

September 16, 2013

WINE News

Stellar back-to-back Bordeaux vintages like 2009 and 2010 pose a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Don't miss out!



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Bordeaux: And Now the Young Wines

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

Last newsletter we concentrated on the old and rare wines of the world, and we featured many Bordeaux. This issue we'll concentrate on younger Bordeaux, particularly 2009 and 2010, saving the new 2012 vintage for the 2012 Bordeaux Vintage Report, which we will send out in October.

I started collecting Bordeaux in 1971, and I have been going to Bordeaux yearly since 1985. Never have I encountered two consecutive vintages that were so great. Any lover of Bordeaux should stock up on these beauties—enjoy the 2009s early and often, and age the 2010s for quite a few years.

Since we only have four pages here, I will not spend too 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 stand behind every wine listed here and on page four. Of course, I also love the wines written about on pages two and three.

Under \$20 Super Values

2009 Les Allées de Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99) The second wine of Château Cantemerle, primarily comprised from the estate's younger vines. The wine has a similar profile to the *Grand Vin*, but is generally ready to drink within several years of harvest. That's now! A quick decant reveals generous fruit and good terroir, and that is always welcome in a wine that's less than \$20.

2009 Arnauton, Fronsac (\$15.99) One of the vintage's great "value" wines! This was a hugely successful offering last year. 91 points JS.

2010 Arnauton, Fronsac (\$13.99) A solid structure of blueberry, plum and spices. Full and chewy. Structured and dense.

2009 Gigault "Cuvée Viva" Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux (\$19.99) Black raspberry and toasted cherry aromas. A very sweet palate. Ralph Sands' favorite. 92 points James Suckling.

2010 Gigault "Cuvée Viva" Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux (\$19.99) 93 Suckling points, 94 from Clyde. We all love the wines from Gigault. They're super values.

2009 Poitevin, Médoc (\$14.99) This is a wonderful value for 2009. The wine is on the new wave side, with tons of ripe blackberry fruit on nose and palate. Sweet middle. Will drink great on release. A steal and a sleeper of the vintage.

2010 Poitevin, Médoc (\$13.99) 90 points WE: "This has ripe and polished fruit, with hints of mint and new wood. A ripe blackberry flavor pushes through the firm tannins..."

2010 Villars, Fronsac (\$18.99) 90 points Robert Parker.

\$20-\$50 Collectibles

2010 Bellegrave, Pauillac (\$27.99) 90 points WS: "A note of singed cedar leads the way, accompanied by dark tea, sandalwood, steeped plum and black cherry accents. Offers a plush feel through the finish, with the wood smoke note lingering." We have a soft spot in our hearts for this property. We miss you, Henry van der Voort.

(Continued on page 4)

THE 2010 BORDEAUX *Debut at the Tasting Bar*

For the first time last month the 2010 Bordeaux wines took center stage at our in-store Bordeaux tasting. The wines showed perfectly, proving that 2010 is, without question, a very good, classically-structured, firm vintage for wines from the Médoc and the Graves, as well as a fine vintage for the opulent, fruit-forward Merlot- and Cabernet Franc-dominated wines from St-Emilion and Pomerol.

2010 Carbonnieux Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$36.99) It's always a pleasure to taste/drink this wine. Floral, with lemon and lime fruit and some tropical hints, great freshness and a dry, crisp finish that is never over-oaked. Drink it young!

2010 Villars, Fronsac (\$18.99) This hails from Fronsac, the source of Bordeaux's greatest Merlot values. The deep blackberry fruit and toasty oak just explode out of the glass! Wines like this make me shake my head and say, "WOW!" and wonder why I buy many wines that are five to 10 times the price. Exceptional!

2010 Fleur Cardinale, St-Emilion (\$49.99) From St-Emilion, this has perfectly ripe fruit with an exotic tinge. Everyone at the tasting loved it, as it was just delicious. The round, plush fruit comes at you in waves, and it has a great, silky mouthfeel. The combination of beautifully polished fruit and oak, all in perfect balance, reminded me why you move up the price ladder!

2010 La Tour de Bessan, Margaux (\$19.99) While the hallmark of the 2010s may be classical power, you can always count on Marie-Laure Lurton-Roux to produce wines of precise focus and elegance. Much like the wine from Château Villegeorge, her other estate, Château La Tour de Bessan is a fine expression of Margaux wine, perfectly extracted with no under or overripe flavors, just a brilliantly balanced wine that floats across the palate. A great value at 20 bucks!

2010 Peyrabon, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99) This Haut-Médoc estate is quickly becoming a K&L favorite because of its bold flavors and great value. The 2010 features very deep, slightly roasted, old vine fruit character from a blend of 50% Cabernet, 27% Merlot and 23% Cab Franc, with hints of black licorice and earth. This will age nicely; also try the 2004 at \$15.99.

2010 Les Forts de Latour, Pauillac (\$299.99) As most of you are aware, Château Latour is no longer selling their wine on a futures basis as of the 2012 vintage. Instead, each year the estate will release their three wines from a vintage that they believe is entering the drinking window at what they deem to be a current market price. So this will be your last chance to buy a great vintage of Le Forts de Latour and lock it in at the current price. This is a wine of great power and complexity, and easily a 20-35 year cellar selection.

—Ralph Sands

JIM'S SEPTEMBER GEMS *2009 Bordeaux Value Edition*

In all my years of wine retailing, wine tasting, winemaking, wine collecting and grape growing (40-plus years), I have come to understand that a great vintage creates absolute, proportional balance in every aspect of the grape/wine makeup. If any one element of the harvest predominates, the true quality of the wine will be put into jeopardy, particularly in regard to aging. An example of this is the 1975 harvest, particularly the wines from the Haut-Médoc. While some of the 1975s are fabulous right now, others have excessive tannins that have outlived the fruit as the wines aged. In 2009, early-ripening grapes (mainly Merlot) got a bit ripe, making alcohols very high, acids seem low, and some of the wines super jammy. As a result, I believe many of the wines will evolve quickly, but will appeal to those who love big, plummy, jammy, highly-alcoholic wines. With that I suggest the following lush wines for near-term consumption.

2009 Labadie, Médoc (\$14.99) Deep ruby in color. This ripe, concentrated, New Worldish wine offers plummy, jammy notes in the nose. 14% ABV.



2009 Peyrabon, Haut-Médoc (\$15.99) Deeply colored, this ripe, rich, plummy wine shows soft, integrated tannins and near-term drinkability. 14% ABV.

2009 Pontet-Bayard, Montagne St-Emilion (\$15.99) Ripe, jammy and toasty, this is a wine to consume within the next few years. 14.5% ABV.

2009 La Tour de By, Médoc (\$19.99) If any minor growth achieved incredible success this vintage it was La Tour de By. Medium-deep ruby, this wine offers wonderful aromas of cassis, currants and vanilla. In the mouth, it is amazingly complex, with wonderful structure and depth of flavor, excellent complexity and a finish that refuses to give up. Rusty has informed me that this Gem will be our house red for the next three to six years. 13.5% ABV.

2009 Haut Prieur, Blaye Côtes De Bordeaux (\$11.99) Deeply-colored, this wine is ripe, jammy and has a core of sweet fruit. Drink this puppy near-term with a big steak. 14.5% ABV.

Enjoy the wines.

—Jim Barr, Rusty, Eby, the Bean and Rizzo

THE LAST WORD On Bordeaux



The barrel room at Malescot.

the prices for the 2011s and 2012s I don't know, but we have plenty of futures available. We suggest buying Right Bank wines from 2012—they're a good bang for your buck.

But I'm getting ahead of myself because we still have plenty of 2009s, like the **2009 Moulin La Lagune, Haut-Médoc (\$27.99)**, which I am surprised is still in stock because every time I pour it K&L's staff and

Growing grapes is risky business, something that's easy to forget after the recent spate of great, good and decent vintages. But Bordeaux is seeing storms and hail this year the likes of which we haven't seen since 1991. Some vineyards are so damaged that they will not produce any fruit for two years. How this will affect

customers fall in love again. It shows roasted herbs, plum and cassis, and a touch of wood spice on the finish. A touch more Merlot in the blend adds suppleness.

The 2010s are steadily arriving, and I think 2010 is an even better vintage. With some wines priced lower than the 2009s, I think it's the obvious choice as long as you can cellar the wines. The **2010 Peyrabon, Haut-Médoc (\$19.99)** shows the hallmark of the 2010 vintage, finishing with lovely, bright acidity that frames the floral and ripe black fruit. I also love the **2010 Malescot-St-Exupéry, Margaux (\$109.99)**, which I think is a stunning \$100-ish classified growth. Currant, roasted herbs, floral tones, smoke, flint and heady black fruit come through with balance, depth and length. Wow. And for less than \$100 the **2010 Langoa-Barton, St-Julien (\$79.99)** is showing really well now, with fleshy red and black fruit that is standing up to the tannins and acidity, with lots of spice and a long finish.

—Steve Greer

STEVE BEARDEN On Bordeaux

Here are some great in-stock wines to buy and drink today while you sort out your buying and cellaring needs from the 2011 and 2012 vintage futures we currently have for sale:

2012 Fleur de Fonplégade Rosé, St-Emilion (\$12.99) This surprisingly delicate Cab rosé is just the thing for fall picnics, barbecues or just to start off the evening. It's clean, fresh and juicy, with ripe cherry flavors and a palate-cleansing splash of mineral on the finish.

2009 De Fieuza, Pessac-Léognan (\$44.99) This fantastic wine shows the warmth and ripeness of the vintage in a slightly richer-than-usual style. Toast, mineral, warm gravel, sweet oak, dark currant fruit and hints of truffle all express themselves in the ample middle. The somewhat smoky finish is long and creamy.

2010 Barde-Haut, St-Emilion (\$39.99) The wines of this boutique-size, high quality operation seem to get better each vintage, and this could be their best yet. The aromas of chocolate-covered cherries lead to a creamy middle of fruit confit flavors that are rich and velvety. Although modern in style, the wine is held together by ample ripe tannins on the limestone-laced finish. This could be decanted tonight.

2005 Barde-Haut, St-Emilion (\$44.99) Similar in style to the 2010 version but more evolved and complex, this is already drinking quite well and shows great balance. The cherry and blackberry flavors are quite sweet, but offset by a touch of herb, cedar and a hint of chalky minerality that keeps things quite fresh. Wonderful acidity really shines here all the way to the finish of gripping-but-fine tannin. The spectacular quality of the 2005 vintage really shines here.

2010 De Fieuza Blanc, Pessac-Léognan (\$59.99) Equal parts Sémillon and Sauvignon Blanc. Powerful and rich, it maintains great freshness. The wine's lush middle shows citronella, lanolin, grapefruit and honeydew, with a smooth texture that seems to linger and build. The juicy finish shows gripping, mouthwatering minerality.

—Steve Bearden

Value Bordeaux Tasting at Alexander's Steakhouse

Our annual Bordeaux Value tasting will be held in San Francisco this year on Saturday, September 21st. Join us for a trade-style tasting featuring the 15 best Bordeaux buys, plus delicious appetizers from Alexander's Steakhouse. Wines will include 1997 Potensac, 2001 Potensac, 2004 Peyrabon, 2001 Sarget de Gruaud-Larose and 1998 Lanessan, plus many more. This great value tasting will sell out quickly, so purchase tickets now. \$30 per person.



**September 21, 2013
1:30–3:30 p.m.
\$30 per person**

UPCOMING BORDEAUX EVENTS

October 24, 25, 26, 2013: Special Château Guiraud Tastings at all three K&L stores.

November 16, 2013: Grand Bordeaux Tastings at all three K&L stores.

January 25, 2014: Union Grand Cru Tasting of 2011 Bordeaux Vintage in San Francisco.

February 9, 2014: Fête du Bordeaux featuring the 2011 Bordeaux Vintage in San Francisco.

Bordeaux (Continued from page 1)

2009 Vrai Canon Bouche, Canon Fronsac (\$26.99) 92 points JS: "Soft tannins with lovely ripe berry fruit and hints of cream. Full and rich with an attractive combination of alcohol, freshness and structure. Better in 2016. But hard to wait."

2009 Corbin, St-Emilion (\$34.99) I love the purity of this property's wines—watch them now and in the future. 92 points JS: "Beautiful fruit of crushed raspberries and cherries, with hints of minerals. Full body, with firm tannins and a chewy finish. Give it two or three years to come together in the bottle."

2010 Corbin, St-Emilion (\$39.99) 93 points JS: "Nose starts with fresh brewed coffee, cedar and chocolate toffee. With a bit of air it shows ripe plum, sweet licorice and fresh leather. Wonderful dark round fruit on the palate with velvety caressing tannins..."

2010 Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$44.99) Cantemerle is one of my favorite Bordeaux properties. I thought the 2006 and 2009 were great, but this is the best ever from them, right 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."

2009 Fleur Cardinale, St-Emilion (\$49.99) A château to watch. Their 2009 and 2010 wines are phenomenal and reasonably priced. Stunning wine. 94 points Robert Parker: "A good value among over-achieving St-Emilion estates is La Fleur Cardinale's 2009."

2010 Fleur Cardinale, St-Emilion (\$49.99) 95 Parker points.

Under \$100 Classics

2009 Angludet, Margaux (\$59.99) 93 JS: "Aromas of blueberries and bramble berries, with hints of earth and meat follow through to a full body, with fine tannins and a juicy finish. Like the texture. Best in years. Try in 2017."

2009 La Lagune, Haut-Médoc (\$69.99) One of the greatest values of any Bordeaux from any vintage—just buy some and be rewarded. 95 points RP: "It is not unusual that the 2009 La Lagune is a spectacular effort given the fact that this estate has been making terrific wines over the last decade or more. It boasts a dense purple color as well as a beautiful perfume of blueberries, mulberries, cassis, white chocolate and subtle toasty oak."

2010 Brane Cantenac, Margaux (\$99.99) 95 Parker points and even more from Clyde. These guys are on a roll.

2010 Clos des Sarpe, St-Emilion (\$99.99) 96 points RP: "This is a quintessential blockbuster, no-compromise, massive, pedal-to-the-metal, balls-to-the-walls sort of wine with incredibly dense crème de cassis, kirsch, licorice, truffle and some background oak. Always one of the most concentrated and backward wines of the vintage, the 2010 is a prime example..."

The Sky's the Limit: \$100+

2010 Beychevelle, St-Julien (\$109.99) 94 points RP: "2010 Beychevelle displays sweet black currant, black cherry, foresty notes, medium to full-bodied texture with impressive purity and moderately high tannins (although they've softened considerably...)"

2009 Rauzan-Ségla, Margaux (\$119.99) ** A huge wine, with tons of fruit and spice. Very fine. 97 points James Suckling.

2009 Léoville-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 JS.

2009 Malescot-St-Exupéry, Margaux (750ml \$129.99; 1.5L \$249.99)

98 points Suckling and Clyde. A wine with intense spice and berry character and hints of sweet tobacco. James picked it as the best wine he tasted in 2012, and I rated it the best price/quality ratio from 2009.

2009 St-Pierre, St-Julien (\$139.99) 98 points RP: "The all-time greatest wine I have ever tasted from Saint-Pierre, this estate, the smallest of the grand cru classes of St-Julien, has an opaque purple color and a spectacular nose of subtle charcoal, crème de cassis, blackberry."

2009 Pichon-Lalande, Pauillac (\$199.99) 95 points RP: "A beautiful effort. It possesses copious mocha, lead pencil, unsmoked, high class tobacco, black currant, forest floor and herbaceous characteristics."

2010 La Mission Haut-Brion, Pessac-Léognan (\$899.99) 98 points Robert Parker and 100 points James Suckling.

2009 Mouton Rothschild, Pauillac (\$1,099.00) 99 Parker points.

100-Pointers from Robert Parker

2009 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$299.99)

2010 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (PA \$279.99)

2009 Leoville-Poyferré, St-Julien (750ml \$249.99; 1.5L \$599.99)

2009 Clinet, Pomerol (\$349.99)

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