receive the original case from 1950!

2005 Mouton Rothschild, Pauillac (750ml \$850.00; 1.5L \$1,800.00; 1.5L 3-pack OWC \$5,400.00) **98 RP:** “A deeply impressive First Growth. It has been blessed with a sensational nose that comes racing out of the blocks with audacious scents of black fruit, cedar, smoke and pencil box.”

2006 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$119.99; 12-pack OWC \$1,399.00) Robert Parker himself was a **95** on this wine in his 2009 review: “The 2006 is a wine to stockpile, especially for those in their 30s and 40s as it needs another decade to reach maturity... This enormously endowed, modern day classic is a legend in the making.”

2009 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$289.99; 6-pack OWC \$1,650.00) **100** points Mr. Parker and Mr. Beffa—enough said. We sold over 500 bottles last year—and one of our last shipments has just arrived.



2010 Pichon-Baron, Pauillac (\$209.99) **97 RP:** “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.

2010 Pichon-Lalande, Pauillac (750ml \$249.99; 1.5L \$499.99) **95 RP:** “The 2010 Pichon Lalande is performing extremely well and at the top of the range I predicted several years ago. A final blend dominated much more by Cabernet Sauvignon than usual.”

2010 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$289.99; 6-pack OWC \$1,650.00) Here we have **100** from **JS** and **RP** and myself. Is it better than the 2009? Let’s check in twenty years. We just received some original wooden cases—hard to find these days.

2010 Mouton Rothschild, Pauillac (\$999.00; 3-pack OWC \$2,999.00; 6-pack OWC \$5,995.00) You want a **100** point score? You got it from James Suckling. And *Decanter*, and *Vinous*. For the person who has everything—but hurry, almost sold out.



The Top 2017s on Pre-Arrival

2017 La Mission Haut-Brion, Pessac-Léognan (\$339.99) **95-97 RP:** “Indian spices and dusty soil. Medium to full-bodied with very firm, grainy tannins and a racy backbone supporting the taut, muscular fruit, it has bags of mineral and earthy suggestions layering the very long finish.”

2017 Margaux, Margaux (\$499.99) They lost only 10% from frost, etc. 89% Cabernet Sauvignon and only 13% alcohol. Red roses and violets on the nose and red currant flavors. Some earthy flavors; elegant wine to enjoy young. Some say it is similar to 1996 Margaux.

2017 Haut-Brion, Pessac-Léognan (\$499.99) Intriguing nose of allspice and savory undertones. Lots of mineral on the nose and palate. Medium weight with lots of spices as the wine warms up. Red currant flavors and nice balance; tons of spice at the back end, too.

2017 Mouton Rothschild, Pauillac (\$499.99) Boysenberry aromas mixed with minerals. Red fruit on the palate. Velvety on the palate with no hard edges—not expansive but nicely structured.

2017 Lafite Rothschild, Pauillac (\$619.99) A fabulous first growth with a regal and elegant nose. Very precise and focused, 96% Cabernet Sauvignon, and it is all Cab on the palate with red fruits abounding and rose undertones. Long and lingering, medium weight and on the elegant side. **97-99 RP, 97-98 JS**

The Many Rewards of the April Roadwork

By Ralph Sands



As I look in the rear-view mirror at my 52 visits in 28 years of traveling to my beloved Bordeaux, I have had more great memories, fantastic wines and great meals than one man deserves and I've enjoyed every minute. My experience with the fantastic quality but stylistically very different vintages of 2009 (ripe and silky) and 2010 (powerful

and concentrated) will always hold a very special place in my heart.

In April of 1990 I was a raw rookie, but confident in my ability to taste, and I loved the 1989 Château Camensac. I lobbied Clyde hard to buy this wine and he finally relented, and I have kept an eye on this quiet fifth growth ever since. The **2009 Camensac, Haut-Médoc (\$44.99)** has a lot in common with the 1989 wine; a very warm and great vintage, loaded with bold, opulent fruit. I include Château Camensac firmly in the company of the Bordeaux greatest values alongside wines like Château Cantemerle, Château Poujeaux, Château Chasse-Spleen and Château Meyney.

On April 13, 2011 we walked out of our downtown hotel to find our car had vanished; in fact it was towed. The retrieving process took quite a while and left me and my pal Alex Pross plenty of time to taste the wide range of wines made by Bernard Magrez and Michel Rolland at Château Pape-Clement. We both agreed the **2010 Fombrauge, St-Emilion (\$49.99)** was an outstanding wine offering phenomenal value; 80% Merlot with great freshness, sweet, exotic fruit but with good, firm structure. We took a big position and sold over 1,600 bottles, so the wait was worth it!

For us road warriors, Tuesday, April 1, 2014 was no joke! We attended four different Union des Grand Cru tastings and tasted 59 wines there, visited seven other estates and tasted another 35 wines. By the time we arrived in Lustrac at 5:30, at Château Fourcas Hosten, we were very tired and beat up. Our contacts told us the stunning renovation here was a must visit and taste experience, and they were correct. The renovation of the entire estate took four years and the results were immediate. The **2010 Fourcas Hosten, Lustrac (1.5L \$49.99)** was the first wine made in the new vinification facility and cellar and we loved it. I bought six bottles for my cellar as soon as it arrived. This lovely value, 55% Cabernet Sauvignon and 45% Merlot, is still young and fresh and features plenty of dark, round fruit, and is firm and fresh with harmonious tannins. Clyde just scored some magnums of this 2010, as well as some magnums of **2009 Coufran, Haut-Médoc (1.5L \$44.99)** which is 90% Merlot and a perennial favorite here at K&L. To quote the great Anthony Barton from Château Leoville-Barton: "A magnum is the perfect size bottle for two people."

While the above '09s and '10s give you some early drinkability, the "Big Dog Wines" from these vintages—wines like **2010 Grand Puy Lacoste (\$119.99)**, **2010 Pichon-Baron (\$209.99)**, **2010 Pichon-Lalande (\$249.99)**, **2010 Haut-Bailly (\$199.99)** and **2010 Mouton Rothschild (\$999.99)**—will require 20 years plus in the cellar to show you their greatness. That will also be worth the wait!

I don't know many people in the business of Bordeaux that would argue this statement: If you want to find out why Bordeaux is considered so famous for its wine, all you have to do is buy and taste a bottle of either **2009** or **2010 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$289.99)**. Especially 2009, as 2010 needs some time, and as much as I despise the numerical scoring of wine, they are both well-deserved 100-point wines that will spoil you forever.

I tell everyone, young and old, to not miss out on the great wines made from the commune of Margaux in 2015. Almost every wine I tasted showcased beautifully elegant, tasty Cabernet Sauvignon in perfect balance with no hard edges, and I bought a wide selection for my cellar. The wine I did not buy but would love to own is Château Margaux, not so much for the wine, which is **100** points, but for the commemorative bottle paying homage to our friend Paul Pontalier. Paul was a brilliant winemaker who made the wine here for 26 years and passed away in 2016. As the **2015 Margaux, Margaux (\$1,499.99)**, his last wine, arrives here, I will leave you with a quote from him about the wine at Château Margaux I jotted down in 2012: "The Château Margaux smoothness is the gift of the terroir. Just like a father, if you identify a gift, you must guide and create an environment for your children to thrive, and you do your best."

We hit the road to Bordeaux on March 29 and will give you a full report on the 2018 vintage upon our return.

Cheers, Happy New Year, Toujours Bordeaux and—Go Warriors!



At Château Latour, Ralph Sands pauses, for a moment, on the road to another great vintage.

Top Wines from 2015 in Stock Now

By Steve Bearden



Now that the wines from the stellar 2015 Bordeaux vintage have begun to lose some of their baby fat, it is becoming apparent just how approachable and delicious many of them are. These are all in stock and although very cellar-worthy, ready to decant and enjoy today.

2015 Moulin du Cadet, St-Emilion (\$27.99) This is a sweet and delicious wine filled with toasty aromas, chocolate-cherry cordial flavors and hints of coffee and red licorice. The middle gushes with ripe and bright red fruits and melds into a rich, heady glycerin-textured finish. This really shows the quality of the vintage at the more modest price points.

2015 Potensac, Médoc (\$28.99) Here is a delicious value that is already drinking well. This starts with ripe black cherry fruit flavors and aromas of fertile soil, herbal mint and tobacco from the 17% Cabernet Franc. The smooth and polished mid-palate glides into a crisp finish. Classified growth quality at a super affordable price.

2015 du Glana, St-Julien (\$29.99) Always one of the great values in St-Julien and a wine that tastes like the appellation from which it hails. This starts with alluring aromas of black raspberries, potpourri, damp earth and barbecue smoke. The middle of the wine is deep and smooth with plenty of chewy black fruits and a finish of firm, polished tannin. Delicious tonight with anything from burgers to fancy fare.

2015 Les Tourelles de Longueville, Pauillac (\$34.99) The folks at Pichon-Baron have made this Merlot-dominated blend a little more user-friendly in 2015 but the Médoc origins are evident in the intense blackberry fruit flavors and aromas. In addition, there are hints of flowers, iron and even a sprig of spearmint in the fine, clean middle. This is a high-tensile wine that is loaded with pedigree and character. Decant one hour.

2015 Ormes de Pez, St-Estèphe (\$34.99) Firm and tannic but with layers of rich fruit from the substantial mid-palate right through to the mineral-coated finish. There are whispers of spice, clay and smoke in this fruity yet dry wine which has plenty of hearty appeal. Decant and enjoy with rich fare.

2015 Fombrauge, St-Emilion (\$34.99) The 2015 shows a bit more elegance and restraint than past vintages but there is still plenty of stuffing here. Aromas and flavors of roasted coffee, an array of bright red fruits, charred wood and Asian spice commingle when this is sniffed and tasted. This medium-bodied wine is rich, supple and impressive already but two to three years will greatly enhance the complex flavors.



2015 Chauvin, St-Emilion (\$49.99) This big, fruity wine is very aromatically expressive with dark fruits, roasted herb, mint, exotic spices and espresso. Flavors of ripe plum and sweet baked cherries bury the tannins on the intense finish and lend a long, smooth expression. Despite the huge fruit profile and lurking structure this is a wine of balance to decant tonight or cellar for a decade.

2015 Langoa-Barton, St-Julien (\$54.99) Big and balanced with bright cherry fruit in the deep middle and touches of oak, sweet berries and cola on the firm finish. Impressive now for its depth and sweetness but will age well as all that fruit is currently cloaking substantial structure.



K&L's Team Bordeaux strides in the gate at Château Langoa-Barton during the en premier campaign for the 2015 vintage.

2015 Grand-Puy-Lacoste, Pauillac (\$86.99) This fifth growth is not only fantastic in this vintage, but well-priced for the quality as well. Aromas of well-integrated toasted oak and crushed flowers along with oodles of creamy black currant fruit almost obscure the dark iron core hiding underneath. Although structured to age well, the gentle warmth of the vintage has rendered this almost opulent for a Pauillac. This will be hard to give the cellar time it deserves.

2015 Branaire-Ducru, St-Julien (\$64.99) This property produced a smooth, rich and somewhat sexy wine with plenty of underlying structure and tension in 2015. For now, lush black raspberries and sweet cherries take center stage along with flowery aromas, but there are touches of smoke, spice and earth poking through the creamy middle palate.

2015 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$149.99) If there could ever be such a thing as an approachable young Lynch-Bages this would be it. This is full of blackberry fruit and graphite aromas along with a savory touch and a long mineral-laced finish. Although big and powerful, there is an overlay of plush, elegant and sweet fruit that already lends a generous note. Needless to say this will age gracefully.

A New Year with the Right Glass of Bordeaux in Your Hand

By Jacques Moreira



Bordeaux whites are often forgotten, ignored, buried way down on the list of the region's phenomenal reds—almost like an afterthought. But some can be equal to, and even surpass, the grandest of white Burgundies; be as versatile as the classic Loire whites; or as charming as the prettiest of the French country wines. All of that with an unequivocal class and poise that always

makes an impression on a dinner table. With that in mind, I will start this article with the whites, followed by some aged classic reds. And all with a very sweet price tag to help you start the New Year with the right glass of wine on your hand!

Fresh and Versatile Bordeaux Blanc

2017 l'Avocat Blanc, Graves (\$15.99)

Our friends at l'Avocat have been making excellent wines since 2002, and the 2017 is no exception. The vines for the white l'Avocat are located in a terroir of large stones and it is considered one of the best in the Graves appellation. The encépagement consists of 50% Sémillon, 40% Sauvignon Blanc and 10% Sauvignon Gris. The richness of the Sémillon is counterbalanced by the freshness and aromatics of the Sauvignons, Blanc and Gris. It is round and balanced, and would be a perfect pairing with seafood, freshwater fish, and the like—especially with a creamy sauce. You just have to try a bottle.



2015 Baret Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$19.99)

With 90% Sauvignon Blanc and 10% Sémillon, the aromatics are of classic Sauvignon, with gooseberries, freshly cut grass, fresh herbs and a touch of tropical fruit that I find irresistible. Very well balanced, impeccably well made, and very elegant. To be drunk now, and to be bought by the case, really.

2015 R de Rieussec, Bordeaux (\$19.99)

There is something to be said about the dry wines of the Sauternes producers: they all have a richness and a touch of exotic aromatics, across the board. The “R” is a very attractive wine, with beautiful aromas of tropical pineapple, and peaches. Made with non-botrytised, but fully ripened grapes, the wine is rich but completely dry. I can see it working really well with rich, spicy dishes like Thai curries.



2014 Esprit de Chevalier Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$24.99)

This is the “second wine” of Domaine de Chevalier Blanc, and as with most second wines, it is crafted to be approachable. The freshness of the 2014 vintage is quite apparent here. The wine is bright, refreshing, and light-weighted, and just about perfect with all sorts of appetizers. I had it with guacamole, salsa, chips and the like, and it was delicious.

2015 Lespault-Martillac Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$29.99)

Made by the team from the renowned Domaine de Chevalier, the quality and pedigree of this wine is quite apparent. It is a full-bodied white that has been aged on its lees for 14 months, with regular bâtonnage imparting a richness that is balanced by the fact that it didn't go through malolactic fermentation, thus preserving its fresh acidity. I would suggest pairing it with any light meat, fish, and of course—lobster!



Well-Aged Classic Bordeaux Rouge

1999 Clarke, Lustrac (\$37.99)

Perfectly aged and ready to be enjoyed—tonight! Here you have an opportunity to buy that aged bottle of Bordeaux for much less than \$50. The developed notes of leather are supported by cherry and even truffle notes. It is of medium body, and a quick decanting would be sufficient to enjoy it.

2003 Clarke, Lustrac (\$36.99)

Showing the typical ripeness of the 2003 vintage, with plums, currants, dark chocolate and mocha, this has caressing, velvety tannins, and is most definitely within its prime drinking phase. This property, owned by the Rothschilds, has seen a complete overhaul in wine quality over the years.



2001 Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan (\$139.99)

One of the star wines I have tasted so far in our young new year. It is a classic Léognan, with its earthy aromas of dried leaves, crushed stones and leather. The note of dark chocolate surrounds its nicely aged tannins. It not only held up very well, but is a stunner right now. What a beauty!

2000 Clos du Marquis, St-Julien (\$89.99)

To this day, some consumers still think of Clos du Marquis as the second wine of the prestigious Léoville-Las Cases. It is not. It is made from grapes that come from this specific “Clos” within the estate of Léoville-Las Cases, with a distinct terroir. It is what we like to call “old school,” which means lots of spices, pronounced tannins, and a lovely touch of meaty leather. I would suggest decanting this classic old 2000 wine for a couple of hours, at the least.

My Favorite 2016 Bordeaux Pre-Arrivals — Pure and Precise

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

These wines are starting to arrive. Do not miss this vintage—many Bordeaux people think 2016 is better than 2015.

2016 Tour St-Christophe, St-Emilion (\$29.99) 96-97 JS: “This is superb: a triumph for the vintage considering how complicated it was in St.-Emilion. Elegance with power. Full-bodied, intense and forthright. Wonderful length and depth. Better than the 2015.”

2016 Siran, Margaux (\$31.99) Violets, licorice, black fruit flavors conceal the latent tannins. A finish that lasts for a minute. **94-96 WE**

2016 Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$33.99) Only 12.8 degrees of alcohol—like the old days. 52% Cabernet Sauvignon; smoky, toasty aromas. The sexy black fruit flavors are intense. Philippe Dambrine has this property hitting it out of the park yearly. **94-96 WE**

2016 Labégorce, Margaux (\$39.99) We were blown away by this wine on three separate occasions. Asian spices and violets mixed in the aroma. Very feminine style with roses showing through on the palate. This is the last 30 cases we can find in Bordeaux. **94-96 RP**

2016 Marquis d’Alesme, Margaux (\$41.99) The second great value made by the Labégorce team. **91-94 WS:** “Fresh, with a pure beam of cassis, flecked with singed alder, dried anise and lilac notes. Shows good latent grip through the finish, maintaining a racy edge.”

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. **92-95 WS**

2016 Clos du Marquis, St-Julien (\$59.99) 94-95 JS: “The clarity and beauty of this young red are brilliant with blackberry, blueberry and mineral undertones. Full and racy. Long and wonderfully polished. Racy. Better than the 2015.”

2016 Branaire-Ducru, St-Julien (\$64.99) A winner in St-Julien. This wine is elegant and sweet with spicy red fruits and a fresh, crisp backbone that holds all the sweet fruit in check. Should be excellent to drink right out of the gate. **95-97 WE**

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 scores around **95** from the writers.

2016 Larcis-Ducasse, St-Emilion (\$74.99) As good as their 2015? Exotic aromas of Asian spice and tobacco. Serious wine for the long haul. Sexy and ripe. **94-97 VN**

2016 Domaine de Chevalier Rouge, Pessac-Leognan (\$84.99) 96-98 WE: “Mint aromas and flavors signal the new wood in which this wine is aging. It has impressive fruit, opulent and dense, balanced by fine acidity, crisp edges and solid tannins. A serious wine that will last for a long time.”

2016 Pichon-Baron, Pauillac (\$179.99; 6-pack OWC \$1,069.00) 98-99 JS: “I have been waiting for this for a long time. It’s a remake of the legendary 1990 Pichon Baron. Full body, ultra-polished yet powerful tannins and a glorious finish. The will evolve beautifully. The core of fruit and tannins are great.”

2016 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (1.5L \$334.99) “Perhaps the best we have ever made from a technical perspective,” noted owner Jean-Michel Cazes. A wine of extraordinary concentration that is, for me, one of the wines of the vintage. Expensive, but remember, “the quality of the wine will be remembered long after the price is forgotten.” **97-99 RP**

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.” **97-99 RP**

2016 Cos d’Estournel, St-Estèphe (\$199.99; 6-pack OWC \$1,199.99) Several high-90s here. I predict this will be the 2019 *Wine Spectator* “Wine of the Year.”

2016 l’Evangile, Pomerol (\$249.99) 98-99 JS: “This is a remake of the great 2015 but it’s much finer and more sophisticated. Such great quality and very sexy. Full body and ultra-polished and clean tannins. Salty, dark fruit. Superb length. Want to drink it!”

2016 La Mission Haut-Brion, Pessac-Leognan (\$469.99) 98 RP: “Medium-bodied and exquisitely elegant, the palate offers perfectly ripe, fine-grained tannins and tons of freshness with layer upon layer of perfumed fruit and a very long, ferrous-laced finish.”

Some Great 2016 Value Bordeaux In Stock Under \$40

2016 Bellegrave, Médoc (\$13.99) Not to be confused with the many other Bellegraves in Bordeaux, this wine is quite substantial for such a low price. Vibrant and lively on the palate with some toasty nuances and rounded tannins on the palate. I love this.

2016 d’Archange, Graves (\$14.99) Aromas of plums and berries with hints of chocolate and stones. Silky tannins and a savory finish. Ralph and I and Trey have a soft spot in our hearts for this property. We were there for dinner when the comet Hale-Bopp was passing over in April 1997.

2016 Puygueraud, Cotes de France (\$17.99) 93-94 JS: “This is really rich and powerful. Full-bodied, round and chewy. Very long and dense. It’s really something. Better than the 2015. Best ever?”

2016 d’Arce, Cotes de Castillon (\$19.99) 90-91 JS: “A linear and firm young red with chalk, dark-berry and crushed-stone character. Medium to light body, firm tannins and a racy finish.” Bravo Hélène Garcin-Lévêque.

2016 La Dame de Montrose, St-Estèphe (\$39.99) 93-95 WE: “While the wine has opulence and richness, it also has a powerful side that is classic for Montrose. It maintains the packed fruit of the vintage in both tannins and juicy blackberry fruit.”



Big Value from Small Châteaux in 2015

By Alex Schroeder



As we ring in the new year, prospects for the Bordeaux wine consumer have rarely been better. We're now four years separated from the great 2015 vintage, and the wines from this classic vintage are tastier than ever. This is good news for the value seekers out there: we were able to find plenty of wines made at smaller châteaux that are delicious

and low-priced. Here are a few that stand out as exceptional values:

The **2015 L'Avocat Rouge (\$17.99)** from Graves might top them all. The texture is silky and elegant, and there's rich plummy fruit, graphite and seamless oak. We've been longtime fans of the château for a reason, and this vintage is their best to date. The power and balance lend it great aging potential, too. Check out the château's white wine as well — it is stunning!

Château Mauvesin Barton is a relatively new project from the likes of young Anthony Barton, of the family that has owned legendary Leoville-Barton since the 1820s. This château is located in Moulis-en-Médoc, and the **2015 Mauvesin Barton, Moulis (\$18.99)** is one of the best sub-\$20 options we offer right now. It opens with an impressive bouquet of soft cedar notes, red currants and baking spice. It has a full, plush texture and great finish that leaves you wanting more.

2015 De Pitray (\$12.99) from Côtes de Castillon (think value St-Emilion) is a delicious, juicy everyday drinker. The Merlot-dominant blend sees no oak, and offers nice bright cranberry and raspberry fruit and even a touch of herbs. It's soft on the palate and drinks really easy, making it a great house red option.

2015 Clos Renon, Bordeaux Supérieur (\$11.99) is another serious example of the value potential from the vintage. It has plush, soft tannins, ripe fruit flavors of red currants and cranberries, and a touch of vanilla and oak. I honestly can't think of a better wine to have around to round out burger night.

2015 Cap St-Georges (\$21.99) from the small satellite commune known as St-Emilion-St-Georges is a powerful wine that has benefited much from the last year or so in bottle. It has dark cherry kirsch notes and a great mineral texture; it's wonderfully expressive and has great oak and tannins that are starting to soften. This is a good bottle to put a little deeper in your cellar and pull out for great company.

Château Cantelys in Pessac-Léognan is a property run by the great Château Smith Haut Lafitte, and the **2015 Cantelys Rouge (\$24.99)** is another great option for long-term aging at a lower price. It has a rich, concentrated, dark-fruited core, a touch of smoke and

graphite, and has a plush, mouth-coating texture. It may need a little time but it will be incredible in a few years.

The **2015 La Tour Cordouan, Médoc (\$14.99)** is drinking great now with its silky texture and rich fruit that is nicely highlighted by elegant toast and a touch of smoke. I wouldn't hesitate to open one now, but again, I wouldn't be scared to lose a few in the cellar for a few years, either. This is a well-executed wine.

The **2015 Baret Rouge, Pessac-Léognan (\$19.99)** is a Merlot-dominant blend with serious power and structure, but that also now has a very approachable nature. It shows the minerally graphite notes Pessac is known for, rich red currant and dried cranberry fruit, and will only keep getting better in the cellar over the next decade.

2015 Haut-Bernat, Puisseguin-St-Emilion (\$19.99) is delicious and drinking great right now. It has soft, silky red fruit from the Merlot, and a little bit of oak that is highlighted by expressive herbal notes. The flavors are already nicely integrated and very enjoyable.

If you're searching for an amazing value from a top Left Bank commune, consider **2015 Lilian Ladouys, St-Estèphe (\$24.99)**. It has rich cherry and licorice notes with considerable power and structure from the tannins. This will undoubtedly age gracefully for at least another 20 years.



K&L's Clyde Beffa tasting with Florence Cathiard at Château Smith Haut Lafitte, which also makes Château Cantelys.

It is not every year Bordeaux produces such a wealth of great wines at the value tier, so it is a great opportunity to fill up your cellar with delightful, ageable wines at remarkable prices. We have plenty of options from 2015 in inventory right now, so don't hesitate to stop by one of our stores and talk with one of our experts about them.

Mostly Stickies: Sauternes and Bordeaux Blanc

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

2015 Haut Charmes, Sauternes (375ml \$11.99) This very special Sauternes bottling is made from the younger vines of one of the region's legendary châteaux (the property starts with an S). The 2015 has the richness of the 2012 with the focus and acidity of the 2013.

2015 Symphonie de Haut Peyraguey, Sauternes (\$24.99) The second wine of Haut Peyraguey—and the first time we have bought this wine. It is absolutely delicious.

2015 Petit Guiraud, Sauternes (\$24.99)

Superb value right now. **91 JS:** “This has an interesting oolong-tea note plus a lot of citrusy freshness and enough caramel and honey to make for a satisfying experience. Well balanced and easy to enjoy now.”



Tasting the 2015 Sauternes.

2005 Raymond Lafon, Sauternes (\$39.99) 93 WS: “This is pure and precise, showing rich apricot, peach and clementine flavors, but great cut too, with a mouthwatering edge that lets chamomile, green plum and honeysuckle notes dance through the finish.”

2013 Doisy-Daëne, Barsac (\$49.99) 94 WS: “Plump and forward, this delivers peach, nectarine and candied lemon peel notes gilded with lots of honeysuckle and heather.”

2014 Coutet, Barsac (\$49.99) Fabulous wine and great price. **97 WE:** “Powered by intense botrytis, this wine is opulent and ripe, with spice, yellow fruit and honey flavors. It has just the right balance of acidity to maintain its shape and proportions.”

2006 de Fargues, Sauternes (\$69.99) 95 WS: “This is really attention-getting, with a seamless toasted coconut note weaving through lush tarte tartine, creamed apricot and heather flavors.”

2007 de Fargues, Sauternes (\$99.99) 97 RP: “This is a fabulous 2007, one of the wines of the vintage.”

2001 d'Yquem, Sauternes (375ml \$379.99) 100 JS: “This is so layered and intense on the palate with lemons and dried pineapple, mango and honey. Full body, very sweet, but it remains tangy and vibrant. Shows such amazing balance and intensity. Crazy finish. Hints of vanilla and apple purée. One of the greatest Yquems ever.”

Dry Whites: Four Vintages to Try

2014 Esprit de Chevalier Blanc, Pessac-Leognan (\$24.99) We love the white Bordeaux wines from 2014. Great acid like 2013 and full flavor like 2012. This is the second wine of Domaine de Chevalier. Not quite the richness of the first wine, but full flavors of white peach and stone fruits with some citrus thrown in.

2015 R de Rieussec, Bordeaux (\$19.99) 91 JS: “On the palate it has a great combination of creaminess and liveliness, the finish long and clean.”

2015 Lespault-Martillac Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$29.99) 93-94 JS: “Dense and layered with dried-apple, pear and honey character. Hints of stones and pie crust. Full and impressive.” Made by the team at Domaine de Chevalier.

2016 La Graside Blanc, Bordeaux (\$11.99) 60-year-old Sauvignon Blanc vines. Superb value.

2016 S de Suduiraut, Bordeaux (\$32.99) 92-93 JS: “Gorgeous dry white.”

2017 l'Avocat Blanc, Graves (\$15.99) Bracing acidity melds with ripe yellow apple and fig. 2017 was a great white Bordeaux vintage.



And Two Fabulous Dry Whites

2016 Y de d'Yquem, Bordeaux Blanc (\$159.99; 6-pack OWC \$950.00) 96 WS: “Rather rich, with coconut, green fig, creamed pear, yellow apple and jasmine notes all melded together, picking up light acacia and elderflower accents on the finish. Very, very showy.”

2016 Palmer Blanc, Vin de France (\$199.99) A blend of Muscadelle, Loset and Sauvignon Gris. Very few cases are made, and even fewer bottles make it stateside. A must buy!

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