

# WINE News

*The vintage in Bordeaux.*



## OCTOBER 8, 2018 FEATURES

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## Bordeaux: Once the King, Always the King

By Clyde Beffa Jr.



**It's about time we did another Bordeaux newsletter.** K&L built its reputation as a fine wine merchant with our first offerings of Bordeaux in 1978 and 1979 when we first offered 1970 Bordeaux in stock and 1978 Bordeaux on pre-arrival. So much is happening in the Bordeaux market some 40 years later.

We have classic in-stock wines on pages 1 and 2, mixed with many superb value wines. We finish with the sweet wines, aka "stickies," and white Bordeaux on page 8. On page 7 we have 2016 and 2017 pre-arrival offerings. In between, Ralph Sands, Alex Schroeder, Jacques Moreira and Steve Bearden will give you some of their picks for this exciting time in the Bordeaux marketplace, from older values to 2015 values and classics. Enjoy! By the way—2018 looks to be a quite good vintage in Bordeaux.

### Classic Wines for Holiday Gifts

**The ne plus ultra—the cream of the crop here.** These are perfect for gift giving either to yourself or to that someone very special. Here are some stars to consider, all scored highly by the wine critics. Let's start with the perfect gifts and the perfect scores these wines have garnered.

**2009 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (750ml \$289.99; 12-pack OWC \$3,349.00),**

**2010 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$289.99)** Robert Parker scored them both 100 points and we agree completely. These beauties will age gracefully for twenty more years. The 2009 is a bit more voluptuous and the 2010 is powerful—it is also quite limited in availability right now.

**2009 Montrose, St-Estèphe (\$389.99) 100 JS, 100 RP**

These three Right Bankers are superb from 2015—just in stock:

**2015 Clinet, Pomerol (\$159.99) 99 JS:** "An immaculate wine with pristine blackberries and dark plums as well as fresh, earthy nuances and dark crushed violets. An upright palate with lightly peppery dark berries

and plums. The inflection of Cabernet here makes for an impressively powerful wine that still exudes Pomerol's suave, seductive charm."

**2015 La Conseillante, Pomerol (\$179.99) 98 JS:** "Aromas of tar, black olive skin and blackberries follow through to a full body. Ultra-fine tannins and a long, linear finish with super intensity. Well-crafted in every sense. A fabulous Pomerol for the future."

**2015 Figeac, St-Emilion (\$249.99) 98 WE:** "Dominated by the two Cabernets—Sauvignon and Franc—this is a beautifully structured wine. Firm tannins and ripe black currants give a perfumed character that is ripe, dense and impressive. The wine has enormous potential, with great tannins and fruit."



*(Continued on page 2)*

Cover: The harvest at Château Malartic-Lagravière.

(Continued from page 1)

Other 97-99 point wines—these super 2010s will sell out quickly:

**2010 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$189.99) 98 JS**

**2010 Pichon-Baron, Pauillac (\$229.99) 97 RP, 97 WE**

For that very special person, an Original Wooden Case 12-pack:

**2006 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (12-pack OWC \$1,499.00) 94 RP**

A great value—and Clyde loves it.

For just favorites of mine—I score them highly:

**1989 Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan (\$149.99)** One of the best wines I have drunk this year. So sweet and lovely—and 30-year birthdays or anniversaries are coming.

**1986 Cos d'Estournel, St-Estèphe (\$279.99) 92 RP:** “A claret that I know would just shine and complement dishes at the dinner table. Drinking perfectly now, this Cos d'Estournel has another 15-20 years to offer.”

**1970 Ducru-Beaucaillou, St-Julien (\$329.99)** The epitome of classic claret. Perfect balance, gorgeous ruby color with brick edge. This is a rarity. 1970 Ducru-Beaucaillou is worth the price. One of the best 1970 Bordeaux you could find: rich, round and full.

**1949 Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$999.99)** The perfect 70-year birthday gift. Perfection in a bottle—one of the greatest wines I have ever tasted. From the Mähler-Besse cellar in Bordeaux. Only a few bottles left.

## Bordeaux: Great Values—Many Just Arrived

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

**Not all Bordeaux is expensive!** Here are some super values from \$19 to \$250.

**2001 Coufran, Haut-Médoc (\$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. In other words, enjoy it—we have sold over 3,000 bottles of this gem.

**2009 Verdignan, Haut-Médoc (\$22.99)** A great bargain from Bordeaux, it is balanced with silky tannins that are complemented by great acidity and red berry fruit.

**2004 Moulin-Haut-Laroque, Fronsac (\$24.99)** We sold a bunch of this wine last year—it is back. **90 RP:** “A big time sleeper of the vintage from Fronsac, this beauty from proprietor Jean-Noël Hervé has hit the bull's eye.”

**2001 Peyrabon, Haut-Médoc (\$24.99)** We love the 2001 Bordeaux vintage and you will love this value red. Almost out.

**2006 Haut-Bergey, Pessac-Léognan (\$26.99)** This is a no-brainer. Just buy it before it sells out. 2006 was very successful in this region.

**2015 Cantelys, Pessac-Léognan (\$29.99)** Owned by the Cathiards of SHL fame and situated just next door, these wines are always values. The 2015 is mineral on the nose and packed with black fruit flavors.

**2005 and 2009 Reserve de Leoville-Barton, St-Julien (\$39.99)** Direct from the property, this second wine of Leoville-Barton is quite rare, and it is always a stunning value! The 2005 received **90** points and the 2009 got **91** points—you get great tasting wines that will cellar well for a long time. Very limited supply.

**2015 Tour-St-Christophe, St-Emilion (1.5L \$59.99)** The biggest-selling 2015 (in bottles) for us. And you get two bottles in one for under \$60. This will sell out immediately. **JS** is a **96** on this beauty!

**2015 Branaire-Ducru, St-Julien (\$64.99) 95 WE:** “This family-owned estate has produced a structured and dark wine with great concentration balanced by acidity and pure, creamy fruit. It is a wine with a good future.”

**2013 Pauillac de Latour, Pauillac (\$69.99) Wine Advocate:** “Offers up notions of baked cherries, warm mulberries and plum preserves with touches of spice cake and dusty soil.”

**2000 Clos du Marquis, St-Julien (\$99.99) 94 WS:** “The nose shows loads of plum, spice and meat aromas, as well as hints of licorice. It's full-bodied, with firm, yet velvety textured tannins. It's big and rounded. If you can't afford Las Cases, try this.”

**2016 Palmer Blanc, Bordeaux (\$Inquire)** Very rare.

Five special wines from five different vintages for the holidays—from Pauillac of course:

**2014 Pichon-Baron, Pauillac (\$119.99) 95 JS:** “Irony and smoky intensity on the very youthful nose. Really rich and tannic, but as it flows over your palate it becomes more and more suave and complex. This is a concentrated, long-term wine.”

**2005 Grand-Puy-Lacoste, Pauillac (\$149.99) 97 JS:** “A fabulous GPL. Perhaps better than the legendary 1982? It shows laser-guide precision on the palate with aromas of currants, cedar, mint, flowers and chocolate. Full-bodied and extremely finely textured on the palate, lasting for minutes. A joy to drink now. Get some.”

**1999 Pichon-Lalande, Pauillac (\$169.99)** My favorite Bordeaux property of all time made a killer '99. Cedar, oak, cinnamon and spice notes mark this soft, fruity wine.

**1998 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$189.99) 91 VN:** “This is another Lynch-Bages that has picked up volume and flesh from bottle aging. It's a very classic Pauillac and a wine that can still improve with additional cellaring.” I think it is great at 20 years old—perfect anniversary gift.

**1990 Haut-Batailley, Pauillac (1.5L \$249.99)** This wine is perfection right now. **RP:** “The 1990 offers a forward, smoky, sweet oaky nose intertwined with bold and lavish aromas of blackcurrants. Medium-bodied, with low acidity, light tannins, and layers of ripe fruit, this finesse-styled wine should provide superlative drinking for more than a decade. It is the finest Haut-Batailley since 1982.”

# It's a Phenomenal Time to Be Buying and Drinking the 2015 Wines of Bordeaux!

By Ralph Sands



**In my long tenure here at K&L I have certainly learned quite a bit about buying and collecting wine.** Simply put: there are times and vintages to buy, and different times and vintages to pass on, but never let greatness pass you by, as it disappears quickly.

Over the next 18 months the two outstanding vintages of 2015 and 2016 will dominate the marketplace. You have to go back to the vintages of 2009 and 2010, 1995 and 1996, and before that, 1989 and 1990 to find these great buying opportunities. 2015 is the vintage arriving this year and it is a lovely vintage with great freshness, purity of fruit and exquisite balance. It is a bit like 2005 in terms of freshness and style with a touch of 2009's ripeness, balance and beautiful drinkability even young. The 2016s will arrive next year and are a more powerful expression along the lines of 2000 and 2010 and destined for the cellar.

There are so many delicious wines in 2015 it's hard to know where to start, but for me, I have to start in the commune of Margaux because I find it to be the greatest vintage I have ever tasted there. My first vintage evaluation was 1988 so I missed other great Margaux vintages like 1979, 1983 and 1986; but as soon as I walked out of the Margaux UGC tasting in April of 2016 I knew I had just tasted greatness across the board!

2015 is outstanding in all regions of Bordeaux but this vintage perfectly captures the hallmark qualities of the Cabernet Sauvignon grown in Margaux at its finest expression: great tasting, deliciously elegant with silky ripe fruit and not a hint of overripeness, all in perfect balance.

Of course I'm not alone—the iconic **Château Margaux's 2015** is trading for over \$800 higher than all the other first growths at **\$1,499.99**. Thank goodness we don't have to pay that amount for great wines from the 2015 vintage, as there are plenty of choices in all price ranges and styles. Young or old, there is something for everyone. Here are my favorites and why...

Château Palmer made a legendary wine built for the cellar, but the second wine **2015 Alter Ego de Palmer (\$74.99)** blew me away, as it did the three previous vintages. I wrote down, "the delicious fruit is just awesome!" We always have to remember that the great wines taste great from the beginning of their lives. We loved the deep, silky wine of **2015 Malescot St-Exupéry (\$79.99)** so much we told owner Jean-Luc he could raise his price; that never happens! Dollar for dollar, "the wine of the vintage."

But Malescot has plenty of competition! The beautifully sleek and precise wine of **2015 Rauzan-Ségla (\$134.99)**; the impressive and richly textured old vine fruit of Château d'Issan; and the epitome

of elegance is found in Château Brane-Cantenac. Château Giscours always features a core of deep, masculine fruit, but in the **2015 Giscours (\$89.99)** the addition of sweet, fleshy middle fruit make this a cellar candidate; the best Giscours in many, many decades! Almost the exact same thing can be said for second growth Château Durfort-Vivens as it emerges from under the radar of popularity—its classic structure and rich middle fruit is seriously good and if you do not know this wine you should. Lastly in this category, a great example to drink young is the plush, lush and delicious wine of **2015 Priuré-Lichine (\$49.99)**.

Fantastic values under \$50 include many wines that are already in my cellar. The dynamic trio of winemaker Marjolaine-de-Coninck, Delphine Kolasa and owner Nathalie Perrodo have transformed the estates and the wines of **Marquis d'Alesme (\$49.99)** and **Labégorce (\$32.99)** into places you must visit and wines you must taste! **d'Angludet, Margaux (\$44.99)** has been a K&L favorite for decades for its serious value and fine aging potential; I just bought the 1986, 1989 and 1996 for my collection. I love Marquis de Terme; always a very formidable wine and the quality has never been better. Dollar for dollar and half the price of Malescot is the greatest wine ever made, **2015 Siran, Margaux (\$32.99)**. It's the wine I bought first, and I will sell it hard to the last bottle. Under \$20, do not miss the beautiful fragrance and elegance of **2015 Malescasse Haut-Médoc (\$19.99)**; and if you prefer the bolder style, try **2015 Cambon La Pelouse, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99)** and the **2015 Croix Mouton, Bordeaux Supérieur (\$15.99)**.



Cheers and Toujours Bordeaux!



Ralph Sands takes notes in Bordeaux.

# Bargain Older Bordeaux, Cellared to Drink Now

By Steve Bearden



With the rise in prices for the newly released Bordeaux vintages over the last several years, older vintages have become a comparative bargain. These great values all come directly from Bordeaux where they have been cellared since release:

**2007 Lanessan, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99)** This “old school”

claret is a gentle, approachable bargain to pop open any time you get the urge for a glass of classic Bordeaux that won't break the bank. There are both red and dark fruit flavors here in an easy-drinking package that will have you reaching for another glass. *Almost sold out.*

**2006 Ormes de Pez, St-Estèphe (\$49.99)**

This is big and firm with a hard candy punch of ripe cherry fruit and a middle that is deep and dry. The bold structure and hearty core of chewy fruit, mineral tinged tannins and whispers of damp clay make this a perfect match to a grilled steak or burger. Decanting suggested.

**2006 Haut-Bergey, Pessac-Léognan (\$26.99)**

This 10-plus-year-old wine represents fantastic value with its sweet fruit profile, earthy aromas and gravelly finish. Big but well-rounded flavors of plum, dark currant and cherry are layered against a finish of firm, ripe tannin and mineral. There is a lot going on in this under-the-radar bottle.

**2005 Dassault, St-Emilion (\$79.99)** Here is a classic

2005 with huge aromas and flavors of fruit confit, black raspberries, ripe cherries and bitter chocolate. This is a solid but rich wine with a thick middle of dense fruit, finishing with smoke, ash and limestone complexity. Decant this delicious blockbuster tonight or cellar for 10 more years.

**2001 Chasse-Spleen, Moulis (\$59.99)**

This is the dominant player in the Moulis appellation and the 2001 is currently plush, gentle and long with the signature acidity of the vintage keeping the mature flavors fresh and vibrant. The mid-palate of baked cherry pie, cedar box, clay and potpourri dominate but the finish is lingering and long.

**2000 Lynch-Moussas, Pauillac (\$69.99)** There is plenty of ripe, rich red and dark fruit in this husky wine that shows the power of the vintage. This is dense with a savory touch to the bold fruit flavors that turn to cedar and leather on the finish of fine tannin. A classic 2000 that is drinking beautifully right now.

**2000 Citran, Haut-Médoc (\$49.99)** There is lots of earth and leather in this big, bold wine which has softened around the edges but still shows the power of the incredible vintage. This “old school” bottling is still a bit brooding when first opened but with air gushes of berry torte flavors and aromas fill out the surprisingly rich mid-palate. While not super complex, this is still a hearty and very satisfying wine to enjoy with dinner any night.

**1999 Tour du Haut-Moulin, Haut-Médoc (1.5L \$39.99)** A magnum of mature Bordeaux from a very good vintage for under 40 bucks is insane, so drag this to your next party and watch it empty surprisingly quickly. This soft, silky wine has caressing red fruit flavors and a touch of earth in the plump middle, and a long, soft finish. Here is an absolute bargain in perfectly stored, ready-to-drink claret.

**1997 Gaudin, Pauillac (\$29.99)** It's almost impossible to find a Pauillac for under 30 bucks these days, so finding one that is 10 years old and drinking beautifully is a real coup. This is dark and firm with iron minerality and good sweetness to the blackberry fruit. No hard edges here, just a substantial and satisfying mouthful that really tastes like the appellation it hails from. Enjoy tonight. *Almost sold out but coming back into stock.*

**1989 Clarke, Llistrac (\$59.99)** The folks at Lafite have owned this property since 1972 and continue to make one of the best values in the Llistrac appellation. At almost 30 years old this is mellow and smooth with sweet fruit flavors along with tea, leather and dried flowers. Although structurally mature, the wine retains good richness and a wonderfully dry finish.



# The 2009 Bordeaux Wines — How Are They Now?

By Jacques Moreira



After all the wonderful things that have been said about the phenomenal 2009 vintage—not the least of which, it's Clyde's favorite—a few questions remain, such as: How are they drinking now? And are there any wines that could be drunk now? Soon? Or are they all way too young to be opened?

And finally, did they fall asleep? You know, that very little-understood phenomenon in which a wine “goes to sleep,” or as some say, goes through a “dumb phase.” It is usually between the third and tenth year of its life in the bottle. Those are all valid questions, which an educated wine consumer should ask before committing to a bottle, be it for dinner tonight, or a case for the cellar. It isn't easy to answer, however, as there is no hard science that would aid us, the wine experts. The only way to answer with any degree of certitude, to any of these questions, is to actually try — or drink — the wines, and since somebody had to do it, I volunteered.

Here they are: 10 wines, thoroughly tasted and analyzed with a couple of 2010s thrown in the mix as well. As for the results, I will give you a hint... It was a pleasurable experience through and through.

**2009 La Clotte, St-Émilion (\$59.99)** Always a fair value for this fantastic Saint-Émilion, which is since 2014 under the same ownership as Château Ausone. Its tremendous quality is well known in the trade, and you should get to know it too. Rich and soft, showing the classic 2009 style, it's approachable and quite honestly, delicious! **93 RP**



**2009 La Tour Carnet, Haut-Médoc (1.5L \$99.99)** 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.

**2009 Grand Pontet, St-Émilion (\$49.99)** Owned by the Bécot family of Beau-Sejour Bécot and Joanin Bécot in Castillon, the Grand Pontet delivers a classic example of Saint-Émilion. It is rich and voluptuous, full of chocolate and cherries, but with perfect balance throughout. Again, I find it difficult to resist such a sensuous wine. But its power tells me that cellar time is in order here. I would recommend getting a case or two, really. *Almost sold out.*

**2009 Grand-Puy-Ducasse, Pauillac (\$69.99)** The Grand-Puy-Ducasse is very much a classic Pauillac with its masculine-edged Cabernet Sauvignon. It still quite young and it needs a good amount of time in the cellar. However, the beautiful notes of cedar and cigar box are already showing. A promising wine that needs to be stored and enjoyed for many years to come.

**2009 Bellevue, St-Émilion (\$69.99)** Silky and rich, one of the best Saint-Émilions. I have tasted lately and it is not holding anything back, ready to go! Again, due to the opulence of the vintage, it needs decanting, but oh, what a wine! Lush chocolate-covered cherries, cedar, exotic spices, nutmeg and plums. It is utterly pleasing, and a must-have.

**2009 Sainte Marguerite, Médoc (\$21.99)** The big surprise here. Of course we expect wines of the higher pedigree appellations to be of a certain quality, but once on a while, we come across a bottle labeled simply as “Médoc,” and the wine sings. That is very much the case here. It is ready to be enjoyed now. The color is starting to show that beautiful garnet tone. The palate is woody, with lots of fruity cassis and plums and a very intriguing note of meat bouillon, leather and olives. I would still advise to decant it to soften its grippy but perfectly ripened tannins. So much complexity for its modest price, indeed a nice surprise.



**2009 Verdignan, Haut-Médoc (\$22.99)** Located close to Saint-Estèphe, and possessing what I like to call that *je ne sais quois* I found on the wines of this area. Some spiciness, woodiness, and a touch of the exotic! The wine showed well, and I would start drinking it from now on, and keep some in the cellar.

**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 also located in that sweet spot north of Saint-Estèphe that I like so much. 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. A very smart buy for cellaring.

## Also Try These 2010 Wines

**2010 Latour-Martillac, Pessac-Léognan (\$69.99)** I decanted this wine for two hours, and it needed it. A first it was quite shut down and austere, but it opened up and showed all the elegance this Pessac-Léognan is known for. Spicy oak notes, cocoa, plums and even violets. But it definitely needs time.

**2010 Alter Ego de Palmer, Margaux (1.5L \$219.99)** 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 charms.



# Renaissance of Value in Bordeaux

By Alex Schroeder



**I love the expensive wines of the Grands Châteaux as much as the next Bordeaux-phile, but my budget dictates that I open up something else on Burger Tuesdays.**

Luckily, I don't have to go far to find my next favorite category of wines: value Bordeaux! With its recent string of successful vintages coupled with a rash of cellar improvements across the area, no other region comes even

close to offering such a variety of high-quality reds and whites at such great prices. Here are some of my favorites in stock right now:

**2015 Lespault-Martillac Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$29.99)** This gem is made by a Domaine de Chevalier-owned property in Pessac-Léognan and the pedigree comes through! It has a taut acid line, minerals on the nose, juicy melon and citrus fruit with a touch of toast and great weight and texture from the 2015 vintage. It's a powerful, balanced and immensely drinkable Bordeaux blanc.



**2016 Croix Mouton, Bordeaux Supérieur (\$15.99)**

This third of a trio of vintages that we currently have in stock from Château Croix Mouton continues the château's streak of over-delivering for price. Made from 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc, it has an expressive melange of jammy blue and red fruits with subtle toast undertones, elegant tannins and great acid on the finish to give it lift and great drinkability. Try the trio for a great vintage comparison!



**2016 D'Arce, Côtes de Castillon (\$19.99)**

Since Hélène Garcin-Lévêque acquired this property, it has become not only one of the best values of the Castillon region, it is one of its best wines, period. It has rich raspberry, dark cherry fruits, with licorice, a hint of smoke, minerals and serious body and structure. It displays the power and finesse of the '16 vintage well.



**2016 Pessac-Léognan de Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan (\$24.99)** This third label from Haut-Bailly is an example of the magic that can happen in the value tiers in such great vintages. It's resplendent with flavors of red currants, dark cherries, tobacco, cigar box and minerals. It has a very full and plush texture, with great acidity that leaves a delicious, sweet fruit finish. This is an exciting preview of what is to come with the 2016s.

**2015 Joanin Bécot, Côtes de Castillon (\$22.99)**

This is a fantastic showing from a perennial Castillon powerhouse. The delicious blend of 80% Merlot and 20% Cab Franc offers a more resplendent, sumptuous style of Bordeaux with dense black currant and blueberry fruit, a touch of espresso and toast with a plush, silky tannic texture that lends the wine a very luxurious feel. This has the density of fruit and structure to age for many years to come.



**2015 Trébiac, Graves (\$14.99)** We sell huge amounts of this staff and customer favorite every year, and the 2015 is the best vintage of Trébiac I've ever tasted! It has a rich and openly expressive fruit profile of blue and red berries, with notes of mint, herbs, gravel and spice. It has an incredibly approachable and drinkable nature, and is an incredible deal in terms of balance, structure and complexity in the world of red wines!



**2015 Crabitey Rouge, Graves (\$15.99)**

A delicious 50-50 Cab-Merlot blend from Graves, this offers everything positive the 2015 vintage has to offer for a great price: very full, round red currant, raspberry and dark cherry fruit richness with great minerals with an overall soft-edge feel and a crisp finish. It will last in your cellar for several years, but this is one you really don't have to wait for to immensely enjoy.



**2002 Malescasse, Haut-Médoc (\$17.99)** This great Médoc property has offered K&L numerous vintages of delicious library wines for incredible prices for years. The latest batch, from 2002, has great complexity with a nice fruit core of red cherry and blackberries with some savory hints of mushrooms, woody undergrowth and leather. The finish has great fruit and acidity making this an amazing everyday food wine.

These wines shatter the concept that Bordeaux is a "pricey" region. Sure, the first growths are more expensive than ever, but there has also never been a better selection of delicious, affordable Bordeaux available, and it is always a good idea to keep a healthy stock of it around so you can save those first growths for truly special occasions. Cheers!



# Bordeaux Pre-Arrivals for 2016 and 2017

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

## 2016 Pre-Arrivals: Pure and Precise, and Under \$100

**2016 Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$31.99)** Only 12.8 degrees of alcohol—like the old days. 52% Cabernet Sauvignon. Smoky, toasty aromas. The sexy black fruit flavors are intense. **94-96 WE:** “This is another successful vintage from this estate.”

**2016 Berliquet, St-Emilion (\$39.99) 95-96 JS:** “This is a really powerful red with fantastic density and richness. Silky and chewy tannins. Lots of chalky, crushed limestone character. Impressive.”

**2016 Clos du Marquis, St-Julien (\$59.99) 93-96 RP:** “This is stacked, with dark plum, cassis and blueberry reduction notes forming the core. The serious spine of graphite and tar is thoroughly embedded, so the finish is long and polished. A beauty.”

**2016 Malartic-Lagravière Rouge, Pessac-Léognan (\$59.99)** Very spicy, jammy, blackberry aromas. Voluptuous wine in the modern style, but with fine acidity to balance.

**2016 Giscours, Margaux (\$64.99) 96-98 WE:** “This wine is massive, dense and solid. At the same time, it has style and elegance.”

**2016 Alter Ego de Palmer, Margaux (\$69.99) 95-96 JS:** “This is very concentrated yet soft and fresh in texture.”

**2016 Clerc-Milon, Pauillac (\$69.99) 94-95 JS:** “Refined and ultra-fine with a linear and polished character. Full-bodied, yet tight and racy. A classy and sophisticated young wine.”



*K&L's Team 2016 scouts the streets of Bordeaux for the best values for our customers...and maybe a midday nosh.*

**2016 d'Issan, Margaux (\$69.99) 96-97 JS:** “This is so energetic for a young d'Issan with lots of white pepper, crushed stones and blackberries. Full body, ultra-fine tannins and great length. One of the greatest ever. Superb depth and intensity to this real Bordeaux. Wow.”

**2016 Larcis Ducasse, St-Emilion (\$69.99)** As good as their 2015? Exotic aromas of Asian spice and tobacco. Serious wine for the long haul. Sexy and ripe. **95-96 JS**

**2016 Pape Clement, Pessac-Léognan (\$89.99) 97-98 JS:** “This is phenomenal with a density and finesse that are hard to remember for this wine. Full-bodied, tight and polished. Seamless texture and salty undertones. Goes on for minutes.”

## 2017 Bordeaux Pre-Arrivals

In 2017, there are some very fine wines at prices lower than the two previous vintages.

### Great Wines for Under \$80

**2017 d'Armailhac, Pauillac (\$46.99)** I much prefer this wine to the Clerc Milon. Elegance and finesse on the palate. Red berry fruits abound. Superb mid-palate texture and smooth finish. Very nice.

**2017 Malartic-Lagravière, Pessac-Léognan (\$49.99)** About 45% Merlot. Perfumy aromas of black fruit and oak. Fairly modern style with nice texture and finish. A bit of tannin covering the fruit.

**2017 Langoa-Barton, St-Julien (\$49.99)** We think St-Julien may be the best region in Bordeaux for 2017, and this is a shining star and value in the region. The black cherry cola aromas are evident and the wine is so fresh and sweet on the palate. Lovely effort.

**2017 Grand-Puy-Lacoste, Pauillac (\$74.99)** Nice perfume—very sweet and ripe on the palate. Lush and lovely. I gave it two stars. This property is on a roll.

**2017 Léoville-Barton, St-Julien (\$76.99)** Léoville-Barton truly surpasses itself with their amazing 2017. With 93% of Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend, this has all the classic black-fruited Barton character and more. A big, deeply colored wine with gorgeous aromatics, one of the undeniable successes of the vintage.

### Classics for the Cellar Under \$200

**2017 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$109.99)** Historically, this property has stood at the forefront, first among equals. In 2017 they showed why this is so, making one of the best wines of the vintage in my opinion. It is a wine that is perfectly true to itself, a model of freshness, suppleness, and balance.

**2017 Pichon-Lalande, Pauillac (\$129.99)** 7% loss here. 70% Cabernet Sauvignon. Spicy, cedary aromas and flavors. Good weight on the palate. Lovely, spicy, lush wine, like they made in the '80s. I love this wine—they are doing a great job at Pichon-Lalande these days. One of the best of the vintage for me.

**2017 Figeac, St-Emilion (\$169.99)** One of the greatest Right Bank wines of 2017. Production is down over 55%, but what they did produce is endlessly complex, vibrant and detailed. Cool black and blue fruits resonate throughout the pure and dynamic palate. Very few wines were as focused and expressive as this.

**2017 Ducru-Beaucaillou, St-Julien (\$169.99)** Ducru entices with its mélange of spice and floral notes. There is less body but more elegance in the 2017, a very pure expression of the Ducru terroir.

**2017 Gloria, St-Julien (\$39.99)** Always a value for us—ever since the excellent 1966 and 1967 vintages. Very nice palate entry and aromatic on the nose. Black cherry cola nuances on nose and palate. Good mid-palate fruit. Value.



*A golden autumnal hue tints the vineyards of Château d'Yquem.*

## Sauternes and Well-Scored Values in Bordeaux Blanc

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

**1971 Rieussec, Sauternes (\$129.99) 95 RP** from critic Neal Martin—as recently as 2006: “A superb 1971 that has decades ahead of it.”

**1997 Suduiraut, Sauternes (\$49.99) 91 RP:** “An outstanding Sauternes, with wonderful aromas of cream, caramel and honey. Full-bodied, with a light sweetness and a long vanilla and fruit finish. A beauty.”

**1996 Guiraud, Sauternes (\$54.99)** Robert Parker called the 1996 Guiraud “one of the stars of the vintage for Sauternes.”

**2003 Guiraud, Sauternes (\$49.99)** A ton of richness and sweetness, with loads of apple tart, caramel and spice character. The noble rot certainly did its good here. Long, long finish. Beautiful sweet wine. Great balance for such a hot year. **JS 95**

**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. Gorgeous.”

**2014 Coutet, Barsac (\$49.99)** Fabulous wine and a 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.”

**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.”



### Bordeaux Blanc: Superb Values and Y—the Classic

**2016 Roquefort Blanc, Bordeaux (\$11.99)** One of our standbys—A Bill Blatch and Robert Parker and Ralph Sands favorite. A bit Alsatian in style but crisp and clean on the palate. Lovely value.

**2015 Mont-Perat Blanc, Bordeaux (\$14.99)** We tasted this wine early this year and loved it. Clean and crisp style with the richness of the 2015 vintage. Big score by one of the scorers. **91 RP**

**2015 G de Guiraud, Bordeaux Blanc (\$18.99)** Crisp and dry, this wine from Château Guiraud shows the rich flavors of the fully matured grapes along with juicy acidity, making a very useful white wine. We sold a lot of the 2014 and this 2015 is just as good.

**2015 R de Rieussec, Bordeaux Blanc (\$22.99)** Very attractive wine, with beautiful aromatics of tropical pineapple and peaches. The wine is rich but completely dry. I can see it working really well with rich, spicy dishes. Better than their 2016!

**2014 Carbonnieux Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$34.99)** I love the dry white wines of 2014—they have the richness of 2012 and 2015 with the crisp acidity of 2013. This is a “house white” for us. Plenty of citrus aromas and earthy nuances with a splash of oak. Great now and for several more years.

**2016 Y de d'Yquem, Bordeaux Blanc (\$169.99) RP 96:** “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, with the underlying cut to pull it off.”



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