

B O R D E A U X

E N P R I M E U R 2 0 0 5

T H E U L T I M A T E V I N T A G E ?

Claret has for centuries been the ultimate wine. They are the most collectable, they have the greatest ability to age and they are some of the most diverse wines on the planet. They range from inexpensive, everyday drinkers to hugely expensive, coveted treasures. Stylistically, they range from forward and accessible to intensely concentrated and structured. It is a region which truly offers something for everyone.

Each Spring eager merchants and journalists descend upon Bordeaux to taste all that this region has to offer. For months growers and the international media had been talking about this unique vintage. With the result that no vintage has ever been anticipated with such excitement.

The wines have all the structure, refinement and freshness of classic Bordeaux combined with perfect ripeness. When asked what vintage 2005 resembles, many just shrugged and replied that they have never seen a vintage where all the elements came together so perfectly. It has the richness of the 1945s, the power of the 1961s and the fresh minerality of the 2004s.

Given the outstanding quality, there has been much speculation on pricing. As with anything great, the top wines will be expensive. However, we have also gone out of our way to include a good range of wines that will offer excellent value. This will be a vintage to buy for collecting and drinking. We cannot stress this enough.

T H E G R O W I N G S E A S O N

2005 has been called the year of light...and drought. It marked the third year of a continuous dryness that had begun in early 2003. At the start of the growing season, the vines were behind schedule, sluggish from the lack of water. They had to delve deep into the subsoil in search of minerals and nutrition. And then their prayers were answered and it rained...a phenomenon which seems to have occurred throughout the growing season at exactly the right moment.

As a result of this newly acquired energy, the embryonic bunches appeared in May. Much less in quantity and notably smaller than in 2004. As a result, little green harvesting was needed. Slight problems in flowering also meant fewer bunches developed into berries producing lower yields than in 2004, although higher than in 2003.

Summer temperatures were warm, but rarely extreme – only 0.6° C above average. However, there was lots and lots of light providing much photosynthesis which fed the small-berried clusters giving masses of sugar. In fact certain Merlots registered over 16% potential alcohol – the highest on record for many chateaux. In addition to ripeness, notable levels of tannin and aromatics developed in the skins while the remarkably cool nights retained the berries' innate acidity.

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The lack of water seemed to put the grapes optimal ripeness in a holding pattern resulting in one of the longest drawn out (and most relaxing) harvests in history. Growers said that they could never have imagined such a textbook vintage in which everything fell into place at its peak moment. For them, 2005 was truly an exceptional vintage.

THE WINES

With such ideal growing conditions, outstanding results are only to be expected. It was a vintage where the wine really made itself. Many winemakers, instinctively sensing this, took a step back and let nature take its course. Nonetheless, certain precautions needed to be taken. As the skins were thick and overflowing with rich tannins, over-extraction was an issue. Indeed certain Right Bank châteaux, particularly in St Emilion, did not take heed and produced overworked results that came across as unbalanced and unappealing. Luckily for us they are in the minority.

The red wines as a whole have gorgeous, opulent fruit backed by notable structure, freshness and minerality. Most are terroir-driven and superb examples of their individual commune or sub-region.

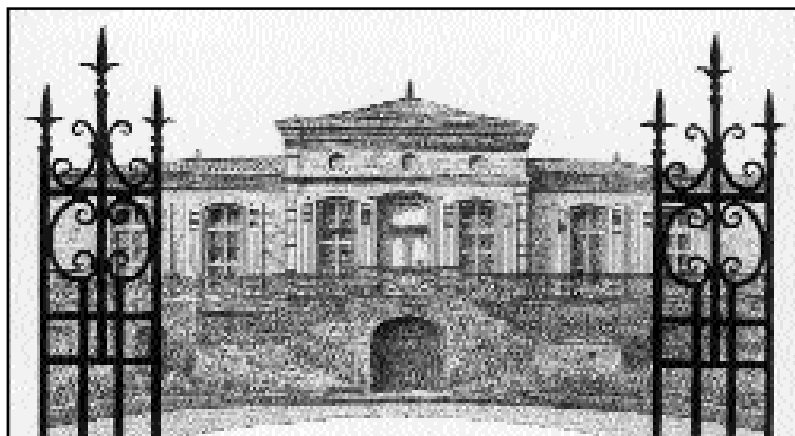
Some wines will be drinkable upon release, though the majority will require a certain amount of cellaring to open up. Many of these wines will also last a long time indicating that this vintage may offer a drinking window larger than any previously seen.

The whites also fared extraordinarily well - rich and dense yet with a superb liveliness. They are generally richer than the 2004s and offer fleshy, primal fruit that should age effortlessly.

It is a great Sauternes vintage. We will be offering a selection of the finest wines by e-mail and they will be appearing on our website as they are released. If you are not receiving our e-mail offers please let us have your e-mail address.

It is highly rare when all three styles excel. 2005 could be the ultimate year.

Below our tasting notes we have included, where available, scores from Jancis Robinson (JR), Wine Spectator (WS), Robert Parker (RP), Matthew Jukes (MJ) and Goedhuis & Company (GD).



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OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

Wines of the vintage (likely to be expensive and limited):

Haut Brion, Latour, Lafite, Margaux, Mouton Rothschild, Cos d'Estournel, Pichon Lalande, Ducru Beaucaillou, Leoville Barton, Pontet Canet, La Mission Haut Brion, Ausone, Cheval Blanc, Le Pin, Eglise Clinet, Vieux Chateau Certan.

Recommended wines of the vintage (likely to combine outstanding quality with sensible pricing):

Leoville Barton, Leoville Poyferre, Calon Segur, Pontet Canet, Langoa Barton, D'Issan, Lagrange, La Lagune, Talbot, Duhart Milon, Grand Puy Lacoste, Domaine de Chevalier, Bahans Haut Brion Haut Bailly, Malartic Lagraviere, Berliquet, Moulin St Georges, Feytit Clinet

Recommended value wines of the vintage:

Lafon Rochet, Haut Batailley, Carbonnieux (red and white), Rocher Bellevue Figeac, La Source, Marbuzet, Cantemerle, Chasse Spleen, Argilus du Roi, Senejac, Fonbel, La Chenade, Lanessan, Beaumont.

BUYING EN PRIMEUR

Buying wine "en Primeur" should be the most cost-effective way of laying down a cellar.

A purchase at this early stage guarantees provenance. When the wine is eventually drunk, it is a comfort to know that the case has not spent its life circumnavigating the globe, but remained in one place.

It is also the only chance to choose format. Since the wine is still in barrel there is still the opportunity to instruct bottling in halves, magnums, double magnums and imperials.

Finally, for those wines made in small quantities, this may simply be the only opportunity to buy.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The wines are offered In Bond England (i.e. all shipping and bottling charges are included). We will arrange shipment in spring 2008. On arrival wine can be delivered directly to you or stored In Bond by our independent storage company Private Reserves at a cost of £7.80 ex-VAT per case per annum. If you decide to take delivery duty and VAT at the prevailing rate will be payable. These charges are at present £15.50 and 17.5% respectively. Carriage will be charged at cost.

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FIRST GROWTHS

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH HAUT BRION, PESSAC LEOGNAN 2,000 – 3,000 2015 – 2035+

Arguably the oldest recognised Bordeaux grand cru, Haut Brion has been owned by the American Dillon family since 1935. Over the years, their incredible investments have re-established the inherent quality of this property enabling it to emerge as possibly the most consistent First Growth since the 1980s.

Beautifully structured and the most poised of all the First Growths (Lafite being an excellent runner up), the 2005 Haut Brion is a stunning wine. Elegant, subtle and pure with outstanding persistence, concentration and finesse.

(JR: 19.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 96-100. MJ: 19.5. GD: 96-100.)

CH LAFITE, PAUILLAC 2,000 – 3,000 2015 – 2035+

One peek into Ch Lafite's cellar is like entering the 18th century. Its cobweb-dressed chandeliers subtly light shadowy corridors playing host to hundreds of ancient vintages. Nothing could be more representative of its philosophy - classic, stylish yet powerful – characteristics that have made it one of the most collectable wines in the world.

In 1985, a 1787 Jefferson bottling obtained £105,000 at auction. Twenty-one years later, it remains the most expensive bottle ever sold.

In 2005, Lafite produced one of the top wines of the vintage. Full stop. It is full-bodied and fleshed out with lots of ripe bramble fruit and excellent – almost granite-like - minerality. Silky yet with formidable presence, it is true to its soulful character and will long reward those who find it in their cellars.

(JR: 19. WS: 95-100. RP: 93-96+. MJ: 19. GD: 95-100.)

CH LATOUR, PAUILLAC 2,000 – 3,000 2015 – 2035+

It is a common misconception that Château Latour was named after its notable cream-coloured tower – a 17th century edifice that served as a dovecote. The original tower that had yielded its name to this exemplary property was built in the 15th century as a watchtower to fend off invading pirates during the Hundred Years War. It has long been eroded away but not without leaving its long lived legend intact.

Mindbogglingly powerful, albeit very reticent upon first taste, there was no denying its sheer concentration and ceaseless length. This is very reminiscent of the exceptional 1961 but with more flesh.

(JR: 19.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 98-100. MJ: 19. GD: 94-100.)

CH MARGAUX, MARGAUX 2,000 – 3,000 2012 – 2035+

Known as the most elegant and aromatic First Growth due to its Cabernet-friendly, sandy soil, Ch Margaux is owned by Corinne Mentzelopoulos and managed by the dynamic Paul Pontallier. The vineyard holdings amount to almost 200 acres, though a much smaller percentage is selected for the grand vin to ensure exceptional concentration.

Their 2005 was by far the most fleshy, hedonistic and upfront of all the First Growths. According to the château, 2005 provided excellent levels of everything – acidity, sugar, fruit and tannin. Its undeniable structure is swept up in its velvety palate making the tannins virtually undetectable. This is a wine which will be approachable relatively young but has amazing stuffing and will last and last. Incredible.

(JR: 19.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 96-100. MJ: 20. GD: 96-100.)

CH MOUTON ROTHSCHILD, PAUILLAC 2,000 – 3,000 2015 – 2035+

By far the most visitor-friendly estate of the First Growths, Mouton Rothschild is also one of the most artistically-oriented. Since 1945 the Rothschild family has annually commissioned various artists to create labels for their grand vin. Over the years, celebrated artists such as Chagall, Picasso and Warhol have graced the outside of their bottles. The 2005 Mouton is notably dense and rich with powerful, brooding tannins and notes of spiced cranberry and blackberry fruit. Nonetheless, there is an underlying softness and savouriness which renders the wine very balanced and complete.

(JR: 18.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 94-96. MJ: 18.5. GD: 94-98.)

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SECOND GROWTHS

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH LEOVILLE LAS CASES, ST JULIEN 1,200 – 1,800 2013 – 2030+

If ever another wine gets promoted to First Growth category, Leoville Les Cases will undoubtedly be the one. Owned by the Delon family, this château comprises 97 hectares of vineyard land. However, unlike most of its Médoc neighbours, it only uses the vineyards classified in the original 1855 classification, an area called “Le Grand Enclos”, to make its grand vin.

Followers of this famous property will not be disappointed by its results in 2005. Perhaps the second most backward wine tasted (the first unanimously being Latour), the wine is densely coloured and opaque. A serious wine with an everlasting finish which Wine Spectator predicts will receive 100 points once released.

(JR: 18.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 92-94. MJ: 19.5. GD: 94-98+.)

CH COS D'ESTOURNEL, ST ESTEPHE 800 – 1,200 2015 – 2025+

Resembling an ancient Indian palace, Cos d'Estournel is like no other Bordeaux château. Established in the early 19th century by Louis Gaspard d'Estournel, the château was built after the vineyards were established as a celebration of his Far East conquests.

Jean Guillaume Prats, the director of Cos d'Estournel, was on good form the day we tasted – very satisfied with his 2005 results. And we have to agree. Cos tasted fantastic. Full-bodied yet with ultra silky tannins and unmistakable minerality, this was sumptuous, powerful and elegant. This is classic Bordeaux but with a twist which has no doubt been influenced by a lower than average percentage of Merlot this year (only 17%).

(JR: 18. WS: 95-100. RP: 95-97. MJ: 18.5. GD: 93-96+.)

CH PICHON LALANDE, PAUILLAC 500 – 800 2015 – 2020+

This estate was once merged with neighbouring Pichon Baron to form a much larger domaine. Due to inheritance politics, it was split in 1850 between only two children – one being Virginie de Lalande née de Pichon Longueville. The Lalande family sold the property in 1925 and today, it is owned by the charming and remarkable May Eliane de Lencquesaing.

Medium- to full-bodied, their 2005 offers fresh griotte cherries enveloped by savoury flavours of spice and mineral. Fresh and clean, it is more traditional in style than its twin, Pichon Baron.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 89-91+. MJ: 18.5. GD: 93-95+.)

CH DUCRU BEAUCAILLOU, ST JULIEN 500 – 800 2015 – 2020+

Instantly recognisable by its sunny Mediterranean-hued label, Ducru Beaucaillou is always a favourite. Owned by the Borie family over the last 60 years, it has been run by Bruno, the eldest son of the late Jean-Eugène, since 2003. This change in leadership seems to have had a highly positive effect – both 2003 and 2004 won over Robert Parker who described the 2003 as “the best since 1982” and the 2004 as “a candidate for one of the finest wines of St.-Julien”. The 2005 may leave both of them in the dust.

Rich with beautiful aromatics of blood orange, red currants and cranberry, this full-bodied wine has impeccable concentration and fantastic balance between its crunchy fruit texture and velvety tannins. Definitely one not to overlook. Outstanding.

(JR: 18. WS: 95 – 100. RP: 92-94+. MJ: 18. GD: 94-96.)



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SECOND GROWTHS continued

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH MONTROSE, ST ESTEPHE 400 – 600 2010 – 2020+

For years Montrose has been in the shadow of its more decadent, flashy neighbour, Cos d'Estournel. Quietly confident, it is a brilliant performer in notably dry, sunny vintages due to its dense clay soil that allows the vines to remain hydrated. In 2003, this was particularly true as many deemed it wine of the vintage.

Comprising 77% of the château's 2005 production, this Cabernet Sauvignon dominated, full-bodied wine is opaque and dense with broad, chewy tannins and lots of plump, ultra ripe and dark berry fruit. In the château's view the 2005 is as exceptional as their 2003.

(JR: 18.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 92-94+. MJ: 18.5. GD: 92-94.)

CH PICHON BARON, PAUILLAC 400 – 600 2010 – 2020+

Along with Pichon Lalande, this estate was only one of two Pauillacs to be classified as second growths in 1855. They have rivalled each other ever since. However, Pichon Baron has remained in the shadow of its more illustrious neighbour often enabling it to provide good value for money.

Comprised of 64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot and 3% Cabernet Franc, Pichon Baron's 2005 brims with opulence and velvety tannin. This is hedonistic and fleshy with good concentration and notable berry fruit flavours.

(JR: 17. WS: 92-94. RP: 92-95+. MJ: 18. GD: 91-93.)

CH LEOVILLE BARTON, ST JULIEN 400 – 600 2013 – 2025+

One of the great names in classically styled Bordeaux, Léoville Barton has been owned by the same family throughout its entire existence. Unusual for the Médoc region, there is actually no château based on the property. As a result, the wines are vinified and aged at neighbouring Langoa Barton, which as its name suggests, is also owned by the Barton family.

Its 2005 is a serious wine. Powerful and backwards with spice and meaty flavours, this is a wine built for long cellaring but will reward those patient enough. Superbly long finish.

(JR: 17+. WS: 95-100. RP: 94-96. MJ: 18. GD: 93-95.)

CH LEOVILLE POYFERRE, ST JULIEN 300 – 500 2011 – 2025+

Similar to Pichon Longueville, the three Léovilles (Las Cases, Barton and Poyferré) were originally part of the same estate – in fact, the largest in Bordeaux at the time of the revolution. In the early 1800s, the estate was divided into three distinct properties. Though it bears the same forename of its famous siblings, Poyferré is the one that is least known. Fortunately, this is changing. Through modernisation, exceptional vineyard management and meticulous winemaking, it is emerging as a star in its own right.

Their 2005 must be one of the most elegant and silky wines we tasted (on 3 occasions with consistent notes). Tight with excellent minerality, on the palate it opens up slowly revealing its refined fruit and tannins which linger on the finish. It is svelte, yet commanding – like an Argentine tango dancer.

(JR: 16. WS: 95-100. RP: 92-94. MJ: 18.5. GD: 93-95+.)

CH GRUAUD LAROSE, ST JULIEN 300 – 400 2010 – 2020+

One of the more self-sufficient châteaux in Bordeaux, Gruaud Larose is also one of the most natural. Practicing organic techniques, they create their own compost from the remnant stalks, skins and seeds and were the first château to recycle their own water.

All of this meticulous attention to detail has been paying off as Gruaud Larose has been going from strength to strength, especially since the mid 1990s. Their 2005 is no exception. On the palate, there are lots of velvety tannins and flavours of blackberry and spice. Nicely balanced with a powerful, long finish.

(JR: 16. WS: 89-91. GD: 90-92+.)



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SECOND GROWTHS continued

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH RAUZAN SEGLA, MARGAUX 300 – 400 2010 – 2020+

Originating in the 17th century, Rauzan Sègla was created by Pierre de Mesures de Rauzan who purchased large tracts of land which included neighbouring Rauzan Gassies, Desmirail and Marquis de Terme. Within a short period of time, Rauzan Sègla had become high on collectors lists rivalling Léoville, Gruaud Larose and Mouton Rothschild. One of its followers included Thomas Jefferson who purchased several cases of the 1790 vintage.

Over the years it was divided and sold on to various owners falling deeper and deeper into oblivion until the 1980s when its old, wooden vats were replaced with stainless steel and excellent clones of Cabernet Sauvignon replaced the tired Merlot. In 1994, the château was taken over by Chanel who has continued this drive for quality.

Out of the dozens of 2005 wines poured at the Margaux tasting in Bordeaux, Rauzan Sègla stood out. With a luring and pretty nose and a lovely mouthfeel, the wine further enchanted the palate with voluptuous black cherry and raspberry flavours and a light glimmer of crisp acidity. Wonderfully long finish. A real charmer.

(JR: 15.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 92-94. MJ: 17.5. GD: 91-93+.)

CH BRANE CANTENAC, MARGAUX 240 – 320 2010 – 2020+

Brane Cantenac is owned by a branch of the largest winemaking family in Bordeaux, the Lurtons. It was, however originally created by the owner of Mouton Rothschild, Baron de Branne. After years of mediocrity, it started improving in the late 1990s and even began to create wines which captured Robert Parker's attention. He described this property as "one of the stars of Margaux, if not Bordeaux" and their 2003 as "one of the best bargain-priced classified growths".

Smooth and easy, Brane Cantenac's 2005 is following in the same vein as its recent predecessors, yet taking advantage of 2005's warmth, roundness and underlying minerality.

(JR: 15.5. JS: 89-91. RP: 91-93. GD: 90-92.)

CH DURFORT VIVENS, MARGAUX 150 – 200 2010 – 2020+

One of the oldest established château in Bordeaux, this property was originally established in the 12th century by the Durfort de Duras family. In 1824, it was purchased by M. de Vivens who consequently added his own name. Over the years, it fluttered about various owners like a feather in the wind (including Ch Margaux) until it landed in the palm of the Lurton family.

Once criticised for its exceptionally high percentage of Cabernet – as much as 82% - in recent vintages this has been reduced to about 70%. Its 2005 has wonderful balance with smooth, velvety tannins and ripe, yet crunchy fruit. Lots of Margaux texture.

(JR: 16. WS: 85-88. GD: 89-91.)



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THIRD GROWTHS

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH PALMER, MARGAUX 600 – 800 2010 – 2025+

Ch Palmer has many followers. Indeed in certain vintages it even rivals Ch Margaux itself. Its 1961 was one of the most compelling wines of the vintage outperforming most First Growths. Many deem this château far more noble than its originally classified Third Growth status.

Opulent and noticeably ripe, this Palmer displays the telltale 2005 minerality with mouth coating flavours of cinnamon, dark chocolate and spice. Exotic with fine tannins and power, it is very clean and modern.

(JR: 17.5+. WS: 95-100. RP: 94-96. MJ: 18. GD: 92-94+.)

CH CALON SEGUR, St Estephe 350 – 450 2010 – 2020+

The most northerly classified growth in the Médoc, Calon Ségur has had a most gracious history. In the 18th century, it was the most beloved property of its owner, the Marquis Nicolas-Aléxandre Ségur. Though he also owned such celebrated châteaux as Lafite and Latour, he would proudly state: "I make my wine at Lafite and Latour but my heart is in Calon." He immortalised his affection by creating a heart on the label – a symbol that exists to this day.

Today, it is owned and managed by Mme. Denise Capbern Gasqueton, a magical hostess who captures the essence of La Vieille France with all its elegance and manners.

This is an archetypal Calon Ségur and was easily one of our favourite wines of the week. Wonderfully pure with fleshy ripeness, it sings the glories of the St Estèphe terroir with its textured tannins and feisty charm. We cannot think of a better Calon.

(JR: 17+. WS: 92-94. RP: 93-96. MJ: 18.5. GD: 91-94+.)

CH LANGOA BARTON, St Julien 250 – 300 2010 – 2012+

This château is owned by the Barton family (with Léoville Barton). Serving as a residence and a wine cellar, Langoa took its name from "gué" an old French word for the small stream that flows at the southern end of the property. Unlike the classical style of its stable mate, Langoa tends to be more approachable and flattering at a young age with fleshy fruit and textured tannins.

Nothing could be more true than the 2005. Upfront and plump, it offers scores of primal fruit and spice. A wine which "utterly seduced" Jancis Robinson.

(JR: 18. WS: 92-94. RP: 90-92+. GD: 91-93+.)

CH MALESCOT ST EXUPERY, MARGAUX 200 – 300 2010 – 2020+

Contrary to literary illusions, this château was not named after the author of the celebrated book, Le Petit Prince. It took its name from two owners, Simon Malescot and Comte Jean-Baptiste de Saint-Exupéry.

It is known for its "quintessential expression of finesse, power and terroir" as described by Robert Parker (Bordeaux, 2003). In 2005, it does not disappoint. Wine Spectator gave it an exceptional 95-100 points describing it as "a fabulous wine, with the finesse and class of a great Burgundy and the power and style of Bordeaux" and the "best ever from this château".

(JR: 16.5+. WS: 95-100. RP: 93-95+. GD: 90-92.)

CH GISCOURS, MARGAUX 200 – 250 2011 – 2025+

A diamond in the rough, for many years Château Giscours was an inconsistent performer. In 1995, the estate was sold to Eric Albada, who purchased Château du Tertre two years later. His arrival has had a significant impact in terms of quality. As Robert Parker has noted in Bordeaux (2003) his 2001, 2000, and 1999 vintages are "the finest Giscours trilogy to date."

The 2005 will give previous vintages a run for their money. Dark and brooding with chocolate and black currant flavours, it is deep and pensive - more St. Julien in style than Margaux. A wine that the Wine Spectator suggests may be their "best ever".

(JR: 17. WS: 92-94. RP: 90-93. GD: 89-92+.)



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THIRD GROWTHS continued

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH D'ISSAN, MARGAUX

180 – 240

2010 – 2025+

Many collectors view this château as well worth its status... and they are not alone. For centuries, D'Issan has been a coveted treasure. According to local lore, it was served at the wedding of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry Plantagenet as well as being a favourite of Emperor François-Joseph of Austria.

The 2005 would not have disappointed even these noble palates. Classically Margaux in style with fine, ripe tannins, this full-bodied wine has aromas of blueberry, spice and minerals. Owner Emmanuel Cruse said that he has never seen such high sugar levels. Indeed, his highest Merlot vat registered at 15.7% alcohol. Thank goodness for blends. Yet this 2005 exuberance has created a wonderfully alluring wine - sensual yet powerful.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 89-91. RP: 92-94. GD: 91-93+.)



CH LAGRANGE, ST JULIEN

180 – 240

2011 – 2022+

Advantageously positioned next to Gruaud Larose, this property is comprised of over 109 hectares of vines, all in a single parcel - a rarity in Bordeaux. After years of under performing, in 1983 the château was sold to Suntory, the Japanese drinks group. After much investment in not only the vineyards and chai, but also in the château and gardens, it has emerged as a beautiful swan with some excellent wines that are notable for their ripe, rich characteristics.

Full of wonderfully ripe fruit, the full-bodied 2005 is more masculine than normal hinting at a long cellar life. Its sweet mid-palate rounds out any edges making it an alluring, inviting wine.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 92-94. GD: 91-93.)



CH CANTENAC BROWN, MARGAUX

180 – 240

2009 – 2018+

For years, it was known for producing powerful, structured Margaux. However since the late 1980s when AXA purchased the estate, Cantenac Brown has worked towards a softer, more discrete style.

This vision seems to have easily sunk into the 2005. With pretty floral aromatics and a medium- to full-bodied palate of black cherry, subtle herb and spice, it is a silky Médoc styled wine that hides its power and structure easily within its velvety layers.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 89-91. RP: 87-89. GD: 89-91.)

CH FERRIERE, MARGAUX

180 – 240

2009 – 2018+

Ch Ferrière is undoubtedly one of the least known of all the classified growths. One reason for this may be due to its size. It is tiny by Bordelais standards at only 8 hectares. Despite its Lilliputian measurements, its reputation superseded its size qualifying it as a Third Growth in 1855.

Fleshy and floral, its 2005 is a fresh, clean wine that is superbly balanced. It is easy and even paced carrying the ripe entry all the way through to the finish.

(JR: 15.5. WS: 89-91. GD: 89-91+.)

CH LA LAGUNE, HAUT MEDOC

180 – 240

2010 – 2020+

One of the most popular wines during these campaigns – due to its excellent value. Unlike its classified companions, La Lagune is the only Third Growth that is not from a communal appellation. Comprised of very light sandy-gravelly soils, many believe its wines are similar to those of Pomerol or Graves.

Very terroir driven, the 2005 La Lagune is reticent on the nose but concentrated and powerful on the palate. Rich but not cloying, it offers notes of bramble fruit, cherry and fresh almonds that linger on the palate.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 89-91. RP: 92-94. MJ: 17.5. GD: 90-92.)



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FOURTH GROWTHS

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH BEYCHEVELLE, ST JULIEN 200 – 300 2009 – 2016+

Ch Beychevelle is the first famous property one stumbles upon coming north into St Julien. It boasts possibly the most colourful and glorious gardens in all of Bordeaux. There are two theories explaining its name and nautical label - both acknowledging the passing ships in the nearby Gironde and the Gascon language - “beychet velo” or “bêche velle” meaning “lowered sails” and “sailing vessel”, respectively.

Undeniably pretty and suave with a subtle backbone of structure, the 2005 Beychevelle finishes with a fresh salty tang.

(JR: 17. WS: 89-91. RP: 91-93. MJ: 15. GD: 90-92.)

CH BRANAIRE DUCRU, ST JULIEN 200 – 300 2009 – 2018+

Across the road from Ch Beychevelle lies Ch Branaire Ducru. Until 1988 the entire production was sold in France through the Nicolas chain of wine shops. A change in ownership fortunately also changed that policy and Branaire Ducru now takes its rightful place on the international market. The core of the blend is Cabernet Sauvignon and intensive work in the vineyard ensures optimum ripeness. They are aiming for a balance of elegance and complexity and director Jean Dominique Videau believes that in 2005 they have achieved that goal.

Spicy and exotic, Branaire Ducru’s 2005 is brimming with violets and cinnamon wrapped in plush tannins and a crisp acidic backbone. Fleshy yet focused.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 94-96. MJ: 18.5. GD: 91-93+.)

CH TALBOT, ST JULIEN 180 – 240 2010 – 2020+

A mark of the significant English influence in Bordeaux, Ch Talbot was named in honour of John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, who fought gallantly (and without weapons) but lost his battle against the French in Castillon in 1453. For many years it was a twin to Ch Gruaud Larose which also bore the Cordier label. However, since 1992 Jean Cordier exchanged his shares in Gruaud to take complete control of Talbot. It is now run by his daughter Nancy. The 2005 is spicy and rich with lots of plush velvety tannins. The palate is chewy yet refined. It almost commanded a 95-100 score from Wine Spectator who stated that it is “the best Talbot in years.”

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 88-90. MJ: 17. GD: 92-94.)

CH DUHART MILON, PAUILLAC 180 – 240 2010 – 2025+

Owned since 1962 by the Rothschilds of Ch Lafite, this wine is often overlooked. Yet it comes through with impressive results, whose style replicates its more renowned big brother – pure with outstanding finesse.

In 2005, it follows these same principles. Full-bodied and silky, it is noticeably complex and powerful, yet elegant with dark notes of black cherry, spice and tar. A wine that lingers on the palate.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 90-92. MJ: 17.5. GD: 90-92.)

CH PRIEURE LICHINE, MARGAUX 180 – 240 2009 – 2018+

As its name suggests, this château has a religious connection as a priory for Benedictine monks. After the French revolution, its religious connection was dissolved and it was sold off to various owners. In the 1950s it came into the hands of Alexis Lichine, a Russian native who had emigrated to the USA and pioneered the marketing of the California wine industry before moving to Bordeaux. He changed the name from Cantenac Prieuré to reflect his ownership – a name which continues to this day, though the property is no longer owned by the Lichine family.

Over recent years, it has become a wine of notable quality. The 2005 further exemplifies this trend. Medium- to full-bodied with nice, silty tannins, it exudes lush, ripe fruit.

(JR: 17+. WS: 89-91. RP: 91-94. MJ: 16.5. GD: 89-91.)



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FOURTH GROWTHS continued

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH LAFON ROCHET, ST ESTEPHE 150 – 200 2012 – 2025+

Ch Lafon Rochet is ideally situated due northwest of Lafite and west of Cos d'Estournel. Though its terroir is exceptional, many critics believed that earlier vintages in the 1970s and 1980s were too tannic and lacked charm. Since the 1990s, it has steadily improved due to several factors such as harvesting later, increasing the amount of new oak and a higher percentage of Merlot in the blend – a phenomenon which has a strong current following in St Estèphe.

“Blackberry with light spice and toasted oak character. Full-bodied, with fine tannins and a sweet, ripe fruit finish. Yummy to taste.” Wine Spectator.

(JR: 16. WS: 89-91. RP: 91-93. MJ: 17.5. GD: 89-91+.)



FIFTH GROWTHS

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH LYNCH BAGES, PAUILLAC 400 – 600 2010 – 2022+

If any château in all of the classified growths consistently outperforms its original status, it is Lynch Bages. Indeed, this château has long been prized by Pauillac lovers who seek good value, yet well made wine. The property is situated just outside the quiet village of Pauillac north of Latour and Pichon Lalande. It is owned and run by Jean-Michel Cazes a highly admired and charismatic Bordelais whose vision and joie de vivre have influenced many the world over.

The 2005 will please any Lynch Bages aficionado (and may make converts of others). Plump with wild strawberry and spice, it is deceptively complex suggesting it may be approachable fairly early on but will age marvellously well. Wonderful entry that carries through consistently to the long finish.

(JR: 17. WS: 92-94. RP: 91-93. GD: 91-93+.)

CH GRAND PUY LACOSTE, PAUILLAC 350 – 450 2009 – 2018+

Grand Puy Lacoste sits on top of the steepest slope in Pauillac, a whole 16 metres above the main flatlands! Hardly Himalayan, but the extra 16 metres of pebble enriched soil results in particularly excellent drainage. François-Xavier Borie is at the helm of this very impressive château which was purchased in 1978 from Monsieur Dupin.

In 2005, François-Xavier produced a wine of notable concentration – ripe and rich with black cherry and spicy oak. However, with its underlying minerality and fresh acidity, it is not heavy. Those in the know think that it might even be better than his exceptional 2000.

(JR: 17. WS: 92-94. RP: 92-94. GD: 92-94+.)



CH PONTET CANET, PAUILLAC 350 – 450 2011 – 2020+

This star has been rising since 1994 when Alfred Tesseron began practicing Draconian-like measures to extract the most potential from his top Pauillac property. Some of the advances include debudding, de-leaving and severe crop thinning. Unlike many advanced Bordeaux cellars, their vinification vats are not set on “auto pilot” but are manually and meticulously controlled. They understand the needs of each vintage vary and respond accordingly.

Pontet Canet was our first stop this vintage and we were greeted warmly by Alfred and his labrador. The 2003 and 2004 were the best wines that we have tasted from this château, until 2005 that is. A definite favourite during this trip. Powerful, rich yet precise with dark chocolate and black cherry notes, it was a wine which followed 2005's style: classic but huge.

(JR: 15.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 94-96. MJ: 19. GD: 93-95+.)



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FIFTH GROWTHS continued

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH CLERC MILON, PAUILLAC 200 – 300 2011 – 2020+

In a brilliant location, next to Lafite and Mouton, Clerc Milon is another château in the famed Mouton Rothschild trinity. Since 1985, it has done much work to improve its quality through better vineyard management, winemaking and with a higher percentage of Merlot to create friendlier, yet more concentrated bottlings. Over the years, it's become a favourite of Robert Parker who regards this château as "a must buy".

Unmistakably Pauillac in style, the 2005 Clerc Milon is gravelly and tight with powerful tannins backed up by ripe berry and savoury flavours. It has a hefty, masculine feel balanced by some of the refined qualities of its cousin D'Armailhac.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 90-92. MJ: 17. GD: 89-92.)

CH D'ARMAILHAC, PAUILLAC 180 – 240 2012 – 2018+

For years this château had an identity crisis having almost as many names as France has had republics. It was created in the 18th century by Dominique d'Armailhac from a section of land situated between Mouton Rothschild and Pontet Canet and hence named Mouton d'Armailhac. In 1933, it was acquired by the Mouton branch of the Rothschild family and in 1956, its name was changed to Mouton-Baron-Philippe. Almost 20 years later, the Baron Philippe's wife died and he changed the name to Mouton-Baronne-Philippe in her memory. In 1989, the name reverted back to D'Armailhac in order to curb confusion with their brand, Mouton Cadet.

Despite its chameleon-like name changes, for the past 20 years its quality has been consistent. Medium-bodied with an ethereal texture, the 2005 offers pretty notes of violets, plums and minerals enveloped in velvety tannins. James Suckling of Wine Spectator believes that it may be better than the 2000 or 2003.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 89-91. RP: 90-93. MJ: 16.5. GD: 90-92.)

CH DAUZAC, MARGAUX 180 – 240 2010 – 2016+

One of the least known of the classified growths, Château Dauzac nonetheless has a long, illustrious history tracing its roots back to the 13th century. However, it was the arrival of Thomas Michael Lynch in the 18th century who invested and expanded its vineyards that made it one of the more celebrated Margaux of its time.

Over the years, it changed hands from renowned wine merchant Nathaniel Johnston to the Miaillhes family. In 1988 inheritance tax forced them to sell the estate to French insurance company, MAIF, who still own the château today. In 1992, André Lurton was hired as manager and he has since considerably improved the quality at this once highly admired château.

Silky with fresh and ripe raspberry and blackberry flavours, its medium-bodied 2005 has wonderful underlying minerality which gives noticeable elegance and purity. "Best ever" from Wine Spectator.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 90-92. MJ: 16.5. GD: 89-91.)

CH HAUT BAGES LIBERAL, PAUILLAC 150 – 200 2011 – 2018+

Similar to Lynch Bages, Haut Bages Libéral is also named after the plateau ("bages") on which it sits. Located only a hop, skip and a jump from Latour, their main vineyard area rests on prime Bordeaux soil. Their other two parcels are situated next to Pichon Lalande and Grand Puy Lacoste. Regardless of its superb location, it is often underestimated by collectors. As a result, it can be excellent value, especially in top vintages.

Subtle with fresh notes of cherry and minerals, the 2005 has a solid Cabernet core defining this as nothing other than a Pauillac.

(JR: 16. WS: 92-94. GD: 89-91+.)

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FIFTH GROWTHS continued

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH DU TERTRE, MARGAUX 150 – 200 2011 – 2020+

Originally part of the Marquis de Ségur's extensive collection of châteaux, like many Bordelais châteaux, for many years Ch du Tertre succumbed to neglect. In the 1960s new owner, Philippe Capbern Gasqueton (of Calon Ségur) invested much money and effort to re-plant and rebuild the château. In Bordeaux (2003), Robert Parker describes their wine as "one of the finest values amongst the Bordeaux classified growths" no doubt due to their relatively unknown status".

This medium-bodied wine offers dark aromatics of ripe black cherry and treacle. Not typically Margaux in style, it is potent with all the 2005 chewy, brooding structure and richness.

(JR: 17. WS: 85-88. RP: 91-94. GD: 89-91.)

CH BATAILLEY, PAUILLAC 150 – 200 2011 – 2018+

Known as one of the "forgotten" château of the Médoc, Batailley is also one with great potential. Owned by the Castéja's, it has been managed by Borie-Manoux, a leading Bordelais négociant, since the 1960s. For many years it was not traded amongst traditional Bordeaux circles which contributed to its lesser known stature. This has changed only over the past couple of years.

This is well made Pauillac which provides pleasure at a relatively affordable price. Notably rich and ripe, the 2005 has flavours of dark bramble fruit, liquorice and spice with underlying toasty oak. Full-bodied but finely tuned.

(JR: 15. WS: 89-91. RP: 90-92. GD: 88-90.)

CH HAUT BATAILLEY, PAUILLAC 150 – 200 2015 – 2020+

Ch Haut Batailley is under the thoughtful eye of François-Xavier Borie. It is less well-known than its stablemate Grand Puy Lacoste, though just as well managed. It has one of the highest vine densities in Bordeaux at 10,000 vines per hectare, which generally translates to more competition amongst vines and a better quality of fruit.

In 2005, it was easily one of our favourites and will most likely be a best buy. Pretty and lightly nuanced with ripe berry fruit and floral flavours, it is suave, smooth and fantastically feminine.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 88-90. GD: 91-93.)

CH CANTEMERLE, HAUT MEDOC 100 – 150 2012 – 2020

One of the three non-Communal classified growths (with La Lagune and Cantenac), Cantemerle is located in Macau, a village due south of Margaux. Due to its proximity it has certain shared traits with several of its distinguished neighbours. Yet, it has an unusual connection to vineyards thousands of miles away. In the early 1980s, much of its Cabernet Franc was changed to Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot by top grafting. Mexican viticulturalists, specialists in this field, were flown in from the Napa Valley to carry out the procedure.

This is where the similarities end as Cantemerle is classic Bordeaux – and its 2005 is just that. Flavoursome with notes of griotte cherry and green olives, its 2005 has notable finesse and length.

(JR: 16. WS: 89-91. RP: 89-91. GD: 89-91+.)



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PESSAC LÉOGNAN / GRAVES

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH LA MISSION HAUT BRION 1,000 – 1,500 2015 – 2030+

Owned by the Dillon family since 1983, La Mission Haut Brion is without doubt one of the most exceptional wines of Bordeaux. Across the road from Haut Brion, it regularly competes with its more illustrious older sibling and has even outperformed Haut Brion in certain vintages.

True to château style, the 2005 La Mission Haut Brion is more masculine than the feminine and elegant Haut Brion. A powerhouse on every level, it has superfine tannins and a robust structure that is fleshed out by a wonderfully sweet mid-palate. Jean-Philippe Delmas compared 2005 to the 1961 in regards to tannin levels and ripeness. Another star in the making.

(JR: 19. WS: 95-100. RP: 95-97. MJ: 18. GD: 95-98+.)

CH PAPE CLEMENT 400 – 600 2012 – 2025+

Created in the 13th century by Pope Clément V, Château Pape Clément is one of the oldest estates in Bordeaux. After he took the Papacy in 1306 and moved to Avignon, he relinquished the château to the church. This heritage remains with the château today in the form of a Papal cross on its label – a symbol that is shared by Châteauneuf du Pape producers in the Rhône Valley.

A modern-styled Graves, the 2005 Pape Clément has a clean, ripe palate with velvety tannins and notes of berry fruit and toasty oak. Plump, yet polished it finishes on warm, spicy cinnamon.

(JR: 17. WS: 92-94. RP: 96-100. GD: 91-93+.)

CH HAUT BAILLY 250 – 350 2012 – 2025+

Rich in sandstone composed of fossilised shellfish (“faluns”), Haut Bailly has one of the most noteworthy terroirs in Pessac Léognan. As a direct result of this ancient soil, their wines are extremely elegant and pure. Though not enormously high profile, this château is one of the most appreciated by critics and collectors.

An excellent 2005 that has all of marks of the vintage - plump and pretty with velvety tannins and superb ripeness.

(JR: 17+. WS: 92-94. RP: 93-95+. GD: 91-94+.)

CH SMITH HAUT LAFITTE 250 – 300 2012 – 2025+

Equally known for its red and white wines, Smith Haut Lafitte is particularly notable for producing clean, concentrated and consistent wines – qualities which have enabled it to be one of the most popular châteaux in the Graves region.

Brimming with enticing notes of roasted coffee, smoke and dark, spicy fruits, this medium- to full-bodied wine is smooth and plush. With wonderful concentration and balance, the finish just goes on and on...

(JR: 17.5? WS: 92-94. RP: 93-95+. GD: 91-93.)

CH LES CARMES HAUT BRION 250 – 300 2012 – 2022+

Les Carmes Haut Brion is one of the tiniest and least known Pessac Léognans. Only a fraction over 4.5 hectares, it is superbly placed – a stone’s throw from Haut Brion and La Mission Haut Brion. Many believe this château is close to the style of its neighbours as the terroir is basically the same. Due to the minute quantities produced, it is not the easiest wine to find and is sought after the world over.

Meaty and rich on the nose, the palate is packed with voluptuous fruit and velvety tannins that are chewy and long lived. A very serious wine.

(JR: 17. WS: 85-88. RP: 91-94. GD: 91-93.)



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P E S S A C L E O G N A N / G R A V E S

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DRINKING DATES

CH LATOUR HAUT BRION 200 – 300 2011 – 2022+

There is often a degree of uncertainty as to the exact identity of Latour Haut Brion. Some declare it to be the second wine of La Mission Haut Brion while others insist it is a château in its own right. The two sides may be happy to hear that they are both partially right. Up until 1983, it was the second label of La Mission containing a large quantity of press wine and lesser cuvées. However, since being sold to the Dillon family in 1983, it has taken on an individual identity and is now produced from separate parcels of vines.

Stylistically, Latour Haut Brion is fragrant and supple; profoundly so in 2005. It may be the high percentage of Cabernet Franc (41%) which makes this wine stand out. It has an ethereal presence which is delicate yet complex. (JR: 18. WS: 92-94. RP: 90-92. GD: 90-92+.)

DOMAINE DE CHEVALIER 200 – 250 2012 – 2025+

Known for its exquisite Graves finesse, this property has been owned by Olivier Bernard since 1983. Consulting oenologist, Stéphane Déroncourt was hired some years back which has contributed to the fresh and clean style. Meticulous parcel selection enables their grand vin to be the best representation of their mineral-driven style.

The 2005 Domaine de Chevalier is velvety and pure with notes of ripe plums, bramble fruit and superb minerality. With its expert viticulture and winemaking, it has extracted all the qualities from the vintage yet has respected its trademark linear elegance. A Graves lover's wine. Superb.

(JR: 17. WS: 89-91. RP: 91-94. GD: 91-93+.)



CH MALARTIC LAGRAVIERE 180 – 240 2010 – 2022+

For many years, Malartic Lagravière was an underachiever. With high yields and poor viticultural management, it produced mediocre wines. In 1997, it was purchased by the Bonnie family who have invested heavily in the estate creating a state-of-the-art chai as well as introducing a second wine.

Packed with pretty aromatics of cinnamon and blueberry, the 2005 is smooth, ripe and elegant. A charming wine which will make for early drinking.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 89-91. RP: 90-93. GD: 90-92.)



CH CARBONNIEUX 100 – 150 2010 – 2018+

Ch Carbonnieux is more famous for their white wine, though they actually have more hectares planted with red varieties. This may be down to one of its former owners, the Sultan of Turkey, who blessed the white as “mineral water of Carbonnieux” to get around Muslim law.

In 2005, they produced a fairly modern styled wine with plump, ripe fruit that has good freshness and length. On the palate it has warm toasty notes balanced by characteristic Pessac gravel undertones.

(JR: 16. WS: 85-88. RP: 91-93. GD: 88-90.)



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ST EMILION

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH AUSONE, 1ER GRAND CRU CLASSE 3,000 – 4,000 2015 – 2035+

Known the world over for its magnificent terroir (and spectacular views over the Dordogne valley), Ch Ausone takes its name from the Roman poet Ausonius who owned vineyards around St. Emilion.

A half breed between modern and traditional, the 2005 Ausone displays superlative ripeness yet with fantastic focus. Its blend of 55% Cabernet Franc and 45% Merlot has no doubt had an influence on its plush but linear style. With notes of blueberry, dark chocolate and toasty new oak, it is finely balanced between alcohol, tannin and acidity. An excellent 2005. Sadly we don't get much.

(JR: 18.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 96-100. MJ: 19.5. GD: 95-97.)

CH CHEVAL BLANC, 1ER GRAND CRU CLASSE 2,000 – 3,000 2015 – 2035+

Several years ago, 10 of the world's top wine specialists were asked if they could own a wine estate, which one would it be. At least 5 of them said Cheval Blanc. Indeed, this château is like no other. Wonderfully silky and smooth yet powerful, it is often approachable when young yet has the capacity to age for many years. Its unusually high proportion of Cabernet Franc (usually 50% or more) accompanied by Merlot has undoubtedly contributed to its allure.

We think that Cheval Blanc is the best St Emilion of 2005. It is fleshy, hedonistic, yet not overtly modern. It is superbly balanced. Each concentrated, expressive drop flows smoothly from start to its very long finish. Superfine tannins. Fully integrated oak. It is simply mindblowing.

(JR: 19+. WS: 95 -100. RP: 95-98. MJ: 19.5. GD: 96-100.)

CH L'ANGELUS, 1ER GRAND CRU CLASSE 500 – 1,000 2012 – 2025+

Owned by the de Bouard de Laforest family for years, it is only since the mid 1980s that this château has truly hit its potential. Hubert de Bouard, with the assistance of consulting oenologist, Michel Rolland, is making some of the finest wines in St Emilion. The château is particular notable for producing excellent wines in off vintages which for many is the true testament of quality.

Full-bodied and super velvety, the 2005 Angélu displays notes of black cherries and spice. Polished with a refreshing kick on the finish.

(JR: 15. WS: 92-94. RP: 96-98+. MJ: 18.5. GD: 91-94.)

CH FIGEAC, 1ER GRAND CRU CLASSE 300 – 500 2013 – 2030+

Ch Figeac has had a chequered history. In the 19th century, its owner went bankrupt and it was broken up into various parts – some attaching themselves to Beaugard and La Conseillante. Another part became La Tour Figeac, which was later divided again creating La Tour du Pin Figeac. Luckily, 40 hectares of this once vast estate were able to cling together for dear life forming the parameters of one of St Emilion's most recognisable châteaux.

Almost Médoc-like, Figeac's 2005 was produced from equal thirds of Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. It is concentrated with fine structured tannins and less jammy than some other St Emilions – no doubt due to its high Cabernet content. A fine wine which will need some cellaring to come around.

(JR: 17+?. WS: 92-94. RP: 91-94. GD: 91-93+.)

CH CANON, 1ER GRAND CRU CLASSE 300 – 500 2012 – 2025+

Ch Canon is located on rich limestone soil slopes southwest of the town of St Emilion. It is known for its muscular style which when young can be quite backward and tight but with age can evolve beautifully.

Noticeably plump and rich with extra sweetness on the mid-palate, it has chewy, prominent tannins that become more silky and refined on the finish. This is the best wine made at Ch Canon for many years.

(JR: 16. WS: 89-91. RP: 90-93. MJ: 17. GD: 90-92+.)

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ST EMILION continued

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DRINKING DATES

CH BELAIR, 1ER GRAND CRU CLASSE 300 – 400 2011 – 2020+

Ch Belair is something of a rarity for a Right Bank château as it can trace its history back to the 14th century. In 1802 they began bottling their own wines at the château – an inconceivable practice for the time and their wines sold for three times more than other St Emilions. Luckily for its followers, the price has decreased over the years making it an affordable Right Bank option.

With a lovely nose of violets and liquorice, the 2005 bursts onto the palate with chewy tannins and plump fruit. This is a ripe and hedonistic wine that finishes on subtle nuances of terroir and roasted coffee.

(JR: 17. WS: 92 – 94. RP: 87-89. GD: 89-91.)

CH PAVIE MACQUIN, GRAND CRU CLASSE 300 – 400 2012 – 2020+

One of the few châteaux in Bordeaux that is biodynamically farmed, Pavie Macquin has long been one of the top wines of St Emilion which aficionados liken to Lafleur in Pomerol. It is managed by the ultra dynamic Nicolas Thienpont who uses oenologists Michel Rolland and Stéphane Deroncourt as his right hand men.

Slightly difficult to taste as it was still finishing its malolactic fermentation, the 2005 still showed outstanding potential. Full-bodied and chewy, it also displays crisp acidity rendering it fresh and lively. Wine Spectator describes it as “monumental” which may be better than its 2003.

(JR: 15.5+?. WS: 95-100. RP: 94-96+. GD: 92-94.)

CH CANON LA GAFFELIERE, GRAND CRU CLASSE 300 – 400 2013 – 2025+

Since the 1980s, Canon La Gaffelière has been owned by the dapper and über friendly, Count Stephan von Neipperg. With the help of consulting oenologist, Stéphane Deroncourt, they have transformed this château into one of the most sought after properties on the Right Bank.

Slightly reticent on the nose, this wine’s notable concentration and power surface on the mid-palate after its initial attack. Should have a long life ahead. Produced from 55% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 92-94. MJ: 18. GD: 90-92+.)

CH TROPLONG MONDOT, 1ER GRAND CRU CLASSE 300 – 400 2013 – 2025

Located on a limestone plateau overlooking Pavie, Ch Troplong Mondot has become one of the most sought after châteaux in all of Bordeaux. It has consistently been making quality wines for years. It is this dedication to true quality that has set it apart from some of its flashier peers.

The 2005 is exactly what one has come to expect from this château. Full-bodied with excellent concentration, it displays appetising aromas of dark berry fruit, maple syrup and roasted meat. Finishes long and full.

(JR: 17+. WS: 92-94. RP: 96-100. MJ: 18.5. GD: 90-94.)

CH ROL VALENTIN, GRAND CRU 300 – 400 2012 – 2025

Rol Valentin was purchased in 1994 by ex-footballer, Eric Prissette. Following his takeover, he brought in consulting oenologist, Stéphane Deroncourt. Their goal is to produce a wine that is more modern in style with ripe, clean fruit and velvety tannins.

They have made an excellent 2005. Rich with lush flavours of dark berried fruit that are stratified into its full-bodied and concentrated palate. The best wine yet from this château.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 92-94. GD: 89-92+.)

CLOS FOURTET, GRAND CRU 300 – 400 2011 – 2020

Unusually titled for a Bordelais property, Clos Fourtet gets its name from “Camp Fourtet” as it was originally used as a Medieval fort to protect the town of St Emilion.

One of the most balanced St Emilions that we tasted, the 2005 is medium- to full-bodied with wonderfully ripe fruit that is enhanced by additional spicy and meaty notes. Refreshing and clean finish.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 94-96. GD: 87-88)

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ST EMILION continued

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH TROTTE VIEILLE, 1ER GRAND CRU CLASSE 250 – 350 2012 – 2020+

Like certain domaines in Burgundy, Trotte Vieille is a one parcelled vineyard enclosed by stone walls. But that is where the similarities stop. Planted with 50% Merlot, 45% Cabernet Franc and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon, its pure limestone soil produces one of the most terroir-driven wines in the region.

“Violets and blackberries galore follow through to a full-bodied palate, with intense blackberry flavors and a long, long finish. The core of ripe fruit in this is wonderful. Stunning for this estate.” Wine Spectator Online April 2006. (JR: 15. WS: 92-94. RP: 91-94. GD: 88-90.)

CH BEAU SEJOUR BECOT, 1ER GRAND CRU CLASSE 250 – 350 2012 – 2022+

Like certain Left Bank estates, Ch Beau Séjour Bécot was once part of a larger estate that had been separated into two (the other being Beauséjour Duffau Lagarosse). Located west of the village of St Emilion, it lies next to other sought after properties such as Canon and Angélus.

Their 2005 was certainly one of the prettiest wines we tasted. Fresh and clean, this medium- to full-bodied wine offered flavours of dried flowers, plums and minerals. One of the highest levels of acidity which in this vintage was much needed.

(JR: 17. WS: 92-94. RP: 92-95. MJ: 17. GD: 89-92.)

CH LARCIS DUCASSE, 1ER GRAND CRU CLASSE 240 – 450 2014 – 2025

Larcis Ducasse is next to Ch Pavie and has excellent terroir. Made by the Nicolas Thienpont and Stéphane Derenoncourt team, it is comprised mostly of 78% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Sauvignon to add focus and structure and 20% Cabernet Franc. With excellent concentration and chewy tannins, the 2005 is a heavyweight which displays (unexpected) pretty aromatics of peach, plum and violets. Like a gentle giant. Sadly the Parker score may make it expensive and impossible to find.

(JR: 15?. WS: 95-100. RP: 95-98. GD: 91-93+.)

CH BELLEVUE, GRAND CRU CLASSE 200 – 300 2010 – 2018

This château is owned by the Beylot family and managed by Nicolas Thienpont of Pavie Macquin. Produced from 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc, the 2005 has lots of everything – ripeness of fruit, tannins and minerality. Very expressive of the vintage, it also has a pretty, shy side which comes through, especially on the finish.

(JR: 16. WS: 89-91. RP: 94-96+. MJ: 17.5. GD: 90-93.)

CH GRAND MAYNE, GRAND CRU CLASSE 200 – 250 2013 – 2030+

One of the up and coming châteaux of the appellation, Grand Mayne is known for providing some of the best value and longest lived wines that the Right Bank has to offer.

Its 2005 is just that. Very powerful with layers of exotic spice, sweet oak and fleshy dark berry fruits. It has a dark brooding finish which will take some time to open up, but should evolve beautifully. Produced from 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc.

(JR: 16. WS: 89-91. RP: 91-93. GD: 90-92.)

CH BERLIQUET, GRAND CRU 180 – 240 2010 – 2018

This overlooked château lies next to Canon and Magdelaine. Over the last few years, Patrick de Lesquen with Patrick Valette (formerly of Pavie) have taken over the winemaking helm. With many talents between them, this dynamic duo should firmly plant Berliquet in the realm of top notch Right Bank estates.

Ripe and satiny, the 2005 Berliquet displays notes of sweet plump fruit and toasted oak that linger consistently throughout the palate. Purity as opposed to power.

(JR: 16. WS: 89-91. RP: 88-90. GD: 90-92+.)



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ST EMILION continued

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH MOULIN ST GEORGES, GRAND CRU 180 – 240 2010 – 2020

Another château which falls under the Ausone umbrella, Moulin St Georges was particularly impressive in 2005. Lovely violets and black cherry notes fill up the aromatics while its palate is rich with powerful, chewy tannins which do not feel heavy.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 89-91. RP:91-93. GD: 90-92.)



CH LA TOUR FIGEAC, GRAND CRU CLASSE 180 – 240 2011 – 2022

Like its Médoc cousin (in name alone), La Tour Figeac was named after a now ghost tower on the premises. The renowned Stéphane Derenoncourt is their consulting oenologist who has helped contribute to this property's reputation...and growing fanbase.

Savoury and meaty on the nose, it has excellent fruit concentration and velvety tannins on the palate. Very expressive for such a young wine - no doubt a result of Derenoncourt's "Midas" touch.

(JR: 16. WS: 89-91. RP: 90-92. MJ: 17. GD: 90-92.)

CH FAUGERES, GRAND CRU 140 – 180 2011 – 2020

Renowned for its upfront fruity flavours, Ch Faugeres also has excellent ability to age which suits both those who like to drink their wines young and those who prefer rather more mature wines.

"A fruity red with blackberry, licorice and dried flowers. Full-bodied, with ultrafine tannins and a powerful finish. Racy wine." Wine Spectator Online, April 2006

(JR: 15+. WS: 89-91. RP: 91-93. GD: 88-90.)

CH DESTIEUX, GRAND CRU 140 – 180 2009 – 2015

One of the lesser known St Emilions, Château Destieux's 2005 is friendly and sweet with plump flavours of blueberry and blackcherry. It is round yet fresh with good underlying acidity. A beautifully balanced St Emilion.

(JR: 15. RP: 92-94. GD: 88-90.)

CH ROCHER BELLEVUE FIGEAC, GRAND CRU 80 – 120 2008 – 2014

Produced from vines located on the plateau close to Figeac and Pomerol, this 2005 offers ample notes of plum, blueberry and spice. Velvety and beautifully balanced, it finishes on underlying minerality and fresh acidity. One of the most balanced St Emilions we tasted. Robert Parker states, "Consumers searching for a fine, unpretentious, and richly fruity St Emilion should latch onto this wine and buy it by the case." Bordeaux (2003). This should be excellent value.

(RP: 88-90. GD: 89-91.)



CH SAINT AYME, GRAND CRU 80-100 2010 - 2019

Every 10 years, the wines of St Emilion are reviewed in order to determine if they merit the quality to be labelled as a Grand Cru, Grand Cru Classé or a 1er Grand Cru Classé. In the latest rounds in 2003, Saint Ayme moved on up from regular village status to that of Grand Cru - an excellent achievement. But considering that it has the Denis Durantou touch, it is almost to be expected.

Its 2005 is another particular achievement. Medium- to full-bodied, its pervasive palate is choc-o-bloc full of gravely minerals and ripe, yet unobtrusive fruit. This should provide excellent value.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 89-91. GD: 89-91.)

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P O M E R O L

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

LE PIN 5,000 – 8,000 2012 – 2025+

A true pioneer, proprietor Jacques Thienpont was one of the first garagistes in Bordeaux. He makes his wine in a space under the house that could serve as a garage if it weren't in use as a wine cellar. He differs from many of his fellow garagiste, in that he insists on producing terroir-driven, balanced Pomerol, while many others still produce over-extracted, ultra-ripe wines.

Almost Burgundian in style, the 2005 is a wine of beauty and refinement. A crystal clear hue of bright ruby-violet gleams in the glass. The smokey nose has notes of blackberry and raspberry fruit. On the palate, it is superbly ethereal and intense, yet with notable structure that carries through to the long finish.

(JR: 18.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 94-96. GD: 95-100.)

CH L'EVANGILE 500 – 1,000 2014 – 2030+

L'Evangile has long been one of the most sought after Right Bank châteaux. Since the Rothschild family (the Lafite branch) purchased the estate in 1990, its quality has rivalled neighbouring Pétrus and Lafleur.

Its 2005 is comprised of 87% Merlot and 13% Cabernet Franc. Full-bodied with chewy tannins, it has impeccable balance between its fruity and savoury characters and a long, long finish. A serious contender which may yet receive 100 points from the Wine Spectator.

(JR: 18.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 93-95+. GD: 92-94+.)

CH L'EGLISE CLINET 500 – 1,000 2011 – 2025+

Tasting with Denis Durantou is always a visual feast. Not only do we get to savour a range of great wines, but we also get to view one of the Right Bank's most striking art collections, painted by Denis' wife. The most famous of the Pomerol "Clinets", L'Eglise Clinet has been run by Denis since 1983 whose brilliant winemaking has catapulted this château skywards.

Collectors of this château will not be disappointed by his 2005. A blockbuster, it is one of the deepest coloured Pomerols that we tasted. It is wonderfully balanced between modern and traditional winemaking giving it plenty of ripeness yet allowing the terroir to shine through. Fabulous.

(JR: 18. WS: 95-100. RP: 96-98+. MJ: 18. GD: 93-96+.)

VIEUX CHATEAU CERTAN 500 – 1,000 2013 – 2030+

What is there not to like about this château and its amiable owner, Alexandre Thienpont? Sensitive, reflective and wonderfully humble, he is of the school who believes that wine makes itself. He is just the assistant who helps it along the way.

The 2005 is a quite wonderful wine. When we asked him how he made it, he just stated that it was completely natural, absolutely no manipulation was involved – no micro-oxygenation, no must concentrators, no enzymes – only gentle vinification. The result is superb.

Slightly atypical for the château, the 2005 is notably velvety, with chewy tannins yet also wonderfully elegant and pretty. For Alexandre 2005 was the year of the perfect Merlot, which will be reflected in the final blend. One of the wines of the vintage.

(JR: 19-. WS: 95-100. RP: 92-94+ GD: 95-100.)



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P O M E R O L continued

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DRINKING DATES

LA CONSEILLANTE 500 – 1,000 2012 – 2025+

Many experts consider this an atypical wine, often more reminiscent of Grand Cru red Burgundy than a heavy weight Pomerol. Its exceptional terroir places it on the Pomerol/St. Emilion border surrounded by Cheval Blanc, Vieux Château Certan, L'Evangile and Pétrus.

Truffley with a slight wildness, the medium- to full-bodied 2005 is silky with beautiful balance and purity. Definitely not overdone or overripe. Wine Spectator believes it has the potential of 95-100 and says it's the "best in a long time."

(JR: 16?. WS: 92-94. RP: 93-95+. MJ: 18.5. GD: 91-93.)

CH CLINET 300 – 500 2012 – 2025+

Ch Clinet was relatively unknown until the late 1980s when its 1989 and 1990 were awarded 100 points and 96 points, respectively by Robert Parker. Known for its modern-styled wine, crystal clean cellar and its consulting oenologist, Michel Rolland, it is easy to see why many admire its results.

Their 2005 is fantastically concentrated yet not overripe – a feat not easily achieved on the Right Bank in this particular vintage. It has smoky, subtle nuances of toasty oak barrels (100% new) which are beautifully integrated in its fleshy, fruity palate. Very long finish.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 94-96. GD: 89-92.)

CH FEYTIT CLINET 250 – 300 2012 – 2020+

An up and coming Pomerol property, Feytit Clinet produced a delicious 2005. Very concentrated, it offers layer-upon-layer of mouth-filling fruit balanced by ripe tannins and perfect acidity.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 89-91. RP: 91-93. MJ: 18. GD: 91-93.)

CH BEAUREGARD 200 – 300 2012 – 2025+

Beauregard was one of our favourites at the Pomerol tasting. Its 2005 is velvety with dark chocolate, bramble fruit and exotic spice notes. Notable structure and minerality will allow this wine to age effortlessly and long. Another classic of this superb vintage.

(JR: 17. WS: 89-91. RP: 89-91. GD: 91-93+.)

CH GAZIN 200 – 300 2012 – 2025+

If one were to choose one château in all of Bordeaux to live in, this might well be the one. Beautifully serene with soft hues and stone walls, it is inviting and warm. Unfortunately, we were only invited to taste, so our residential fantasies soon had to fade into the morning mist.

Dense and rich with dark chocolate and cherry notes, the full-bodied 2005 is an alluring wine that is fleshy and highly structured. Produced from 85% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Malbec.

(JR: 17. WS: 89-91. RP: 92-94. GD: 88-91.)

CH NENIN 200 – 300 2012 – 2025+

Purchased by the Delon family of Léoville Las Cases in 1997, Ch Nenin has quickly ascended the Bordeaux quality ladder. Its 2005 was produced from 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. Suave, yet wonderfully appetising with ripe berry and meaty notes, it is complex and complete. An excellent Pomerol.

(JR: 17. WS: 92-94. RP: 90-92. GD: 90-92.)

CLOS DU CLOCHER 180 – 240 2010 – 2016

Clos du Clocher is a little known property with a very good terroir. They only make around 2,000 cases a year which may be part of the reason that it has remained in the shadows. Its 2005 is a treat. After a day tasting Right Bank divas, Clos' elegant subtlety was refreshing. Finely tuned with notes of wild strawberries and minerals, it will be excellent value in 2005.

(JR: 17. WS: 89-91. RP: 90-92. GD: 89-92.)

CH BEAU SOLEIL 150 – 200 2010 – 2018

Like many Pomerol estates, Beau Soleil is a small property which produces its wine from a mere 3 hectares of vines. Ripe and structured, with blackberry and blackcurrant flavours, their 2005 had notable concentration and potential with an excellent balance of fruit and tannin.

(JR: 15. WS: 89-91. GD: 89-91.)



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SECOND WINES

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

PETIT CHEVAL, CH CHEVAL BLANC 300 – 500 2010 – 2020+

Produced from an equal blend of Merlot and Cabernet Franc, the 2005 Petit Cheval is a hedonistic wine with an opulent nose that carries through to the ripe, textured palate. Its ultra fine tannins provide much support yet are barely detectable due to its excellent fruit concentration. This is going to be a crowd pleaser.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-94. MJ: 18.5. GD: 92-94.)

LES FORTS DE LATOUR, CH LATOUR 300 – 500 2013 – 2025+

Possibly the most serious of the second wines in 2005 (or in any vintage for that matter), the 2005 Les Forts de Latour is an impressive wine with ripe bramble fruit, roasted coffee and floral notes. Superbly clean, poised and powerful, it is undeniably Ch Latour in style with only fractionally less concentration and muscle.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 92-94. MJ: 17. GD: 92-94.)

PAVILLON ROUGE, CH MARGAUX 300 – 500 2011 – 2022+

Produced from almost half Merlot and half Cabernet Sauvignon with a dollop of Petit Verdot, this wine is undeniably rich and round. Opulent and dense, it is the most powerful Pavillon Rouge - in alcohol and tannins - that Ch Margaux has ever produced. An excellent second wine which will be approachable relatively early.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 90-93. MJ: 18.5. GD: 91-93+.)

LA CHAPELLE D'AUSONE, CH AUSONE 300 – 500 2010 – 2020+

An intriguing nose that has inviting aromas of dark chocolate, black cherry and coconut. The palate juxtaposes clean modernity and assertive oak flavours on one hand with a wonderful mineral saltiness, particularly on the finish. Wine Spectator describes it as "too good for a second wine."

(JR: 17.5. WS: 95-100. RP: 92-94. MJ: 18. GD: 88-90.)

CH BAHANS HAUT BRION, CH HAUT BRION 250 – 350 2012 – 2025+

An excellent 2005 which Jean-Philippe Delmas says is the best since 1989. It is voluptuous yet brooding with dark berry and molasses flavours although more reticent than its cousin La Chapelle de la Mission. Its fully ripe mid-palate glides effortlessly into a long sumptuous finish. Brilliant.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-94. RP: 90-92. MJ: 17.5. GD: 92-94+.)

CARRUADES DE LAFITE, CH LAFITE 250 – 350 2012 – 2025+

A popular second wine, in 2005 it has a rich spicy palate with pronounced flavours of liquorice, dark berry fruit and lots of fleshy mouthfeel. At over 45% Merlot, which is unusually high for this wine, it is undoubtedly plush. The Wine Spectator describes it as "serious" and a worthy opponent for its exceptional 2000 equivalent.

(JR: 18. WS: 89-91. GD: 90-92+.)

LES PAGODES DE COS, CH COS D'ESTOURNEL 180 – 240 2011 – 2020+

Produced from equal proportions of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, this medium- to full-bodied wine has silky smooth flavours of roasted coffee, dark berried fruit and earthy tar. Noticeable freshness paired with St Estèphe's telltale, gripping tannins give this 2005 wonderful focus and length.

(JR: 17+. WS: 89-91. RP: 88-90. GD: 89-92.)



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SECOND WINES continued

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DRINKING DATES

**LA CHAPELLE DE LA MISSION,
CH LA MISSION HAUT BRION** **180 – 240** **2012 – 2020+**

Very pretty with plum and bramble spice flavours, this medium-bodied wine is perfectly balanced and finishes with lots of refreshing minerality. It undoubtedly displays the Jean-Philippe Delmas touch. Composed of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 89-91. RP: 90-92. MJ: 17. GD: 89-92.)

**LA RESERVE DE LA COMTESSE,
CH PICHON LANDE** **150 – 200** **2012 – 2018+**

Like many second wines in the Médoc, La Reserve de la Comtesse is often produced with a high quantity of Merlot making it appealing at an earlier age. The 2005 is fresh with red raspberry, spice and floral notes which continue into the palate creating a balanced and friendly wine.

(JR: 17. WS: 85-88. MJ: 17. GD: 88-90.)

DAME DE MONTROSE, CH MONTROSE **150 – 200** **2010 – 2018+**

This medium- to full-bodied, modern-styled wine is plump and spicy with raspberry, blueberry and black pepper flavours. Chewy with notable St Estèphe-style chalky tannin, this Dame accounts for 17% of the château's total production in 2005.

(WS: 89-91. MJ: 17. GD: 88-90.)

**LA CROIX DE BEUCAILLOU,
CH DUCRU BEUCAILLOU** **150 – 200** **2012 – 2020+**

Very ripe, the 2005 Croix de Beaucaillou spreads expansively on the palate with notes of griottes, black cherry and flowers. Wonderfully easy, it finishes with refreshing acidity on the palate, making one want to go back for more.

(WS: 89-91. MJ: 17. GD: 89-91+.)

PETITE EGLISE, CH L'EGLISE CLINET **150 – 200** **2011 – 2020**

Produced from 100% Merlot, the 2005 Petite Eglise offers smooth, yet savoury notes of berry fruit and almonds. A slight tangy undercoat livens up the palate which finishes on silky minerality and textured chalky tannins.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 85-88. GD: 88-90.)

**TOURELLES DE LONGUEVILLE,
CH PICHON BARON** **100 – 150** **2012 – 2020**

Pichon Baron's second wine is produced from Sainte Anne, a plot planted with mostly Merlot that is located in the western part of their vineyards. Their philosophy is to create a plump, almost Right Bank styled wine that is approachable within the first couple of years after release. Its 2005 treads the same path with its ripe tannins and inviting flavours of dark chocolate.

(GD: 87-89.)

LES FIEFS DE LAGRANGE, CH LAGRANGE **100 – 150** **2010 – 2020**

Meaning "mon terroir" in old French, Les Fiefs is produced from vines that are less than 20 years old and those parcels that are slightly less representative of the grand vin, Lagrange. Its 2005 is powerful with chunky tannins and exceptional minerality that are fleshed out by flavours of black cherry, liquorice and toast.

(GD: 88-90.)

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CRUS BOURGEOIS/PETITS CHATEAUX

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CLOS DU MARQUIS, ST JULIEN 200 – 300 2014 – 2024+

Clos du Marquis was first created in 1904 as a “brand”, a second wine to Léoville Las Cases which would absorb the barrels not deemed fine enough for the grand vin. Over time it became a wine in its own right and since 1989 has been produced from separate parcels which lie outside Léoville Las Cases’ main vineyards.

Superbly balanced with exceptionally fine and velvety tannins, the 2005 Clos du Marquis is rich, sumptuous and wonderfully structured.

(JR: 17. WS: 92-94. RP: 89-91. MJ: 18. GD: 89-92+.)

CH HAUT MARBUZET, ST ESTEPHE 200 – 300 2016 – 2025+

A pioneer, Haut Marbuzet was one of the first château to practice late harvesting for optimum ripeness and 100% new oak barrel aging - over 25 years ago. Many other properties have followed suit producing wines that are full of fruit and approachable relatively young.

“Lovely berry and chocolate fruit, with just a hint of spice. Medium-bodied, with fine tannins and a fresh finish. Layered and rich.” Wine Spectator Online, April 2006

(JR: 16-. WS: 89-91. RP: 90-92. MJ: 17. GD: 90-92+.)

CH SOCIANDO MALLET, HAUT MEDOC 200 – 300 2016 – 2025+

Known as the ultimate Cru Bourgeois (or disguised Cru Classé), Sociando Mallet is one of the most sought after wines during En Primeur campaigns. It was not classified in 1855 as the vineyard was deemed to be too far north but it is undoubtedly of cru classe quality.

Medium- to full-bodied, the 2005 Sociando Mallet is a bit reticent on the palate, but on the nose, it is smoky and rich with notable structure and length. Needs time.

(JR: 15.5. WS: 85-88. RP: 92-94. MJ: 18. GD: 90-92+.)

LA FLEUR DE BOUARD, LANDE DE POMEROL 180 – 240 2010 – 2018

La Fleur de Bouard was purchased by Hubert de Bouard of Ch Angélu in 1998 because of its exceptional terroir. With consulting oenologist Michel Rolland, their goal is to create the most expressive wine possible.

And their 2005 is certainly that. It is extraordinarily rich and dense with flavours of wild damsons and liquorice.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 89-91. RP: 90-92. GD: 88-90.)

LA SOURCE, BORDEAUX 150 – 200 2010 – 2018

In a small picturesque enclave south of St Emilion lies Ch de Sours. With the new owner came a new winemaker. In this case, Sebastien Lamonthé, a talented young man with Hollywood good looks and a panache for making perfectly balanced wines. Despite its characteristic friendly qualities, La Source’s vineyards are planted on soil composed predominately of limestone which results in distinctly mineral elements in their wines.

The 2005 is a particular success. The ultimate blend will be aged 50% in new oak and is comprised of 50% Merlot and 50% Cabernet Franc. Velvety yet with a reserved spirit, it offers notes of dark chocolate and ripe berries with underlying savoury characteristics – qualities that are no doubt due to the higher than usual addition of Cabernet Franc. It is an easy yet sophisticated drink that will be interesting to watch evolve.

Steven Spurrier at Decanter was a fan awarding 17-20.

(WS: 85-88. GD: 89-91.)



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CRUS BOURGEOIS / PETITS CHATEAUX

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DRINKING DATES

LES CRUZELLES, LALANDE DE POMEROL 150 – 200 2010 – 2019

Another very fine wine from Denis Durantou, Les Cruzelles has pretty cherry flavours and underlying minerality. Composed of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc, this has a firm structure nicely balanced by velvety fruit and should evolve beautifully.

(WS: 85-88. GD: 86-89.)

CH MONBRISON, MARGAUX 150 – 200 2011 – 2018

In the 80s to early 1990s this château was making some of the most expressive bottlings from this appellation. From the mid-nineties it seemed to slip a notch or two, but is now back on track.

“Gorgeous aromas of blackberries, spices and minerals follow through to a full-bodied palate, with silky tannins and a long, long finish. Supersurprising. Best in decades.” Wine Spectator Online, April 2006

(JR: 16. WS: 92-94. GD: 89-91.)

CH D'ANGLUDET, MARGAUX 150 – 200 2011 – 2020+

Ch d'Angludet is located in the southwest corner of Margaux close to Giscours and du Tertre and was for many years the home of the late Peter Sichel (Bordeaux merchant extraordinaire). He invested heavily in the vineyards and his painstaking work enabled this château to surpass its more famous neighbours on many occasions.

“Lots of crushed blackberries and currants. Pure fruit. Full-bodied, with silky tannins and a medium finish. Very pretty.” Wine Spectator Online, April 2006

(JR: 16. WS: 89-91. RP: 90-92. GD: 88-90.)

CH GLORIA, ST JULIEN 150 – 200 2012 – 2020+

Ch Gloria was created in the 1940s from parcels of Beychevelle, Léoville Poyferré, Gruaud Larose and Duhart Milon. Due to its late arrival, it could not partake in the 1855 classification and as a result, it is one of the best value chateau of the appellation.

Quite plump and juicy yet with a refreshing backbone of acidity, the 2005 Gloria displays dark chocolate, bramble fruit and toasty oak.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 89-91. RP: 88-90. GD: 88-91.)

CH PAVEIL DE LUZE, MARGAUX 140 – 180 2009 – 2015

Château Paveil de Luze is a small property located on deep, well-drained gravel soils which are ideal for Cabernet Sauvignon. A charmer, its polished wines mature early and are an excellent choice for the impatient drinker. The 2005 has a pretty nose of violets and raspberries, good weight on the palate and a lightly salty finish.

(GD: 87-90.)

CH MARBUZET, ST ESTEPHE 140 – 180 2009 – 2019

Though the château is still owned by the Prats family, the vineyards were sold to Domaines Reybier a few years ago with Cos d'Estournel. As a result, it sees the same star treatment as its more famous neighbour. In 2005, it produced a powerful, slightly backward wine with notes of cocoa and dark berry fruit. Easily the best result over the past few years.

(WS: 85-88. RP: 88-90. GD: 89-91+.)

CH LATOUR CARNET, HAUT MEDOC 140 – 180 2010 – 2018

This château is owned by Bernard Magrez, the polished and successful owner of Pape Clément. Wonderfully perfumed on the nose, with good structure and ripeness that carries through to the finish.

(JR: 15.5. WS: 89-91. GD: 89-91.)



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CRUS BOURGEOIS / PETITS CHATEAUX

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH CHASSE SPLEEN, MOULIS 140 – 180 2011 – 2020+

For many years this château was undervalued. Though its official classification is Cru Bourgeois, many specialists believe that it equals a third or fourth growth in quality. The 2005 definitely supports this view. Heady with notes of ultra ripe raspberries, its palate is rich, chewy and long lived. Very 2005.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 89-91. GD: 89-91.)



CH POUJEAUX, MOULIS 140 – 180 2011 – 2020

Another over achiever from Moulis, Ch Poujeaux is known for its consistent quality and smooth edges. The 2005 is powerful and chewy yet with underlying freshness that is fleshed out by dark berry fruit. It is well known for being good value every vintage.

(JR: 16. WS: 89-91. RP: 87-89. GD: 89-91.)

CH PIBRAN, Pauillac 120 – 180 2009 – 2018

Ch Pibran is owned by AXA, the insurance group which also has various châteaux in the Médoc including Pichon Baron. For several years, Jean-Michel Cazes of Lynch Bages oversaw the winemaking. In 2005, Pibran has produced a medium-bodied wine with that is easy, plump and will be approachable early.

(WS: 89-91. RP: 86-88. GD: 87-89.)

CH LALANDE BORIE, ST JULIEN 120 – 180 2010 – 2018+

Created in 1970 by Jean Eugène Borie, it is today managed by his son, Bruno, the owner of Ducru Beaucaillou. The 2005 is a blend of 46% Merlot, 45% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 9% Cabernet Franc. As in 2003, great care was taken to ensure that there was no over extraction. The results are medium-bodied with spice, plum and berry fruits, it is velvety yet backed by fine tannins and crisp acidity.

(RP: 85-87. GD: 87-89+.)

CH ARGILUS DU ROI, ST ESTEPHE 100 – 150 2012 – 2020

Quite rich with excellent concentration and those appealing St Estèphe textured tannins which give character and grip. Packed with dark berry fruit and linear minerality, this came across very well and lingered long on the palate. Should be great value.

(GD: 89-91+.)



CH CLAUZET, ST ESTEPHE 100 – 150 2012 – 2020

Ch Clauzet has been owned by Baron Velge since 1997. He hired well-known technical director, José Bueno, previously cellar master for Baron Philippe de Rothschild for 23 years. Some excellent wines have been produced since he took over.

Very ripe and velvety with ultra fine, but prominent tannins. Its ample palate is flushed with blueberries and minerals. Elegant and pure. A lovely wine.

(JR: 15. WS: 85-88. GD: 88-90+.)

CH LE CROCK, ST ESTEPHE 100 – 150 2011 – 2020

Located in the southern part of the appellation, Le Crock has been owned by the Cuvelier family (of Léoville Poyferré fame) since 1902. In 2005, they produced an exquisitely balanced wine which has lovely aromatics of violets, plums and blueberries further stratified by an underlying minerality and spice. An excellent offering, it wine may be one the vintage's best buys.

(WS: 89-91. RP: 87-89. GD: 89-91.)

CH POTENSAC, MEDOC 100 – 150 2011 – 2020+

Belonging to the Delon family, proprietors of Léoville Las Cases, Château Potensac is a Cru Bourgeois Exceptionnel located in the northern Médoc. Planted on gravel and limestone soils, Potensac is notably mineral, especially in dry vintages like 2005 where roots must delve deep for water. This serious effort is comparable with their excellent 2000 and 2003.

(WS – 85-88. RP: 85-86. GD: 87-89+.)

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CRUS BOURGEOIS / PETITS CHATEAUX

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH DUCLUZEAU, LISTRAC 100 – 150 2009 – 2018

After several Pink Panther jokes and impersonations, we began our investigation into this Borie clan creation. Gently perfumed with ripe raspberries and spice, it is delicious and is made for early drinking rather than lengthy cellaring. (WS: 85 – 88. RP: 84-86. GD: 87-89.)

CH LANESSAN, HAUT MEDOC 92.00 2010 – 2020+

One of the oldest estates in the Médoc dating from the 14th century, Lanessan was not classified in 1855 as they failed to submit a sample. Had they done so, some specialists believe that it would have been listed as a Fifth Growth. Not particularly great news for the château owners, but for its consumers on the other hand... With excellent fruit concentration and forwardness, the 2005 Lanessan also displays serious structure and depth. A great buy that has a bright (and complex) future. Wine Spectator describes it as the “best in years”. (JR: 16. WS: 89-91. RP: 88-90. GD: 88-90.)

CH SENEJAC, HAUT MEDOC 80 – 120 2010 – 2018

Since this château was purchased by Thierry Rustman, the former manager of Château Talbot, the quality of its wines have gone from strength to strength. The 2005 is a fine example with ripe bramble berry fruit and tight, balanced tannins. It is a wine that is extremely popular with many of our clients due to its quality and excellent value. (RP: 90-92. GD: 87-90.)

CH BERNADOTTE, HAUT MEDOC 80 – 120 2009 – 2016+

A moderately sized estate, Bernadotte has been owned by the de Lencquesaing of Pichon Lalande since 1997. Its 2005 was created from 49% Cabernet Sauvignon, 48% Merlot and 3% Cabernet Franc. A powerful wine with a velvety palate, it displays lots of ripe berry fruit and plums with good freshness underneath. (WS: 85-88. RP: 85-87. GD: 87-89.)

CH FONBEL, ST EMILION 80 – 120 2010 – 2018

Ch Fonbel is vinified by the team at Ausone which means excellent quality at a modest price. This is a delicious blend of 75% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Petit Verdot. Medium- to full-bodied, it offers lots of fine tannin, with dark and concentrated fruit. (JR: 16+. WS: 89-91. RP: 90-92. GD: 87-89.)

LA CHENADE, Lalande de Pomerol 80 – 100 2010 – 2018

Very fruity with notes of apricot and peach, this is pretty and enticing. Its mid-palate is further fleshed out by dark berry fruits and liquorice. A lovely wine which is produced by Denis Durantou of L'Eglise Clinet. (GD: 87-89+.)

CH BEAUMONT, HAUT MEDOC 75.00 2010 - 2018

Since 1986 when this property was purchased by two insurance companies, it has been producing some of the best value Cru Bourgeois available. Its 2005 is heady on the nose with sweet, expressive fruit and a medium-bodied, velvety palate that displays more concentration than it initially lets on. (JR: 16.5. WS: 85-88. RP: 87-88. GD: 88-90.)



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W H I T E S

ESTIMATED £/CS IN BOND U.K.

DRINKING DATES

CH HAUT BRION, PESSAC LEOGNAN 2,000 – 3,000 2010 – 2020+

Made from 52% Sauvignon Blanc and 48% Semillon and aged in 40% new oak barrels, the 2005 Haut Brion Blanc is wonderfully complex with lemon peel, acacia and gun flint flavours. A fine example which lives up to its powerful and rich reputation, yet which is not weighty. Highly recommended.

(WS: 95-100. RP: 96-99. MJ: 19. GD: 95-98.)

CH LAVILLE HAUT BRION, PESSAC LEOGNAN 400 – 600 2009 – 2020+

A direct competitor of Haut Brion Blanc for those who prefer a lighter, more refined touch. Unlike, Haut Brion, white wine is its speciality – no reds are made at this highly sought after chateau. The 2005 Laville Haut Brion exudes notes of minerals, confit orange and fresh pineapple. It is fresh, tight and delicate on the palate. Extraordinarily pure and focused.

(WS: 95-100. RP: 96-98. MJ: 17.5. GD: 92-95.)

CH PAPE CLEMENT, PESSAC LEOGNAN 400 – 600 2009 – 2018+

“Solid core of fruit in this wine with excellent structure that reminds me of red wine. Tight and well-knit. Goes on for a long, long time. 60 percent Sauvignon Blanc and 40 percent Sémillon.” Wine Spectator Online, April 2006

(WS: 95-100. RP: 94-96. GD: 91-94+.)

DOMAINE DE CHEVALIER, PESSAC LEOGNAN 300 – 500 2008 – 2020+

Beautifully pure with superb and delicate flavours of ripe white peach and minerals. It is undoubtedly moreish yet utterly light which ends on a light caramel finish that is full and long. Produced from 80% Sauvignon Blanc and 20% Semillon and fermented in 30% new oak barrels.

(RP: 91-93. MJ: 18. GD: 93-95+.)

PAVILLON BLANC, MARGAUX 300 – 400 2008 – 2018+

The best known (and best) white wine produced in the Médoc, Ch Margaux’s Pavillion Blanc is ample with spicy pear and toasty oak flavours with noticeable weight and concentration. It is not as mineral-driven and polished as the 2004, but more hedonistic and fleshy. An exotic example of 100% Sauvignon Blanc.

(WS: 92-94. RP: 92-94. MJ: 19. GD: 92-94+.)

CH SMITH HAUT LAFITTE, PESSAC LEOGNAN 250 – 350 2008 – 2018+

One of the most popular white Bordeaux, the 2005 Smith Haut Lafitte is produced from a less traditional blend of 90% Sauvignon Blanc, 5% Semillon and 5% Sauvignon Gris. Fermented and aged in oak barrels of which 50% are new, it has fleshy notes of peach and toasted brioche which gives considerable weight and appeal.

(WS: 95-100. MJ: 18. GD: 91-93.)

CH MALARTIC LAGRAVIERE, PESSAC LEOGNAN 180 – 240 2009 – 2018

“Fresh and lively with lots of lemon and lime character. Medium-bodied with a delicate finish. Bright and lively.” Wine Spectator Online, April 2006

(WS: 85-87. RP: 91-93. GD: 87-89.)

CH CARBONNIEUX, PESSAC LEOGNAN 100 – 150 2008 – 2018

Noticeably Sauvignon Blanc dominated with clean, crisp flavours of gooseberry and tarragon, this medium-bodied white is fresh with good concentration and a fantastic peach aftertaste that is long lived and focused. Ch Carbonnieux is always a reliable source of white Bordeaux which further adds to its track record in 2005.

(RP: 92-94. MJ: 16.5. GD: 90-92.)



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