

Montrachet
Fine Wine Merchants

2022 Bordeaux En Primeur
Tasting notes and opinion

2022 BORDEAUX

Profound and harmonious, an historic vintage

I'm just back from a fortnight in Bordeaux tasting the 2022 vintage and it is clear that it is a magnificent one. Everyone expected the warm, dry summer to give dense, concentrated wines but the 2022s also have unanticipated freshness and elegance. This is one of the most exciting en primeur vintages I have tasted and many of the château owners feel likewise. Henri Lurton at Château Brane Cantenac describes it as 'legendary, like 1945 and 1961' whilst Christian Moueix likens it to 1982. I tasted over 400 wines and this is my selection of those I found most interesting. Having marked wines out of 100 for several years for my own use I have included these scores here for the first time.

After the brief interlude of a cool, wet 2021 season, 2022 sees the return to the warm summers seen in 2018, 2019 and 2020. Fortunately, a wet winter had allowed water reserves to be built up and storms at the end of June provided enough rain in most places to allow the vines to withstand the hot, dry conditions of the three months that followed. The result was a small to average-sized crop of thick-skinned, perfectly ripe and healthy grapes that many growers at the time likened to caviar. There was very little need for any sorting, the only thing lacking was juice.

April was cool (the only month to record below average temperatures) and the growing season started later than in 2021 with only a few vineyards suffering losses from frost. May was warmer and June was hot with temperatures reaching 40C. It was the first of several heatwaves and the warm, sunny weather ensured a good, even and early flowering. By the middle of June, growers were expecting a good-sized crop and the vintage in the middle of September. However, storms struck at the end of June and hail damaged many vineyards both in the northern Médoc (Saint Estèphe in particular) and to the south of Margaux.

July and August saw more days over 40C and very little rainfall. Young vines on free-draining, gravel soils suffered but in most cases the vines coped with the water stress well. Fortunately, night-time temperatures were more modest and acidity levels held up well in contrast to previous hot summers such as 2003 and 2009.

With the fruit in perfect condition, growers could choose their moment to harvest each plot at optimum maturity. Nearly all chose to pick their white grapes and merlot relatively early in order to retain freshness and to avoid excessive alcohol but most decided not to rush the cabernets and petit verdot, resulting in a harvest that often lasted for 3 to 4 weeks.

The thick skins and lack of juice meant that little work was needed to extract sufficient colour and tannin so pumping over was used sparingly and very few practised the more extractive techniques of *délestage* and *pigeage*. Fermentation temperatures were generally low but choices on how long to macerate were more variable as was the decision on how much press wine to add.

Overall the dry whites are fresh, ripe and aromatic. They have more concentrated flavours but less acidity and vitality than 2021. They will be delicious to drink young but lack the minerality and ageing potential of the finest vintages. The reds, in contrast, are dense, rich, generous wines that have a depth and concentration that is only rarely achieved. Many châteaux have made one of their finest wines ever which, given the quality of 2018, 2019 and 2020 makes the 2022s very special indeed. Many growers liken them to previous, great vintages with the older generation mentioning 1961 and 1982. For me, they have the opulence of 2018 and 2020 whilst retaining the freshness and vitality of 2005, 2010 and 2016.

The sweet white wines are similarly successful. The rain finally arrived at the end of September just as the last red grapes were picked and provoked an intense outbreak of the *pourriture noble* essential for the making of fine Sauternes. The richest, most intense wines were harvested in the third and fourth weeks of October with high levels of both sugar and acidity. These are magnificent, opulent wines that remind me of other successful, warm years such as 2005 and 2010.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Charles Taylor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Charles Taylor M.W.

May 2023

PAUILLAC

Château Lafite Rothschild

1er Cru Classé, 94% CS, 5% M, 1% PV

Erik Kohler harvested early from 31st August to 24th September and has made the most elegant wine of the first growths. With satisfactory yields of 35 hl/ha and a high proportion of cabernet sauvignon, this is restrained but has incredible depth and intensity of flavour. Lovely, creamy, blackcurrant nose, and carefully extracted, high quality tannins give structure (13.7% alcohol and 17% vin de presse added) and persistence to a rich, succulent wine. A beautiful, complete wine of exquisite harmony that will age effortlessly. 100 points. Drink 2032-2060.

Château Mouton Rothschild

1er Cru Classé, 92% CS, 8% M

Jean-Emmanuel Danjoy is now responsible for all the Mouton properties; Mouton and d'Armailhac as well as Clerc Milon where he was previously estate director for ten years. The 2022 Mouton is a glorious, full-bodied wine with a beautiful, cedar and cassis nose, a rich, fleshy texture and wonderful length on the finish. 14% alcohol, 50% of the crop was selected for the grand vin and the wine will be aged as usual in 100% new oak barrels. 99 points. Drink 2032-2060.



Château Lafite Rothschild

Château Latour

1er Cru Classé, 92.45% CS, 7.4% M, 0.15% PV

The second successive year of low yields. This time it was the dry summer that reduced the amount of juice in the berries resulting in an average yield of 30.6 hl/ha. Any vines that showed signs of undue stress were marked during the summer and harvested separately. Overall, 39% of the crop was used for the *grand vin* which, as usual, comes from L'Enclos adjoining the cellars. Dark, deep and concentrated, this is a massive Latour with beautiful, ripe fruit, high quality tannins and sufficient acidity to give freshness and vitality. In short, a complete wine that builds in the mouth to an explosive finish and one that will age magnificently. As usual, it won't be released en primeur. 100 points. Drink 2035-2060.

Château Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande

2ème Cru Classé, 78% CS, 17% CF, 5% M

Nicolas Glumineau has now made ten vintages at Pichon Lalande during which time he has converted much of the estate to biodynamic viticulture, increased the proportion of cabernet sauvignon and both deepened and refined the style. In 2022 he brought forward the harvest date, particularly for the merlot which started on the 6th September. The wine has beautiful cedar and blackcurrant aromas, a lovely freshness and vitality on the palate and some of the silkiest tannins to be found in Pauillac. 99 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Pichon Longueville Baron

2ème Cru Classé, 81% CS, 19% M

Pierre Montegut, previously responsible for Château Suduiraut, has taken over from Jean-René Maignon as technical director of all the AXA-owned properties and has made a brilliant 2022. The *grand vin* comes from the finest, most gravelly plots adjacent to Château Latour and represents just 48% of the production of the estate. Deep and rich with beautiful aromas of cassis and cedarwood and a superb, close-knit texture. Perfectly constructed wine that combines power with harmony and a long, persistent finish. First growth quality. 99 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Lynch Bages

5ème Cru Classé, 66% CS, 28% M, 3% PV, 3% CF

Harvesting was prompt and swift with all the estate's 90 hectares being picked in less than 2 weeks between 12th and 24th September. Deep and dense, this has wonderful blackcurrant and cedar aromas and beautiful, ripe fruit on the palate. Impressive, close-knit texture and a sumptuous, sweet finish. 14.2% alcohol and will be aged for 18 months in 75% new oak barrels. A complete wine of second rather than fifth growth quality. 97 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Duhart Milon

4ème Cru Classé, 78% CS, 22% M

Much of the merlot is now used for the second wine, Moulin de Duhart, and the strict selection (50%) coupled with low yields of 30 hl/ha have given additional depth and concentration to the *grand vin*. Beautiful, blackcurrant aromas and excellent structure and freshness make this the finest Duhart that I've tasted en primeur. A truly elegant Pauillac that will be accessible young but age gloriously. 97 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Clerc Milon

5ème Cru Classé, 59% CS, 32% M, 8% CF, 1% C

Caroline Artaud has been estate director at Clerc Milon since 2020 and has made another full-bodied, fleshy wine with masses of ripe, blackcurrant fruit, a dash of toasty oak and a rich, generous texture. Harvested a little later than at Mouton and with a higher proportion of merlot, this is a burly 14.5% alcohol and will be aged in 55% new oak casks. A splendid, flavoursome wine with a great future. 96 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Grand Puy Lacoste

5ème Cru Classé, 79% CS, 21% M

As is often the case, Francois-Xavier Borie and technical director Christel Spinner decided to pick relatively early starting the merlot on 7th September and finishing the cabernet by 23rd September. 60% of the crop from the estate's 64 hectares was selected for the *grand vin* which is a typically fresh and powerful wine. Lovely, cedary notes on the nose and fresh, brambly fruit on the palate give a rich, generous wine with excellent vitality and persistence. Has the structure to age magnificently. 96 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château d'Armailhac

5ème Cru Classé, 60% CS, 22% M, 16% CF, 2% PV

The freshest and most forward of the Mouton wines thanks to the early harvest, the significant proportion of cabernet franc and the careful extraction of tannins. A lovely, elegant wine with vivid, ripe, blackcurrant fruit, a fresh, silky texture and a long, succulent finish. Will be aged in 50% new oak. 95 points. Drink 2030-2045.

Château Pontet Canet

5ème Cru Classé, 57% CS, 35% M, 4% PV, 4% CF

Matthieu Bessonnet took over from Jean-Michel Comme as technical director at this large, 81 hectare, biodynamic estate in 2020 after five years at Chapoutier in the Rhône. The challenge in 2022 was to protect the fruit from the heat and sun which involved three treatments with kaolin. The harvest was the earliest ever at Pontet Canet but still a few days later than most, lasting from 8th to 28th September. The fruit was destemmed by hand and the cabernet sauvignon was given a light crushing to avoid the risk of any unfermented sugar being left in the wine. All the *vin de presse* was added and this is a rich, opulent wine with 14.7% alcohol, full-bodied and burly with a dense, tannic structure. Not the most elegant but plenty of concentration and character.

95 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Pédesclaux

5ème Cru Classé, 68% CS, 22% M, 7% CF, 3% PV

Harvested from 12th to 27th September, this is the first vintage to be certified organic. A beautiful, generous wine produced in the Jean-Michel Wilmotte designed winery. Masses of spice and blackcurrant fruit together with a ripe, juicy texture. Finishes fresh and long.

95 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Haut Batailley

5ème Cru Classé, 70% CS, 30% M

Jean-Charles Cazes and the Lynch Bages team continue to make great progress at this fine fifth growth that they acquired in 2017. The wine has extra depth and richness now and the 2022 is the best ever with beautiful, cassis fruit and a rich, succulent texture. Combines depth and elegance and boasts a long, sweet aftertaste. The percentage of new oak barrels has increased to 65% and this will age effortlessly. 96 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Batailley

5ème Cru Classé, 75% CS, 22% M, 3% PV

This splendid wine will be bottled with a special label commemorating the late Queen Elizabeth II. Philippe Castéja continues to improve the quality here and this is the finest young Batailley that I've ever tasted. Rich and aromatic with ripe, blackcurrant fruit, fine tannins and fresh acidity. A magnificent, full-bodied wine that has impressive vitality and will age gracefully. 95 points.

Drink 2032-2045.

Château Haut Bages Libéral

5ème Cru Classé, 87% CS, 13% M

Claire Villars has made another highly successful wine that combines depth with fine freshness and purity of flavour. With a generous (by 2022 standards) yield of 45 hl/ha this is ripe and generous with sweet, blackcurrant aromas and a rich, juicy texture. The vines lie immediately to the north of Château Latour with further plots on the plateau of Bages and the whole estate has been certified organic since 2019. The 2022 will be aged 40% in new oak barrels, 40% in one year old barrels and 20% in cement vats and amphorae. 95 points.

Drink 2032-2045.

Château Grand Puy Ducasse

5ème Cru Classé, 58% CS, 40% M, 2% PV

An excellent effort from this 40 hectare estate, owned by Crédit Agricole since 2004, which has made significant progress of late. 2% of petit verdot is included in the blend for the first time adding spice & structure. 70% of the production was selected for the *grand vin* which will be aged in 40% new oak barrels. Dense cassis with sweet cedar notes, lively fruit, fresh acidity and firm but ripe tannins. Should be one of the best value Pauillac *crus classés*. 94 points. Drink 2032-2040.

Château Lynch Moussas

5ème Cru Classé, 74% CS, 26% M

The Castéja family continue to make progress at their less well-known but excellent value fifth growth. Made by the same team as at Batailley, the wine shares a similar rich, generous style. A little burly with chunkier tannins but plenty of fruit and a delightful hint of spice from ageing in 57% new oak barrels. 94 points.

Drink 2030-2040.

Château Bellegrave

60% CS, 40% M

Ludovic and Julien Meffre own this small but perfectly-sited estate that lies at the southern end of the appellation surrounded by the vines of Châteaux Latour, Pichon Baron and Lynch Bages. A deep, rich, fruity Pauillac that has masses of dark cherry and blackcurrant fruit together with a touch of spicy oak. A great success and brilliant value in an increasingly expensive appellation. 93 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Haut Bages Monpelou

70% CS, 27% M, 3% CF

Owned by and run in tandem with Château Batailley whose vineyards it adjoins. An attractive, ripe, juicy wine with good structure and a sweet finish. Good value, chunky Pauillac. 92 points. Drink 2030-2038.

SAINT JULIEN

Château Ducru Beaucaillou

2ème Cru Classé, 82% CS, 18% M

Bruno Borie and technical director Emmanuel Bonneau harvested the merlot early (from 7th September) to retain freshness but waited for the cabernet to achieve full maturity (finishing on 4th October) and have fashioned a beautiful, elegant wine that combines rich, opulent dark fruits with excellent freshness and precision. Has impressive depth and concentration together with the creamy texture reminiscent of the great mature vintages of Ducru (1953, 1961, 1982, 2000, 2005). A truly fine wine with flamboyant yet classic character that will be aged in 100% new oak barrels. One of the wines of the vintage. 99 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Léoville Las Cases

2ème Cru Classé, 83.5% CS, 10.5% CF, 6% M

Jean-Hubert Delon has made a wine with an exceptionally high proportion of cabernet and this is monumental with intense flavour, firm but ripe tannins and a impressive, long aftertaste. Classic Médoc that combines the fruit of Saint Julien with the structure of Pauillac. Backward at present and not as sumptuous as many, but has great potential and will handsomely reward those willing to wait. 98 points. Drink 2035-2055.

Château Léoville Barton

2ème Cru Classé, 83% CS, 11.5% M, 5.5% CF

This magnificent, 50 hectare estate has one of the highest average ages (38 years) of vines in the Médoc. Always a dense, concentrated wine with fine ageing potential, the 2022 Léoville Barton also has splendid succulence and an opulence that will make it approachable when young. Beautiful, cedar and blackcurrant aromas, firm but ripe tannins and a generous texture make this a complete wine that will age spectacularly. 98 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Léoville Poyferré

2ème Cru Classé, 58% CS, 34% M, 4% CF, 4% PV

Harvested between 8th and 28th September at an average yield of 33 hl/ha. Technical director, Isabelle Davin, gave the wine a 6 to 8 day pre-fermentation, cold maceration. One of the richest wines of Saint Julien with 14.4% alcohol and plenty of firm but ripe tannins. The impressive, dense structure will guarantee a long life. Will be aged in 80% new oak barrels. 97 points. Drink 2032-2050.



The new vat room at Château Langoa Barton

Château Gruaud Larose

2ème Cru Classé, 83% CS, 14% M, 3% CF

Owned by the Merlaut family, this substantial, 82 hectare property comprises a single block on a splendid, gravel plateau at the southern end of Saint Julien. Since her arrival from Ducru Beaucaillou in 2019, technical director Virginie Sallette has converted the whole estate to organic viticulture. The 2022 is a dense, rich, concentrated wine with a beautiful flavour of blackcurrant, small red berries and a hint of spice. Powerful tannins add structure and this is a serious, age-worthy wine that will benefit from cellaring. 13.5% alcohol and will be aged in 95% new oak barrels. 97 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Beychevelle

4ème Cru Classé, 54% CS, 42% M, 4% PV

Estate director, Philippe Blanc, has been at Beychevelle since 1995 and the new winery, built in 2016, is equipped with 59 stainless steel tanks which allow him to vinify each plot separately. The wines have gained in precision and the 2022 is a beautiful, rich textured wine with magnificent, sweet fruit and fine freshness and elegance. Yields were satisfactory at 36 hl/ha and the wine will be aged in 70% new oak barrels. One of the most elegant wines of the appellation. 97 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Langoa Barton

3ème Cru Classé, 56.5% CS, 41% M, 2.5% CF

Vinified in the new cellar at Langoa which houses a magnificent range of oak vats varying in size from 80 hl to 200 hl. Technical director François Brehant has been bringing greater elegance and generosity to Langoa in recent years and this is another fine example of classic Saint Julien that oozes breed and charm whilst retaining the traditional Langoa sturdiness. Harvested from 8th to 23rd September at yields of 30 hl/ha, the 2022 Langoa has 14.2% alcohol, excellent freshness and acidity and will be aged in 60% new oak barrels. 96 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Talbot

4ème Cru Classé, 70% CS, 25% M, 5% PV

Jean-Michel Laporte, estate director since 2018, has made the fruitiest, most delicious wine of Saint Julien. Cropped at a satisfying 40 hl/ha, this is fresh and ripe with a modest 13.5% alcohol and a lovely mixture of red and black fruits. The high average age of the vines (42 years) gives depth and concentration and the carefully extracted tannins and fresh acidity provide structure and length to the finish. 96 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Branaire Ducru

4ème Cru Classé, 60.5% CS, 31.5% M, 5.5% CF, 2.5% PV

Technical director, Jean-Dominique Videau, has made a typically elegant and refined Branaire. Harvested from 12th to 24th September at an average yield of 34.5 hl/ha and vinified in the new winery which houses 75 stainless steel vats. Rich (14.3% alcohol) and concentrated with fine, blackcurrant fruit and a splendid, generous texture. Excellent acidity maintains fine vitality and the finish is long and fresh. A lovely, complete wine that will be aged in 60% new oak barrels. 96 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Saint Pierre

4ème Cru Classé, 80% CS, 12% M, 6% CF, 2% PV

At 17 hectares, this is the smallest cru classé in Saint Julien and is run by brother and sister, Jean and Vanessa Triaud, together with technical director, Rémi di Constanzo. This is their second year in conversion to an organic and biodynamic estate and produced the same yields as the 2021 vintage (34 hl/ha). The 2022 is a typically rich Saint Pierre; dense and concentrated with vivid, dark fruits and a touch of spicy oak. Firm but ripe tannins add structure and the finish is sweet and long. 95 points. Drink 2032-2045.

La Croix Ducru Beaucaillou

66% M, 32% CS, 2% PV

Not really a second wine as it is produced from the best plots of the estate's vineyards that lie in the centre of the appellation just to the west of the D2 road. The high proportion of merlot gives a vividly fruity wine with wonderful cedary, blackberry aromas, a rich, generous texture and an impressive, long aftertaste. Will be aged in 80% new oak barrels. 95 points. Drink 2032-2042.

Le Petit Ducru de Ducru Beaucaillou

75% M, 20% CS, 5% PV

The third label used by Bruno Borie for his Saint Julien wines where he owns a total of 105 hectares. The majority of the fruit for this wine comes from the 25 hectares at the western extremity of the appellation purchased by his father from Château Lagrange in the 1970s and previously sold as Château Lalande Borie. With a high proportion of merlot, this is an atypical Saint Julien but is beautifully crafted with soft, succulent fruit and wonderful freshness. Will be aged in 40% new oak barrels and be delicious at an early age. 93 points. Drink 2029-2036.

Clos du Marquis

44.5% CS, 45.5% M, 10% CF

From the vineyards owned by Château Léoville Las Cases which lie on the western side of the D2 opposite the Grand Clos which is now reserved for the *grand vin*. The higher proportion of merlot gives a lovely succulence to what remains a deep, serious wine that will mature magnificently. Beautiful cassis fruit, silky tannins and excellent freshness; a complete wine that will be aged in 53% new oak barrels. 96 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Lagrange (St Julien)

3ème Cru Classé, 86% CS, 12% M, 2% PV

The cabernet sauvignon in the eastern section of the vast Lagrange estate, on the border with Gruaud Larose, was of such high quality that technical director Matthieu Bordes decided to produce a Lagrange with the highest ever proportion included in the blend. The strict selection (40% of the crop used in the *grand vin*) resulted in one of the most concentrated and powerful Lagranges ever. Deep, black plum and cassis on the nose, firm tannins balanced by sweet fruit on the palate and an impressive, long aftertaste. 94 points. Drink 2030-2042.

Château Gloria

50% CS, 35% M, 9% PV, 6% CF

A fine, non-classified growth owned and run by the Triaud family who also own fourth growth Château Saint Pierre. Masses of ripe red and black fruit and a plump, generous texture. Will be aged in 40% new oak barrels with a small amount in clay amphorae to preserve the maximum of fruit and freshness. A lovely wine that will be approachable young but with the harmony and balance to age gracefully. 94 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Moulin Riche

65% CS, 25% M, 10% PV

From a 20 hectare property in the north-west corner of the Saint Julien appellation that was acquired by the Cuvelier family in 1920 along with Léoville-Poyferré. Has the same, bold flavour as Poyferré in a chunkier, less refined style. Dense and concentrated with firm but ripe tannins that guarantee a fine future. Will be aged in 25% new oak barrels. 93 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château du Glana

65% CS, 35% M

60 hectare estate owned by brothers Ludovic and Julien Meffre who make the wine aided by consultant oenologist, Christophe Ollivier. This is the richest du Glana ever with dense, ripe fruit and an opulence rarely found at this level. Has a wonderful, succulent texture and an impressive, long finish. 93 points. Drink 2029-2038.

SAINT ESTEPHE

Château Cos d'Estournel

2ème Cru Classé, 61% CS, 37% M, 1% CF, 1% PV

Technical director Dominique Arangoits was delighted with the quality from the estate's old merlot vines (some are 107 years old) and has included a good proportion of the grape variety in the blend for the *grand vin*. Harvested from 7th to 23rd September (the earliest since 1989) the 2022 is a full-bodied, gusty Cos with rich, black fruits, a dense, close-knit texture and firm but ripe tannins. The most backward of the top Saint Estèphes but with great potential. 96 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Montrose

2ème Cru Classé, 66% CS, 25% M, 8% CF, 1% PV

Pierre Graffeuille (previously in charge of Léoville Las Cases) has taken over the management of this fine 95 hectare estate from Hervé Berland and has made a winning start. The dry summer and consequent low yields (30hl/ha), together with an early harvest (2nd to 22nd September) and a strict selection (52% of the crop) has given a dense but elegant wine full of fresh fruit and a ripe, generous texture. Builds in the mouth to a fabulous, long finish. 98 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Calon Ségur

3ème Cru Classé, 70% CS, 24% M, 5% CF, 1% PV

One of the richest, ripest Calons ever. Harvested from 6th to 27th September with low yields of 26 hl/ha. Deep, rich and powerful with 15% alcohol, masses of dark fruit and a touch of spicy oak. A big, bold, flamboyant wine with carefully extracted, ripe tannins and a long, lingering finish. Will spend 20 months in 100% new oak barrels. A remarkable wine from estate director Vincent Millet and consultant Eric Boissenot. 96 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Lafon Rochet

4ème Cru Classé, 65% CS, 31% M, 4% CF

The first vintage made by estate director Christophe Congé who has joined Lafon Rochet after 22 years at Lafite. Jacky Lorenzetti added this fine, 41 hectare estate to his expanding portfolio of châteaux (Pédesclaux, d'Issan, Lilian Ladouys) in 2021 and continues to make a rich, generous style of Saint Estèphe. Ripe and fruity with a touch of spicy oak. Well-endowed with chunky tannins and a long aftertaste. 94 points. Drink 2032-2042.

Château Ormes de Pez

51% M, 39% CS, 8% CF, 2% PV

Owned by the Cazes family of Lynch Bages since 1940, this is consistently one of the finest non-classified châteaux in the Médoc. Rich and generous, it combines, lovely, creamy, blackcurrant fruit with firm but ripe tannins. Harvested a week after Lynch Bages, the low yields (29 hl/ha) following hail at the end of June have given impressive weight and concentration. 14.3% alcohol and will be aged for 16 months in 45% new oak. 93 points. Drink 2032-2042.

Château Capbern

53% CS, 44% M, 2% PV, 1% CF

Owned by Château Calon-Ségur and run by Vincent Millet, this splendid estate has its own cellar in the centre of the village and makes one of the very best value wines in Saint Estèphe. Spicy and aromatic, this is a full-bodied, gutsy wine with masses of red and black cherry fruit. Will be aged in 60% new oak barrels. 93 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Le Crock

44% CS, 40% M, 11% CF, 5% PV

This fine 32 hectare estate is beautifully positioned immediately to the north of Cos d'Estournel and is owned by the Cuvelier family of Léoville Poyferré. The wine is made by the Poyferré team headed by Isabelle Davin together with consultant oenologist, Antoine Médeville. Spring frost and hail in June reduced the yield to 21hl/ha. A dense, concentrated wine with a full-bodied, tannic structure that will demand patience. 14.7% alcohol and will be aged in 30% new oak barrels. 93 points. Drink 2032-2040.

Château Lilian Ladouys

52 % M , 40 % CS, 8% PV

Acquired by Jacky Lorenzetti in 2008, the estate is now run by his daughter Manon. In 2020, the château was classified as one of only 14 *crus bourgeois exceptionnels*. The 2022 is a lovely, open wine, full of fruit and high quality tannins. Most attractive with a gentleness and succulence rarely found in Saint Estèphe. Finishes sweet and generous. 92 points. Drink 2030-2038.

MARGAUX

Château Margaux

1er Cru Classé, 92% CS, 6% M, 2% CF

Philippe Bascaules has made a brilliant wine that combines power, charm and elegance. 25mm of rain in the middle of August provided sufficient relief to the vines to enable them to produce a small (25 hl/ha) but perfectly ripe crop of thick-skinned, healthy fruit. Harvested from 8th to 27th September, only 40% of the crop was selected for the *grand vin* which includes 18% of *vin de presse*, the highest ever. Beautiful, creamy, blackcurrant and cedar aromas and vivid, pure, fresh fruit on the palate. Wonderful, seamless texture and a long, sweet, succulent finish. 100 points. Drink 2032-2055.

Château Palmer

3ème Cru Classé, 51% CS, 45% M, 4% PV

The second year of low yields (22 hl/ha), this time as a result of the dry summer. The harvest lasted over a month (7th September to 6th October) with each plot being picked at the optimum moment. A rich, opulent wine with masses of dark fruits, a sumptuous texture (14.4% alcohol) and powerful, ripe tannins. Will be aged for 12 months in 225 litre oak *barriques* (60% new) followed by a second year in 30hl oak *foudres* from Seguin Moreau and Stockinger. 98 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Brane Cantenac

2ème Cru Classé, 74% CS, 23% M, 1% CF, 1% PV, 1% C

Henri Lurton has been running this estate for over 25 years and considers the 2022 his finest ever; a beautiful, elegant wine with lovely, creamy, blackcurrant fruit, a wonderful, succulent texture and an impressive, long finish. Only 38% of the crop was used for the *grand vin*, which is now produced exclusively from the old vines on the Cantenac plateau directly in front of the château. With a high proportion of cabernet and ageing in 100% new oak barrels, this is the closest in style to Château Margaux and brilliant value. 97 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Rauzan Ségla

2ème Cru Classé, 72% CS, 26% M, 2% PV

Nicolas Audebert picked promptly, from 2nd to 28th September. The result is a fragrant, carefully extracted wine with wonderful freshness and a rich, succulent texture. Only half the crop was used for the *grand vin* which has 14.5% alcohol and will be aged in 50% new oak barrels. A beautiful, seamless wine that combines power and elegance. 97 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Lascombes

2ème Cru Classé, 67% CS, 30% M, 3% PV

2022 marks the start of a new era at this large estate that boasts 120 hectares of vines within the Margaux appellation. Acquired in 2022 by Gaylon Lawrence, owner of Heitz Cellar amongst other Californian wineries, the 2022 vintage has a higher proportion of cabernet sauvignon, will be aged in only 60% new oak barrels, and is, crucially, the result of a much stricter selection (200,000 bottles of *grand vin* instead of 300,000 in the past). Continuity is provided by technical director Delphine Barboux and consultant Michel Rolland who have both been at Lascombes since 2001. The 2022 has the same, generous style of previous vintages but with fresher, more precise fruit, higher quality tannins and a finer, more persistent aftertaste. 96 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Malescot St Exupéry

3ème Cru Classé, 55% CS, 40% M, 5% PV

Jean-Luc Zuger consistently makes a rich, fleshy style of Margaux from his 24 hectares of vineyards and this is no exception. Dark, dense and concentrated with plenty of dark, brambly fruit and well-endowed with tannin, this needs time to harmonise but will reward those with patience. Finishes sweet and long. 96 points. Drink 2032-2045.



Foudres at Château Palmer

Château Durfort Vivens

2ème Cru Classé, 84% CS, 16% M

Gonzague Lurton has farmed this fine 62 hectare estate biodynamically since 2016 and now ages 30% of the crop in terracotta amphorae of between 300 and 700 litres. The balance (70%) is aged in new oak barrels. The 2022 harvest was managed in two *tris*, the first between 1st and 15th September and the second from 19th September to 12th October. The extended picking enabled all the fruit to be harvested at the optimum moment and the result is a beautiful, harmonious wine of 13.5% alcohol with rich, fresh, juicy fruit and a sweet, sumptuous texture. 96 points. Drink 2030-2045.

Château Giscours

3ème Cru Classé, 64% CS, 30% M, 3% PV, 3% CF

This fine, 60 hectare estate consistently makes one of the richer, more generous wines of the appellation and 2022 is one of the best ever. This was the first year that estate director Alexander Van Beek harvested the entire crop in stages, with 4 rounds of picking taking place between the 1st and 30th September. Yields were relatively low at 27 hl/ha but the quality of fruit was exceptionally high, enabling the château to use the entire crop for the *grand vin*. Rich and aromatic with vivid, plum and blackcurrant fruit on both the nose and palate. Full-bodied with firm but ripe tannins and a long, fresh finish. 95 points. Drink 2030-2045.

Château du Tertre

5ème Cru Classé, 57% CS, 23% M, 15% PV, 5% CF

From a single 52 hectare plot at the highest part of the appellation (tertre meaning hillock) this is an immensely attractive wine with sweet, juicy fruit and carefully extracted, silky tannins. A high quality crop means 60% of the production will be used for the *grand vin*. Will spend 18 months in 50% new oak barrels. 95 points. Drink 2030-2042.

Château Ferrière

3ème Cru Classé, 67% CS, 27% M, 5% PV, 1% CF

Claire Villars, like her husband Gonzague Lurton, runs her estate biodynamically. With 25 hectares of vines, this is one of the smallest *crus classés* but is blessed with 8 hectares of vines planted in the 1950s from which comes much of the *grand vin*. Beautiful, fresh, cassis nose and vivid fruit on the palate. Has an impressive, close-knit texture, firm but ripe tannins and a lovely, sweet aftertaste. Will be aged 35% in new oak barrels, 35% in one year old barrels, 20% in concrete vats and 10% in terracotta amphorae. 94 points. Drink 2030-2042.

Château Prieuré Lichine

4ème Cru Classé, 65% CS, 30% M, 5% PV

One of the larger (72 hectares) Margaux classed growths with vines spread over the four communes of the Margaux appellation. The wine-making is in the highly capable hands of Etienne Charrier with the help of consultant Stéphane Derenoncourt. The 2022 was harvested between 12th and 29th September at an average yield of 34 hl/ha. 58% of the crop was selected for the *grand vin* which is rich and aromatic with masses of fruit and firm but ripe tannins. One of the best ever vintages of this improving château. 94 points. Drink 2030-2042.

Château Angludet

47% M, 40% CS, 13% PV

Owned by the Sichel family since 1961, the 32 hectares of vineyards are currently managed by Ben Sichel who has converted the estate to biodynamic viticulture and introduced the use of clay amphorae. After a summer when temperatures in the vines reached 48C, the 2022 has great concentration with superb structure and intensity and is packed with fresh, ripe flavours of red and black berries. 65% of the crop will be aged in traditional 225 litre French oak barrels (of which 30% are new) with the balance in 700 litre clay amphorae. 94 points. Drink 2030-2042.

Château Mongravey

68% CS, 30% M, 2% CF

Created by the Bernaleau family in 1981, Château Mongravey, one of only three *crus bourgeois supérieurs* in the Margaux appellation, has vines lying between Châteaux Giscours and du Tertre. The Bernaleaus are great fans of the Pulsair system of breaking up the cap of skins during fermentation and consistently produce rich, generous, fruity wines. The 2022 is ripe and fleshy with vivid plum and cassis fruit and a sweet, succulent texture. 93 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Pavil de Luze

90% CS, 10% M

This fine 32 hectare estate lies in the commune of Soussans at the northern end of the Margaux appellation. Acquired by the de Luze family in 1862, the property has been managed since 2004 by Frédéric de Luze. Since 2017, Stéphane Derenoncourt has been employed as consultant and the wines have gained in both structure and elegance. The 2022 is a lovely wine; rich, fat and generous with remarkable power and freshness derived from the high proportion of cabernet sauvignon. Will be aged in 40% new oak barrels. 92 points. Drink 2028-2036.

MEDOC

Château La Lagune

3ème Cru Classé, Haut-Médoc, 52% CS, 45% M, 3% PV

Caroline Frey, whose family also own Paul Jaboulet Aîné in the Rhône, farms this substantial 80 hectare estate organically and it is certified as such. Beautiful blackcurrant and plum fruit, together with firm but ripe tannins give a rich, generous wine that will age magnificently. Well-structured with a long, sweet, gutsy aftertaste. Will be aged in no more than 40% new oak so that the fruit can shine through. 95 points. Drink 2030-2045.

Château Cantemerle

5ème Cru Classé, Haut-Médoc, 70% CS, 20% M, 5% CF, 5% PV

Laure Canu (previously at Château Angélus) is beginning to settle in as director of this substantial 96 hectare estate owned since the 1980s by the French SMA insurance group. Harvested from 12th to 27th September, this has a lovely, bright nose of violet and red fruits with carefully extracted tannins producing a soft, generous texture. The judicious use of oak (40% new barrels, 40% one year old and 20% two years old) adds structure and complexity. A most attractive, forward wine that is balanced and well-integrated. Will be delicious young but age gracefully. 94 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château de Camensac

5ème Cru Classé, Haut-Médoc, 59% CS, 41% M

This charming property lies just outside the appellation of Saint Julien. Owner Jean-Pierre Foubet has gradually been increasing the proportion of cabernet sauvignon in the vineyards and the wine is gaining in both stature and charm. Harvested between 8th and 27th September with an average yield of 30 hl/ha, this is one of the finest vintages of Camensac ever with a vibrant mix of red and black fruits, gentle spice and excellent freshness. Will be great value if it remains one of the least expensive *crus classés* on the market. 93 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Chasse Spleen

Moulis-en-Médoc, 54% CS, 39% M, 5% PV, 2% CF

Run by Céline Villars and her husband Jean-Pierre Foubet, this is one of the best known family-owned chateaux in Moulis. The harvest began on 15th September and due to the dry summer, produced a reduced yield of 34hl/ha. The result is a rich, concentrated wine with ripe, black fruits, solid tannins and fine freshness. Will be aged in 40% new oak. This is Céline's 23rd vintage and she believes that it is her best one yet. 94 points. Drink 2030-2042.

Château Fourcas Dupré

Listrac-Médoc, 55% CS, 45% M

Gérard Jicquel bought the estate in 2019 and has embarked on a programme of major renovations. The new winery should be finished for the 2023 harvest but, in the meantime, the splendid 2022 Fourcas Dupré is ageing in the old cellars which will be demolished in due course. Estate director Lucas Leclercq has added more substance to the mid palate since his arrival from Lafon Rochet in 2019 and this is probably the best ever Fourcas Dupré. Rich and generous with carefully extracted tannins and a long aftertaste. Has all the freshness typical of Listrac without the austerity. 93 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château d'Agassac

Haut-Médoc, 50% CS, 47% M, 3% CF

Gérard Jicquel purchased this estate in 2021 and has plans to build a hotel at d'Agassac but for the moment he is concentrating on improving the vineyards. He has installed Lucas Leclercq as estate director. Half the crop was lost to hail on 20th June and the resultant wine is the most concentrated ever. Deep, dark and brooding with intense, blackcurrant fruit and a sweet, opulent texture. The 2022 will be aged 50% in new oak barrels, 30% in vat and 20% in amphorae. 93 points. Drink 2028-2038.

Château Mauvesin Barton

Moulis-en-Médoc, 55% M, 36% CS, 9% CF

Owned by the Barton family since 2011, the estate has been making steady progress and this is the most generous and complete wine made so far. With several springs and a moisture retaining soil, the vines were unaffected by the summer drought and the wine has vivid fruit with a lovely, juicy texture and a sweet, succulent finish. 92 points. Drink 2028-2036.

Château Sénéjac

Haut-Médoc, 47% CS, 34% M, 13% CF, 6% PV

This is a well-sited, 37 hectare property that lies just outside the Margaux appellation. Owned since 1999 by the Cordier family of Château Talbot, the wine is made by the same team in a similar fruity, generous style. Fresh and ripe with carefully extracted tannins and a gentle, succulent texture. 13.5% alcohol and will be aged in 30% new oak. 92 points. Drink 2028-2036.

Château Cissac

Haut-Médoc, 49% CS, 43% M, 5.5% PV, 2.5% Malbec

A full-bodied, concentrated wine as a result of the low yield (25 hl/ha). Spring frost, hail damage in June and a dry summer reduced the production of *grand vin* to just 180,000 bottles from the estate's 61 hectares that lie inland from Pauillac and Saint Estèphe. Rich and tannic, this will benefit from a few years ageing. 91 points. Drink 2028-2036.

PESSAC-LEOGNAN & GRAVES

Château Haut Brion

1er Cru Classé, 54% M, 35% CS, 11% CF

The second earliest vintage on record (after 2003) with the black grapes being harvested from 29th August to 14th September. Vinified in a temporary but superbly equipped winery whilst the chateau's new cellars are being built. Low yields (32 hl/ha) following the dry summer have given a dense, concentrated wine of 14.5% alcohol with rich, spicy aromas and plenty of opulent, plummy fruit. Firm but ripe tannins give impressive structure despite the addition of only 2% press wine. A complete, harmonious wine with all the elements for a magnificent future. 99 points. Drink 2032-2055.

Château La Mission Haut Brion

Cru Classé, 52% CS, 43% M, 5% CF

Made by the same team (Jean-Philippe Delmas, Jean-Philippe Masclef, Pascal Baratié and Florence Forgas) as Haut Brion but the wine has a more open, vividly fruity character. Plenty of structure from the higher proportion of cabernet matched by a beautiful, sumptuous texture. Fresh and exuberant with masses of plummy fruit and an impressive, long aftertaste. 98 points. Drink 2030-2050.

Château Smith Haut Lafitte

Cru Classé, 64% CS, 32% M, 3% CF, 1% PV

Certified organic since 2019 and now working with several biodynamic practices. The harvest took place between the 20th and 30th September with ageing in 60% new oak barrels from the château's own cooperage which sources its wood from 200 year old trees in the forests of Jupilles and Tronçais. Their tight grain limits the ingress of oxygen, preserving the maximum of freshness of fruit. Dense and concentrated with a thick, close-knit texture and massive structure from the firm tannins. 96 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Domaine de Chevalier

Cru Classé, 65% CS, 30% M, 3% PV, 2% CF

Olivier Bernard has now made forty vintages at Domaine de Chevalier and the 2022 will be bottled with a commemorative label of a galloping horse. The plantings of the 1980s and 1990s that extended the red wine vineyards to 60 hectares are now mature vines and giving magnificent wine. The 2022 is the finest wine ever with a depth and concentration never seen before, coupled with excellent vitality and perfect ripeness of fruit. Will be aged in a mixture of 225 litre barrels and larger oak *foudres*. 97 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Haut Bailly

Cru Classé, 56% CS, 37% M, 5% PV, 2% CF

Véronique Sanders and technical director Gabriel Vialard have followed the delicious 2021 with a monumental 2022 that is both refined and powerful. Beautiful fruit, a rich, close-knit texture and the finest tannins that I've ever tasted in a young Haut Bailly. Will be approachable young but has the capacity to age effortlessly for decades. 97 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château de Fieuzal

Cru Classé, 50% CS, 45% M, 5% PV

Estate director, Stephen Carrier, has refined the style and this is the most elegant Fieuzal that I've ever tasted. Picked early from 1st to 26th September, the fruit for the *grand vin* was given 5 days cold maceration at 5C without the addition of any sulphur. Fresh, ripe, red cherry and blackcurrant fruit on the nose, silky tannins and a generous texture. Immensely attractive but has a natural concentration from the vintage and finishes sweet and long. If the price remains reasonable, will be one of the bargains of the vintage. 95 points. Drink 2030-2045.

Château Pape Clément

Cru Classé, 60% CS, 40% M

Bernard Magrez's flagship property that sits in the commune of Pessac surrounded by housing. Always rich and generous, the 2022 is ripe and opulent whilst retaining fine freshness and acidity. 95 points. Drink 2030-2045.

Domaine de la Solitude

Pessac-Léognan, 60% CS, 35% M, 5% PV

Olivier Bernard of Domaine de Chevalier rents this vineyard from a religious foundation, the Sisters of La Sainte Famille. Situated 5 km to the south-west of Domaine de Chevalier in the commune of Martillac, the soil is similar but a little sandier. The improvements that Olivier Bernard has made since 1993 are now paying off and the wine has a depth and quality not seen before. The 2022 is a rich, ripe, opulent wine with vivid fruit and a touch of toasty oak. Sweet and generous, this will be enjoyable young but age gracefully. 93 points. Drink 2028-2035.

Château Civrac Lagrange

Pessac-Léognan, 50% CS, 40% M, 10% PV

From a small property adjacent to Domaine de Chevalier, this is rich and concentrated with intense brambly fruit in a ripe, opulent style. Will be aged in 50% new oak barrels. 92 points. Drink 2028-2035.

Vieux Château Gaubert

Graves rouge, 50% CS, 50% M

Dominique Haverlan now has 150 hectares of vines and this is his finest property in the Graves appellation. Situated at Portets with vines in neighbouring Beautiran, this is as good as many wines from Pessac-Léognan. Rich and powerful with masses of dark fruits and a fine, full-bodied structure. 92 points. Drink 2028-2035.

POMEROL

Vieux Château Certan

Pomerol, 75% M, 20% CF, 5% CS

This is another great success from Alexandre and Guillaume Thienpont who have recently put together a string of superb vintages. This is a rich, sunny wine with ripe, opulent fruit, silky tannins and a succulent finish. Highly aromatic, it will drink well when young but has the depth and concentration to age magnificently. Yields were amongst the highest on the Pomerol plateau and only two thirds of the crop was used for the *grand vin*, essentially all the old vines plus the relatively recent plantings of cabernet sauvignon. Will be aged in 65% new oak barrels from Seguin-Moreau and Sylvain. 98 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château La Fleur Pétrus

Pomerol, 96.5% M, 3% CF, 0.5% PV

One of the Moueix family's finest properties which has its origins, as its name implies, just to the north of Châteaux Lafleur and Pétrus. It has recently been extended to 19 hectares by the acquisition of further plots on the Pomerol plateau. Harvested promptly from 1st to 19th September this is beautifully fresh with amazing depth, concentration and a beautiful, seamless texture. 98 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château La Conseillante

Pomerol, 87% M, 13% CF

This fine estate lies in front of Château Cheval Blanc with its vines straddling the Saint Emilion-Pomerol border. Marielle Cazaux harvested between 5th and 20th September with a satisfactory (for Pomerol) yield of 33 hl/ha. Lovely, creamy, old vine fruit, a beautiful, seamless texture and a long, persistent finish. A dazzling wine, full of class and refinement. Will be aged in 70% new oak barrels. 98 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château La Fleur de Gay

Pomerol, 100% M

Chantal Lebreton and consultant Axel Marchal have made one of the most sumptuous Pomerols from three plots of clay and gravel adjoining Châteaux Lafleur, La Fleur Pétrus and Le Pin. Harvested promptly on 5th and 6th September in order to preserve freshness and vitality. Carefully extracted, and aged in 65% new oak barrels, this is a rich, opulent, vividly fruity wine which combines both power and elegance. 96 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Vray Croix de Gay

Pomerol, 90% M, 10% CF

This 3.67 hectare estate comprises two distinct plots on the gravelly part of the Pomerol plateau, one adjoining Château Lafleur and the other in front of Château Trotanoy. The property was acquired by the owners of Château Calon-Ségur in 2020 and the wine is now made by the same team of Vincent Millet and Eric Boissenot. The merlot was harvested on 5th and 6th September and the cabernet franc on 22nd September. This is a splendid, powerful, opulent wine with succulent fruit and a touch of spicy oak. Will be aged for 18 months in 30% new oak barrels together with some clay amphorae. 96 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château La Croix de Gay

Pomerol, 89% M, 11% CF

Chantal Lebreton owns a well-sited property of just 4.2 hectares on the plateau of Pomerol with a mix of clay and gravel soils. Low yields of 25 hl/ha due to frost on 2nd and 4th April and the subsequent dry summer has resulted in a production of only 15,000 bottles. The concentrated grapes needed the gentlest possible maceration with the minimum of *remontages* and a maximum temperature of 28C. Fresh plum and blackberry aromas with a hint of nuts and spice. The ripe tannins give structure and length and this remains an undervalued château. 95 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Gazin

Pomerol, 93% M, 4% CF, 3% CS

Substantial 26 hectare property, owned by the de Baillencourt family, that lies on the Pomerol plateau immediately to the north of Pétrus to whom they sold 4.5 hectares of prime vines in 1970. The wine-making has been in the highly capable hands of Mickael Obert since 2005 and the 2022 is one of his finest efforts. Dense and concentrated with vivid, plummy fruit, carefully extracted tannins and a rich, meaty texture. Finishes firm but with lovely, sweet fruit. 96 points. Drink 2032-2042.

Château Lafleur Gazin

Pomerol, 100% M

8.5 hectare estate at the north-eastern end of the Pomerol plateau adjacent to Châteaux Lafleur and Gazin. The clay and gravel soils give a rich, perfumed wine with masses of plummy fruit. Harvested between 5th and 13th September, the 2022 is the best ever with a richness rarely achieved before and a freshness that brings fine vitality and balance to the wine. 95 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Lagrange (Pomerol)

Pomerol, 100% M

9 hectare estate on the northern edge of the Pomerol plateau where the deep, blue clay is covered with a layer of gravel. It was purchased by Jean-Pierre Moueix in 1953 from the Pecresse family with Château Trotanoy. The 2022 is a delicious Pomerol which combines ripe, supple, plummy fruit with fine, ripe tannins and lovely, fresh acidity. 95 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Pince

Pomerol, 85% M, 15% CF

8.5 hectare property owned by the Moreau family. Harvested relatively late from 19th to 23rd September, this is a rich, opulent wine with masses of black cherry and plum fruit. Carefully extracted tannins and enough acidity to keep the wine fresh whilst maintaining a rich, broad, generous texture. 94 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Siaurac

Lalande de Pomerol, 75% M, 15% CF, 10 % Malbec

After the devastating frost of 2021, yields in 2022 happily returned to a normal 42hl/ha at this substantial (45 hectares) estate situated just to the north of Pomerol. The complex mixture of gravel, clay and sandy soils planted with an average of 33 year old vines gives a rich, elegant wine with a ripe, generous texture and a long, satisfying finish. Technical director Pénélope Godefroy will age the wine in French oak barrels, clay amphorae and stainless steel vats. 93 points. Drink 2028-2035.



SAINT EMILION

Château Ausone

Saint Emilion, 50% CF, 50% M

Edouard and Pauline Vauthier have made one of the most elegant, harmonious wines of Saint Emilion. The merlot was harvested early from 5th to 9th September with the cabernet franc following two weeks later from 21st to 27th September. At 15.4% alcohol, this is rich and powerful but the quality of the tannins is the finest for many years and the sumptuous red and black fruits make this a complete wine with a close-knit, generous texture and a long, fresh finish. 99 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Cheval Blanc

Saint Emilion, 53% M, 46% CF, 1% CS

The earliest harvest ever at Cheval Blanc with the first merlot being picked on 29th August. The cabernet franc was also gathered promptly from 13th to 20th September. The consistently high quality of the crop has allowed Pierre-Olivier Clouet to make a good volume of the *grand vin* despite the low yields (27 hl/ha). There will be no Petit Cheval this year, with the *vin de presse* and the produce from very young vines being sold off in bulk. Deep and dense with impressive purity and intensity of fruit. Builds in the mouth to a glorious finish. 99 points. Drink 2032-2050.

Château Figeac

Saint Emilion 1er Grand Cru Classé 'A'

35% M, 34% CF, 31% CS

Estate director, Frédéric Faye, says he was lucky to get 30mm of rain in August which enabled the vines to withstand the summer heat. The combination of old vines on gravesac rootstock planted on the deep, blue clay under gravel that abounds at Figeac gave a superb wine that is powerful yet restrained, rich yet fresh and dazzles with its purity and precision of fruit. 98 points. Drink 2032-2045.

Château Canon

Saint Emilion 1er Grand Cru Classé, 75% M, 25% CF

The restructuring of the vineyard since the estate was acquired by Chanel in 1996 is now nearly complete. Harvested promptly from 30th August to 22nd September with a satisfying yield of 45 hl/ha, all the wine from the estate's 24 hectares will be used for the *grand vin*. This is a beautiful, elegant wine with a complex mixture of red and black fruits. Full and firm with fine, ripe tannins and lovely, fresh acidity. One of the more restrained Saint Emilions and one of the very finest. Will be aged in 50% new oak barrels together with four larger *foudres*. 97 points. Drink 2032-2042.

Château Troplong Mondot

St Emilion 1er Grand Cru Classé, 85% M, 13% CS, 2% CF

Estate director Aymeric de Gironde continues to refine the style since his arrival from Cos d'Estournel in 2017. One of the earliest to start harvesting (29th August in 2022), all the fruit is given a cold, pre-fermentation maceration for 7-14 days at 5C. Vinification is more precise with 42 vats in the new cellar compared to 20 previously. There is no longer any malolactic fermentation in barrel and the wines remain unracked during their 15 months in barrel. Gently oaked (55% aged in new oak barrels plus four 20 hl foudres), the 2022 is a beautiful, concentrated wine with fine, ripe tannins and superb purity of fruit. 96 points. Drink 2030-2042.

Clos Fourtet

St Emilion 1er Grand Cru Classé, 91% M, 5% CS, 4% CF

Owner Matthieu Cuvelier, together with estate director Emmanuel de Saint Salvy has made Clos Fourtet, situated in the heart of the Saint Emilion limestone plateau, one of the appellation's finest estates. Harvest began on 9th September, the earliest ever for the château, and yields were healthy at 34hl/ha. Rich, concentrated cassis with toasty oak and cedarwood, this has a wonderful aromatic quality and a fine freshness. Will spend 18 months in 60% new oak barrels. 96 points. Drink 2030-2042.

Château Trotte Vieille

St Emilion 1er Grand Cru Classé, 50% CF, 45% M, 5% CS

This fine, 12 hectare estate lies just to the east of the town of Saint Emilion and is blessed with some of the oldest cabernet franc vines in Bordeaux which give superb depth and vitality to the wine. Rich and generous with sweet fruit, silky tannins and excellent freshness on the finish. 96 points. Drink 2030-2042.

Château La Clotte

Saint Emilion, 85% M, 15% CF

Owned by the Vauthier family of Château Ausone and made by the same team, this is a tiny, 4 hectare property which has 57 year old vines both on south-facing, limestone slopes and on the plateau above. A full-bodied, opulent wine with a sunnier disposition than Ausone but one which retains great poise and finesse. 95 points. Drink 2030-2042.

Château Pavie Macquin

St Emilion 1er Grand Cru Classé, 80% M, 19% CF, 1% CS

Nicolas Thienpont and Stéphane Derenoncourt have fashioned another brilliant, rich wine full of fruit and freshness from the 15 hectares of vines that adjoin Châteaux Pavie and Troplong Mondot. Ripe and concentrated with carefully extracted tannins and lovely, fresh acidity. Will be aged in no more than 50% new oak in order to allow the fruit to shine through. 95 points. Drink 2030-2042.

Château Le Prieuré

Saint Emilion Grand Cru, 92% M, 8% CF

Perfectly sited, 12 hectare property on the south-facing, limestone slopes immediately to the east of the town of Saint Emilion, adjacent to Châteaux TrotteVieille, Troplong Mondot and Pavie-Macquin. The merlot was harvested from 13th to 22nd September and the cabernet franc on 26th September. This is a big, bold, opulent Saint Emilion with a sweet, succulent texture and a long, generous finish. 95 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Quinault L'Enclos

Saint Emilion, 63% M, 20% CS, 17% CF

One of the few remaining vineyards within the town of Libourne. The warm microclimate created by the surrounding housing makes it one of the earliest ripening sites in Bordeaux. The harvest started here on 30th August and was completed by 15th September. Owned by Château Cheval Blanc since 2008, the wine is made by Pierre-Olivier Clouet and the Cheval Blanc team. 60% of the crop is aged in 20 hl oak *foudres* with the balance in 600 litre *demi-muids*. Rich and spicy with a succulent texture and a juicy, sweet finish. 94 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château de Fonbel

Saint Emilion Grand Cru, 85% M, 10% CS, 5% C

16 hectare estate under the same ownership as Château Ausone which lies 5 kilometres to the south on sandier soil. Rich and generous with carefully extracted tannins and lovely, fresh acidity, this is classy Saint Emilion at a bargain price. 93 points. Drink 2028-2036.

Château La Rose Pourret

Saint Emilion Grand Cru, 85% M, 15% CF

9 hectare property to the north-west of the town of Saint Emilion acquired by Daniel Derichebourg in 2018. Vinified in the new *cuvier* housing 16 stainless steel vats, the 2022 is the best vintage ever with dark red and black cherry fruit, a rich, generous texture and a long, sweet aftertaste. The merlot will be aged in oak barrels and the cabernet franc in 1600 litre amphorae. 93 points. Drink 2028-2035.

Château Jacques Noir

Saint Emilion, 100% M

Chloé Vignon has taken over the wine-making at this small (5.6 hectares) château owned since 2001 by the Ducourt family and this is the finest Jacques Noir that I've ever tasted. Ripe and fruity with excellent freshness and vitality and a long, generous aftertaste. 92 points. Drink 2028-2034.

DRY WHITES

Château Haut Brion Blanc

Pessac-Léognan, 51.4% Sémillon, 48.6% Sauvignon

Harvested early and swiftly between 16th and 23rd August in order to retain much needed acidity and freshness of flavour. Fermented and aged in 40% new oak barrels for a maximum of nine months this is wonderfully aromatic (there is some sauvignon gris in the blend) with fine vitality despite the rich (14.2% alcohol), generous texture. Finishes fresh and long with a delightful touch of salinity that gives bite and intensity. 95 points. Drink 2026-2035.

Château La Mission Haut Brion Blanc

Cru Classé, Pessac-Léognan, 72% Sémillon, 28% Sauvignon

The same vinification as at Haut Brion but the higher proportion of sémillon gives richer aromas and a slightly broader texture on the palate. Similar alcohol (14.3%) and impressive length on the finish. Will be bottled in May 2023. 95 points. Drink 2026-2035.

Domaine de Chevalier Blanc

Cru Classé, Pessac-Léognan, 70% Sauvignon, 30% Sémillon

Harvested early from 22nd August to 1st September with picking restricted to a couple of hours in the early morning in order to preserve the maximum aroma and freshness. Fermentation is in barrel (one third new) with subsequent ageing in both barrel and larger 15 hl oak foudres. Rich and opulent but retains fine vitality and has a long, crisp, mineral finish. Only 18,000 bottles produced. 95 points. Drink 2026-2035.



Château La Mission Haut Brion

Château Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc

Cru Classé, Pessac-Léognan,

90% Sauvignon Blanc, 5% Sauvignon Gris, 5% Sémillon

The 2022 harvest was the earliest in the chateaux's history, beginning with the sauvignon on the 18th August and ending with the sémillon on 2nd September. This early picking allowed head wine maker Fabien Teitgen to achieve a surprisingly low pH (3.20) and the resulting wine is both ripe and fresh with zesty lemon, white peach and fine minerality. Will be aged for 12 months in 50% new oak barrels, sourced from the château's in-house *tonnellerie*. Delicious to drink straight away but has the freshness and concentration to age elegantly over the next few years. 95 points. Drink 2026-2032.

Château de Fieuzal Blanc

Pessac-Léognan, 55% Sauvignon, 45% Sémillon

Stephen Carrier had to come back early from holiday to start the harvest on 18th August. All the white grapes were picked by 23rd August and the wine has wonderful vitality as a result. The low yield of 27 hl/ha gives impressive intensity of flavour; complex, peachy aromas with a touch of honey and spice. Fermented in 225 litre oak and 400 litre acacia barrels which transmit less oxygen. Has fine poise and balance, fresh and generous with excellent salinity on the finish. 94 points. Drink 2026-2032.

L'Abeille de Fieuzal Blanc

Pessac-Léognan, 65% Sémillon, 35% Sauvignon

The second wine of Château de Fieuzal, vinified partly in barrel and partly in stainless steel vats. Has the same vitality of the *grand vin* in a more open, forward style. Will drink well upon release but has the balance to age gracefully. 92 points. Drink 2025-2028.

Château Fourcas Dupré Blanc

Bordeaux Blanc, 53% Sauvignon, 47% Sémillon

This exciting new white wine has been so successful in recent years that the château is planting an additional 2 hectares on the limestone section of the vineyard previously devoted to merlot. Vinified in oak barrels from Nadalié and 700 litre amphorae from Tava, this is deliciously ripe and fresh with lovely, citrus aromas and stone fruit flavours. Ripe and generous on the palate with a crisp, mineral finish. 91 points. Drink 2024-2027.

Vieux Château Gaubert Blanc

Graves Blanc, 50% Sauvignon, 50% Sémillon

Dominique Haverlan made 35 barrels of this delicious, fresh, aromatic wine. Fermented and aged for 6 months in casks from *tonnellerie*s Nadalié and Seguin-Moreau, this is one of the finest whites of the Graves appellation. Crisp and clean with aromas of peach and gooseberry and a long, mineral finish. 91 points. Drink 2024-2027.

SAUTERNES AND BARSAC

Château Suduiraut, 1^{er} Cru Classé, Sauternes *100% Sémillon*

Estate director Pierre Montégut has been promoted to become technical director of all the AXA-owned Bordeaux châteaux and retains responsibility for Suduiraut where the 2022 is one the richest ever vintages. Part of the crop was harvested early (20th to 27th September) but most was delayed until the onset of botrytis in the middle of October. The most concentrated grapes were picked from 17th to 27th October and much of the *grand vin* comes from these later *tries*. The resulting wine is 13.5% alcohol with an astonishing 190g/l of residual sugar giving a profound, persistent wine of extraordinary balance and richness. 96 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château de Fargues, Sauternes *85% Sémillon, 15% Sauvignon*

Philippe de Lur Saluces lost half the crop to frost so this is one of the lowest yields in Sauternes this year (5 hl/ha). Harvested late from 17th to 24th October, the wine is one of the most concentrated with beautiful, intense, honeyed, white peach, apricot and pear flavours balanced by wonderful acidity. One of the standout Sauternes of the vintage. 97 points. Drink 2030-2045.

Château Doisy Daëne, 2^{ème} Cru Classé, Barsac *92% Sémillon, 8% Sauvignon*

Jean-Jacques Dubourdieu is delighted with his yield of 15 hl/ha in 2022, eclipsing the estate's miniscule production in 2021 (1 hl/ha) and slightly more than the appellation average (14.5 hl/ha). He decided to blend some of the lighter, earlier pickings with the richer, later-harvested wines in order to produce a magnificent, balanced wine that is similar in style & quality to the superb 2010. With 13.5% alcohol, 145g/l of residual sugar and fine balancing acidity, this is luscious and honeyed, a great success. 96 points. Drink 2028-2040.

Château Coutet, 1^{er} Cru Classé, Barsac *94% Sémillon, 5% Sauvignon, 1% Muscadelle*

After a tiny crop in 2021, winemaker Laurent Girardot is delighted to see yields return to a more satisfying 15hl/ha. The 2022 harvest involved four *passages* in the vineyard, comprising 14 days of picking between 26th September and 28th October with the richest and finest juice being harvested in the final week. At 13.5% alcohol and 158g/l of residual sugar, this is a rich, opulent wine, balanced by fine freshness and crisp acidity. 96 points. Drink 2028-2040.

Château Guiraud, 1^{er} Cru Classé, Sauternes

65% Sémillon, 35% Sauvignon

Former wine-maker at Château d'Yquem, Sandrine Garbay, took over the reins at this fine 1er Grand Cru Classé in May 2022 and has produced a spectacular wine with her inaugural vintage. One of Sandrine's first changes was to use only indigenous yeasts in fermentation, the first time that this has been practised at Guiraud, and with yields returning to a healthier 10hl/ha, the resulting wine is a huge success. Rich and generous with a magnificent bouquet of white flowers, honeyed apricot and peach allied to fine freshness on the palate. A balanced, harmonious wine that will age superbly. 95 points. Drink 2028-2040.



Château Doisy Védrières, 2^{ème} Cru Classé, Barsac

92% Sémillon, 8% Sauvignon

Owned by the Castéja family, this is consistently one of the best value wines of Barsac. At 13.8% alcohol and 140 g/l of residual sugar, this is a beautiful, complete wine, combining the minerality of Barsac with the richness of Sauternes. 95 points. Drink 2028-2040.

Château Broustet, 2^{ème} Cru Classé, Barsac

90% Sémillon, 7% Sauvignon, 3% Muscadelle

The 17 hectares of vines gave an average yield of 10 hl/ha. This is a lovely, fresh, lemony wine, full of honeyed fruit and balanced by crisp acidity. With 13.8% alcohol and 150g/l of residual sugar, it is one of the richest Broustets ever and should be brilliant value. 94 points. Drink 2028-2038.

Château Lamothe Guignard, 2^{ème} Cru Classé, Sauternes, 90% Sémillon, 5% Sauvignon, 5% Muscadelle

The botrytis arrived late following welcome rain at the end of September, after which Philippe Guignard harvested a satisfying 17hl/ha crop in four *passages* finishing on 28th October. This is a rich yet fresh wine with 14.5% alcohol and 140g/l of residual sugar. Open and aromatic, this will give immense pleasure relatively soon but has the depth and concentration to age gracefully. 94 points. Drink 2027-2038.

How our 2022 Bordeaux En Primeur Offer works:

- **The recommended wines**

This booklet represents my personal selection of the most successful wines of the vintage. I have tried to include wines at every level and from a wide spread of appellations. At the time of going to press we do not have prices of any of the châteaux so I cannot make ultimate judgements of value for money. There are other excellent wines that I have tasted that I will buy if the price is right. Conversely, I may decide that the price asked for some of my chosen wines is too high.

- **Let us have your wish list**

Please let us know as soon as possible if there are any specific châteaux (whether they are on my list or not) in which you are interested and we will make you an offer as soon as the wine is released.

- **Prices by email**

As the châteaux release their wines onto the market, we will send out the prices by email. If you have not already received any 2022 Bordeaux information from us by email, please let us have your email address so that we can keep you informed.

- **Order by email or telephone**

Email: office@montrachetwine.com

Telephone: 020 7821 1337

We would urge you to place your order as quickly as possible. The châteaux have a limited supply and the most successful wines sell out within hours.

- **Timetable**

We expect the individual châteaux to release their prices at any time between now and July. The wine is sold whilst still lying at the châteaux for delivery after bottling. i.e. 2022 Bordeaux will be shipped to the UK in spring/summer 2025.

**For further information or to place an order,
please contact our en primeur specialists:**

**Charles Taylor M.W., Thomas Britten,
Lucy de Renzy-Martin, Ed Hume-Kendall**



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Terms and conditions

Wine will be invoiced at the IN BOND price, lying at London City Bond, Creek Road and which excludes costs such as delivery, duty & VAT. The IN BOND price for the wine must be paid for at the time of order. The duty, VAT and delivery costs are due, if applicable, when the wines are shipped in 2025.

Wine is generally sold in either 6x75cl or 12x75cl bottle cases (i.e. 4.5 or 9 litres) and we supply all 'En Primeur' purchases in these sizes unless otherwise instructed. Wine can be bottled in different formats: Halves 24x37.5cl, Magnums 6x150cl, Double Magnums 1x300cl etc. There is a surcharge for this; please specify your requirements at time of ordering.

We ask that your minimum total order of wines from the 2022 vintage is £1000.

*Whilst detailing the blend of varieties at the individual châteaux I have abbreviated the grape varieties as follows:
Cabernet Sauvignon - CS, Cabernet Franc - CF, Merlot - M, Petit Verdot - PV, Carmenère - C*

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