

Montrachet
Fine Wine Merchants

2024 Bordeaux En Primeur
Tasting notes and opinion

2024 BORDEAUX

Exhilarating dry whites and fresh, harmonious reds

2024 was a challenging growing season with above average rainfall for much of the year and the greatest mildew pressure in living memory. Fortunately, the vintage was saved by a long, warm, dry period in July and August that dried out the soil, provided some essential water stress to the vines on well-drained vineyards and ensured that the fruit would reach a good level of both phenolic and sugar ripeness. The cool, night-time temperatures ensured high levels of acidity were retained and the dry white wines, harvested in the second and third weeks of September are amongst the finest of recent years with a winning combination of ripe, concentrated fruit and thrilling acidity.

After one of the wettest winters on record (November, December, February and March were all amongst the rainiest of the past 20 years), bud break was early at the end of March. It was difficult to get into the vineyards on heavier soils to treat the vines and the consistently damp weather provoked an early onset of mildew on any vines that were left untreated.

The wet weather continued into May, and it was often necessary to spray repeatedly at close intervals. It was undoubtedly harder for organic producers to withstand the mildew pressure and the many French bank holidays played havoc for estates with inflexible workforces.

Fortunately, the weather improved at the end of the month and for some growers a week of sunshine coincided with the all-important flowering period. For others, however, it arrived either too late or too early or a significant part of the crop was lost to coulure or millerandage.

The rest of June reverted to dull, humid weather with continuing mildew pressure and growers became increasingly pessimistic about their chances of successfully ripening their crop. However, the weather changed dramatically for the better and July and August were both dry and warm. The soil dried out and the fruit started to ripen and thicken their skins. By the middle of August, the vines on free-draining soils were beginning to show welcome signs of much-needed hydric stress. The vintage had been saved and all that was needed now was a month of calm weather to bring the fruit to full maturity.

After a refreshing burst of rain at the end of August, September started clemently, and the dry white wine harvest was completed

in good conditions in the second and third weeks of September. The quality of both sauvignon and sémillon is exceptional with good volumes of ripe, healthy fruit giving high quality wines. Both sugar and acidity levels were excellent, and the wines have a natural freshness and balance that hasn't been seen for many years. The aromatic quality of the sauvignon is the finest for a long time with the sémillon bringing both structure and flavour to the blend.

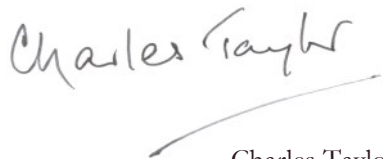
Unfortunately, the good weather failed to hold, and rainy conditions returned from 21st September. Growers had to decide whether to press ahead with harvesting whilst the fruit was still healthy, or risk waiting for greater ripeness and accept a higher incidence of rotten fruit. Most of the merlot was harvested by the last week of September with the cabernets following quickly at the beginning of October. The results are mixed with the well-financed estates on early ripening, free-draining soils at a distinct advantage. The hardier, more resistant cabernet sauvignon survived the wet conditions better than the more fragile merlot but, as a later ripening variety, it also struggled to reach full maturity.

In the winery, most producers opted for a gentle maceration and were careful not to extract too much tannin. The resultant reds are fresh and aromatic with red rather than black fruit flavours, refreshingly low levels of alcohol and excellent levels of acidity. They are harmonious, forward wines that will give a huge amount of pleasure at a relatively early age.

The sweet white wines, harvested in October, are similarly vibrant with good botrytis character and a fine balance between sugar and acidity. They are reminiscent of a less sweet style of Sauternes made in the 1980s and 1990s.

Overall, it is a vintage to enthusiastically buy the magnificent dry, white wines and to carefully select the reds. There are many successful wines, no blockbusters but plenty of well-balanced, harmonious wines that, providing prices are attractive, deserve a place in any cellar.

I'm expecting a quick campaign, with the first releases likely to have beaten you to reading this report, and for much of the action to be over by the end of May.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Charles Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. Below the signature is a long, thin, horizontal line that tapers at both ends, resembling a stylized underline or a flourish.

Charles Taylor M.W.

April 2025

DRY WHITES

Château Haut Brion Blanc

Pessac-Léognan, 56.1% Sémillon, 43.9% Sauvignon

Just 2.7 hectares of the estate is planted with white varieties. After a dry July and August, welcome rain on 29th August refreshed the vines, after which picking commenced on 2nd September and lasted for nine days. The juice is fermented and aged for six months in small French oak barrels. The 2024 is crisper and more precise than the more opulent 2022 and 2023 vintages, with a distinct sauvignon character despite the lower than usual percentage used for the *grand vin*. Fresh and vibrant with thrilling acidity and a long, mineral finish. A brilliant wine. 98 points. Drink 2029-2036.

Château La Mission Haut Brion Blanc

Cru Classé, Pessac-Léognan, 59% Sémillon, 41% Sauvignon

After a rare deviation in 2023 when there was a preponderance of sauvignon, the 2024 returns to the more usual dominance of sémillon. Beautiful, pure, lemony fruit, a lean, close-knit texture and a touch of salinity on the finish make this a fine, complete wine that will age magnificently. 97 points. Drink 2030-2036.



Château La Mission Haut Brion

Domaine de Chevalier Blanc

Cru Classé, Pessac-Léognan, 75% Sauvignon, 25% Sémillon

Harvested from 4th to 16th September with each bunch picked at optimum maturity, this is a brilliant wine, along with Haut Brion the finest of the vintage. Vinified in a mixture of traditional 225 litre oak barrels, larger 400-500 litre casks, 25 hl *foudres* and a couple of clay amphorae. Intensely flavoured with concentrated fruit and crisp acidity, this has impressive structure and a persistent finish. One of the finest white Chevaliers of recent years, this will age magnificently. 97 points. Drink 2028-2036.

Château Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc

*Cru Classé, Pessac-Léognan,
90% Sauvignon Blanc, 5% Sauvignon Gris, 5% Sémillon*

Estate director and wine-maker, Fabien Teitgen, has made another brilliant dry white from the 11 hectares of the 78 hectare estate that are planted with white grape varieties. Fermented and aged for 12 months in 50% new oak barrels produced by the château's own cooper, this is both crisp and creamy with intense fruit and a touch of oak. A lovely, complete wine that will be delicious young but also age magnificently. Only 15,000 bottles made as a result of a strict selection for the *grand vin*. 96 points. Drink 2027-2034.

Blanc de Lynch Bages

Bordeaux Blanc, 77% Sauvignon, 12% Muscadelle, 11% Sémillon

Grown on limestone soils in the village of Saint Sauveur immediately to the west of Pauillac. Fermented and aged on the lees for 6 months in 50% new oak barrels, this is rich and concentrated with vibrant fruit and mouth-watering acidity. 94 points. Drink 2026-2030.

Château de Fieuzal Blanc

Pessac-Léognan, 65% Sauvignon, 35% Sémillon

Just 11 of the estate's 75 hectares are devoted to the production of their brilliant white wines. The 2024 is one of the finest ever. Ripe and aromatic with fresh, peachy fruit, a rich, succulent texture and thrilling acidity. An intense, concentrated wine with a close-knit texture and a persistent aftertaste. Two thirds of the crop is fermented and aged in small oak barrels with the balance in acacia, a denser wood that gives a slower uptake of oxygen to the wine. 95 points. Drink 2027-2033.

L'Abeille de Fieuzal Blanc

Pessac-Léognan, 60% Sauvignon, 40% Sémillon

The second wine of Château de Fieuzal, produced from the younger vines following the extensive restructuring of the vineyards that has been ongoing since the arrival of Stephen Carrier in 2007. A delicious, open-textured wine that has masses of fruit and a lovely, mineral finish. 93 points. Drink 2026-2030.

Caillou Blanc du Château Talbot

Bordeaux Blanc, 83% Sauvignon, 17% Sémillon

From 6 hectares of the Talbot vineyards that were first planted with white grape varieties by Georges Cordier, the grandfather of the current owners, in the 1930s. Harvested between 12th and 16th September and fermented in 30% new oak barrels with a little *bâtonnage* to give extra richness and volume to the wine. Has a wonderful combination of grassy sauvignon and peachy sémillon on the nose and a crisp yet generous texture on the palate. One of the finest vintages of recent years. 94 points. Drink 2027-2032.

Château Fourcas Dupré Blanc

Bordeaux Blanc, 70% Sauvignon, 30% Sémillon

Estate director, Lucas Leclercq, is expanding the production of the château's hugely successful white wine. Grown on the limestone soils of the estate and vinified in one third each of new oak barrels, cement amphorae and stainless steel vats, this is one of the finest and best value white wines of the Médoc. Crisp and aromatic with lovely, concentrated, bright fruit flavours and a long aftertaste. 93 points. Drink 2026-2030.

Domaine de la Solitude Blanc

Pessac-Léognan, 65% Sauvignon, 35% Sémillon

From 5 hectares of white grape varieties on this predominantly red wine estate run by Olivier Bernard of Domaine de Chevalier. Vinified predominantly in small oak barrels of which 20% are renewed each year. Fresh and aromatic with ripe, honeyed fruit balanced by crisp acidity. A delicious, mouth-watering wine with both intensity and class. 94 points. Drink 2027-2031.

Château Doisy Daëne Grand Vin Sec

Bordeaux Blanc, 100 % Sauvignon

Jean-Jacques Dubourdieu has continued the tradition of a great dry white wine made from 100% sauvignon created by his late father, Denis. Barrel-fermented, this is crisp and aromatic with vibrant fruit, excellent depth, a generous texture and a mouthwatering finish. 94 points. Drink 2027-2032.

Vieux Château Gaubert Blanc

Graves Blanc, 60% Sauvignon, 40% Sémillon

Dominique Haverlan makes this wonderful wine from just 2.5 hectares of his finest vines at Portets in the heart of the Graves appellation. 80% is fermented and aged for six months in small French oak barrels with 20% vinified in stainless steel. The 2024 is the most aromatic of recent vintages with excellent minerality and purity of fruit. A lovely, harmonious wine that will be delicious young and age gracefully. 93 points. Drink 2026-2030.

PAUILLAC

Château Lafite Rothschild

1er Cru Classé, 96% CS, 3% M, 1% PV

The first vintage to be certified as organic and one of the shortest harvests on record, just two weeks from 23rd September to 7th October. Estate director, Erik Kohler, has made a typically elegant and harmonious wine from the usual, high proportion of cabernet sauvignon. The most refined and precise of the Pauillac first growths, medium-bodied with a beautiful, seamless texture and fine persistence on the finish. Saskia de Rothschild has indicated that the price will reflect the difficult market conditions so this should be the least expensive Lafite for many years. 95 points. Drink 2033-2044.

Château Mouton Rothschild

1er Cru Classé, 93% CS, 7% M

The deep, well drained, gravelly soils on the Plateau de Mouton, were the key to producing an impressively concentrated, intense Mouton this year. The dry and warm conditions in July and August allowed for a relatively straightforward harvest, from 23rd September to 5th October. Rich, cassis fruit on the nose and a dense, close-knit texture on the palate. This is as generous as any Pauillac I tried this year and will age splendidly. 95 points. Drink 2034-2045.

Château Latour

1er Cru Classé, 94.6% CS, 5.2% M, 0.2%PV

This delightful Latour won't be available en primeur as the château have a policy of only releasing their wines when they are closer to maturity. The *grand vin* comes exclusively from L'Enclos, the walled vineyard adjacent to the cellars between the D2 road and the estuary. The merlot was harvested between 19th and 28th September with the cabernet following from 30th September to 9th October. Fresh and firm with fine, blackcurrant fruit and a touch of spice. The tannins are ripe and the finish satisfying. A compact wine with excellent poise and balance. 95 points. Drink 2034-2045.

Château Pichon Baron

2ème Cru Classé, 87% CS, 13% M

The backbone of Pichon Baron comes from the vines planted on the deep gravel adjacent to Château Latour. The free draining nature of these soils was crucial to maintaining depth of flavour and the low yield (20 hl/ha) helped make the wine one of the most impressively concentrated of the vintage. Deep black fruits and cassis on the nose precede a generous, meaty texture on the palate with firm tannins and a close-knit finish. 94 points. Drink 2033-2040.

Château Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande

2ème Cru Classé, 83% CS, 14% M, 3% CF

Nicolas Glumineau has proven his worth once again with a magnificent Pichon Lalande. He treated the vines a record 41 times during the growing season, sorted the fruit three times during the harvest and selected only 50% of the resulting wine for the *grand vin*. He lowered the fermentation temperature to 25C and restricted the *remontages* to the first half of the *cuvaison* to extract only the ripest tannins. He also increased the use of press wine to 15% due to the high quality of the cabernet sauvignon. This is one of the wines of the vintage with beautiful, refined red and black fruits and a touch of cedar on the nose, magnificent, silky tannins on the palate and a harmonious finish. 94 points.

Drink 2031-2042.

Château Lynch Bages

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

Jean-Charles Cazes's team can vinify 15 hectares of vines per day in their new winery, a vital factor on a 90 hectare estate in a September with intermittent rainfall. Jean-Charles insisted on a very strict selection policy, both in the vines and with optical sorting in the cellar and yields are lower, at an average of 29.5 hl/ha. This is a typically gutsy Lynch Bages with impressive red and black fruits on the nose and a dense, close-knit texture on the palate. Excellent spice and complexity on the finish. 93 points. Drink 2031-2042.

Château Duhart Milon

4ème Cru Classé, 78 % CS, 22% M

A wonderfully sophisticated effort from the winemaking team at Château Lafite. Harvesting began with the merlot on the 24th September and finished with the cabernet sauvignon in Montgrand, the château's western-most vines on 8th October. A beautiful, fresh, carefully extracted wine with wonderful, precise blackcurrant fruit on the nose, supple, refined tannins on the palate and a harmonious finish. One of the most elegant Pauillacs of the vintage. 93 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Clerc Milon

5ème Cru Classé, 66% CS, 24% M, 8% CF, 1% PV, 1% C

A rich, generous, fleshy wine from this fine fifth growth owned by Mouton Rothschild and managed since 2020 by Caroline Artaud. The vines lie to the north of Pauillac between the estuary and the vineyards of Mouton and Lafite. The 41 hectares were harvested quickly from 24th September to 4th October and the stylish, well-balanced wine will be aged in 55% new oak barrels for 18 months. 93 points. Drink 2031-2040.

Château Grand Puy Lacoste

5ème Cru Classé, 78% CS, 22% M

With regard to yields, Emeline Borie has far outperformed the majority of her neighbours with a healthy 38 hl/ha against a Pauillac average of 29.56 hl/ha, a triumph she attributes to technical director Christel Spinner and her team working over the 8th and 9th May bank holidays and the subsequent weekend which, she says, “saved the harvest”. 60% of the crop was used for the *grand vin* which has one of the highest ever proportions of cabernet sauvignon in the blend. The resulting wine is a great success with blackcurrant and fresh plums on the nose, an abundance of soft, supple tannins on the palate and a touch of sweet cedar and spice on the finish. Will be aged in 70% new oak barrels.

93 points. Drink 2031-2039.

Château Haut Batailley

5ème Cru Classé, 68% CS, 26% M, 6% PV

The Cazes family of Lynch Bages purchased this estate in 2017 and swiftly expanded the vineyards from 22 to 41 hectares (mainly in the south-west of the appellation near the border with Saint Julien) and improved the wine-making facilities. The wine has gained in both structure and refinement and the château now makes one of the most elegant wines of the appellation, combining the power of Pauillac with the charm of Saint Julien. Will be aged in 60% new oak barrels for 16 months. 93 points. Drink 2031-2038.

Château Batailley

5ème Cru Classé, 81% CS, 15% M, 4% PV

2024 marks a century of vintages produced by the Castéja family and the wine will have a special, red label to celebrate the occasion. There will also be a limited edition of the wine bottled in the rare, 2.25 litre, Marie-Jeanne size. Harvested from the 28th September to the 8th October, yields were lower than usual but the quality of fruit remained high following rigorous sorting of the grapes. Technical director Hugues Mathieu lowered the fermentation temperature to 25C to extract only the finest of tannins and this has an aromatic, vibrant, blackcurrant nose, a wonderfully supple texture with refined tannins on the palate and a touch of spice on the finish. 93 points. Drink 2031-2039.

Château Haut Bages Libéral

5ème Cru Classé, 94% CS, 5% M, 1% CF

This lesser-known but finely-situated fifth growth has been certified organic since 2019. The majority of the vines lie close to the estuary immediately to the north of Château Latour with further plots on the plateau of Bages. Harvested promptly from 24th September to 4th October with a yield of 30 hl/ha, this is ripe and spicy with beautiful, blackcurrant fruit and impressive freshness on the finish. Owner, Claire Villars, now matures the wine 40% in new oak barrels, 40% in one year old barrels and 20% in ovoid concrete vats. 93 points. Drink 2031-2037.

Château d'Armailhac

5ème Cru Classé, 72% CS, 14% M, 14% CF

The highest ever percentage of cabernets in the blend and, for the first time since 2001, no petit verdot as it was deemed to be on the rustic side. A lighter, fresher wine with lovely, pure blackcurrant fruit on the nose, great freshness on the palate with just the right amount of tannin (13% of press wine used) and a touch of spice on the finish. 93 points. Drink 2030-2037.

Château Pédesclaux

5ème Cru Classé, 68 % CS, 21% M, 10% CF, 1% PV

The new plantings of the past 15 years have increased the proportion of cabernet sauvignon in the vineyard and the *grand vin* continues to gain in character as a result. Care was taken not to over extract the tannins and this is a ripe, harmonious wine with sweet, blackcurrant fruit, a compact structure and a persistent aftertaste. 93 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Pichon Comtesse Réserve

72% CS, 24% M, 4% CF

Estate director and wine-maker, Nicolas Glumineau, continues to restructure the vineyard and much of the younger cabernet sauvignon vines are finding their way into the delicious second wine which has beautiful freshness, a soft, generous texture and a delightful aftertaste. Not a blockbuster but a charming, aromatic Pauillac that will give a huge amount of pleasure at an early age. 93 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château Pontet Canet

5ème Cru Classé, 52 % CS, 43 % M, 4 % PV, 1 % CF

Technical director, Mathieu Bessonnet, has continued the recent trend for fresher, more elegant wines at this important, 81 hectare, biodynamic estate and is proud of the result given the additional work required in the vineyard. He picked the merlot later than most, from 26th September to 3rd October followed by the cabernet sauvignon between 7th and 11th October. Happily, after a long period of practising biodynamic viticulture, he believes the vines are developing a natural resilience to the various climactic challenges they now more regularly face. The 2024 is a medium-bodied, compact, balanced wine with spicy fruit and a soft finish. 92 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château Lynch Moussas

5ème Cru Classé, 78% CS, 22% M

Owned by the Castéja family of Château Batailley since 1919, this under the radar fifth growth has made excellent progress over the last decade and is now one of the best value *crus classés* in Pauillac. A little more rumbustious than Batailley, this has plenty of flesh and muscle on the palate and will drink well in a few years. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

Château Grand Puy Ducasse

5ème Cru Classé, 56% CS, 39 % M, 5% PV

The first vintage to be vinified in the new cellar on the quay in Pauillac and a great success from this steadily improving fifth growth. Rich and spicy with a generous texture. Carefully-extracted tannins give structure without any rough edges. Not a blockbuster but well-judged and will be ready for drinking relatively soon. 92 points. Drink 2029-2036.

Château Bellegrave

61% CS, 39% M

One of a dwindling number of non-classified châteaux in Pauillac. The Meffre brothers' estate is surrounded by the vines of Châteaux Latour, Pichon Baron and Lynch Bages and they receive regular offers to buy them out. For the moment, they are resisting and continue to make a gutsy, fleshy wine that remains one of the best value in the appellation. Red cherry and blackberry fruit is complemented by a touch of toasty oak and a generous finish. 91 points. Drink 2030-2035.

Château Haut-Bages Monpélou

75% CS, 21% M, 3% CF, 1% PV

16 hectare property on the plateau of Bages that is owned by the Castéja family of Château Batailley and run into tandem with its more famous neighbour. A traditional, firm Pauillac with ripe tannins and attractive, dark fruits. Has sufficient structure to age well in the medium term. 91 points. Drink 2030-2035.



Château Pontet Canet

SAINT JULIEN

Château Léoville Las Cases

2ème Cru Classé, 84% CS, 11% CF, 5% M

The *grand vin* comes from the Grand Clos immediately to the south of L'Enclos of Château Latour and has the same depth and concentration as its famous neighbour. Despite the challenges of the vintage, owner Jean-Hubert Delon and technical director Michael Georges have managed to craft a beautiful, harmonious wine without sacrificing too much of the traditional Las Cases power and structure. Beautiful, blackcurrant fruit, firm but ripe tannins, a close-knit texture and a long, fresh finish make this one of the most complete wines of the vintage. 95 points. Drink 2033-2040.

Château Léoville Barton

2ème Cru Classé, 92% CS, 6% M, 2% CF

The 50 hectares of vines were harvested quickly in 12 days from 24th September to 5th October, making it one of the shortest harvests on record. With one of the highest ever percentages of cabernet sauvignon, this is a firm, dense wine that will age as well as any in 2024. Has intense, blackcurrant and bramble fruit with a touch of spicy oak. Needs a little time to harmonise but has a promising future. Will be aged in 60% new oak barrels. 94 points. Drink 2031-2040.

Château Ducru Beaucaillou

2ème Cru Classé, 86% CS, 14% M

Bruno Borie has made one of the most serious and complete wines of the vintage. By removing leaves and reducing the crop as early as June, they ensured a better phenolic ripeness than in 2021 and the low yields (20-25 hl/ha) gave a rare concentration to the wine. At harvest time, two lines of optical sorters eliminated any unripe and rotten grapes. A long, gentle, cool maceration gave a rich, vividly fruity wine with firm but ripe tannins and a succulent aftertaste. One of the highest alcohols (13.4%) in the Médoc and a great success. Will be aged, as usual, in 100% new oak barrels. 94 points. Drink 2032-2040.

Château Gruaud Larose

2ème Cru Classé, 81% CS, 17% M, 2% CF

This 82 hectare estate has been certified organic since 2022 and is consistently making one of the finest wines of Saint Julien. Technical director, Virginie Sallette, harvested between 27th September and 8th October. Fermentation is exclusively in wooden vats followed by ageing for 18 months in 95% new French oak barrels. Rich and fleshy with fine structure and a solid core, this will age splendidly. 94 points. Drink 2032-2040.

Château Léoville Poyferré

2ème Cru Classé, 64 % CS, 27% M, 8% CF, 1% PV

The wine-making team of oenologist, Isabelle Davin, and *maître de chai*, Didier Thomann, have made one of the richest, most generous wines of the vintage. The low yields, 26 hl/ha, gave weight and concentration to the *grand vin*, which was selected from 80% of the parcels closest to the Gironde estuary. Within these plots, all the young vines that have been individually replaced are now marked and harvested separately, with their fruit being systematically eliminated from the blend. Fermentations were cooler and the amount of new oak has been reduced to 70% privileging the fruit and harmony of the wine. A great success with ripe, red and black fruits allied to fine tannins and a fresh finish. 94 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Château Langoa Barton

3ème Cru Classé, 52% CS, 40% M, 8% CF

Similar character and flavour to the Léoville Barton but the higher percentage of merlot makes it more approachable when young. Made in the same cellar by the same team headed by technical director François Brehant, it shares the fresh, structured style for which the Barton properties are well known. Red and black fruits are complemented by a hint of oak and the ripe but firm tannins guarantee a fine future. 93 points. Drink 2030-2038.

Château Beychevelle

4ème Cru Classé, 55% CS, 42% M, 3% PV

Another, most attractive, aromatic Saint Julien from Philippe Blanc who has raised the quality at Beychevelle markedly over the past decade. There were 10 days of harvesting between 24th September and 9th October. Fresh and fruity with carefully extracted tannins, a ripe, generous texture and a vivid, sweet aftertaste. By no means a blockbuster but a highly attractive, medium-bodied wine of class and harmony. Will be aged in 70% new oak barrels. 93 points. Drink 2029-2038.

Château Talbot

4ème Cru Classé, 70% CS, 25% M, 5% PV

Jean-Michel Laporte was one the first to start picking the merlot in Saint Julien, on 18th September but waited to harvest the cabernet sauvignon at maximum maturity, only finishing on 7th October. Always a ripe, generous wine with vivid fruit, the 2024 has attractive freshness and will be enjoyable at an early age but also has the capacity to age gracefully. Will be aged in no more than 60% new oak barrels to ensure the fruit is not overwhelmed. 93 points. Drink 2030-2038.

Château Branaire Ducru

4ème Cru Classé, 72% CS, 22% M, 3.5% CF, 2.5% PV

François-Xavier Maroteaux and technical director Jean-Dominique Videau continue to make one of the most elegant wines of Saint Julien. The second vintage to be vinified in the château's new gravity cellar, the 2024 is fresh and vibrant with masses of attractive, red cherry and plum fruit, a compact structure and a persistent, harmonious finish. 93 points. Drink 2029-2037.

Château Saint Pierre

4ème Cru Classé, 85% CS, 12% M, 3% PV

The first vintage to be certified as organic and a great success from this the smallest (17 hectares) of all the Saint Julien *crus classés*. Jean Triaud together with technical director Rémi Di Constanzo has fashioned a rich, fleshy wine with beautiful blackcurrant aromas and a touch of spice from ageing in 65% new oak barrels. 93 points. Drink 2031-2038.

Clos du Marquis

65% CS, 30% M, 5% CF

This fine, quintessential Saint Julien comes from the 44 hectares of vines that Château Léoville Las Cases owns to the west of the D2 road. Vinified in the vast new winery in the middle of the village which houses 110 vats (to enable to different parcels to be kept apart), this is a lovely, sweet, generous wine with fine freshness and impressive length on the finish. 12.9% alcohol contributes body and 8% *vin de presse* has been incorporated which adds structure and ageing potential. Overall, a great success. 93 points. Drink 2031-2038.

Château Lagrange

3ème Cru Classé, 84% CS, 10% M, 6% PV

General manager, Matthieu Bordes, was pleased with the quality of the thicker-skinned cabernet sauvignon and has made another successful vintage with a high proportion in the blend. The size (118 hectares) of the property together with the difficult weather conditions necessitated a strict selection, of both the fruit (manual and optical sorting) and the resulting wines. The *grand vin* is fresh and vividly fruity with lovely cassis aromas, carefully extracted tannins and a ripe finish. 93 points. Drink 2031-2037.

La Croix Ducru Beaucaillou

65% M, 32% CS, 3% PV

From the vines of Château Ducru Beaucaillou that lie to the west of the D2 road together with some of the best-placed parcels of merlot that are excluded from the *grand vin*. Technical director Emmanuel Bonneau performed a *saignée* on most of the merlot vats to concentrate the juice. The unusually high proportion of merlot for a Saint Julien wine makes this immediately appealing with masses of glossy fruit, a delicious, close-knit texture and a succulent finish. 93 points. Drink 2029-2037.

Pavillon de Léoville Poyferré

50% CS, 18% M, 18% CF, 14% PV

One of the most attractive second wines of the vintage with fresh, bright fruit, a vibrant, crunchy texture, supple tannins and an attractive, clean finish. This will be delicious young and will age gracefully in the medium term. 92 points. Drink 2028-2034.

Château Gloria

56% CS, 32% M, 5% PV, 7% CF

This is the first vintage of Gloria certified as organic and continues the warm, welcoming style for which the château is well-known. Ripe and aromatic with fine, vivid fruit and a touch of spicy oak (aged in 40% new oak barrels). This has a highly attractive, fleshy texture and a lovely, generous finish. 93 points. Drink 2030-2037.

Château Moulin Riche

46% CS, 39% M, 15% PV

The Cuvelier family acquired Château Moulin Riche in 1920 along with Léoville Poyferré and for many years the name was used for the second wine of its famous neighbour. The wine now, however, is vinified separately. The vines lie 2 km to the north-west of Poyferré and there is a good proportion of petit verdot which gives tannin and structure. The 2024 is a rich, burly wine with generous fruit and will age well. 92 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château du Glana

69% CS, 31% M

A fine estate owned by brothers Julien and Ludovic Meffre that is one of the few remaining unclassified châteaux in Saint Julien. The majority of the vines lie adjacent to Châteaux Talbot and Lagrange and make a similarly generous wine with both class and harmony. Harvested swiftly from 23rd September to 4th October, the low yields (30 hl/ha compared to 55 hl/ha in 2023), helped the fruit reach a good level of maturity with red cherry and plum aromas complemented by a touch of spicy oak. Ripe and juicy, this is a medium-bodied, compact wine that will age gracefully. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

SAINT ESTEPHE

Château Montrose

2ème Cru Classé, 80% CS, 17% M, 3% CF

Technical director Vincent Decup produced the *grand vin* exclusively from vines planted on Terrasse 4 soils which was a crucial factor in limiting water uptake and inducing a satisfactory level of hydric stress in the cabernets. A green harvest helped to further concentrate the flavours and this is one of the densest, most intense wines of the vintage, with dark, brambly fruit on the nose, real depth, swagger and spice on the palate and a long, luxurious finish. 94 points. Drink 2033-2040.

Château Cos d'Estournel

2ème Cru Classé, 60% CS, 38% M, 1.5% CF, 0.5% PV

Continuing the trend of the past ten years, this is another elegant and harmonious Cos. Technical director, Dominique Arangoits, decided to opt for a cooler maceration this year (26C rather than a more typical 29C) in order to extract only the finest tannins and compensated by increasing the percentage of press wine to 15%. This has wonderful aromas of fresh blackberry, red plum and spice and is beautifully textured with polished tannins, lovely freshness and a succulent finish. Will be aged in 50% new oak barrels. 94 points. Drink 2032-2039.

Château Calon Ségur

3ème Cru Classé, 82% CS, 9% M, 8% CF, 1% PV

Estate director, Vincent Millet, decided to begin harvesting the merlot on his birthday, 20th September, and was rewarded as his team picked a good percentage of it before the rain returned the following day. Only 55% of the crop was used for the *grand vin* and the strict selection in both the vines and cellar has ensured a most successful result. Harmonious, regal red and black fruit on the nose, plentiful but smooth tannins on the palate (15% press wine used this year) and impressive length and finesse on the finish. 94 points. Drink 2031-2039.

Château Lafon Rochet

4ème Cru Classé, 72% CS, 25% M, 3% CF

The well seasoned Christophe Congé oversaw proceedings at Lafon Rochet for the 2024 vintage with the cabernet sauvignon on the deep gravel soils of the estate's western plateau making up a higher than usual proportion of the blend. Blackcurrant and red plum aromas precede a lovely, open textured palate with sweet fruit, a touch of cedar from 40% new oak and an elegant, harmonious aftertaste. 93 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château Ormes de Pez

48% M, 41% CS, 6% PV, 5% CF

Owned by the Cazes family of Lynch Bages, in 2024 they employed a strict selection policy in the vineyard which resulted in their lowest yields for some time. Harvesting late from 1st to 10th October they made a wine with lovely red plums and blackcurrant on the nose, a touch of spice (45% new oak) and a rich, ripe texture. 92 points. Drink 2030-2037.

Château Le Crock

43% CS, 40% M, 12% CF, 5% PV

One of the smallest crops at Le Crock (just 17 hl/ha), as Sara Cuvelier and her team lost three parcels of vines on the plateau de Marbuzet to hail. The fruit that survived, however, was of fine quality and was harvested promptly from 27th September to 8th October. Masses of vibrant redcurrant and blackberry on the nose, soft supple tannins to balance lovely, fresh, crunchy fruit with a pure finish. 92 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château Lilian Ladouys

66% M, 17% CS, 14% PV, 3% CF

The entire crop was harvested in just 12 days from 26th September to 7th October. The ripe merlot gave elegance and the fleshy cabernets and petit verdot added structure and vitality. A ripe, generous wine, not a blockbuster but with delicious, forward fruit, carefully extracted tannins and a fresh finish. 92 points. Drink 2029-2034.

Le Marquis de Calon Ségur

63% M, 37% CS

The characterful and charming second wine of Château Calon Ségur. Estate director, Vincent Millet, has changed the profile of the *grand vin* since his arrival from Château Margaux resulting in much of the older merlot now being included here. These old vines give a richness and generosity rarely found in a second wine and make Le Marquis de Calon one of the very finest in the Médoc. The 2024 represents 45% of the crop and is a great success with ripe, plummy fruit, carefully extracted tannins and a long, fresh finish. Will be aged in 20% new oak barrels. 92 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château Capbern

70% CS, 30% M

Owned by Calon Ségur and with the winemaking duties in the hands of the exceptionally talented Vincent Millet, Capbern is frequently one of Saint Estèphe's best value wines. An impressive yield of 45 hl/ha (the village average was 31), was a result of meticulous work in the vineyards by Vincent and his team and the resulting wine has delicious red fruit on the nose, ripe tannins on the palate and a generous, spicy finish. 92 points. Drink 2030-2036.



MARGAUX

Château Margaux

1er Cru Classé, 93% CS, 5% M, 1% CF, 1% PV

Low yields (30 hl/ha), precise vinification and a strict selection (46% of the crop for the *grand vin*) were the essentials for estate director Philippe Bascaules to make yet another beautifully aromatic, elegant, seamless wine. The rainy conditions required up to 20% of the juice from the merlot vats to be run off prior to fermentation but the cabernet sauvignon was of its usual high quality and provided essential backbone and character. A lovely, harmonious wine with the silkiest of tannins; the most refined of the first growths. 95 points. Drink 2034-2042.

Château Brane Cantenac

2ème Cru Classé, 77% CS, 22% M, 1% CF

Henri Lurton consistently makes one of the most elegant wines of Margaux from the finest plots on the Cantenac plateau. This year he eliminated the carmenère and petit verdot from the *grand vin* as they lacked maturity and finesse. The 2024, harvested relatively early between 17th September and 7th October, is a beautiful, harmonious wine with fresh red and black fruits, supple tannins and a persistent, clean finish. With 11% press wine added to give density and structure, this will be attractive young and age gracefully. 94 points. Drink 2031-2038.

Château Palmer

3ème Cru Classé, 59 % CS, 41% M

Unusually, estate director Thomas Duroux selected only the cabernet sauvignon and merlot for the *grand vin* this year. Biodynamic practices resulted in a low (22hl/ha) but high quality yield. Since 2022 all the crop has spent the first year in traditional oak barriques followed by a second year in large 30hl oak *foudres*. The result is a wonderfully harmonious wine with aromatic, redcurrant and blackberry fruit on the nose, soft, supple tannins and a precise, close-knit texture. 94 points. Drink 2030-2037.

Château Rauzan Ségla

2ème Cru Classé, 63.5% CS, 34% M, 2% PV, 0.5%CF

The first vintage in which *directeur général* Nicolas Audebert has been able to make full use of the newly constructed viticultural centre. Having the tractors on hand has reduced the time it takes to treat all 62 hectares of vines to just six hours. 2024 was the first vintage to be certified organic, and the team have produced one of the Médoc's best wines this year. Fresh, brambly fruit on the nose with a restrained, gentle spice from 50% new oak barrels precedes a silky, harmonious palate with fine depth and complexity. Beautiful, supple tannins and a long, sultry finish. 94 points. Drink 2032-2038.

Château Lascombes

2ème Cru Classé, 65% CS, 30% M, 2.5% PV, 2.5% CF

Estate director Axel Heinz continues to refine the style at this 130 hectare estate, now owned by Lawrence Wine Estates of the US. The *grand vin* contains a higher proportion of cabernet sauvignon and the extraction of tannins is more precise resulting in greater generosity on the mid-palate. The 2024 is an elegant, harmonious wine with fresh aromas of blackcurrant and sweet cedar, supple tannins, and a long, energetic finish. Will be aged in 60% new oak barrels, somewhat less than in the past. 94 points. Drink 2031-2038.

Château Durfort Vivens

2ème Cru Classé, 94.5% CS, 5% M, 0.5% CF

Farmed biodynamically since 2016, owner Gonzague Lurton was happy with his relatively high yields of 37 hl/ha this year, significantly above the Margaux average. A high percentage of cabernet sauvignon in the blend, which Gonzague attributes to the variety's ability to maintain high levels of concentration amidst the rain in September. Picking was from the 23rd September to the 8th October. For the past few years, 30% of the crop has been vinified in 300 and 700 litre terracotta amphorae, with the remainder in new oak, to enhance the texture and the tannins are wonderfully soft and supple. Bright blackberry fruit on the nose, fine freshness and poise on the palate with lovely concentration of fruit and spice on the finish. 93 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château Giscours

3ème Cru Classé, 60% CS, 31% M, 6% CF, 1% PV

Another success for Alexander Van Beek and his team with meticulous work required in the vineyard where organic viticulture is practised. Cover crops are now planted to increase the nutrients in the soil and, with a yield of 33 hl/ha, Giscours is one of the few Margaux properties to make more wine in 2024 than in 2023. Several passages of picking were carried out between 19th September and 11th October with the team returning to the same plots to sequentially pick fruit at optimal ripeness from vines of differing ages and levels of vigour. This is an elegant, sophisticated wine with masses of dark fruits, a generous silky texture and long, subtle power on the finish. 93 points. Drink 2031-2038.

Château d'Issan

3ème Cru Classé,

65% CS, 30% M, 2% CF, 2% Malbec, 1% PV

Jointly owned by Emmanuel Cruse and Jacky Lorenzetti, this is the finest of the three Lorenzetti *crus classés*. The quality of the terroir, close to the Gironde estuary, shines through with impressive structure allied to a rich, generous texture. Beautiful, blackcurrant aromas are complemented by a touch of spicy oak and a long, fresh finish. 93 points. Drink 2030-2037.

Château Malescot Saint Exupéry

3ème Cru Classé, 53% M, 40% CS, 7% PV

Jean-Luc Zuger makes one of the most full-bodied wines of the Margaux appellation, combining ripe, plummy fruit with carefully extracted tannins. Harvested late (1st to 15th October) to ensure full ripeness, the 2024 is a rich, generous wine that is being aged in 50% new oak barrels. 93 points. Drink 2032-2039.

Château Prieuré Lichine

4ème Cru Classé, 65% CS, 29% M, 6% PV

Wine-maker Etienne Charrier together with consultant Stephane Derenoncourt continue the remarkable progress made at this substantial 85 hectare estate over the past ten years. The challenging weather conditions required the use of both optical and densimetric sorting systems to ensure the quality of the fruit but the result is a ripe, fragrant wine with excellent purity of fruit and a persistent, fresh finish. 93 points. Drink 2030-2037.

Château du Tertre

5ème Cru Classé, 75% CS, 13% M, 10% CF, 2% PV

Consistently, one of the most attractive and best value Margaux crus classés. Masses of red and black fruits on the nose are followed by a fresh, succulent texture and a long, sweet aftertaste. A lovely, harmonious wine that personifies the Margaux appellation and delivers real quality at a sensible price. 93 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château Angludet

59 % CS, 40 % M, 1 % PV

Biodynamic viticulturalist and winemaker Ben Sichel now maintains cover vegetation between the vines, has planted fruit trees amongst the rows and leaves the prunings on the ground to promote soil regeneration. Despite a frost on 19th April he managed to produce a respectable 30 hl/ha. One third will be aged in 700 litre clay amphorae, with the balance in Jupilles oak barriques from *tonnellerie* Saint Martin. A fine, aromatic wine with lifted red berries and a hint of sweet cedarwood. Carefully extracted, delicate tannins will ensure the wine will be approachable relatively soon and will continue to age elegantly. 93 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château Le Coteau

90% CS, 8% M, 2% CF

Much more cabernet sauvignon in the blend this year (it was 57% in 2023) as owner Eric Léglise considered it to be by far the most successful variety. He used the fruit from the six best hectares of his 14 hectare estate. The merlot was picked on 25th September but he waited until 5th October to start harvesting the cabernet sauvignon, finishing on the 10th. The result is a rich, juicy wine with sumptuous cassis fruit complemented by a touch of spice. The wine will be matured in 25% new oak barrels from *tonnelleries* Marchive and Orion. A great success; a fine, aromatic Margaux with both charm and persistence. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

MÉDOC

Château La Lagune

3ème Cru Classé, Haut Médoc, 52% CS, 42% M, 6% PV

Caroline Frey runs this fine biodynamic 86 hectare estate where a localised hailstorm on the 17th May reduced the crop by 40%. However, through careful work in the vineyard, the château harvested some good quality healthy fruit between 23rd September and 9th October, yielding a satisfactory 26 hl/ha. With limited *pigeages* and *remontages*, they extracted only the finest tannins. Maturation is 95% in French oak barrels, of which 50% are new, and 5% in Clayver ceramic eggs. The resulting wine has lovely aromatics of redcurrants, violets and blackberries and a bright, vibrant palate with soft, supple tannins and a hint of sweet cedar on the finish.

93 points. Drink 2031-2037.

Château Chasse Spleen

Moulis-en-Médoc, 60% CS, 33% M, 7% PV

This substantial, 115 hectare estate is owned by Céline and Jean-Pierre Villars-Foubet and is deservedly the best-known wine of the Moulis appellation. Rich and fleshy with firm but ripe tannins and bright acidity, this has enough fruit and structure to age gracefully. Will be aged in 40% new oak barrels. 92 points. Drink 2031-2037.

Château Cantemerle

5ème Cru Classé, Haut Médoc, 73% CS, 18% M, 7% CF, 2% PV

Whilst construction of their new, 6000m² cellar nears its conclusion, Cantemerle have produced a fine effort in what was a testing vintage. The healthy yield of 43 hl/ha – almost double that of some of their neighbours – is a testament to the tireless work carried out in the vines by estate director, Laure Canu, and her team. Picking took place over a fortnight, starting with the merlot on 24th September and concluding with the cabernets on 7th October. The result is a fine, open wine with charming, redcurrant and blackberry fruit on the nose, supple tannins on the palate and a fresh finish. Will drink well from a young age. 93 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château Sociando Mallet

Haut Médoc, 55% M, 43% CS, 2% CF

This splendid 49 hectare property lies just to the north of Saint Estèphe in the village of Saint Seurin de Cadourne. Often a dense, backward wine that demands patience, the 2024 is unusually forward with delightful red fruits and touch of oak and spice on the nose, a ripe, generous texture and a most attractive, soft aftertaste. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

Château Mauvesin Barton

Moulis-en-Médoc, 53% CS, 47% M

Acquired by the Bartons in 2011, this 46 hectare property has since seen a complete renovation in both vineyards and cellar and the wine has steadily improved. Melanie Barton has made a fresh, charming wine full of red fruits and supple tannins. Soft and succulent with a sweet finish. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

Château Sénéjac

Haut Médoc, 59 % CS, 29 % M, 8 % CF, 4 % PV

Owned by the Cordier family of Château Talbot and the wine is made by their technical director, Jean-Michel Laporte. The yield was a highly satisfactory 48 hl/ha and the 2024 is ripe and fruity with carefully extracted tannins and a generous texture. It will be aged in 20% new oak barrels and should be one of the best value non-classified wines of the Médoc. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

Château d'Agassac

Haut Médoc, 47% CS, 50% M, 3% CF

One of only 14 *crus bourgeois exceptionnels*, the vineyards adjoin those of Château La Lagune and share the same deep, gravel soils. The high (31 years) average age of the vines give the wine depth and longevity and the 2024, albeit lighter than the 2022 & 2023 vintages, is a great success with a generous texture and a long finish. Will be aged 50% in new and 1 year old barrels and 50% in amphorae and small vats. 92 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château Fourcas Dupré

Listrac-Médoc, 48% CS, 40% M, 12% PV

Estate director, Lucas Leclercq, made this delightful wine in the new winery which houses 31 130hl cement vats. More of the wine is now matured in 300 and 600 litre barrels together with ceramic amphorae manufactured by TAVA in Italy. The 2024 vintage is medium-bodied, ripe and fruity, a harmonious, balanced wine whilst retaining the typical sturdy, Listrac character. 92 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château Beaumont

Haut Médoc, 65% CS, 30% M, 5% PV

Philippe Blanc, who is responsible for both Châteaux Beaumont and Beychevelle, picked relatively early, from 19th September to 2nd October. Cropped at a satisfying 43 hl/ha, fresh and aromatic with glossy, blackcurrant fruit, this has a juicy texture and a fresh, ripe finish. Not a blockbuster but highly attractive and will be delicious to enjoy at an early age. 91 points. Drink 2029-2034.

Château Cissac

Haut Médoc, 61% CS, 29% M, 10% PV

Marie Vialard together with technical director Laurent Saint Pasteur consistently make characterful, sturdy Médocs that age well. Their 61 hectare estate lies a few kilometres away from the Gironde estuary just behind the village of Pauillac. The 2024 is fresh and fruity with cedarwood aromas, carefully extracted tannins and a persistent aftertaste. 91 points. Drink 2030-2035.

PESSAC-LEOGNAN & GRAVES

Château Haut Brion

1er Cru Classé, 47.2% CS, 37.5% M, 15.3% CF

Technical director, Jean-Philippe Masclef, picked the red grapes from 17th September to 4th October. The poor flowering and strict sorting (densimetric, optical and manual) reduced the crop to 26 hl/ha, one of the lowest since his arrival at Haut Brion in 1988. Gentle extraction (lower temperature and shorter *remontages*) has given a ripe, fleshy wine with pure fruit and high quality tannins. Rich and generous with fine harmony and a persistent finish. Will be aged in 75% new oak barrels. 95 points. Drink 2032-2040.

Château La Mission Haut Brion

Cru Classé, 51% CS, 46.5% M, 2.5% CF

Despite being under the same ownership and management as Château Haut Brion since 1983, La Mission makes a more overt style of wine with vibrant fruit and an immediate presence. Ripe blackcurrants and spicy oak on the nose followed by a succulent texture on the palate make it more open and easy to appreciate. A lovely, complete wine that will age splendidly. 94 points. Drink 2031-2039.

Château Haut Bailly

Cru Classé, 58% CS, 40% M, 2% CF

A gentle, generous wine from Véronique Sanders and technical director Gabriel Vialard. Harvested from 18th September to 4th October, this is full of vivid fruit with a ripe, succulent texture and a long, sweet finish. The aim was to extract only the ripest tannins and not overpower the ripe but delicate fruit. One of the most elegant and harmonious wines of the vintage. 93 points. Drink 2030-2038.

Château Les Carmes Haut Brion

Pessac-Léognan, 48% CF, 29% CS, 23% M

Tiny, 7 hectare, property whose vines lie just a few hundred metres to the north of Château Haut Brion and include an unusually high proportion of cabernet franc. Estate director, Guillaume Pouthier, together with consultant, Stéphane Derenoncourt, used 52% whole bunches (slightly less than in previous years) and aged the wine in the usual mixture of 70% in new barrels, 19% in 18hl oak *foudres* from Rousseau and Stockinger, and 11% in clay amphorae. The result is a dark, brooding wine with intense, brambly fruit and a rich, dense texture. One of the most powerful wines of the vintage. 93 points. Drink 2031-2038.

Château Smith Haut Lafitte

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

After a record-breaking 70% in 2023, this is the second highest percentage of cabernet sauvignon in the *grand vin*, which comes from the best-placed parcels of the 67 hectare estate. Certified organic since 2019 with many biodynamic practices, the 2024 season was challenging but the warm, dry July and August enabled the fruit to reach a good level of maturity and the grapes were harvested from 18th September to 9th October. Ripe and generous with plummy fruit and high quality tannins, this finishes fresh and long. 93 points. Drink 2030-2038.

Château Pape Clément

Cru Classé, 53% CS, 45% M, 1% CF, 1% PV

Bernard Magrez's flagship property has produced a typically ripe and generous wine from their 64 hectares of vines located in the suburbs of Bordeaux. The sheltered position and desire to allow the grapes to reach optimum maturity has given a ripe, generous wine with a most attractive, fleshy texture and a satisfying, sweet finish. Aged 70% in small oak barrels (two thirds of which were new), 15% in larger oak *foudres* and 15% in a mixture of ceramic eggs, cement and stainless steel vessels. 93 points. Drink 2030-2037.

Domaine de Chevalier

Cru Classé, 65% CS, 30% M, 5% PV

A lovely, harmonious, medium-bodied wine from Olivier Bernard and his sons Adrien and Hugo. Harvested between 20th September and 8th October and fermented in a mixture of oak, stainless steel and cement vats followed by ageing in 225 litre barrels and larger oak *foudres*, this has fresh, plummy fruit and a fleshy mid-palate. Carefully extracted tannins add structure and the wine finishes sweet and long. 93 points. Drink 2030-2038.

Château de Fieuzal

Cru Classé, 50% M, 40% CS, 10 % PV

Estate director and wine-maker, Stephen Carrier, together with consultant oenologist, Thomas Duclos, concentrated on bringing out the maximum of fruit and vitality. The low yields (28 hl/ha) helped Stephen achieve a good level of ripeness and this is bright and fresh with lovely red fruits, carefully extracted tannins and a touch of spice on the finish. The best value Graves *cru classé*. 93 points. Drink 2029-2037.



Domaine de la Solitude

Pessac-Léognan, 60% CS, 35% M, 5% PV

A beautiful property on the edge of the Landes forest in the village of Malartic. Owned by the religious order of the Sisters of La Sainte Famille, the 45 hectares of vines have been farmed since 1993 by Olivier Bernard of Domaine de Chevalier. One of the finest non-classified Graves châteaux, the 2024 is an elegant, medium-bodied wine with fresh, red fruit aromas and an attractive nuttiness. Carefully-extracted tannins add structure and guarantee its ability to age in the medium term.

92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

Château Civrac Lagrange

Pessac-Léognan, 55% CS, 35% M, 10% PV

A splendid property adjacent to Domaine de Chevalier. Harvested relatively late, finishing on 10th October, to achieve the maximum of ripeness, this is rich and spicy with good colour, excellent weight and concentration and a lovely combination of dark fruits and spice.

91 points. Drink 2029-2034.

Vieux Château Gaubert

Graves rouge, 60% CS, 40% M

A lovely, gutsy Graves from the oldest parcels of Dominique Haverlan's impressive 110 hectares of vines, centred on Portets in the heart of the Graves appellation. Rich and oaky with lovely, spicy fruit and a ripe, generous texture. 91 points. Drink 2029-2034.

POMEROL

Vieux Château Certan

Pomerol, 71% M, 20% CF, 9% CS

Poor weather during the flowering period reduced the crop to 30 hl/ha but enabled the remaining fruit to achieve a greater level of maturity. The *grand vin* comprises two thirds of the crop and includes the oldest plots of merlot planted between 1932 & 1982, cabernet franc replanted after the devastating 1956 frost and cabernet sauvignon planted in 2012. This is a refined, harmonious wine with blackcurrant aromas, vibrant red fruits and silky tannins on the palate and impressive length on the finish. 13.5% alcohol, achieved without chaptalisation, and refreshing acidity to give balance. Will be aged in two thirds new oak barrels from Seguin-Moreau and Sylvain. 94 points. Drink 2031-2040.

Château Gazin

Pomerol, 90% M, 10% CS

Gazin has a single block of 26 hectares on the Pomerol plateau. The cabernet franc wasn't considered ripe enough and was replaced in the *grand vin* by the cabernet sauvignon planted on the gravel soils in front of the château. Fresh and aromatic with good structure and a ripe, generous texture, this is a lovely, harmonious wine that will age gracefully. 93 points. Drink 2032-2038.

Château L'Evangile

Pomerol, 80% M, 19% CF, 1% CS

Owned by the Rothschilds of Château Lafite, Château L'Evangile has long made one of the finest, most refined wines of Pomerol. The 2024 vintage sees the inclusion for the first time of four rows of cabernet sauvignon in the *grand vin*. Planted in 2020 as a trial, *maître de chai* Charbel Abboud says they will now plant an entire block with the grape variety. Ripe and aromatic with beautiful, fresh, plum and blackberry fruit, the 2024 has high quality tannins and a delicate, silky texture. One of the few wines of the vintage to build in the mouth to a long, sumptuous finish. 94 points. Drink 2032-2040.

Château La Fleur de Gay

Pomerol, 88.5% M, 11.5% CF

Only 3,000 bottles produced by owner Chantal Lebreton and consultant Axel Marchal from three parcels of clay and gravel soil totalling 2 hectares on the Pomerol plateau adjacent to Châteaux Lafleur and Trotanoy. The merlot was harvested on 19th September and the cabernet franc on 2nd October, giving a rich, dense, chewy wine with fabulous fruit and persistence. 12.7% alcohol and will be aged in 42% new oak barrels. 93 points. Drink 2030-2037.

Château La Conseillante

Pomerol, 80% M, 20% CF

This is a typically elegant wine from Marielle Cazaux who waited to pick at optimum ripeness (23rd to 25th September for the merlot and 1st & 4th October for the cabernet franc). Only three vats required any chaptalisation and the low yields (22 hl/ha after careful sorting of the crop) gave a rare concentration to what is a beautiful, seamless wine with fine freshness and harmony. With 13.5% alcohol, this is ripe and generous and one of the most complete Pomerols of the vintage and will be aged in 70% new oak barrels. 94 points. Drink 2030-2038.

Château Vray Croix de Gay

Pomerol, 81% M, 19% CF

After two blockbuster (14.5% alcohol) vintages, the 2024 is a lighter, more refreshing wine with attractive red cherry and plum fruit, a delicate structure and a persistent finish. The wine, from two plots totalling 3.67 hectares on the gravelly parts of the Pomerol plateau, one adjacent to Château Lafleur and the other in front of Château Trotanoy, is made by Vincent Millet and his team from Château Calon Ségur, aided by consultant Eric Boissenot. One of the most elegant Pomerols of the vintage. 93 points. Drink 2030-2037.

Château du Domaine de L'Eglise

Pomerol, 98% M, 2% CF

Splendid, 7 hectare estate to the north of the church of Pomerol, owned by the Castéja family of Château Trotteville and also run by Christophe Dussutour and his team. The quality has improved markedly over the past decade and the 2024 is a full-bodied, generous wine with a fine mixture of red and black fruits, a touch of spice and a long, fresh finish. One of the best value Pomerols. 93 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Château La Croix de Gay

Pomerol, 93% M, 7% CF

Chantal Lebreton and her sons Jean-Pascal, Olivier and Julien, aided by consultant Axel Marchal, have made a delicious, vividly fruity 2024 from their 4 hectares of vines on the plateau of Pomerol. Will be aged in 40% new oak barrels to give additional richness and a touch of spice to what is already a medium-bodied, well-balanced wine. 92 points. Drink 2029-2037.

Château La Cabanne

Pomerol, 94% M, 6% CF

Owned by the Estager family since 1952, this fine 10 hectare estate is on the western side of the Pomerol plateau. A ripe, fleshy wine with a touch of spicy oak (will be aged in 60% new oak barrels), rich and generous and consistently one of the best value Pomerols. 92 points. Drink 2030-2036.

Clos René

Pomerol, 70% M, 20% CF, 10% Malbec

The Lasserre family own 16 hectares of vines on the western side of the Pomerol plateau where the soils have a higher proportion of sand and gravel. Consistently a round, fleshy Pomerol with the accent on fruit rather than structure, Clos René is one of the best value wines of the appellation. The 2024 is ripe and generous and will be enjoyable at an early age. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.



Château La Croix du Casse

Pomerol, 95% M, 5% CF

A delicious, open, forward wine with masses of red berry fruit. The 9.5 hectares of vines lie on warm, gravel and sandy soils and give a fragrant, medium-bodied wine that drinks well at an early age. Owned by the Castéja family of Châteaux Batailley and Trotteville, the wine is also vinified by the Trotteville team led by Christophe Dussutour. Ripe and aromatic with carefully extracted tannins and a soft, generous finish. 92 points. Drink 2028-2034.

Château Siaurac

Lalande de Pomerol, 53% M, 30% CF, 17% Malbec

Large, 45 hectare, estate acquired in 2020 by the Suravenir insurance group that also owns Château Calon Ségur. Estate director Pierre Rebaud and technical manager Elodie Kaminski harvested the 43 plots between 21st September and 4th October and have made a fine, vividly fruity, open-textured wine that will be delicious to drink young. Ripe and aromatic with red cherry and plum fruit and just a little tannin to ensure its development in the medium term. Will be aged in a mixture of French oak barrels, cement vats and amphorae. 91 points. Drink 2028-2033.

SAINT EMILION

Château Ausone

Saint Emilion, 65% CF, 35% M

The Vauthier family harvested relatively late on four days (30th September & 1st October for the merlot and 4 & 5th October for the cabernet franc) to ensure the ripest possible fruit. A lovely, harmonious wine with real depth and personality. Has impressive purity of fruit, silky tannins and a close-knit texture rarely found in 2024. Sweet and succulent, this will be delicious young and age splendidly. 95 points. Drink 2032-2040.

Château Cheval Blanc

Saint Emilion, 46% M, 48% CF, 6% CS

Pierre-Olivier Clouet eliminated 34% of the crop in a series of sorting operations to select only the ripest and healthiest fruit. *Cuvaison* was long but gentle to extract the maximum of flavour and only the finest tannins. In the end 70% of the wine was used for the *grand vin* with, as usual, no *vin de presse* added and which will be aged in 100% new oak barrels. A beautiful, rich, generous wine with impressive harmony and precision. Finishes sweet and long. 95 points. Drink 2032-2040.

Château Figeac

St Emilion 1er Grand Cru Classé 'A', 39% CS, 33% M, 28% CF

Frédéric Faye has been at Figeac for 23 years and says this was one of the most challenging he has seen. But with careful sorting of the fruit (eliminating 20-30% of the berries) and a strict selection for the *grand vin* (half the crop will be sold as Petit Figeac), he has made an impressive Figeac that has both freshness and generosity. Ripe, blackcurrant and plum fruit and a touch of spice gives a succulence rarely found in 2024 and the quality of the tannins is impressive. Finishes sweet and long. 94 points. Drink 2031-2040.

Château Canon

Saint Emilion 1er Grand Cru Classé, 78% M, 22% CF

The restructuring of the vineyard since Chanel acquired the property in 1996 is now paying big dividends as the new plantings reach their prime. The 24 hectares on the limestone plateau were harvested between 19th September and 9th October with the crop given a strict, manual sorting to eliminate any unripe or unsound fruit. Has all the freshness and vitality associated with the limestone soil coupled to refined fruit and high quality tannins. Will be delicious young and age gracefully. 94 points. Drink 2030-2040.

Clos Fourtet

St Emilion 1er Grand Cru Classé, 84% M, 10% CF, 6% CS

Matthieu Cuvelier, together with estate director Emmanuel de Saint Salvy and consultant oenologists Jean-Claude Berrouet and Stéphane Derenoncourt, consistently makes one of the finest wines of the appellation from his 19 hectare estate on the limestone plateau immediately to the west of the town of Saint Emilion and adjacent to Châteaux Canon and Belair-Monange. Ripe and fruity with good density this is a beautiful, compact wine with delicious plum and brambly fruit, carefully extracted tannins and a generous finish. 94 points. Drink 2031-2039.

Château Trotte Vieille

St Emilion 1er Grand Cru Classé, 56% CF, 41% M, 3% CS

As in previous vintages, the cabernet franc plays the leading part in the *assemblage* for the *grand vin*. Many of the vines are over 100 years old and bring depth and vitality to the wine which, over the past ten years, has grown in stature to become one of the very finest wines of Saint Emilion. The 12 hectare estate lies just to the east of the town of Saint Emilion and is owned by the Castéja family of Château Batailley with the vineyards run by Christophe Dussutour. Fresh and fruity with good depth, a touch of spice, firm but ripe tannins and a long aftertaste. 94 points. Drink 2030-2038.

Château Troplong Mondot

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

Since his arrival in 2017, Aymeric de Gironde has changed the style of Troplong from an extracted, powerful, often alcoholic wine into a refined, precise wine with a distinct sense of place. The 2024 was harvested quickly between 20th September and 11th October with a satisfactory yield of 35 hl/ha after a strict optical sorting and is a medium-bodied, fresh, harmonious wine with beautiful, pure red and black fruits, a creamy texture and persistent finish. One of the most elegant Saint Emilions of the vintage. 93 points. Drink 2030-2038.

Château La Clotte

Saint Emilion, 80% M, 20% CF

Tiny 4 hectare property acquired by the Vauthier family of Ausone in 2014. Edouard Vauthier waited until 1st October to pick the merlot and 5th October for the cabernet franc, a risky decision that resulted in a smaller crop but a rich, aromatic wine with fully ripe fruit and silky tannins. One of the very finest Saint Emilions of the vintage. 93 points. Drink 2031-2038.

Château Le Prieuré

Saint Emilion Grand Cru, 95% M, 5% CF

The first vintage made by Vincent Millet and consultant oenologist Eric Boissenot in the newly constructed cellar which houses 26 small vats in which to vinify the fruit from the estate's 12 hectares of vines that lie on the limestone plateau and clay-limestone slopes to the east of the town of Saint Emilion. Harvested quickly at the optimum moment between 27th September and 4th October, the 2024 is a lovely, ripe, vividly fruity wine with lush fruit and gentle tannins. 93 points.

Drink 2029-2036.

Château Moulin Saint Georges

Saint Emilion Grand Cru, 80% M, 20% CF

Splendid, 7 hectare, estate owned by and situated immediately opposite Château Ausone. A beautiful expression of this fine *terroir*, vinified by the Ausone team and aged in 100% new oak barrels. Ripe and sumptuous with fresh, plummy fruit and a touch of spice. 93 points. Drink 2030-2037.

Château Laroque

Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé, 98% M, 2% CF

The Beaumartin family have owned this large (61 hectares of vines) estate since 1935. After many years of no more than adequate wine-making, new life was breathed into the property with the appointment of David Suire as estate director in 2015. The quality has improved dramatically with the old vines (most of the vineyards were planted after the 1956 frost and are now over 60 years old) giving glorious wine as a result of the more precise vinification. The 2024 is fresh and aromatic with vivid fruit and a touch of spice. Finishes sweet and generous. Will be aged in 50% new oak barrels. 93 points. Drink 2029-2035.



Château Laroque

Château Grand Corbin

Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé, 86% M, 12% CF, 2% CS

Substantial, 34 hectare, estate that lies to the west of Saint Emilion not far from the Pomerol border. Quality has jumped since the arrival of Lure Canu as director in 2021 and her appointment of Axel Marchal as consultant oenologist in 2022. Harvested between 23rd September and 3rd October, this is ripe and spicy with excellent freshness and a fine, fleshy texture. Will be aged in 35% new oak barrels. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

Château Mangot

Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé, 64% M, 34% CF, 2% CS

Promoted to Grand Cru Classé in 2022, Château Mangot makes one of the most sumptuous wines of the appellation. The Todeschini family own 34 hectares of vines between 30 and 90 metres altitude on the limestone slopes near Saint Etienne de Lisse, just a few kilometres to the east of the town of Saint Emilion. The 2024 is fresh and aromatic with ripe, plummy fruit, silky tannins and a delicate finish. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

Château de Fonbel

Saint Emilion Grand Cru, 65% M, 31% CS, 4% C

The Vauthier family's estate comprises 16 hectares of vines to the south of Saint Emilion on well-drained sandy, gravelly soils, a big advantage in a wet season such as 2024. The harvest for the cabernet and carmenère was delayed until the 4th & 5th October to achieve the maximum of ripeness and this is a great success with rich, plum and blackcurrant fruit, a succulent texture and excellent structure from carefully-extracted tannins. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

Château Jacques Noir

Saint Emilion, 100% M

A tiny 5.6 hectare estate on the limestone slopes just to the east of the town of Saint Emilion. The vividly fruity wine will be aged in 30% new oak barrels for 12 months to add complexity. The result is a most attractive, medium-bodied, harmonious wine with ripe, plummy fruit and a fine structure. 90 points. Drink 2029-2033.

Château Plaisance

Montagne-Saint Emilion, 94% M, 6% CS

This 18 hectare estate lies at the junction of the Montagne Saint Emilion and Lalande de Pomerol appellations. Owned since 2001 by the Ducourt family, the wine is aged in one third new oak barrels and has excellent fruit, and firm but ripe tannins. 90 points. Drink 2029-2033.

SAUTERNES AND BARSAC

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

100% Sémillon

Pierre Montégut, technical director for all the AXA-owned Bordeaux estates, has made an elegant, refined wine with a perfect balance of 13.9% alcohol and 130 g/l of residual sugar. Not as monumental nor concentrated as the opulent 2022 and 2023 vintages, this is beautifully fresh and aromatic with ripe, honeyed fruit balanced by excellent acidity. The best fruit was harvested between 3rd and 17th October, with a yield of 11 hl/ha. Will be aged in 50% new oak casks and 50% in 1 year old barrels. 94 points. Drink 2030-2038.

Château Rayne Vigneau, 1^{er} Cru Classé, Sauternes

76 % Sémillon, 24% Sauvignon

One of the largest (83 hectares) and best sited (immediately to the west of Château d'Yquem) Sauternes estates. The quality has improved considerably since the property's purchase by the Trésor du Patrimoine group from Crédit Agricole. The 2024 is the last vintage to be made by Vincent Labergère who has since left to run Châteaux Soutard, Larmande and Faurie La Rose in Saint Emilion. A beautiful, fresh, elegant wine with fine concentration and length on the finish. 93 points. Drink 2030-2038.

Château Coutet, 1^{er} Cru Classé, Barsac

98.9% Sémillon, 1% Sauvignon, 0.1% Muscadelle

Laurier Girardot has continued the magnificent run of vintages at Coutet with a remarkable 2024. Picked over five weeks from 19th September to 22nd October, the finest juice was obtained in the first half of October and has given a splendid wine with both vitality and richness. 13% alcohol, 3.61 pH and 140 g/l of residual sugar makes it impeccably balanced with opulent, honeyed fruit whilst retaining excellent freshness. 93 points. Drink 2030-2038.

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

75% Sémillon, 25% Sauvignon

Jean-Jacques Dubourdieu has made another brilliant wine which combines rich, honeyed fruit with mouthwatering acidity. At 13.5% alcohol and 146 g/l, this is one of the richest wines of the vintage but remains beautifully poised with wonderful purity of fruit and a persistent finish. 93 points. Drink 2030-2038.

Château Suau, 2ème Cru Classé, Barsac

100% Sémillon

Romain Garcia, the owner of neighbouring Château de Rolland, took over the running of this tiny, 5.5 hectare estate in December 2023 from Olivier Bernard of Domaine de Chevalier and Château Guiraud. The 2024 is his first vintage and it's a brilliant début. Planted with 60 year old vines, the wines have been consistently fine but have now moved up a gear with impressive precision and a fine, lingering finish. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

Château Lamothe Guignard, 2ème Cru Classé, Sauternes,

90% Sémillon, 5% Sauvignon, 5% Muscadelle

Harvested in four tris between 23rd September and 24th October with the finest juice coming principally from the middle of October. Philippe Guignard considers his 2024 to be a return to the style of the 1980s and 1990s with a higher level of acidity than in recent years and less than 100 g/l of residual sugar. Aged for 18 months in Allier and Vosges oak barrels (20% new) from *tonnelleries* Condochon, Radoux, Allary and Orion, this is fresh and aromatic with lively fruit and a delightful sweet but crisp finish. 91 points. Drink 2029-2034.

Château Doisy Védrières, 2ème Cru Classé, Barsac

84% Sémillon, 14% Sauvignon, 2% Muscadelle

Guillaume Lefebvre has purchased the neighbouring, 15 hectare property of Château Pernand bringing the estate to a total of 50 hectares. The average yield was 12 hl/ha and a strict selection of only the richest juice has given a lovely, rich, opulent wine with fine purity of fruit, 129 g/l of residual sugar and excellent balancing acidity. Another great success. 93 points. Drink 2030-2037.

Château Broustet, 2ème Cru Classé, Barsac

95% Sémillon, 5% Sauvignon

Small, 17 hectare estate that is one of the most improved Barsac *crus classés* since its purchase in 2010 by the Merlaut family of Château Gruaud Larose. The 2024 is a lighter, fresher style than the impressively unctuous 2023 but has a generous texture and perfect harmony. 13% alcohol with 120 g/l of residual sugar. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

Château Cantegril, Barsac

100% Sémillon

10 hectare property on the limestone plateau of Barsac purchased by the Dubourdieu family of Doisy Daëne exactly 100 years ago. The wine, albeit a little less concentrated, has the same finesse and vitality of Doisy-Daëne and has the capacity to age gracefully. Crisp and fresh with beautiful fruit and a lovely, honeyed texture. 92 points. Drink 2029-2035.

How our 2024 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. The points I have given are relative within this vintage.

- **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 2024 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 the end of June. The wine is sold whilst still lying at the châteaux for delivery after bottling. i.e. 2024 Bordeaux will be shipped to the UK in spring/summer 2027.

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

**Charles Taylor M.W., Ed Hume-Kendall,
Thomas Britten, Jasper Taylor,
Liam Dufraisie and Beth Layder**

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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 the order. The duty, VAT and delivery costs are due, if applicable, when the wines are shipped in 2027.

Wine is generally sold in 6x75cl bottle cases (i.e. 4.5 litres) and we supply all 'En Primeur' purchases in this size unless otherwise instructed. Wine can be bottled in different formats: Halves 12x37.5cl, Magnums 3x150cl, 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 2024 vintage is £1000.

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

Front cover: Château Gruaud Larose

Back cover: Château Brane Cantenac

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