

WINE News

Your source for Bordeaux:
new, old and future.



JANUARY 18, 2016 FEATURES

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Bordeaux: Something for Every Palate and Pocketbook

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

As 2016 begins, there is a lot of excitement from Bordeaux. The young and very promising 2015 reds are being tasted for the first time and the quality seems quite high. We will send a team to taste these babies in April and report back to you. Meanwhile, we have many Bordeaux red and white wines available, with some superb values from many different vintages. Below are our recommendations for the newly released 2012s, which have evolved into delicious wines—and they are very well priced.

2012 Bordeaux—Just In

Tour St-Christophe, St-Émilion (750ml \$27.99; 1.5L \$49.99) One of the top new properties in Bordeaux. I love this wine, with its forward, ripe fruit flavors and plenty of balancing acid. California Cab style. 93 points James Suckling and 90 points Robert Parker.

Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$29.99) We love this property every year since their 1949. 92 points JS: "This red shows some cassis, blueberries and floral notes on the nose. Some tar, too. Medium to full body, juicy tannins and a fruity finish. Enticing wine. Drink now or hold."

Angludet, Margaux (\$32.99) One of our favorite properties in Bordeaux. "Super fresh! Sweet but firm red fruit with raspberry flavors continue throughout the middle of the wine. This is a wine in the classic style, and it will drink well young. A fine value!" —*Ralph Sands, K&L Bordeaux expert*

Clinet, Pomerol (\$79.99) 93 points WS: "Gorgeous plum cake, melted licorice and steeped currant and blackberry fruit is inlaid with notes of fruitcake and singed vanilla bean. Long and plush through the finish, with a buried charcoal spine that adds needed cut."

In this issue we will also make some recommendations for the very fine 2014s on pre-arrival basis, and go back to our favorite 2009s—and even back into the 1980s. Great Bordeaux ages for many years, as attested to at our recent Bordeaux dinner in honor of Jim Chanteloup. The 1949 Cantemerle and 1961 Barde-Haut were off the charts, as were the 1981 Vieux-Château-Certan and 1991 Palmer.

Grand-Puy-Lacoste, Pauillac (\$49.99) 93 points WS: "Well-built, with a charcoal frame that melds nicely with steeped currant, blackberry paste and dark plum fruit flavors. The long finish is riveted to a graphite underpinning. Remarkably dense, but without the austere twinge of the vintage."

Léoville-Barton, St-Julien (\$79.99) "This great property produced a big wine, with loads of grapey, blue/purple fruits, but is rounder and more forward, and will drink well relatively young after 7-10 years. It reminds me of the delicious 1999!" —*Ralph Sands*

Pape Clément, Pessac-Léognan (\$89.99) 97 points RP: "This is truly great wine and not far off their magnificent 2005 and 2010. Full-bodied, with rich cassis, subtle burning embers and spice followed by velvety, well-integrated tannins, the wine is lush, expansive, savory and profound. This is a remarkable wine that could be drunk at a reasonably young age, but should cellar brilliantly for a quarter-century."

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Jacques Loves the 2012s

By Jacques Moreira

As I wrote in our newsletter back in June 2015, I believe the 2012 vintage fooled everybody. Wine critics to wine merchants alike, we all thought it was a little less-than of a vintage. The good news about this initial assessment, coupled with the Bordeaux market of the time, plus the value of the dollar then and now, was that prices were lower than previous vintages, in fact almost as low as 2008. And even better news, they were kept this way after the famous re-evaluation of the vintage by Parker et al earlier last year. There is an excellent buying opportunity now for those wanting to get some wines that are showing quite beautifully early and yet still have cellar potential. Am I contradicting myself? Welcome to the 2012 vintage!

2012 Léoville-Barton, St-Julien (\$79.99) This second growth château has always been a favorite of mine. Situated at the heart of appellation, it is a quintessential St-Julien. Very well polished with the classic notes of cola and cassis. Dark fruit, coffee, and violets. The palate is structured for sure, but all its elements are in such harmony that one forgets it is only a three-year-old wine. A relatively young drinking wine and yet capable of cellaring for decades.

2012 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$109.99) This beautiful Pauillac I would place in the category of the ones to cellar. It needs time. It is still showing some tightness, but it is clear by the quality of the fruit along with its structure that it will develop beautifully. Dark fruit followed by pencil lead and cedar wood, graphite, plums, cassis, and quite spicy. And a very sweet price for a wine of this caliber.

2012 Fourcas Hosten, Lustrac (\$19.99) Hailing from Lustrac, Fourcas Hosten, a Cru Bourgeois, benefits from a privileged terroir, great drainage, and protected against frost by its microclimate. I've always found that Fourcas Hosten wines retain a nice balance between the old-school style and the ripeness of the fruit. The 2012 is no exception. A bit of technical information: 50%



of the vineyard is on gravelly soil in the area called “Le Fourcas” where the Cabernets are planted, the other 50% is located on a clay-chalky soil opposite the château where there is a perfect fit for the Merlot grapes. The result is a wine that is early drinking, with bright fruit and lots of elegance. Another smart buy.

2012 Bourgneuf, Pomerol (\$39.99) Now let's talk about a seldom-seen affordable offer from Pomerol. Belonging to the same family (the Vayrons) since 1840, Château Bourgneuf also benefits from a great terroir. Located on a gentle slope in the Pomerol Plateau, it enjoys great drainage and sun exposition. Its clay, sandy soils make the perfect condition for the Merlot grapes that are—more often than not—perfectly ripened.

Dense, full bodied with smoky, meaty notes, along with cocoa, cherry and berries. Very soft, very silky and lush. For cellaring for a few years or to enjoy now after decanting.

2012 d'Angludet, Margaux (\$32.99) Perhaps one of our best values in Margaux now. This historic property under the ownership of the Sichel family has always had a good track record, especially among the British for its classical style. The 2012 delivers those classic Margaux notes. Pretty nose of violets and crushed stones. The palate is very lively with raspberry and some deeper plum notes. The lightness of the tannins makes it a perfect wine to drink now; but also again, you could still cellar this for another decade. A classic indeed.

2012 Puy-Blanquet, St-Émilion (\$19.99) Back to the Right Bank, this Grand Cru St-Émilion is a no-brainer for this price. Also a château with a good track record, the 2012 offers a wine that impress in its simplicity. Pronounced fruity notes of plums and cassis, along with a touch of spices, framed by some serious minerality that makes it nice, juicy and a pleasure to drink now.



(Continued from page 1)

Lafite Rothschild, Pauillac (\$549.99) *** “Three stars. Absolutely perfectly ripe Cabernet Sauvignon fruit.. The bright red and purple-hued fruit screams of violets, and the palate is sleek, with great focus and length. The wine is both strong and elegant at the same time without a hint of over-ripeness.” —*Ralph Sands, K&L Bordeaux expert*

Pichon-Baron, Pauillac (\$99.99) Great wine with long future. One-third the price of the 2010. 94 points JS: “A pretty core of ripe-berry, currant and mineral character to this red with a full body, silky tannins and a fresh finish to add. Creamy texture.”

Léoville-Las Cases, St-Julien (\$139.99) 96 points WE: “This combines considerable power and concentration with rich, impressive fruits. It has both style and elegance, with density to give it great aging potential. The tannins are firm while also having a velvet texture.”

Haut-Brion, Pessac-Léognan (\$399.99) Must show a great first growth or two in the mix. 98 points RP: “Certainly one of the candidates for the wine of the vintage, with a dense purple color, classic nose of crushed rock, lead pencil shavings, black raspberry, blueberry and flowers... is full-bodied, stunningly concentrated, yet finishes with luxurious, almost extravagant amounts of fruit and intensity.”

2012 Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan (PA \$74.99) 96 points AG, 96 points RP: “The classic 2012 Haut-Bailly is staggeringly great wine, with a stunning bouquet of lead pencil shavings, blueberries, black raspberries and blackcurrants and perhaps a touch of spring flowers, followed by a medium to full-bodied wine with an almost seamless integration of wood, alcohol and tannin.”



Countdown to Bordeaux!

By Ralph Sands

I'm not usually very excited to be working on January 2nd, but this year is different because it's only 90 days until we leave for Bordeaux. I'm pumped up and excited as I can be to taste 2015.

The 2015 vintage is looking from all reports to be very good; this is not a surprise because I/we watch the weather in Bordeaux online almost every day during the growing season. K&L has been selling Bordeaux futures/pre-arrivals since Clyde Beffa returned from his evaluation of the 1984 vintage, and many of my customers started buying the great estates from me in April of 1985.

In April of 1991 I was privileged to be given the opportunity to also "do the work/evaluation" on the outstanding 1990 vintage. This entails tasting more than 1,000 wines in a period of 10 days, or fewer, and Clyde and I have not missed a vintage since. With 25-30 years of barrel tasting under our belts, we conduct our business with enthusiasm and great confidence. We are well aware that Bordeaux has not had a great vintage since 2010, and a great vintage brings great demand from regular Bordeaux collectors as well as investors. Once prices are released for the greatest estates, allocations for these estates are offered out to top worldwide customers like K&L at the first price/tranche. In great vintages the prices and allocations for these wines can change daily—that is just reality.

Customers that have supported and purchased the famous estates in recent vintages will of course be given top priority. If 2015 is an important year for you, or you want to make sure you get your favorites at our best price, I would get your list together and contact me well ahead of our departure. We leave April 2.

If delicious in-stock Bordeaux is what you are looking for, we have you covered, and they hail from some of my favorite estates. The 2009 Bordeaux vintage is like 1982: so delicious, it is hard not to want to drink them all young! But don't do it! Wines with superb ripeness of fruit that exude perfect balance and harmony are rare and need to be cherished in the cellar. Wines like **2009 La Lagune, Haut-Médoc (\$66.99)**, a pure, sexy red fruit-driven wine, and **2009 Meyney,**

St-Estèphe, (\$39.99)—classic, cool dark fruit again dominate from this perennial overachiever—and the fabulous **2009 Petite Lion Marquis de Las Cases, Saint-Julien (\$59.99)**, the second wine of the great second growth Léoville-Las Cases, are all in my collection.

Many people feel a magnum (1.5 liter) is the perfect size for wine. To quote a couple of our friends—first, the legendary Anthony Barton: "I've always felt that a Magnum is the perfect size for two people." And then K&L General Manager Brian Keating's epic sign on the door: "Always bring a magnum! No party will ever refuse you!" I'm thrilled to see **2005 La Tour de Mons, Margaux (1.5L \$69.99)** return in magnum, as I adore the wine and all of the 750s in my cellar are long gone. I just could not stay away from this tasty, elegant wine that features bright, shining blue fruit that just floats across the palate. Bernard Magrez and his winemaker Michel Rolland make wines full of rich, exotic fruit, and our team agreed right away after tasting **2010 Fombrauge, St-Émilion (1.5L \$59.99)** in magnum that it was a winner!

For tremendous value in contrasting styles, look no further than this trio of wines from Pessac-Léognan. Clyde and I will never forget our dinner at Château d'Archebeau in April of 1997. The comet Hale-Bopp was bright and perfectly focused the night sky—just like their **2010 d'Archebeau Rouge, Graves (\$12.99)**, classic in style with bright, crisp fruit of tart cherries and brisk acid in perfect balance. Perfect for rich dishes! The **2010 Léognan, Pessac-Léognan (\$29.99)** is a first-time selection here and is full of rich, opulent New World fruit that we know our customers enjoy. The incredible values from Nicola and Sean Allison's Ch. L'Avocat continue to be my house wines and I classify them as serious! The **2012 L'Avocat Rouge, Graves (\$15.99)** has masculine, dark fruit of black cherry, cassis and earth. Cellar a few years or decant for a couple hours. The **2013 L'Avocat Blanc, Graves (\$14.99)** is made in the style of Bordeaux's greatest whites, barrel fermented and rich while being a fraction of the cost of the famous estates.

Happy New Year, Toujours Bordeaux and Go Giants!

Bordeaux Oldies and Goodies

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

From \$20 to \$10,000, we have a huge cellar full of older Bordeaux for you.

1999 Lanessan, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99) This 15-year-old bottle is drinking perfectly now! According to Robert Parker: “This underrated Médoc consistently produces wines of fifth-growth quality.”

1997 Potensac, Haut-Médoc (\$24.99) Our biggest-selling Bordeaux for the past two years. Over 16,000 bottles sold—our last shipment has just arrived. Still lush and lively and full of fruit.

2005 Fontenil, Fronsac (\$29.99) 92 points RP: “From the home estate of Dany and Michel Rolland, the 2005 Fontenil has an opaque, thick ruby/purple color. Dense plum, black cherry, blackberry and cassis fruit jump from the glass of this full-bodied, terrific Fronsac, which is one of the appellation’s stars of the vintage.”

1991 Labegorce, Margaux (\$29.99) I love this so-called off-vintage wine. Still bright and drinking fine right now. Old-school Bordeaux. Rustic like me.

2005 La Tour de Mons, Haut-Médoc (1.5L \$69.99) This gorgeous wine sold out quick when we first got it in stock. Aged to perfection, this is ready to enjoy tonight. One of Ralph’s favorite value buys. Great party size, and we have a few larger formats available.

2000 Labegorce, Margaux (750ml \$39.99; 1.5L \$79.99) Another old-school beauty from a very well-situated property near the Gironde. Very focused and quite mineral on the palate. Good fruit and it could stand decanting an hour or so. Direct from the property. This wine is just great old-school claret. Has great mid-palate depth and richness. 90 points *WE*.

1996 Lynch-Moussas, Pauillac (\$49.99) In February 1998, Robert Parker wrote: “Lynch-Moussas is clearly on the comeback trail, as evidenced by the 1995 and 1996 efforts, which are two of the finest wines I have tasted from this Pauillac estate.” Just tasted in 2015, the wine sings. Old-school Bordeaux—pure cassis and red fruits. Wonderful balance and length. Superb value.

2005 Angludet, Margaux (\$59.99), 2005 d’Armailhac, Pauillac (\$79.99) These are two of the best buys from this great vintage. Cellar them five more years or decant for two hours.

1997 Branaire-Ducru, St-Julien (1.5L \$129.99; 3L \$329.99) Just the most delicious wine you can drink right now—all fruit and rounded tannins. Plenty of life. I love the ’97s to enjoy now—especially in magnum format. Some larger formats available.



2005 Branaire-Ducru, St-Julien (\$89.99), 2005 Domaine de Chevalier Rouge, Pessac-Léognan (\$109.99) and 2005 Calon-Ségur, St-Estèphe (\$119.99)

The 2005s are showing great right now—they are still lively and begging for more cellar time. Three of my faves from Bordeaux.

2000 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$149.99) We sold out of this wine and just got our last 180 bottles. 94 points Robert Parker and 95 points Clyde Beffa.

1996 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$199.99) 93 points Robert Parker, writing in August, 2011: “The 1996 exhibits a dark plum/ruby/purple color that is just beginning to lighten at the edge, surprisingly velvety tannins and a classic Pauillac bouquet of lead pencil shavings, cedarwood, black currants, sweet cherries and spice box. This medium to full-bodied, elegant, savory, broad wine is still five years away from full maturity.”

2000 Figeac, St-Émilion (\$199.99) Big, dense, and chewy, the Figeac is full of ripe middle fruit, balanced by firm but ripe tannins. Here is a wine of great purity. As good as their 1982? Should age well. 93 points JS and 91 points Stephen Tanzer.

1986 Ducru-Beaucaillou, St-Julien (\$199.99), 2003 Ducru-Beaucaillou, St-Julien (\$229.99) One of our favorite properties, and these two wines are almost opposites, with the soft and round 2003 and Cabernet-dominated, powerful 1986. Both have high scores.

2005 Cos d’Estournel, St-Estèphe (\$249.99) 99 points JS: “The purity of fruit in this is fascinating with plums, currants and other dark fruits. Then there is another layer of spices and chocolate. So much cassis. Full and very layered with chewy polished tannins and a long, long finish. Just starting to open. Changes all the time. Still needs a year or two but gorgeous to drink already.”

2003 Latour, Pauillac (\$999.99) 100 points RP: “A profound example of Château Latour, the full-bodied, opulent 2003 is already performing well at age eleven, which is somewhat atypical. The pH is a relatively high 3.8, which also indicates low acidity. The wine is very ripe, but not over-ripe, offers great freshness, and lots of creme de cassis and camphor as well as hints of blackberries and chocolate. Dense, thick and unctuously textured, this staggering Latour is undeniably the most sumptuous, opulent wine made here since the 1982 or 1961.”

2009 Mouton Rothschild, Pauillac (\$999.99) King Dollar gets this under \$1,000. Very limited.



Classic Buys in Bargain Bordeaux

By Steve Bearden

The holidays are officially over, and we can take a moment to focus on some high-quality Bordeaux bargains that may have escaped your attention in all the hustle and bustle. Here are some classics you don't want to miss while they are still in stock.

2014 Reynon Sauvignon Blanc, Bordeaux (\$12.99) This vintage lends a touch more grapefruit pith and nuances of smoke and gunflint to accompany the citrus verbena and lip-smacking minerality. The crushed fruit and zippy acidity keep this as refreshing as ever.

2014 Lamouroux Blanc, Graves (\$15.99) I love this juicy white for its flowery aromas and mouth-filling middle of spiced apricot and honeyed peach. There is a lanolin-like fatness to the middle before the stony finish of fresh rainwater and pebbles kicks in.

2014 Clos Floridene Blanc, Graves (\$21.99) Subtle oak shadings add dimension and richness to this substantial and flavorful wine. This is figgy, round and full-bodied with wonderful mid-palate weight and mineral tension to the intense finish. Here is a serious wine that could match well to chicken or even pork.

2010 Lamouroux, Graves (\$15.99) Earthy aromas of dark cherry, vanilla and cocoa powder jump from the glass as soon as this is poured. This opens with bright fruit that is dark and ample, showcasing the weight of the vintage and the barely noticeable tannin. The long, sweet finish has a rocky complexity that begs for another sip.

2009 Tronquoy de St-Anne, St-Estèphe (\$16.99) The second wine of Tronquoy-Lalande is a lush, velvety and very earthy wine that, while not typically St-Estèphe, is still delicious and silky bargain Bordeaux.

2009 Capbern Gasqueton, St-Estèphe (\$24.99) Owned by Calon-Ségur and a superb value, this has striking aromas of potting soil, dark cherries, herbs and dried flowers. The firm and husky middle is filled with warm, dark fruit and a damp, clay mineral edge that supports the ripe tannin. This is classic St-Estèphe.

1985 Soutard, St-Émilion (\$49.99) Here is a wine for those looking for a fully mature bottle that is delicately complex, understated and traditional. This has gentle and silky dried cherries, subtle leather tones, a touch of cedar and hints of sage and spice that are soft and finely detailed. An affordable, old-school classic.

To Drink While You Wait: 2013 and 2014 Blanc, Plus Older Picks

By Jeff Garneau

How exciting to begin another new year and to welcome another Bordeaux vintage! 2013 was the third in a series of challenging vintages in Bordeaux following back-to-back stellar years in 2009 and 2010. We will have the opportunity later this year to assess the quality of the red wines. For now, there are plenty of good whites to drink.

Cru classé Château Carbonnieux enjoys a favored position in the village of Léognan and is often the first property in the region to begin the harvest. They made the most of the short growing season in 2013 and produced an outstanding wine. The **2013 Carbonnieux Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$34.99)** grabs your attention with exotic, tropical aromas of guava and passionfruit. The palate is dominated by tart, fresh white grapefruit notes, reflecting the high proportion (75%) of Sauvignon Blanc. The Sémillon lends a bit of structure to the wine and a firmness of character that is felt mostly on the finish. The wine spends 10 months in barrel (30% new) yet remains bright, crisp and focused with little apparent oak influence. Contrast this with the **2013 Brown Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$34.99)**, which spends eight months in barrel, with a higher percentage of new oak and more frequent batonnage that adds a toasty element and more richness of texture. Delightful tropical fruit—fresh pineapple notes, sweet and tangy. Both wines offer excellent value, but if you are searching for a real bargain in a Bordeaux blanc, try the **2014 Saint-Jean-des-Graves Blanc, Graves** at only **\$10.99**. Offering notes of fresh citrus and cut hay, it is crisp and clean in style.

The 2001 vintage has emerged as the most drinkable of that decade so far. The wines are aging a bit precociously but retain the lively

acidity that is one of the hallmarks of the vintage. The **2001 du Tertre, Margaux (\$54.99)** is a perfect example. Opens a bit floral on the nose then turns very savory with notes of leather and spice. Plenty of ripe red and black fruits—red currant and tart, fresh blackberry notes. Firm tannins frame the finish. An overperforming fifth growth under the same ownership as neighbor Château Giscours. The wines from here just keep getting better and better.

The **2005 Fontenil, Fronsac (\$29.99)** is a big, full-bodied, unapologetically modern wine from a vineyard purchased by Michel Rolland in the mid-1980s. Deeply colored, with loads of dark fruit, it remains remarkably youthful even at 10 years of age, and tannins are surprisingly firm for a wine that is 90% Merlot. Decant for one hour or continue to cellar.

I was fortunate to taste side by side this month the **2006 Reserve de la Comtesse Lalande, Pauillac (\$49.99)** and the **2010 Reserve de la Comtesse Lalande, Pauillac (\$59.99)**. The second label of Château Pichon-Lalande, it is consistently one of the best among the top properties in Bordeaux. Both wines exhibit the slight toast, the dark fruit, and the polished elegance which marks the house style. The 2006 is really very good. Deeply colored. Richly textured with generous black fruits. At 10 years, it is still quite young, with firm tannins, and will benefit from a few more in the cellar. The 2010, released just three years ago, is beyond words. More deeply colored still with lively acidity, loads of sweet dark fruit, and hedged round with formidable tannins that are nonetheless quite fine. More patience still will be required here but will be amply rewarded. A stunning wine.



Château Cantemerle (photo: Vinexia).

2014 Bordeaux Pre-Arrival

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

The 2014s offer a lot of wine for the money. Here are some of my top picks to buy on a pre-arrival basis. There's something for every pocketbook in this selection. The 2015 Bordeaux will surely be more expensive than the '14s. But the question is, will they be 10, 20 or 30% higher than 2014?

Value wines under \$50

Capbern, St-Estèphe (\$17.99) 90-92 points WE: "The new, shortened name for what was Capbern Gasqueton indicates a new, plum-driven direction for this estate. The wine is solid with enormous fruit and great acidity."

Labegorce, Margaux (\$23.99) This wine is stunning and at under \$25 represents a superb bargain. Aromas of fresh raspberry, red licorice, and cedar. Delicious on the palate. 91-93 points RP.

Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$26.99) 93-94 points JS: "This is a knockout. Excellent concentration of fruit and firm tannins. Very, very long. Fruity and intense. Same quality or better than 2010. Impressive."

Malescot St-Exupery, Margaux (\$44.95) Lovely spice on nose; sweet fruit and red berry flavors; long, meaty, delicious. Always one of our favorites. 93-94 points JS.

\$50-\$100 Classics

Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$86.99) We love this wine—it is the biggest seller we have for the 2014s. 95-96 points JS: "This has fascinating aromas already with blackcurrants and cassis. Hints of spices. It's full-bodied with ultra-fine tannins and a long, focused finish. Muscular but toned and beautiful."

Pichon-Lalande, Pauillac (\$89.99) Lots of lovely, exotic grapey fruit here; very elegant and precise. Back to the glory days of the eighties for this property.

Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$93.99) I must say this is a truly great wine and one of the best of the vintage. Alfred Tesseron can do no wrong. 93-96 points AG: "A host of violets, lavender, mint, spices, new leather and plums grace the palate in an utterly exquisite wine endowed with magnificent yet understated depth and crystalline purity. This is without question one of the highlights of the vintage."

Top of the Line—No Limit

Ducru-Beaucaillou, St-Julien (\$109.99) One of the wines of the vintage. Dark, rich and full-bodied, hints of cola and spice. Really nice, with great length. Blackberry fruit and layers upon layers of ripe fruit.

Angelus, St-Émilion (\$249.99) This is a beautifully perfumed wine that shows style and elegance as well as rich, weighty blackberry fruit. The blend's 50% Cabernet Franc gives tense, dark structure as well as aromatic character.

Haut-Brion, Pessac-Léognan (\$329.99) 96-98 points WE: "The wine is serious, darkly structured and firm in character, packed with tannins that lend a very dry feel. Fragrant fruitiness and intense acidity shine through for a very fine wine, likely to age over several decades."

Mouton Rothschild, Pauillac (\$369.99) Label is homage to Baroness Phillipine. It is also one of the best wines of the vintage.

Stickies: A Great Vintage for Sauternes

Doisy-Védrières, Barsac (375ml \$16.99) 94-96 points RP: "The palate is fresh and vibrant on the entry with a fine line of acidity, much more race than recent vintage with citrus lemon, honey and orange peel on the long, persistent finish."

Guiraud, Sauternes (375ml \$22.99) 93-95 points RP: "A perfumed bouquet with clear honey, beeswax and honeysuckle aromas that are well defined. The palate is fresh and taut on the entry: good tension and focus here, very harmonious with a gently build in the mouth towards a satisfying marmalade and quince-driven finish."

Rieussec, Sauternes (375ml \$29.99) 97-98 points JS: "This has a phenomenal finish. It's dense yet agile with dried tropical fruits and spices. Honey, too. Yet so intense and powerful. It really lasts for minutes. Medium sweet yet so fruity and energetic. This shows how you can have ripeness with fruit and then lots of botrytis. Exciting wine."

Climens, Barsac (375ml \$32.99; 750ml \$64.99) 94-96 points RP: "As usual, this Climens is bestowed a sense of volume and persistence in the mouth and you have the sense that this will be a more approachable Barsac... in the top two or three sweet wines of the vintage."

Bordeaux—Some New Arrivals and Re-buys

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

2010 St-Paul, Haut-Médoc (\$14.99) 91-92 points JS: “I really like the polished tannins with mineral, berry and violet character. Full and round. Beautiful.”

2009 Maison Blanche, Médoc (1.5L \$29.99) 91 points WS. We sold over 14,000 bottles of this wine in 750ml—it is stunningly delicious: blackberries and toasty oak abound. Will cellar well for five-plus years. Fresh and vibrant.

2009 Clarendelle Rouge, Bordeaux (1.5L \$34.99) Made by the Haut-Brion people. Excellent power and sweetness. Very good value party wine.

2009 Malmaison, Moulis-en-Médoc (\$19.99) The 24-hectare Château Malmaison in Moulis, Gironde, was purchased by the Rothschilds in 1973 and lies adjacent to Château Clarke. WS: “This has a good sappy feel, with kirsch and cherry preserves flavors laced with a pepper note and a lively tobacco streak.”

2009 Clarke Rothschild, Lustrac (\$24.99) Toasty new oak aromas and flavors. Quite rich and more modern in style. Nice length and depth. These guys are doing well. Ralph: Big solid fruit; long and serious. 70% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon.

2010 Fourcas Hosten, Lustrac (\$19.99) One of the best value Bordeaux in our stores. Clyde gives it 100 points for value vs. price. Very elegant and fruity for a 2010. Enjoy young—very vibrant.

2009 Grand Corbin Manuel, St-Émilion (750ml \$19.99; 1.5L \$39.99) A delicious wine. Quite rich and fruity—typical 2009 Bordeaux with blackberry aromas and flavor. Toasty oak aromas that lead to the palate. Fine texture—a great value. Good now with one hour decanting but will age well for 10 years. 92 points WE.

2009 Capbern Gasqueton, St-Estèphe (\$24.99) Calon-Ségur owns this property and produces this wine with the same level of attention to detail as their flagship wines. This is evident in the quality of the product, which flies under the radar as an excellent wine and superb value from the '09 vintage.

2010 Fleur de Pedesclaux, Pauillac (\$24.99) The Fleur de Pedesclaux is softer and more approachable than the big brother Pedesclaux, but in the same modern style, with plenty of fruit but softer tannins. 50% Cab, 45% Merlot, and 5% Cab Franc. This property is on a roll.

2009 Haut Carles, Fronsac (\$29.99)

This is the first time we have purchased this property. Tons of very ripe blackberry fruit here. Semi-new wave but well-balanced.



2010 Bonalgue, Pomerol (\$34.99) 93 points JS: “Ripe fruity nose with plums, blueberries, tobacco and aniseed. Some vanilla, chocolate and leather. Pure fruit on the palate with medium-full body and good intensity. Velvety texture and outstanding length. Lots of new woods that need to integrate. Tannins still quite firm.”

2010 Poujeaux, Moulis (\$39.99) “Very close in quality to the brilliant 2009, this wine is the superstar of the appellation of Moulis,” notes Robert Parker. 92 points JS.

2009 Phélan-Ségur, St-Estèphe (\$44.99) 93 points JS: “Solid wine. Bright blueberry and floral aromas follow through to a full body, with soft, velvety tannins and a long finish. Best since 1989.”

2010 Langoa-Barton, St-Julien (\$69.99) K&L's great friend Anthony Barton has headed both Léoville-Barton and Langoa-Barton since 1986, and both are made at the Langoa Château. Langoa-Barton is his third growth St-Julien, and a spectacular performer from its 15 hectares of vineyards. 93 points JS.

2010 Croix de Beaucaillou, St-Julien (750ml \$69.99; 1.5L \$149.99) 92 points Neal Martin: “The La Croix de Beaucaillou 2010 has a touch of camphor on the nose that is very ripe and nicely defined—much more modern in style compared to its peers and attractive. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins, plenty of fleshy ripe black fruit and a very composed and quite sophisticated finish.”

2009 Kirwan, Margaux (\$69.99) 94 points JS: “This is a wine that seduces you, with its crushed blackberries and hints of dark chocolate that follow through to a full body and ultra-fine tannins with a tangy, fresh finish. Solid as a rock. Best ever from here.”

2006 Pichon-Lalande, Pauillac (750ml \$149.99; 1.5L \$299.99) 95 points Robert Parker: “The 2006 Pichon Lalande, which blows away the 2005, represents a return to the velvety-textured, rich, sexy style most readers would associate with Pichon Lalande.”

2008 Les Forts de Latour, Pauillac (\$199.99) 92 points Neal Martin: “The Les Forts de Latour 2008 has a vivacious, almost exotic bouquet with macerated dark cherries, kirsch, dried orange peel and a hint of mint. The palate has a sweet, succulent entry with good substance.”

2010 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$279.99) What can you say? 100 points—first growth quality.

2009 Nairac, Sauternes (\$39.99) We have sold over 100 cases of this fabulous sticky at this very low (lowest in U.S.?) price. The last 20 cases have arrived.



Upcoming Bordeaux Events

Saturday, January 30, 2-5pm: Union des Grand Crus de Bordeaux Tasting at the Bently Reserve in San Francisco Featuring over 90 Bordeaux properties pouring the 2013 vintage. Do not miss the fabulous dry whites and Sauternes from 2013. Price per person, \$75.

Monday, April 25: MMD Tasting and Dinner with Six Famous Châteaux Huge-scoring wines of Mouton Rothschild, Ducru-Beaucaillou, Palmer, Pichon-Lalande, Haut-Bailly, and Hosanna; dinner separately. Time, price and place TBD.

2016 Resolution No. 1: Drink More White Bordeaux

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

I must admit it, as the Bordeaux buyer for K&L, I must drink more white Bordeaux in 2016. I love Sancerre and Chablis and Bourgogne Blanc, but white Bordeaux offers some of the best values in the white wine world. As Alex and Ralph are always telling me: “Buy more white Bordeaux—customers are asking for it.” Jacques and I and the LA staff tasted a handful of delicious white Bordeaux on January 3rd at the LA holiday party—they were quite different from each other, but all were delicious and all represented great values. Here are my notes:

2014 Guirauton Blanc, Graves (\$10.99) The 2014s are a combination of the richness of the 2012s and the brisk acidity of the 2013s. This wine is a steal at \$11. Very powerful, intense Sauvignon nose with tons of citrus and lemon peel aromas. Some richness on the palate, but the crisp Sauvignon character shines through here. Bring on the steamed clams.

2013 Mission St-Vincent Blanc, Bordeaux (\$14.99) Very delicate on the nose. Typical 2013 with very brisk citrus acidity and texture. Lemony and very well balanced. Easy to drink—party wine.

2011 Le Thil Comte Clary Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$16.99; February club wine) and **2013 Cantelys Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$19.99)** Both of these properties are now owned by the Cathiards of Smith-Haut-Lafitte, and they are very close to that famous property. Cantelys is next door to Smith and the 2013 is made in the style of Smith—without as much richness. It has a touch of oak on the nose and superb acid balance on the palate with some melon undertones. Spicy and lively. The Le Thil was purchased by the Cathiards in 2012 and this is the last vintage of Le Thil white, as they pulled up all the vines and planted Cabernet. It has a melony aroma and flavor—some peaches too. A perfectly mature white that drinks great right now. 92-93 points JS.



2013 Clos Marsalette Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$21.99) In the Stephan Von Neipperg stable of wines, this wine is quite exotic. Jacques thought it reminded him of a Meursault. Very perfumy oaky aromas and flavor—rich and round but with the great 2013 acidity. Lush wine but perfectly balanced. Perfect with a lobster dish. Great white Bordeaux intro for California Sauvignon Blanc drinkers. 91 points WS.

2013 Brown Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$34.99) 50% Sauvignon Blanc and 50% Sémillon. Slightly oaky aromas that follow to the palate with layers of citrus flavors. Some toasty oak nuances also, with fine acid balance. Extremely well-made. These guys make good value red and white. 93 points WS.



2013 Carbonnieux Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$34.99) Fabulous, complete wine with elegant, slightly oaky, melony, and citric hints. Pure and mouth-filling white in perfect balance. So good—great depth of flavor and sweetness. I love it. 75% Sauvignon Blanc, 25% Sémillon. 93-94 points JS.

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