

WINE News

The 2009 and 2010 Bordeaux vintages are the best ever back-to-back Bordeaux vintages. From \$14 to \$1,500 a bottle we have the biggest and best selection of these stunning wines.



JUNE 17, 2013 FEATURES

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Bordeaux: The King of Wines

by Clyde Beffa Jr.

Not just because K&L sells more Bordeaux than any other region and not because our auction department has more Bordeaux listed than any other region. Fact is, Bordeaux makes the most collectible wines in the world. And there are still great values out there for everyday use. While there is not doubt that 2009 and 2010 Bordeaux wines are the best back-to-back vintages ever (I must admit that I did not taste the 1928 and 1929 when they were released), there are many great Bordeaux wines produced from all different vintages. Check out our staff notes on pages 2, 3, and 4.

The 2009s are sweet, sexy, voluptuous wines that will age gracefully for many years, while the more firmly structured 2010s show tremendous fruit under a cloak of tannin; basically the 2009s have the fruit covering the tannins and the 2010s have the tannins covering the fruit. The 2010s do have a bit more acidity, so the French wine merchants and the châteaux owners prefer it as more “classic” than the riper 2009 vintage.

2009 Chateau Leoville Barton, St-Julien

(\$129.99) This wine will be spectacular for many years. Power, sweetness, and balance. *98 points and #3 on Wine Enthusiast’s Top 100 Cellar Selections of 2012. 96 points James Suckling.

2009 Chateau Malescot Ste-Exupery,

Margaux (\$129.99) 98 points James Suckling and Clyde Beffa. A wine, with intense spice and berry character, with hints of sweet tobacco. James picked it as his best wine tasted

in 2012 and I rated it the best price vs. quality 2009 Bordeaux.

2009 Chateau Fleur Cardinale, St-Emilion

(\$49.99) A Chateau to watch now and in future—their 2009 and 2010 wines are phenomenal and reasonably priced. 94 points Robert Parker: “A good value among over-achieving St.-Emilion estates is La Fleur Cardinale’s 2009.” Stunning wine.

2010 Chateau Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc

(PA \$42.99) Cantemerle is one of my favorite

Since we only have four pages here to give you choices for your table or cellar, I will not spend so much time bloviating about how every wine lover should try Bordeaux wines from the \$9.99 range to wherever their pocketbook and inclination takes them. I will say, you ought not to rule out any vintage just because the vintage is not as good as 2009 or 2010 or 1982. There are fine values from every vintage in Bordeaux. To wit, we have probably sold more bottles of 1997 Bordeaux than any other vintage except 2009. 1997 was a restaurant vintage—meaning the wines are lighter and more ready to consume young. We are still selling them, and if some of the 2007 Bordeaux prices drop, we will sell tons of this restaurant vintage, too.

Now for some of my picks on this page—wines every cellar has to have:

Bordeaux properties. I thought the 2006 and 2009 were great, but this is the best ever from them—right up there with their legendary 1949. 94 points Robert Parker: “... this is the finest Cantemerle I have encountered in my professional career of tasting young vintages.”



STEVE BEARDEN *On Bordeaux*

Here in Bordeaux land we are caught between two great vintages, with lots of 2009s still available and the 2010s arriving almost weekly. One new arrival you should try while it lasts is the **2009 Labadie, Médoc (\$14.99)** with its warm notions of earth and ripe cherry. The middle is roasted and sweet, leading to an intense mineral-laced finish on this accessible bargain. Richer yet, the modern-styled **2009 Moulin de la Roque, Médoc (\$15.99)**, with its round, flashy middle and surprisingly clean and classy finish. From my favorite appellation we have a tiny amount of the small production **2009 Haut-Bergey, Pessac-Léognan (\$39.99)**. Boasting dark currant fruit, earth, charcoal, mineral and a touch of tobacco in a clean, elegant package, this complex wine will sell out fast. For those of you who missed the fantastic **2009 Corbin, St-Emilion (\$34.99)**, act quickly, because we have more in stock and it has already sold out twice before. The lush raspberry, vanilla aromatics are impossible to resist and invite you to dive right in to the silky smooth mid-palate of raspberry and red plum fruit. Finally, for those of you who have not yet tried any 2010 Bordeaux but have heard how powerful and tannic they are, try cutting your teeth on the **2010 Fonplegade, St-Emilion (\$42.99)**. The structure on this lush, deep and concentrated beauty is buried beneath palate-coating layers of plump, creamy, espresso-laced dark fruit. —*Steve Bearden*

JEFF GARNEAU'S *Bank Shot*

2009 Les Allées de Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99) Where have you been all my life, gorgeous? 2009 was a great year for second wines and this is quite possibly the best \$20 Bordeaux of the vintage. Wonderfully expressive nose with hints of violet and blackcurrant leaf. Generous dark fruit. Notes of sweet black cherry and fresh blackberry. Rich cassis and black licorice. Silky texture backed by ultra fine tannins. Unmatched quality at this price.

2010 Calèches de Lanessan, Haut-Médoc (\$15.99) Speaking of second wines, 2010 is the first vintage we have ever sold of the second wine of the ever popular Chateau Lanessan. The wine displays youthful, berryish fruit, intriguing spice notes and a hint of cocoa. There is lively acidity here matched by ripe red and black fruits and a rich texture. Firm tannins frame the finish. This is serious wine that will reward 3 to 5 years in the cellar.

2009 Lanessan, Haut-Médoc (\$24.99) The first vintage overseen by new director Paz Espejo. While building on the 200-year history of the Chateau, this young Spanish woman has ushered Lanessan into the 21st century, introducing a cleaner, more modern style. On the nose a suggestion of new oak with a hint of spice. Black currants on the palate, ripe and sweet. A classic, restrained style, firm and focused. An outstanding inaugural effort and a promise of great things to come.

1998 Lanessan, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99) The 1998 vintage in the Médoc will break your heart. There is fruit here backed by firm tannins that have yet to fully resolve. Great potential here but patience is required. —*Jeff Garneau*

STEVE GREER *The Last Word*

Bordeaux is back! At least in the newsletter. After talking with Ralph about the 2012 vintage, I was reminded that there are plenty of fantastic wines at great prices from 2009—and don't forget 2010! Especially with the return of **2009 Bois-Martin, Pessac-Léognan (\$19.99)**. This was a huge hit with customers last year and a clear candidate for case buys for cellaring. The situation of this property is perfect for producing lovely wine. Raspberry and cedar aromas with ripe red fruits on the palate to the long finish of mineral and cedar. The **2009 Caronne Ste-Gemme, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99)** is packed with 60% Cabernet. The nose is dusty rocks and earthy notes; a bit of decanting lets the red and black fruit come alive, with sweet tobacco and a long, toasty finish. I love the **2009 Clement Pichon, Haut-Médoc** and the **2010 (both \$19.99)**. The 2009 is bigger and riper with dark plum and almost candied cherry, with a polished texture. With the 2010 you get the hallmark of this vintage: lovely, juicy acidity, but also tons of red and black berry fruit flavors, with a touch of toastiness, too. Loudenne returns with the **2009 Loudenne, Médoc (\$16.99)**. This is always a customer favorite, and the 2009 will not disappoint. Pretty floral aromas and lots of toasty cedar and red berry. The palate is supple with more astringent tannins on the finish than I was expecting. Very nice. —*Steve Greer*

JIM'S JUNE GEMS

2009 Bordeaux, in-stock: Great vintage, wonderful wines from the lesser growths

Chateau Beaumont, Haut Médoc (\$17.99)

We have imported this wonderful Cru Bourgeois for well over twenty years. Deeply colored, this lovely, opulent wine shows tons of cassis to mocha aromas, with a broad, well integrated, viscous mouthfeel, and a long, rich finish. Rusty has informed me that this near-term Gem will be our house red for the next three to six years. For those of you who are hung up on points from the wine gods, The Wine Enthusiast gave this puppy 89 to 90 points. 14% ABV. 🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷

Chateau Arnauton, Fronsac (\$16.99) Inky in color, the nose exhibits a woody, almost mushroomy note with distinctive cassis to blueberry fruit overtones. In its creamy, rich, viscous, fleshy mouth presentation, this Gem is well-integrated, balanced, broad and loaded with lush, deep, ripe fruit. As with the Beaumont, this Gem will drink in the near-term (three to six years) and Rusty has told me to bring at least a few cases home for that purpose. 89 points *WE*. 14.5% ABV.

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Chateau La Fleur Calon, Montagne

St-Emilion (\$14.99) Medium deep ruby in color, the nose shows lush plum and blueberry notes with just a hint of wet stone minerality. With its soft, round, integrated entry, this Gem, which is mostly Merlot, offers up immediate drinkability and completeness, with a long, warm finish. Dusty has informed me that this Gem will be one of our house reds for the month. 14.0% ABV.

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Chateau Gigault, Premières Côtes de Blaye, "Cuvée Viva" (\$19.99) 92 points *JS*, 90 points *RP* and 89 points *WS*. Medium-deep ruby in color, the bouquet offers up tons of black cherry to currant-like fruit notes with mocha to roasted coffee bean undertones, and a hint of slate-like minerality. All of this carries over nicely to a complex, broad, viscous wine in the mouth. Rusty has informed me that this will be one of our everyday house wines in five to ten years. 14.0% ABV.

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Enjoy this month's selection! —*Jim, Rusty, Eby, The Bean, and Rizzo*

2012 Bordeaux: Some Fine Values?

by Ralph Sands

I have just returned from Bordeaux and the evaluation of the 2012 vintage. This marked my 44th visit to the region and my 23rd vintage evaluation. With well over 1,000 wines tasted, I believe I've wrapped my arms around 2012 pretty well, understand the style of the vintage, and have identified the best wines.

As always, the weather makes the wine. In 2012, the weather was normal...which means very difficult! Near-perfect vintages like 2005 and 2009 are very rare. Almost every vintage has numerous problems and 2012 certainly had its share of problems.

Weather-wise: In 2012 cold/wet conditions kept bud break late. Uneven flowering spread out for weeks, pushing things almost a month behind. Cool and wet conditions continued, causing worry of mildew. On July 15th, the weather changed dramatically and sunny conditions persisted through the end of September. Harvest was late everywhere. Most of the Merlots were harvested at good ripeness and mostly in nice conditions but a lot of the Cabernet Sauvignons on the Left Bank were picked in the rains of mid-October. The rain and the fact that some Cabernet Sauvignon was just not completely ripe at harvest keep 2012 out of the very good vintage category. These conditions also resulted in a small crop overall, with most estates making about 50% of their normal amounts.

It is common to refer to a Bordeaux vintage as either a Cabernet Sauvignon vintage or a Merlot vintage, and 2012 is definitely a Merlot vintage. The Right Bank commune of Pomerol made some fantastic wines across the board, with very good consistent quality also in St-Emilion. The areas of Pessac-Léognan and the Médoc were very uneven with some wines showing aggressive dryness and green notes on the finish. That being said, there some fine Left Bank successes in 2012 that do not have those green and drying notes, but certainly not as many as I would have liked.

2011 vs. 2012: While 2011 produced elegant wines with strong acidities, 2012 produced riper wines with a darker core of fruit and more flesh, so I absolutely prefer 2012 to 2011. Where does 2012 fit in compari-

son to other vintages? Well, while it may not be in the league of great vintages like 2010, 2009, 2005 or 2000, I like it at least as well if not more than 2008, 2006 and 2007. My strongest comparison at this early stage would be to 1998, also a late and very fine Merlot vintage while being much tougher and closed on the Left Bank.

The Blancs: The Sweeties from Sauternes and Barsac... My notes for these wines will be on our 2012 vintage report.

Please feel free to contact me anytime with any questions or for advice on the wines of Bordeaux. I can be reached at extension 2723 or by email at Ralph@klwines.com. Cheers and Go Giants!

POMEROL AND ST-EMILION:

- 2012 Certan de May, Pomerol** 93-95 points *WE*: **\$82.99**
- 2012 Cheval Blanc, St-Emilion** 95-97 points *WE*, 94-97 *WS*: "Impressively rendered for the vintage." **\$499.99**
- 2012 Clinet, Pomerol** 92-94 points *RP*: "A powerful, full-bodied, muscular Pomerol...beautiful density and plenty of mocha, black cherry, truffle and graphite notes." **\$69.99**
- 2012 Clos Fourtet, St-Emilion** 93-95 points *RP* **\$69.99**
- 2012 Feytit-Clinet, Pomerol** 93-95 points *RP* **\$59.99**
- 2012 Hosanna, Pomerol** 94-96 points *RP* **\$139.95**
- 2012 La Conseillante, Pomerol** 92-95 points *WS* **\$92.99**
- 2012 Larcis Ducasse, St-Emilion** 93-95 points *RP*: "Bravo! If you haven't yet jumped on the Larcis Ducasse bandwagon, it's time to do so." **\$54.99**
- 2012 Nenin, Pomerol** 92-93 points *JS* **\$47.99**
- 2012 Pavie Macquin, St-Emilion** 93-96 points *WS* **\$59.99**
- 2012 Troplong Mondot, St-Emilion** 94-96 points *RP*: "One of the superstars of the vintage..." **\$79.99**
- 2012 Vieux-Château-Certan, Pomerol** 94-96 points *WE* **\$149.99**

OUR FAVS NON-RIGHT BANK:

- 2012 Smith Haut Lafitte Rouge, Pessac-Léognan** 94-95 *JS*: "Dense yet balanced with a beautiful texture and length." **\$64.99**
- 2012 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac** 96-98 points *WE*, 94-95 *JS*: "A wine that makes you want to drink it already." **\$96.99**
- 2012 Pichon-Lalande, Pauillac** 94-96 points *WE* **\$89.99**
- 2012 Mouton Rothschild, Pauillac** 96-98 *WE*: "It's seriously structured, with loads of black currants and dark tannin, and revels on the finish with the juicy, fresh acidity of this vintage." **\$379.99**
- 2012 Margaux, Margaux** 94-96 points *WE* **\$379.99**
- 2012 Léoville-Las Cases, St-Julien** 95-97 points *WE*, 93-96 *WS* **\$129.99**
- 2012 Léoville-Barton, St-Julien** 94-96 points *WE* **\$69.99**
- 2012 Lafite Rothschild, Pauillac** 95-97 points *WE*, 93-96 *WS* . **\$549.99**
- 2012 Ducru-Beaucaillou, St-Julien** 94-96 points *WE* **\$109.99**
- 2012 Domaine de Chevalier Rouge, Pessac-Léognan** 92-95 points *RP*: "One of the stars of the vintage..." **\$48.99**
- 2012 Cos d'Estournel, St-Estèphe** 94-96 points *WE*, 92-95 *RP* **\$139.99**



Ralph Sands (left) with Bill Blatch at the Ban du Millésime event in Bordeaux.

Bordeaux-Old and New Values and Classics

by Clyde Beffa Jr.

Whether you want to drink a nice red with your hamburger tonight or buy the best Bordeaux available, we have a huge inventory of all vintages and price levels. Here are my picks for the cellar or the table.

DRINKERS

1996-1998-1999-2003-2004 Chateau Lanessan, Haut Médoc (all \$19.99)

A classified growth shoulda-be. Located next to Branaire Ducru and Beychevelle, this property represents K&L's "most cases sold in 2012 and 2013." From the classic 1996, 1998, and 2004 to the elegant 1999 and the super sweet 2003, you cannot go wrong.

1998 Chateau Grandis, Haut Médoc (\$19.99) Never heard of this property before this year—do not know exactly where it is—but the wine is delicious. We sold out of our first batch instantly and we just received 50 more cases. Fresh, lively, fruity, and smooth. Summer red with 15 years of age on it.

2005 Chateau de Chantegrive, Graves (\$19.99) The lovely, garnet-colored. Delightfully complex without being overripe, the wine shows black fruit and light toast, supported by subtle tannins. How could you *not* like this wine? Plenty of mineral flavors and aromas. Rated a super value by Clyde.

2002-2009-2010 Chateau La Tour de By, Médoc (all \$19.99) This Chateau is making great wines since 2000. Take your pick here. Drink the 2002 tonight with your steak, drink or cellar the sweet and sexy 2009, and cellar a few years the rich and powerful 2010. The 2009 received 90 points from Neal Martin's Wine Journal.

1999 Chateau Larrivet Haut Brion, Pessac-Léognan (\$44.99) Totally underrated property—this wine is as good as their fabulous 2001. Sweet, mineral aromas and flavors. 91 points Clyde.

ONE OF OUR FAVORITE PROPERTIES

2005 and 2009 Chateau Angludet, Margaux (\$64.99), 2007 Chateau Angludet (\$34.99) The 2005 and 2009 are classic Bordeaux for the cellar. Drink the lovely 2007 while you wait. James Suckling and Clyde Beffa gave 93 points to the 2009. I'm a 95 on these wines for price/quality ratio.

IN MY CELLAR:

2006 Pauillac de Latour, Pauillac (\$89.99) Fresher, more forward and ready to drink younger, this is a great (and affordable) introduction to the wines of one of Bordeaux's most famous châteaux. Much richer than their 2007, this wine has a dark ruby color as well as a big, sweet nose of ripe cherries. Round, medium-bodied, and easy to appreciate as well as consume.

YOU MUST BUY THESE THREE:

2009 Chateau Larmande, St-Emilion (\$34.99) 94 points JS: "A wine, with beautiful focused fruit of raspberries and citrus fruit follow through to a full body, with super polished tannins and a bright acidity. Very lively." 95 in my book.

2009 Chateau Gloria, St-Julien (\$49.99) 94 points JS: "Rich and decadent on the nose, with exotic fruits, spices and incense. Full body, with so much wonderful chocolate, fruit and velvety tannins. It's a joy to taste now, but will give even more pleasure in years to come. Best ever from here and one of the best values of the vintage." I think this is best Gloria since 1966.

2009 Domaine de Chevalier, Pessac-Léognan (\$89.99) One of my favs—I have seven vintages of this property in my cellar—including this one. 97 points JS: "Aromas of blueberries and lemon rind. Full body, with soft and velvety tannins and bright fruity finish. Refined and beautiful. Layered wine. Pure fruit. Gravely. Stoney. So classy and complex. Try in 2020."

THE BEST OF THE BEST:

2009 Chateau Leoville Poyferre, St-Julien (\$249.99) 100 points RP: "One of the more flamboyant and sumptuous wines of the vintage...."

2009 Chateau Pichon Baron, Pauillac (\$229.99) 98 points RP: "Revealing incredible quality and performing better than it did from barrel, the 2009 appears to be the greatest Pichon Longueville Baron since the 1990 and 1989."

2010 Chateau Pichon Baron, Pauillac (\$269.99) 97 points RP: "Administrator Christian Seeley thinks the 2010 is the greatest Pichon Longueville Baron he has ever made, equaling some of the estate's colossal wines from vintages such as 1989 and 1990."

2009 Chateau Lynch Bages, Pauillac (\$219.99) 98 points RP: "...this appears to be the finest Lynch Bages since the 2000, 1990 and 1989. According to the chateau, the 2009 has the highest level of polyphenols ever measured as well as high alcohol (nearly 13.5%)."

2005 Chateau Leoville Las Cases, St-Julien (\$279.99) 100 points WS, 99 points JS. A stunner of a wine and the phrase "Iron fist in a velvet glove" immediately comes to mind. —Alex Pross



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