

# WINE News

*Bordeaux: A first taste of 2015, plus current values and newly arrived oldies.*



## MAY 9, 2016 FEATURES

2	In Stock Gems	4	Right Bank Trio	7	Haut-Bailly
3	2015 Preview	5	Moueix Stable	7	'09, '10 Gems
4	A "Fantastic 5"	6	Oldies, Goodies	8	Recall 2005

## The Big Easy, 10 Years Later: 2015 Bordeaux

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

**Our Bordeaux team (Clyde, Trey Beffa, Ralph Sands, Alex Pross, David Driscoll and Philip Bohorfoush) returned from a trip to Bordeaux on April 12th.** We went to Bordeaux expecting to taste some good wines from 2015, and we came back with the feeling that, indeed, we tasted some very good wines from 2015. Maybe it is the curious fact of the fives in Bordeaux—in other words, vintages from Bordeaux ending in the number “5” have been quite good over the years. For example: 1945 (cofounder Todd Zucker’s and my vintage), 1955 (Ralph’s vintage), 1975, 1985, 1995 and 2005 were all good to fabulous vintages, so by that standard, anyway, it makes sense for 2015 to be very good. Also, after a

string of “useful” vintages, it’s about time to have a fine one (looking back to the great 1945 vintage, it was preceded by the lesser 1943–1944 vintages; the same can be said for 1954, 1972–1974, 1984, 1992–1994, 2004, and 2011–2014). We are currently compiling our 2015 Vintage Report, which should be out in late May—probably before most of the top properties have released their prices. A handful of good, solid, value 2015s have opened already—look for my notes on page 3. Trey has summed up the vintage nicely, Ralph and Alex have thrown in a few of their 2015 favs on page 4, and David Driscoll recounts a memorable Right Bank 2015 tasting at Jean-Pierre Moueix on page 5.

## Some of the Best Bordeaux Values In-Stock

**We have a plethora of fine Bordeaux values in our stores and warehouses—many have just arrived and some are direct from the property.** From the 1980s through the 2012s, there are wines to fit all palates and pocketbooks. Some are quite limited, so act accordingly. I list some of my picks here and on page 2, while Jeff, Steve, and Jacques list theirs on pages 6, 7 and 8.

**1997 Clément-Pichon, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99)** We sold over 3,000 bottles of their **1996 (\$25)**, and this beauty is ready for the dinner table now. Showing black cherry and coffee notes on the nose, this has a nice touch of elegance, there’s plenty of fruit, and it’s nicely balanced. Clément-Pichon is a familiar name to many who have visited Bordeaux. Located in southern Médoc not far north of the city of Bordeaux, this château is one of the most beautiful in the region.

**2009 Malescasse, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99)** One of our favorite properties from our favorite vintage. Deep ruby. Complex nose features delicate, almost Margaux-like aromas of cassia and clove. Smooth and sweet on the palate with a velvety texture. These 2009s are so good now and they will be for many years.

**2010 Malmaison, Moulis (750ml \$19.99; 1.5L \$39.99)** Another great value under \$20! We have sold out of this before and just received another small batch. Elegant on the nose and quite grippy on the palate. This property has been doing well lately. 92 points James Suckling: “Aromas of blueberries and minerals follow through to a full body, with fine tannins and a caressing finish. Very finely crafted. Gorgeous wine from here.”



## In Stock Gems from \$20 to \$600—1995-2013 Vintages

While we wait for the 2014s and the 2015s to arrive, we have plenty of choices you can enjoy now or put in your cellar.

**2012 Dragon de Quintus, St-Emilion (\$39.99)** A superb wine made by the Haut-Brion team—soft and fruity with toasty blackberry fruit aromas and flavor. From the former vineyards of Tertre Daugay and L'Arrosée—super terroir for this, the second wine of Quintus.

**2001 Labégorce, Margaux (\$29.99)** I am confident that K&L sells more wine from this property than anyone else in the world. The older vintages are classic old-school Bordeaux and the newer ones are more in the modern style. The terroir here is excellent and one of their neighbors is Château Margaux! As Mr. Parker says, and we agree: “A straightforward, dark plum/garnet-colored effort, the 2001 Labégorce reveals smoky, earthy elements intertwined with cherries, plums, and cedar. Medium-bodied and elegant...” And for under \$30 it is definitely worth a try.

**2013 Carbonnieux Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$34.99)** I never buy enough white Bordeaux, so get this one as soon as you can—it will fly off the shelves. Perfect balance and so refreshing with citrus aromas and flavors. Big scores from the scorers.

**2009 de Chantegrive Rouge, Graves (\$19.99)** A major sleeper of the vintage, this blend of 50% Cabernet Sauvignon and 50% Merlot is their best ever. Notes of tobacco leaf and black currants are impressively displayed in this medium to full-bodied, velvety textured, very seductive style of wine. We have sold over 3,000 bottles so far.

**2004 Haut-Bergey Rouge, Pessac-Léognan (\$24.99)** This wine is delicious now and will cellar well for another 10 years. The 2004 Bordeaux vintage was very underestimated, as it came between the hyped 2003 and 2005. Prices are very reasonable and the wines are classic Bordeaux—not overdone. This wine has that mineral nose that follows to the palate. Bright fruit and great acidity. Open an hour before enjoying with a rare steak. Great price!

**2010 Clarke Rothschild, Lustrac (750ml \$24.99; 1.5L \$49.99)** We have been carrying this property for over 10 years and it is always a great value—plenty of punch for the price. 93 points JS: “Extreme nose of crushed raspberries and minerals. Full body, with very integrated tannins and a fresh clean finish. Lasts for minutes.”

**2012 Tour St-Christophe, St-Emilion (750ml \$27.99; 1.5L \$49.99)** One of the top new properties in Bordeaux. I love this wine with its forward ripe fruit flavors and plenty of balancing acid. California Cab style. 90 points Robert Parker.

**2012 Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$29.99)** We love this property every year. 92 points JS: “This red shows some cassis, blueberries and floral notes on the nose. Some tar, too. Medium to full body, juicy tannins and a fruity finish. Enticing wine.”

**2013 Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$26.99)** Another fine wine from one of our favorite properties. It is priced lower than any other Cantemerle on the market. Fine red berry aromas and flavor. A bit more classic than 2012 with some tannin at the back palate. Age it a few years or decant two hours.

**1999 Sarget de Gruaud Larose, St-Julien (\$34.99)** We sell a lot of this favorite second wine and the 1999 is quite elegant, with intense concentration and complexity. Plus, it is drinking well now. This estate is one of K&L's veteran Bordeaux expert Ralph Sands' favorites.

**2009 Lalonde-Borie, St-Julien (\$34.99)** What a fabulous wine for the money! It is so sweet and sexy now that you want to enjoy it immediately, but it will cellar well for another 10 years easily. A sleeper of the vintage. 91-93 points *WE*.

**2013 Latour-Martillac Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$34.99)** Another favorite white from the fabulous 2013 white Bordeaux vintage. Complex and rich, this wine is fully textured, with ripe fruit flavors and balanced acidity. There is a touch of ginger along with citrus, giving the wine extra complexity.

**2000 Les Ormes de Pez, St-Estèphe (\$49.99)** 91 points JS: “So youthful now with lots of thick, spicy fruit. Still tight but loads going on. Thick and powerful.” At under \$50, this wine is a great value. Served on Emirates Airline. Can't be bad.

**1999 La Gaffelière, St-Emilion (\$69.99)** One of the better value properties in Saint Emilion. Fruity and forward, this wine begs to be drunk with a nice piece of prime rib. I will never forget the mind-blowing 1970 vintage from them.

**1995 Clos du Marquis, St-Julien (\$69.99)** Stunning wine that can be cellared a few more years. Not really the second wine of Las Cases these days, it has its own plot! Killer vintage. 93 points *WS*.

### Some Very Special Wines

**2000 Brane-Cantenac, Margaux (\$139.99)** One of their best ever! My notes in 2001: 55% Cabernet Sauvignon and 42% Merlot—rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Good dose of toasty oak, cooked cherries, sweet, soft fruit and ripe tannins. Plummy flavors and a velvety mouthfeel. This wine was a hit at the UGC tasting in Margaux. A great successor to the fine 1999. Watch this property in the future—and buy this wine.

**1995 Pape Clément, Pessac-Léognan (\$129.99)** Saturated ruby-red. Expressive nose combines raspberry, tobacco, and smoky oak. Rich, sweet and mouth-filling, the enticing fruit is accessible already. One of our favorite properties and a superb value for 20-plus years old.

**2005 Palmer, Margaux (\$399.00)** Direct from property with their seal on it. 98 points Robert Parker: “One of the great efforts of this superlative vintage. Floral notes mixed with blackberry, cassis, plum, licorice and spring flowers soar from the glass of this dense ruby/purple wine. It is medium to full-bodied, surprisingly opulent (it has a big percentage of Merlot), long, multi-dimensional and textured. This wonderfully pure, stunning wine once again performs as a first-growth. It should drink well for the next 20-25 years.”

**1997 Branaire-Ducru, St-Julien (1.5L \$129.99; 6L \$599.99)** My absolute favorite wine to drink today—Always a great crowd-pleaser. All sweet cassis fruit—long and lingering on the palate. Direct from the property!

Key: \$NA Price not yet released RP Robert Parker's Wine Advocate WS *Wine Spectator* WE *Wine Enthusiast* JS James Suckling \*All 2015 prices are Pre-Arrival



*The team is ushered into the great Château Ducru-Beaucaillou.*

## Quality, Value in 2015 Bordeaux

By Trey Beffa

**Despite a very challenging tasting schedule this April, the 2015 vintage was one of the easiest vintages to taste out of barrel.**

Definitely the easiest since the 2009, and before that, 2005. The best wines from 2015 are highlighted with wonderfully ripe fruit, lush textures and ripe, fleshy tannins. The best comparison would be the 2009 vintage, with lower alcohol levels, less intensity and concentration but plenty of elegance and freshness to make these wines interesting. Also, unlike 2009 where the quality was consistent throughout all of Bordeaux, the 2015 vintage is much more uneven. We found the quality of the wines from Margaux, Pessac and the Right Bank to be very high, while St-Estèphe, Pauillac and St-Julien seemed much more inconsistent. This makes sense, as the rain that came at the end of summer was much heavier in the northern Médoc. The 2015s will be delicious upon release, but they will also age gracefully for 20 years or even more, in some cases. As always, Bordeaux “En Primeur” tastings mean there is endless talk of pricing among the négociants and merchants. For the most part, the châteaux owners never want to discuss pricing. After four consecutive difficult vintages, the Bordeaux châteaux owners finally have an excellent vintage for which they can justify raising

prices. The overall belief is that if price increases are held under 20%, we will have some great wines at reasonable prices. If they go crazy with a 25% or more increase, then the campaign will be difficult. Let’s hope they are “reasonable.”

### Some of My Top 2015 Picks for Value

**Tour St-Christophe, St-Emilion (750ml \$25.99; 1.5L \$49.99)** Inky color, lots of up-front fruit, very ripe and layered in the mouth, loaded with mocha, cream and blackberry flavors; shows a fair amount of structure and the wine is fresh on the finish. This is a sleeper and a great buy from the 2015 vintage!

**Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$29.99)** I tasted this wine on three separate occasions and loved it every time. Aromatic and wonderfully fresh, crisp fruit that is nearly silky in the mouth; tannins are ripe and sweet with a long, lingering finish. One of their best ever.

**Capbern, St-Estèphe (750ml \$19.99; 1.5L \$39.99)** Bright red fruits in the nose and the mouth; clean, fresh and lively; silky mid-palate. Should be a sleeper and will be very drinkable upon release.

**Lalande-Borie, St-Julien (\$NA)** Another sleeper from Bruno Borie, this is velvety, supple and lush with a round, silky mouthfeel and lingering spicy finish. This is going to drink great upon release!

**Bourgneuf, Pomerol (\$46.99)** This wine is rarely one of my favorites, but the 2015 vintage seems to be hitting on all cylinders! A blend of 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc, it shows a dark purple color, with tons of red and black fruits and hints of savory herbs and smoke. A nice wine that should be approachable young.

**Le Pape, Pessac-Léognan (\$24.99)** Purchased in 2012 by the owner of Haut-Bailly, the quality is already on the upswing here. Spicy, cola hints, lead pencil, lots of minerals and earthy flavors nicely balance a ripe, sweet core of nearly silky fruit. This is an excellent buy!!

**Lespault-Martillac Rouge, Pessac-Léognan (\$24.99)** Another sleeper from 2015! Ripe up-front fruit leads into a silky, fleshy middle, which is followed by a long, lingering finish. Flavors of graphite, mineral and sweet herbs dance along the edges of this wine. Really tasty and should be very approachable upon release.

## Clyde’s 2015 Value Picks that have Released their Price

**Haut-Brisson, St-Emilion (750ml \$22.99; 1.5L \$45.99)** One of the excellent wines from the Peter Kwok stable of Bordeaux (Tour St-Christophe, etc). We have sold and still have some 2005 Haut-Brisson Reserve. Well, in 2015 they stopped making the Reserve, so all of that great juice goes into this wine. Fabulous black fruit aromas that follow to the palate. Plenty of structure for aging but a sweet core of fruit. All this for under \$25? And 94-95 points JS, too.

**Moulin du Cadet, St-Emilion (\$26.99)** One of my top 10 best values of the vintage. Reminds me of the great 1970, but with 45 years of improved winemaking and vineyard management. Sweet and lush with tons of blackberry fruit on nose and palate. Tastes so good right now. 91-92 points JS.

**Malescasse, Haut-Médoc (\$16.99)** These guys always make great wines—heck, we also just bought 250 cases of their 2007 on this April trip. This wine is much better—so round and lush on the palate but with good backbone and structure for aging. Huge scores by the scorers.

**Paloumey, Haut-Médoc (\$14.99)** We have sold 2,000-plus bottles of the 2009 and are still selling it now. That vintage is selling for \$20 and this equally-as-good wine is \$15. Will reward a few years of cellaring, but most people will drink it right up.

—Clyde Beffa Jr.



*Ralph Sands takes notes on the 2015 vintage at Château Leoville-Barton.*

## Another “Fantastic 5” Vintage!

By Ralph Sands

**With the exception of 1965, the last seven out of eight vintages ending with “5” have been fantastic vintages, and 2015 is near the top of the list.** Long story short is that 2015 is a star-studded, outstanding vintage. It is a vintage that features beautiful ripe fruit with great precision, balance and freshness. In fact, it is a classic Bordeaux vintage in style. The best recent vintage comparison, in my opinion, is without question 2005 because of its purity of fruit, bright acidity and great freshness.

For decades now I’ve told our customers that the barometer of a great vintage is the overall quality of the wines, from the great estates all the way to the petite châteaux. While we get all worked up about the prices of the great estates, nothing in my 25 years of going to Bordeaux gets me more excited than having a plethora of great wines that offer exceptional value, and 2015 is just loaded with them. I love every one of these wines and our team did also!

Let’s start on the Right Bank with two stunning values from talented winemaker J.C. Meyrou in St-Emilion: **Haut-Brisson (750ml \$22.99; 1.5L \$45.99)** features tons of bright, sleek red fruit (raspberries) with perfect balance and focus. From an ancient Roman terraced

vineyard, **Tour St-Christophe (750ml \$25.99; 1.5L \$49.99)** has a deep black fruit profile of blackberry and blueberry, lovely middle fruit texture while being light on its feet with no hard edges.

**Moulin du Cadet (\$26.99)** is a small production of 1,800 cases and it is 100% Merlot. The self-proclaimed “Bad Boy” but great winemaker Jean-Luc Thunevin consults here. We loved the attractive, sweet fruit, so we jumped right on it. Canon-la-Gaffelière is always a top wine made by Stephan von Neipperg, but his d’Aiguilhe (silky, blood red fruit with a chalky backbone that reminds me of the fantastic 2005) and **Clos de L’Oratoire (\$NA)** (jammy black and blue fruits with structure) are flat-out phenomenal and usually well priced.

Within seconds of tasting **Capbern, St-Estèphe (750ml \$19.99; 1.5L \$39.99)** at Calon-Ségur, the entire K&L team was in full agreement to buy all we could get our hands on! This is a wine of great freshness and fruit, and will be a joy to drink young.

There is no doubt in my mind that the large commune of Margaux, with its many estates, was the top-performing commune in 2015. Incredible values are to be found everywhere. The wines from Marquis d’Aleseme, **Labégorce (750ml \$27.99; 1.5L \$54.99)**, Dauzac, du Tertre, **La Tour de Mons (\$20.99)**, Rauzan-Gassies, Marquis de Terme, Kirwan and **Siran (\$27.99)** are the best I’ve ever tasted and will be added to my personal collection. The more famous estates like Cantenac Brown, Giscours, Brane, Durfort-Vivens, d’Issan and Rauzan-Ségla made awesome wines of great elegance; while Palmer and Malescot rival Château Margaux for “Wine of the Vintage.”

The old motto at my desk for decades needs to be repeated for 2015: “In the great vintages you should pay very close attention to the second wines/other wines of the greatest estates and treat them with the love you would have for the first wine. The reason is that the difference in quality may be minimal, it will drink earlier and the difference in price can be astronomical.” Wines like Alter Ego de Palmer, Clos du Marquis, Croix de Beaucaillou; Le Griffon and **Les Tourelles (750ml \$34.99; 1.5L \$69.99)**, both from Pichon Baron; Petite Mouton, Reserve de La Comtesse, Pagodes de Cos, Blason d’Issan and Carillon de Angelus all made outstanding wines!

Please feel free to **contact** me any time with questions or for advice on the wines of Bordeaux. Cheers and Go Giants!

## A Trio of Stunning 2015 Wines from the Right Bank

By Alex Pross

**When you spend 10-plus days zipping around Bordeaux, going from château to château and back again, most visits end up as hazy recollections due to the craziness of the schedule we tend to keep over there during “En Primeur.”** One of the visits that remains crystal clear, however, was our visit to Château Tour Saint Christophe, which is situated in the commune of Saint Christophe des Bardes, due east of the St-Emilion village, and not far from Valandraud and Château Fleur Cardinale. Tour Saint Christophe is located on one of the ridges overlooking a valley that’s dotted with wineries. The estate is owned by billionaire Peter Kwok, who bought this property in 2012 and immediately began to fix it up in order to be able to make

the very best wine possible from this great terroir. We were met at the front door of the château by technical director Jean-Christophe Meyrou and winemaker Jerome Aguirre, who escorted us to a room overlooking the valley where we tasted numerous offerings from the 2015 vintage. There were three wines that stood out:

**Tour St-Christophe, St-Emilion (750ml \$25.99; 1.5L \$49.99)** is a stunning value. This wine is loaded with blueberry fruit, velvety tannins, crisp minerality and saline hints on the finish. Smooth and harmonious, the quality of this wine belies its incredibly low price.

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Right Bank Rendezvous at Jean-Pierre Moueix

By David Driscoll

The Bordeaux pundits love to classify everything, from the capabilities of the many châteaux to the quality of each vintage in each particular appellation. Blanket statements are par for the course. Was it a good year on the Right Bank? Was it more of a Left Bank vintage? How was the weather in Pomerol? Are the wines from Margaux the best of the bunch? What I've learned in my nine years of drinking Bordeaux at K&L is that generalities are generally nebulous and that specifics—as difficult as they may be to wrap one's head around—are the only way to get the answers you're looking for. In the case of the 2015 vintage, I found that the quality around Bordeaux was generally very good, but there were hits and misses just about everywhere. Yet if you're looking for statistics—a batting average of quality, let's say—then there were more hits per at bat in Pomerol this vintage. That being said, Pomerol is the smallest appellation in Bordeaux with the smallest properties, so it's easy to bat .500 when you're 5-for-10.

One of the most memorable Pomerol tastings for me was on the Right Bank at Jean-Pierre Moueix, one of the négociants we work with in the region. It was there on a rainy Thursday morning, the river overflowing along its banks, that we sampled the wines from Hosanna, Bourgneuf, Lafleur-Gazin, and Puy-Blanquet—four of my favorites from the 2015 vintage. It was our first Right Bank tasting of the trip and I was excited because we rarely get to taste these wines due to their rather limited availability. To give you an example of the size differentials here, a very exclusive property like Château Latour has roughly 160 acres of vines, compared to Hosanna's 10, Bourgneuf's 22, Lafleur-Gazin's 21.5, and Puy-Blanquet's 50. Even combined, all four estates only make up about 65% of what Latour has under vine, so you're talking fractions over on the Right Bank. In a good vintage like 2015, we might sell our entire allocation on pre-arrival.

We started with the **Puy-Blanquet, St-Emilion (\$NA)**, which was absolutely gorgeous on the nose with hints of violets and rose petals that reminded me of a Ladurée macaron. The tannins were fine and the texture on the palate was soft and finessed. For the price I have to think newcomers to the genre will want to start here. You're getting a fabulously drinkable wine from a Grand Cru Saint-Emilion producer for a very nice price. This will be a K&L wine club wine.

Next up was the **Lafleur-Gazin, Pomerol (\$44.99)**, one of the better deals in Pomerol that coated my palate with plush purple fruits, but finished dry and fine on the back end. It's the kind of wine that gives Merlot a good name; a wine that's almost too delicious to wait on. I'll be interested to see how it develops though.

If you're looking for something a little more old school and less fruit-forward, then the **Bourgneuf, Pomerol (\$46.99)** is the wine for you. There was more pronounced oak on the palate that will need to integrate over the next five years and a dustiness to the tannins that helped balance the lush fruit. This is a wine that should evolve beautifully over the next decade; a real cellar candidate.

Of course, the big winner from this tasting was the **Hosanna, Pomerol (\$159.99)**, one of a handful of Pomerol wines that are receiving monster scores from critics. With 82% Merlot in the mix, the plummy fruit is there in spades, but it's balanced by the structure provided by 18% Cabernet Franc, and there's a lovely note of tobacco and earth that add complexity to all that ripeness. While definitely not inexpensive, the Hosanna will be far cheaper than a bottle of Petrus, VCC or La Conseillante. Already almost sold out!

There are a lot of good wines on the Right Bank in 2015—but there is not a large supply of those wines available!



*The Merlot vineyards of Château Barde-Haut in St. Emilion*

*(Continued from page 4)*

This property is producing some of the best bang for your buck wine not only in St-Emilion, but all of Bordeaux. 95-96 points JS, 91-93 points WE and 91-94 points Antonio Galloni.

Not to be outdone, the **Haut-Brisson, St-Emilion (\$22.99)** is also an amazing value with beautiful aromas of red cherry and cinnamon on the nose. Loaded with bright red crunchy fruit as well as hints of mocha and oatmeal, this rich and ripe wine promises to be the perfect daily drinker. 94-95 points JS, 91-93 points WE.

Last but most certainly not least is the **Enclos Tourmaline, Pomerol (\$149.99)**, a super-small property nestled between famed Le Pin and Trotanoy in Pomerol. This postage stamp-sized property has produced one of the best Pomerols I tasted on our trip: a show-stopping wine that blew me away with a super sexy and exotic nose of berry fruit and spice followed up by a dense and velvety-smooth palate of black licorice, milk chocolate and crushed volcanic rock. The wine is so smooth, with such fine tannins, that it is simply irresistible and is a deal in the context of what other top Pomerols fetch in today's market. Very limited supply. 98-99 points JS.

## Just Arrived—Oldies but Goodies

By Jeff Garneau

The opportunity to obtain, via our négociant partners, a continuous supply of older vintages of perfect provenance is one of the things that sets Bordeaux apart from the world's other fine wine regions.

Some top picks from the latest container to arrive from France:

### 1982 Dauzac, Margaux (\$99.99)

Château Dauzac is a fifth growth in the commune of Labarde in southern Margaux, a near neighbor to third growth Château Giscours. In the early 1980s Château Dauzac was owned by Felix Chatellier, who had purchased the property in 1978 from the Miahle family, owners of Château Siran to the north. 1982 is widely regarded as the finest vintage in a decade of great vintages. Ideal weather conditions yielded concentrated, powerful reds that have aged remarkably well. The 1982 Dauzac, now in its third decade, is approaching full maturity. The nose is quite savory, with a pronounced *sous bois* character. With the bottle I sampled, the removal of the cork was followed by an explosion of violets, an enchanting floral note that virtually defines Margaux. The ripeness of the vintage is apparent in the wine's rich texture and bright, sweet red fruits—predominantly dried cherry and cranberry. Fine tannins frame the finish.



**1989 de Fieuzal, Pessac-Léognan (750ml \$69.99; 1.5L \$139.99)** Like neighbors Domaine de Chevalier and Malartic-Lagravière, Château de Fieuzal is among 16 properties in the Graves region designated as cru classé. Recently arrived from Bordeaux is a nearly complete vertical of some of the best vintages of the 1980s as well as a great selection of large format bottles. The 1980s were a very successful decade for de Fieuzal. Under the stewardship of Gérard Gribelin, a program of improvements in the cellar and vineyards yielded a string of great vintages. The '89 de Fieuzal is typical of these. This is classic Graves at its best: medium to full-bodied with a distinctive minerality. The nose is lightly floral yet predominantly savory with notes of tobacco and cedar. The ripe vintage is evident in the smooth texture and sweet red and black fruits.

**1994 Gruaud Larose, St-Julien (\$69.99)** 1994 was a warm, sunny vintage bedeviled by rain during harvest. Consequently, many of the wines from the Médoc are dilute, or suffer from green or astringent tannins. The '94 Gruaud Larose is an exception, displaying unexpected ripeness and weight. There is much to savor here: sweet black fruits and a hint of that cigar box character that I typically associate with Gruaud Larose. A strong effort for the vintage. Classified as a second growth in 1855, this is an often underrated property that seems to epitomize all that is good about St-Julien.



**2000 Dalem, Fronsac (\$21.99)** Two centuries ago, the wines of Fronsac and Canon-Fronsac west of Libourne were celebrated. As the fortunes of St-Emilion and Pomerol have waxed, however, theirs have waned. But all things old are new again, and today there is renewed interest in the region. The 2000 Dalem, from one of the best vintages of the decade, displays the ripe, sweet fruit that is typical of these millennial wines. Youthful black fruits abound—fresh picked black plum and blackberry—while 15 years past the vintage, emerging hints of spicy cinnamon and savory truffle accent the mostly Merlot fruit. A solid Right Bank effort and a terrific value.



**2000 Calon-Ségur, St-Estèphe (\$139.99)** Classified a third growth in 1855, and when at its best, one of the great estates of the appellation. The pedigree is obvious here. The 2000 Calon-Ségur has it all: lovely weight, richness and texture with ample, ripe, sweet fruit. However, it also demonstrates how the very best wines of this stellar vintage are going to require further patience. The tannins are still quite firm. If I had, say, half a dozen bottles in my cellar (and I do), I would not look to open the next bottle for another three to five years at least.

## 2000 Château Pontet-Canet

**2000 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$149.99)** Half the price of the 2009 and 2010 vintages, this wine sings with rich cassis flavors and toasty oak aromas. 94+ points RP: “Upgraded in score over my original rating, which was several points lower, Alfred Tesseron has done a remarkable job since 1994 with Pontet-Canet. The 2000 shows exceptionally well and is in need of another decade of cellaring, this dense purple wine has a classic nose of incense, charcoal, creme de cassis, and subtle new oak. Full-bodied, powerful, still very tannic, and shockingly backward, this is a big, rich wine that has put on weight and seems to need more time than I originally predicted. Anticipated maturity: 2015-2035+.”



## Château Haut-Bailly: Clyde's Personal Favorite

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

**I know I am favorably biased, but I absolutely love the wines from this property.** They have really improved since the early '90s, and they were quite good before. They've got one of the top terroirs in all of Bordeaux and one of the best directors of any château, Veronique Sanders. She makes the wines so lovely to taste when young—and they will age for a long time. Just this April, we drank the 1966 and 1967 vintages, which were stunningly alive and well, with tons of ripe red fruit flavors. Well-priced wines for the serious Bordeaux collector.

**1998 Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan (\$129.99)** Here's one of our favorite wines of the vintage, and the wines from this region were among the best of Bordeaux. It's 50% Merlot and 50% Cabernet Sauvignon (usually 65%). Blackberry and blueberry aromas with plenty of minerally nuances. Touch of violet. Here is a pure wine, not overly extracted or mixed up. Superbly integrated tannins and layers of fruit. Not huge, just elegance personified. Absolutely fantastic.

**2003 Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan (\$89.99)** Not my favorite vintage in general, but this wine sings—enjoy soon with a nice steak or rack of lamb. 93 points JS: “The warm vintage of 2003 gives this loads of fruit, like raspberries and strawberry jam. Full-bodied and very fresh with soft, round tannins. A long and yummy wine.”

**2010 Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan (\$169.99)** One of their best-ever wines. Tons of fruit, tannin, acid, terroir, etc. I even think Mr. Parker hinted at 100 points in one of his tastings. 98 points JS: “Great aromas of crushed blackberries with flowers and stones that follow through to a full body, with super silky tannins and a long, long finish. This lasts for minutes on the palate.”

**2012 Haut-Bailly, Pessac-Léognan (\$79.99)** One of the best wines of this underrated vintage. It is classic, racy, and noble—so much elegance, finesse, balance and equilibrium. Deep purple color is followed by a sweet nose of black cherries, minerals and black currants. Delicious now on the palate, but cellar it 5-10 more years.



*Veronique Sanders hosts dinner at Château Haut-Bailly.*

## Just Arrived—Gems from 2009 and 2010

By Steve Bearden

**While our Bordeaux team was tasting in France and a bunch of new 2012 vintage Bordeaux were flooding in the front door, some old favorites from 2009 and 2010 were quietly sneaking in the back way.** Here are some of our best sellers from two of the greatest vintages ever seen. But don't wait too long, as this may be last call.

**2009 Lamothe-Bergeron, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99)** The owner of Château Angelus is consulting here and it shows in this delicious, mildly earthy wine that is modern and super flavorful. Toasty and smooth with sweet red fruit flavors and ripe, round tannins.

**2009 Paloumey, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99)** It's easy to see why this somewhat flashy but well-proportioned wine has been such a huge seller here at K&L. This is rather lush, with aromas of damp earth, oak and tobacco mingling with oodles of baked plum fruit. A hint of tart cranberry on the finish keeps this lively and fresh tasting.

**2009 Poujeaux, Moulis (\$44.99)** Blackberry, raspberry and warm fig ooze from this seamlessly textured, gentle and rich wine. This is plump and soft with no edges showing and no tannin peeking through the pillows of ripe, decadent fruit. Will age gracefully but this is delicious now.

**2009 Tronquoy-Lalande, St-Estèphe (\$39.99)** This lush, warm and velvety wine will surprise anyone expecting classic St-Estèphe

firmness. Smooth, sweet, ripe chocolate-cherry Merlot flavors fan out across the satin-textured mid-palate before the faintest hint of fine, gentle tannins carry the long finish. The folks at Château Montrose have fashioned an opulent and easy-to-drink wine that will age effortlessly.

**2010 Plaisance “Cuvée Alix” Bordeaux (\$14.99)** The owner of Château Pape Clément also owns this little jewel of a property known for outstanding bargains vintage after vintage. There is plenty of deep and dark fruit along with touches of grilled herb and spice flavors in this hefty and substantial bottle that stays warm, sweet and plush. Amazing bang for the buck here.

**2010 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$169.99)** Yet another deep, clean and absolutely packed cellar candidate from this overachieving fifth growth. After an hour decanting the complex aromas of raspberries, mint, licorice, violets and spice begin to show the potential here. The body is concentrated and effortless, with the powerful middle of sweet cassis giving way to a long, dry finish of graphite-dusted and polished tannin. This is class in a glass.





## 2005 and 2015: Is There a Connection?

By Jacques Moreira

**Eleven years ago Bordeaux had one of its best vintages on record.**

And last year, according to our experts, was just as good if not better. I will defer to them to talk about the latter. About the former, I have a few words to say.

After the hype of 2000 and the extremes of 2003, the wines of 2005 allured us with such power, precision and grace, they would bring to mind images of models in a Parisian fashion show.

The 2005 vintage was as perfect as they come. The wines are beautiful, structured and full of fruit, with impeccably ripened tannins and elegance. We have received some 2005s at our stores—some in magnum format; some from the Left Bank, some from the Right; all of them a tremendous value for any collection. Here are a few of my favorites:

**2005 Moulin du Cadet, St-Émilion (\$16.99)** With none other than Alain Moueix at the realm since 2002, many changes have been made in this property. Organic farming was introduced, and now it is fully certified Biodynamic by Biodyvin Ecocert, not an easy feat in Bordeaux. The limestone, clay and sandy soils are planted with 100% Merlot, which thrives in this terroir. Showing very elegant woody notes on the nose, along with cherry liqueur, chocolate ganache, ripe plums and a touch of leather makes it very enticing. The sweet, fresh palate is full of black cherries, forest floor, cocoa powder and exotic incense. This wine delivers an incredible quality for this very affordable price. A “cannot miss” type of wine.

**2005 Fontenil, Fronsac (750ml \$29.99; 1.5L \$59.99)** Fontenil has Michel Rolland as its owner and winemaker, and delivers a very high quality Fronsac. Offering a charming nose of cocoa-covered cherries along with earthy notes, it's a medium to full-bodied wine, with dark

chocolate and cherries on its tannic palate. It needs a bit of decanting to showcase all of its appeal. It is showing a nice development now, which suggests it is a good candidate for the near term.

**2005 Poujeaux, Moulis (\$39.99)** A longtime favorite of ours, the star of Moulis has most of its vineyards located in a single parcel on the Grand-Poujeaux plateau, which accounts for perfect drainage. The 2005 is a classic indeed, and scored 91 points in *Wine & Spirits*. Elegant notes of roasted coffee beans, cassis, and graphite. With a very soft entry, well rounded mid-palate, and ripe tannins, it definitely has many years ahead of its peak. Great for the cellar.

**2005 Calon-Ségur, St-Estèphe (\$119.99)** Beautiful wine with intense aromatics, color, depth and concentration. Dark berries, cassis, coffee, leather, smoked meat, along with exotic spices, and I could go on... This wine needs time and will last for a long time in the cellar.

**2005 Coutet, Sauternes (\$54.99)** Very concentrated and complex, it is an invitation to slowly sip and enjoy one of the marvels of the wine world. Truly. Its balance between richness and acidity is mind-blowing. 94 points *WE*, and number 10 of *Enthusiast's* Top 100 Wines of 2008.

**2001 Potensac, Médoc (\$29.99)** Here's the one outlier. I am writing it up because I would like to call attention to this great value for an aged, ready-to-drink Bordeaux. With the classic developed notes of honey, earth, meat, and touch of capsicum, this wine is also elegantly poised. The palate is earthy, but full of dark chocolate and dark berries, with the tannins still quite present, assuring its frame.



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