



B O R D E A U X

EN PRIMEUR 2007

GOEDHUIS & COMPANY

FINE WINE MERCHANTS

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# BORDEAUX

EN PRIMEUR 2007

## PRINCIPAL COMMUNES

**St Estèphe** - St Estèphe is the most northern of Médoc communal crus. Its unique *terroir* is made up of layers of gravel which are supported by a dense clay base. This subsoil retains water in dry seasons and works particularly well with Merlot, a largely planted variety which is used to flesh out Cabernet Sauvignon. This clay base also produces powerful, textured tannins in the grapes which enable St Estèphe to stand out from the pack. Like St Julien, it is one of the four most important communal appellations of the Médoc which does not contain any First Growths, despite its southern border being a stone's throw from Château Lafite. Nonetheless, it is home to exceptional châteaux such as Cos d'Estournel, Montrose, Calon Ségur and Lafon Rochet.

**Pauillac** - Due south of St Estèphe lies, Pauillac, the king of the Left Bank communes. It is home to three First Growths as well as a plethora of other classified growths. Its renowned well-drained, gravelly soils enable its dominant grape Cabernet Sauvignon to reach fantastic heights of complexity and concentration. As a result, the wines tend to be full-bodied with compact tannins and good freshness. Its aromatics are often what one associates with classic Bordeaux: pencil shavings, black currant and occasional mint. Some of the most famous châteaux of the commune are Latour, Mouton Rothschild, Lafite Rothschild, Pichon Baron, Pichon Lalande and Lynch Bages.

**St Julien** - St Julien is like the middle child of the Médoc - not as assertive as Pauillac or as coquettish as Margaux. It lies firmly between the two more outspoken communes and as a result produces a blend of them both. Its wines have often been sought out by aficionados for their balance, stylishness and consistency, particularly in the UK. Despite the fact that it has no First Growths, it has several Second Growths including Léoville Las Cases, Léoville Barton and Léoville Poyferré and Ducru Beaucaillou as well as the two largest properties of the Médoc, Talbot and Lagrange.



**Margaux** – Plump, silky and seductive are the words often used to describe wines from Margaux. Because of their style, they tend to be inviting and more approachable when young. This is in part due to its *terroir* which is comprised of the thinnest soil as well as the highest proportion of chunky gravel in all of the Médoc. It drains well but also makes it more susceptible to vintage variation. The wines tend to have the highest proportion of Merlot within the “core” of the Médoc further adding to its ample roundness and openness. It is home to the largest number of classified growths including its namesake First Growth, Château Margaux as well as Third Growths, Palmer and d’Issan.

**Graves/Pessac Léognan** – Located directly south of the city of Bordeaux, the district of Graves was named after the intense gravel terrain which heavily dominates the soil and which was deposited during the last Ice Age. Besides being well draining, it also adds profound mineral complexity to its wines. In addition, it is the only appellation within the region that is equally famous for its reds and white wines. For many years, it was considered the premium Bordelais wine region and its most famous château, Haut Brion, was collected by the likes of renowned enthusiasts Thomas Jefferson and Samuel Pepys. In 1987, the communal appellation, Pessac-Léognan, was created distinguishing a “cru” from within the larger Graves district. As it is a warmer region, its grapes are often picked 2-3 weeks earlier than the Médoc. The most renowned châteaux of this communal appellation include Haut Brion, La Mission Haut Brion, Laville Haut Brion, Haut Bailly and Domaine de Chevalier.

**Pomerol** – The small sub-region of Pomerol is situated northeast of the industrious city of Libourne. Its soils are predominately iron-rich clay with a smattering of gravel that produce wines with extraordinary power and depth. As a result of this clay-dominance, it has the highest percentage of Merlot planted in all of Bordeaux. Certain châteaux are produced exclusively from this grape, but most incorporate smaller quantities of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc as well. Despite its hefty (if not exclusive) proportion of Merlot, many people think of wines from this region as separate entities. As one wine aficionado stated recently, “It’s not Merlot. It’s Pomerol.” Despite the region’s small size, it contains some of the world’s most sought after (and expensive) wines including Pétrus, Le Pin, Lafleur, l’Evangile and Vieux Château Certan. Unlike other Bordelais sub-regions, there is no system of classification. The châteaux are traded on reputation alone.



***St. Emilion*** – South of Pomerol lies the medieval, perched village of St Emilion. Unlike the flatlands of Pomerol, St Emilion's vineyards are mostly planted on steep slopes directly surrounding the village as well as on the gently rolling hills leading away from its centre. Despite a myriad of soil types, two main ones dominate – the gravely, limestone slopes that delve down to the valley from the plateau and the valley itself which is comprised of limestone, gravel, clay and sand. This soil produces wines that are round, rich and often hedonistic. Despite its popularity today, it was not until the 1980s to early 1990s that attention was brought to this region. Robert Parker, the famous wine critic, began reviewing their Merlot-dominated wines and giving them hefty scores. The rest is history as they say. Similar to the Médoc, there is a classification system in place which dates from 1955 and outlines several levels of quality. These include its regional appellation of St Emilion, St Emilion Grand Cru, St Emilion Grand Cru Classé and St Emilion Premier Grand Cru Classé, which is further divided into "A" (Ausone and Cheval Blanc) and "B" (including Angéus, Canon, Figeac and a handful of others). To ensure better accuracy, the classification is redone every 10 years enabling certain châteaux to be upgraded or downgraded depending on their more recent quality.

***Sauternes/Barsac*** – The furthest southern region, the appellations of Sauternes and Barsac are located due south of the Graves region. It is comprised of two distinct areas – Sauternes, which contains a higher proportion of famous châteaux, and neighbouring Barsac, whose wines are allowed to be labelled under Sauternes (but the opposite is not possible). It is often considered the most picturesque region of Bordeaux with its lush, undulating hills and strikingly pristine white châteaux blanketed in morning mist. Indeed, its magical beauty is reminiscent of a scene out of a Charles Perrault fairytale. It is this mist that creates the botrytis or the affectionately named, 'noble rot', a grape friendly fungus that gently covers and permeates the berries evaporating water while concentrating sugars, flavours and acidity. It is this 'rot' that creates nectar-rich concoctions from Semillon, Sauvignon Blanc and occasionally Muscadelle grapes. Like the Médoc, their wines were classified in 1855 naming one 1er Cru Supérieur, Château d'Yquem, as well as eleven Premier Crus and fourteen Deuxième Crus. Other famous châteaux in the region include Suduiraut, Rieussec, Climens and Guiraud.

***The 1855 Classification*** – This Médoc classification system was created in the 19th century by wine brokers for the Exposition Universelle that took place in Paris that year. They needed a formal tool that they could use to better market their wines to those who were less in the know. The châteaux were divided into 5 different classified growths – First being highest, Fifth being lowest. Their classification was based on price alone. Haut Brion was the only château from the Graves to be included no doubt because it was the most famous at the time. Other châteaux from that sub-region were outlined in another classification in 1959. Despite its age, it is still referred to as a reference guide although some châteaux have shifted their reputations and comparative prices since. Over the years only one château has formally moved to a higher classification. In 1973 after years of trying to prove worthy stature, Mouton Rothschild was finally promoted to First Growth from Second Growth. As a result, the logo on their labels changed from "Premier ne puis, second ne daigne, Mouton suis" ("First I cannot be, second I will not call myself, Mouton I am") to "Premier je suis, second je fus, Mouton ne change" ("First I am, second I was, Mouton does not change").

# BORDEAUX 2007

## AN INNOVATIVE VINTAGE

The 2007 vintage will most likely be one of the most discussed years in recent history. Not only did it introduce several 'firsts' such as its astounding and lengthy growing cycle, but it was also a vintage where technology, *savoir faire* and determination to succeed came together like never before. It was a year where innovative techniques in viticulture and winemaking shined.

Though all communes found some success, those areas that tended to fare best overall had better draining and warmer soils. On the left bank, Cabernet Sauvignon is the definite stand out variety as it was less ripe when the rains struck and as a result were less diluted than the Merlot. Accordingly, most of the top wines contain a higher percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon than normal. The Right Bank had less rain and so less dilution, though good ripening was still not obvious. Pomerol seemed generally more successful than St. Emilion whose wines vary more in quality. Despite the fact that the Right Bank had less rain, they also have cooler, clay soils which are less advantageous in cooler, wetter vintages. As a result, the well, drained warmer soils of the Médoc – particularly St. Julien - seemed to generally fare slightly better, though there were well made wines in every commune.

Due to the challenging vintage conditions, the key to 2007 was exceptional vineyard management, rigorous selection of berries, low yields and later harvesting to ensure the ripest fruit possible. Several châteaux including Ducru Beaucaillou carried out an amazing 4 green harvests alternated by leaf plucking (for better exposure to the sun) to eliminate mildew and concentrate the sugars in the grapes. For many châteaux, it was the most expensive vintage ever to produce due to all the extra effort.

As can be expected, production was either the same or down from the norm on the Left Bank due to their extensive green harvesting and super selectivity. Pauillac seemed to be the most touched. Pontet Canet had the lowest yields overall throughout the Médoc, a mere 28 hl/ha - a far cry from the 40-45 hl/ha in a normal vintage. The yields on the Right Bank and Graves were less touched due to the slightly drier conditions and less mildew. Certain châteaux even had larger productions than 2005 and 2006, though their selection was greater thus declassifying what did not make the grade.

So, how do the wines measure up? It is always an uneasy exercise asking producers to compare the current vintage to others, but it helps us outsiders to understand and place the wines. However it's not a question they like as they feel each vintage is unique. Many are reluctant to reply because their wine styles and goals for the wines have changed over the years. This cautiousness could not have been more apparent than in this vintage as many felt that these wines were similar to no others tasted *en primeur*. Yet, within the walls of each château, certain producers hesitantly acquiesced. Basile Tesseron of Lafon Rochet felt that the upfront fruity character was reminiscent of 1999 and 2004. Though Paul Pontallier of Margaux did not compare specific vintage characteristics, he commented that the quality of his 2007 was better than both 2001 and 2002 and was equivalent to 2004.

Despite certain successes in the Médoc, Graves and Right Bank, there are nonetheless notable variations in quality, so meticulous selection will be paramount before purchasing. We have intentionally slimmed down our list to only include those wines that have real merit. There are fine and well balanced wines from across the board, though the majority are those from the 'greatest *terroirs*'.

For white and sweet wines, however, it is another story. Though the difficult vintage conditions did challenge the red varieties to ripen, the white varieties captured the cool weather and retained their racy acidity. They are generally not as rich or full-throttle as the 2006s or to a lesser extent the 2005s, they are beautifully balanced and will be highly appreciated by those enthusiasts who look for crisp, mineral-driven and thirst-quenching wines.

Sauternes had one of the best vintages in the last 10 years. Yquem compared 2007's vintage conditions to 1997, an excellent year with lots of botrytis. This will be the vintage to stock up on these charmers – even if it's just one case – not just for its innate quality but the fact that they offer some of the best values in Bordeaux. They are labour intensive and cost significantly more than reds to produce yet are generally less expensive than their red equivalents

On another positive note, the Bordelais whom we respect were content with the overall quality. As they said over-and-over, "Fifteen or twenty years ago, [the quality of] 2007 would have never been possible." This is truly an innovative vintage where education, technology, creativity and determination came together to produce the best wines possible from such challenging conditions.

## THE GROWING SEASON

The 2007 vintage was like no other. Many châteaux owners had never seen anything quite like it as its weather was erratic, its summer cool and occasionally rainy and its growing season surprisingly drawn out – the longest ever on record. The winter was mild and most of January was twice as warm as usual with much of February hovering around 20°. This balmy weather sparked an early spring and bud burst - 2 weeks earlier than normal. This in turn created a concern amongst growers who feared a cold spell and spring frosts. But this was not their only worry. The precocious lift-off further suggested an early harvest (100 days after flowering) which would force the 2007 vintage to be picked at the hottest point of the year – August – when the days were not only hot and long but the nights warm as well. This suggested that if Mother Nature was not on their side, they may have another 2003 on their hands with too much heat and sun producing too much sugar (leading to high alcohol) and not enough acidity.

Though April's warm temperatures lead to exuberant plant growth, May began to temper spring's overzealous growing season and none of the grower's fears were realised. But instead of Apollo flashing the bright, burning sun, Zeus gathered clouds and brought down the rain. This poor weather coupled with yo-yo temperatures lead to uneven flowering in much of the Médoc creating uneven growth (and hence ripening) in the bunches. This combination of warmth and dampness further lead to the development of mildew, oidium and England's favourite garden friend...snails. Mildew was the most challenging of these culprits as it spread rapidly on those vines that had not been treated. In some cases, it struck the bunches instead of attacking the leaves directly making it nearly impossible to see. Consistent and early treatment was necessary to prevent its spread which conventional and conscientious growers did carry out.

July and August were some of the most overcast, coolest and wettest (particularly August) months on record. Besides rousing mildew, the rain had also helped spread rot as the berries, notably Merlot, would expand after a downpour and burst. The hearts of the Bordelais had sunk low by the end of August believing that the vintage was literally 'awash'. Things were slightly less tragic for the Right Bank in terms of rain, yet even there, the earlier ripening Merlot was not nearly as ripe as need be and lacked sugar.



Yet on 30 August, Mother Nature's fickle mood changed. The skies opened up, the sun came out and the dry North-Easterly winds stirred. An Indian summer was in full bloom and lasted throughout September and carried forth through October ripening the berries and creating ideal picking conditions. Indeed, September 2007 was the second driest in the last 5 years while September 2006 received over 3 times more rain. Unlike the typical 100 days of ripening from flowering to harvest, 2007's precarious weather prolonged it by 1/3 to 130-140 days - a first to be seen in modern Bordeaux history and one for the viticultural books. According to many winemakers, the precociousness of the vintage actually helped the grapes ripen. They needed this extra time to achieve phenolic maturity. Despite 2007's challenges, it was refreshing to hear an experienced voice put 2007 in perspective. Paul Pontallier of Château Margaux admitted that the conditions were tricky but also emphasized that due to its maritime climate Bordeaux can often have mediocre summers and still produce very good wines. "We have been spoilt by recent vintages and as a result our standards have been brought higher...people have shorter and shorter memories."

## THE WINES

Like any vintage, assessing wine this young is tricky. The wines are masters of disguise always changing, never static. One day they are an open house, the next a closed up beach bungalow in winter. In vintages that have something to strut - like 2000 or 2005 - the quality of the wines are discernible. Sure, they might be tight and unapproachable but their power, length and concentration reveal themselves with experience, patience and understanding. Assessing a vintage like 2007 is a bit more difficult - it's sort of like looking at a spotty, awkward teenager and establishing what potential they may have as an adult. Some may be unattractive, overweight and unemployed, but many develop into well-balanced, conscientious individuals once they've had time to settle into life a bit. So, it almost seemed unfair to taste through and 'rate' the 2007s. Even those wines that seemed slightly awkward, herbal or missing something may be just fine in a few years time when they've been bottled, had time to breathe, relax and develop. In all sincerity, it just seemed too early. This can be apparent with other vintages even as recent as 2004 which got lukewarm reviews *en primeur*. Comments followed on their lack of charm and their hollow cores, yet today most of them are beautifully balanced with fleshed out fruit. They just needed a bit more time.

In saying that, however, people are still curious to know how the 2007s are overall, which is fair enough particularly for those who want to play the *en primeur* game. Stylistically, many are velvety, upfront and fruit forward. Generally, the fruit is dark with lots of black cherry, plum and even liquorice. Red fruit seemed a rarity but again with a bit of time, some may surface. In many Médoc wines, there is an underlying leafiness present, yet in the most balanced wines, it is offset by sweet fruit and fine, ripe tannins. With time, these flavours will most likely transform into 'classic' Claret notes of leather and tobacco that many seek out in those wines from previous decades. As one wine-maker pointed out, the 'greenness' apparent in 2007 is nothing like the outright herbaceous qualities in vintages from the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s or even 1980s. Certain wines on the Right Bank suffered from overextraction, but the finest ones showed a clear definition of fruit flavours, a sweet core and fine, yet perceivable structure.

Most wines will be for earlier drinking - before the 2006s and most certainly before the 2005s. Nonetheless, there is some evident structure as well particularly with the heavy hitters such as Lafite, Latour, Léoville Las Cases and Cheval Blanc which will require a bit of patience before tucking in.



As to be expected, this is not a year for second wines as many contain higher levels of Merlot and some are dilute and uninteresting. However, we selected a top few from the best châteaux which showed real character and depth and with some luck will provide good value and make very pleasant wines that will deliver lots of pleasure early on.

The whites are a delight to taste with crisp, fresh acidity, excellent focus and minerality. Unlike many 2006s which are often lush and occasionally 'heavy footed' in comparison, the 2007s are thoroughbred-like – lean, svelte and pure. Wonderfully refreshing.

Due to the excellent vintage conditions for botrytis, the Sauternes region excelled in producing plush wines with lots of concentration and complexity with notes of dried apricot, peach, zesty spice and honey. Despite their pronounced fleshy fruit, the cooler temperatures allowed the wines to retain their acidity so many are light and succulent on the finish.

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

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

Wines of the vintage (at the upper end of pricing scale):

Margaux, Mouton Rothschild, Latour, Haut Brion, Lafite, Léoville Las Cases, Cos d'Estournel, Palmer, Ducru Beaucaillou, Ausone, Cheval Blanc, Le Pin, l'Évangile, Vieux Château Certan, Figeac, Haut Brion Blanc, d'Yquem.

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

Lynch Bages, Langoa Barton, Pontet Canet, Pichon Baron, Leoville Poyferré, Calon Ségur, Gruaud Larose, d'Armailhac, Pavillon Rouge, d'Issan, Talbot, Grand Puy Lacoste, Domaine de Chevalier, Haut Bailly, Domaine de Chevalier Blanc, Doisy Daëne, Guiraud, La Tour Blanche, Doisy Védrières.

Recommended value wines of the vintage:

Lafon Rochet, Haut Batailley, Poujeaux, Beaumont, Cruzelles, Fonbel, Malartic Lagravière, Filhot

## 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

This wine is offered In Bond England (i.e. all shipping and bottling charges are included). We will arrange shipment in spring 2010. On arrival, wine can be delivered directly to you or stored Under Bond by our independent storage company Private Reserves at a current cost of £8.95 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 £17.49 per dozen and 17.5% respectively. Carriage will be charged at cost.

# FIRST GROWTHS

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

## CH LATOUR, PAUILLAC

2000 - 2800

2013 – 2025

It is a common misconception that Château Latour was named after its cream-coloured tower – a 17th century edifice that served as a dovecote. The original tower which gave 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, which has long been eroded away.

With exceptional vineyard management, Château Latour was able to produce the same quantity as 2006 though only 41% of the production made it into the Grand Vin. They obviously liked what they picked though as they included 15% of press wine (normally only 9%). They believe that 2007 is most stylistically similar to 1999, a wine that Parker described as “a modern version of 1962.” The 2007 exudes all the character of a muscular Pauillac with a tight core and flavours of cassis, mint and cocoa notes. Yet its palate is suave and velvety. The 91% Cabernet Sauvignon cannot help but strut its stuff. (JR: 17.5+. WS: 89-92. RP: 90-93. MJ: 18.5. GD: 91-93)

## 2ND WINE

### LES FORTS DE LATOUR

400 - 600

2011 – 2020

Produced from 59% Cabernet Sauvignon and 41% Merlot, the 2007 Forts de Latour is aromatic with tender notes of fragrant violet, red raspberry and chocolate. Despite its softer appeal, it still displays its Pauillac roots with its underlying structure and pencil lead finish.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 87-90. RP: 90-92. MJ: 17. GD: 88-90)

## CH MARGAUX, MARGAUX

2000 - 2800

2011 – 2022

Known as the most elegant and aromatic First Growth due to its Cabernet-friendly, sandy soil, Château 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.

It was reassuring to see Paul Pontallier so thrilled about the quality of their 2007s. In addition to being less pessimistic about the weather during the summer (“Bordeaux does not often have great summers and yet very good wine is produced on great *terroir*. People have short memories.”), they also carried out much hard work in their vineyards. Though he admitted that their 2007 does not have the depth and density of an exceptional vintage (2000, 2005), he still feels that it is very good, well balanced and equates it in quality to 2004, 1999 and 1985. “In 2007, the *terroir* speaks. We have produced one of the purest Margaux ever.”

A welcome opening nose of juicy red fruits that carries forth on the palate with sumptuous plump raspberry, strawberry and violets. Mouthfilling yet superbly elegant and focused, it was delightfully Margaux. It gave the impression of being almost ready to drink now. Except for one member of our team who slightly preferred Haut Brion, this was our favourite First Growth this time around. Beautifully buxom.

(JR: 18-. WS: 89-92. RP: 92-94. MJ: 19. GD: 92-94)

## 2ND WINE

### PAVILLON ROUGE

300 - 400

2010 – 2018

Plump and attractive with notes of cherry, cocoa and roasted coffee, this medium-bodied wine offers velvety tannins and a fresh core. Its clean minerality and linearity surface as the wine draws to a close.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 85-88. RP: 89-91. MJ: 17.5. GD: 88-91)

**CH MOUTON ROTHSCHILD, PAUILLAC 2000 - 2800 2013 – 2024**

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.

Despite a challenging year, the 2007 vintage produced grapes that had thick skins and one of the highest levels of phenolics (tannins, flavour components) ever recorded at Mouton. The 2007 Mouton displays this concentration with its powerful, yet polished palate of blackberry, treacle and cocoa. Out of the First Growth Médoc wines, it contains slightly more Merlot (19%) adding a bit more plump, fruity roundness than the other Pauillacs. Only 40% made it into the *grand vin* making it an even smaller production than the 2006. This wine received Wine Spectator's highest score on the Left Bank.

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

**2ND WINE**

**PETIT MOUTON 250 - 400 2011 – 2019**

With a profoundly purple colour and a tight, deep nose, the 2007 Petit Mouton offers blackcurrant and chocolate flavours and fine, pronounced tannins. Finishes on toasted coffee and spice. Produced with a larger than normal percentage of Cabernet Franc (11%).

(JR: 17-. WS: 85-88. RP: 84-87. MJ: 16. GD: 86-89)

**CH HAUT BRION, GRAVES 2000 - 2800 2012 – 2022**

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.

Forty-three percent of 2007's production made it into the *grand vin* and just like many other châteaux less Merlot went into the blend (43% rather than the usual 50% or more). A ripe, ample nose sets the pace for this exciting 2007. On the palate it displays the tell-tale Haut Brion characteristics of silky, fine tannins and all round elegance, but it nonetheless has noticeable power, concentration and weight. It is truly impressive for the vintage and will require a bit of patience for its coy personality to surface.

(JR: 18. WS: 89-92. RP: 91-94. MJ: NA . GD: 91-93)

**2ND WINE**

**LE CLARENCE DE HAUT BRION 250 - 350 2010 – 2018**

Since the integration of La Tour Haut Brion into Haut Brion and La Mission Haut Brion last year, another change has been brewing...The 2007 vintage marks the renaming of Bahans Haut Brion, the second wine of Haut Brion to Le Clarence de Haut Brion, in honour of Clarence Dillons's first visit to Haut Brion 75 years ago.

Plump and approachable, the medium-bodied Clarence offers notes of bramble fruit and red and black cherries. A gentle underlying leafiness adds further dimension to a chocolate end note. Finishes silky and dry.

(JR: 17. WS: 85-88. RP: 88-90. MJ: NA. GD: 86-89)

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

**CH LAFITE, PAUILLAC**

**2000 - 2800**

**2012 – 2022**

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

Deep, dark and brooding, the 2007 Lafite is fantastically polished with its superfine tannins and tight, silky mouthfeel. On the palate, it opens up with subtle black fruit flavours of blueberry, black cherry and plum that funnel down to earthy, cocoa characters. It's not as sweet as some, but its restrained, elegant and pure style - so à la Lafite - is most certainly applaudable. Produced from 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Merlot and 1% Petit Verdot.

(JR: 17.5-. WS: 89-92. RP: 90-93. MJ: 18. GD: 90-93)

**2ND WINE**

**CARRUADES DE LAFITE**

**400 - 600**

**2010 – 2018**

This medium to full-bodied 2007 is plump with dark berry flavours that transform into brown sugar and treacle on the finish. Its slightly textured tannins are not as polished as the Duhart but display Lafite's trademark earthiness and subtlety.

(JR: 16. WS: 86-89. RP: 83-85 MJ: 17. GD: 86-89)



# SECOND GROWTHS

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

## CH LEOVILLE LAS CASES, ST JULIEN

800 - 1200

2013 – 2023

If ever another wine gets promoted to First Growth, Léoville Les Cases will undoubtedly be the one. Owned by the Delon family, this château comprises 97 hectares of vineyards. However, unlike most of its Médoc neighbours, it only uses the vineyards classified in the original 1855 classification, an area called “Le Grand Enclos” whose vines are between 30 and 76 years in age, to make its *grand vin*.

The château was particularly proud of its efforts in this vintage. When asked about vintage comparisons, the cellar master said it was difficult to compare though it was similar in upfront fruit quality to 1999; however, 2007 is softer, more unctuous and riper than 1999. The château also viewed their 2007 better than their 2004, a wine which received 95 points from Wine Spectator. Not too shabby.

Definitely one of the most impressive 2007s, this full-bodied wine offered a sweet palate of lightly toasted coconut, roasted coffee, plump cassis and red crunchy fruit. Excellent concentration and depth. This still has the Las Cases powerful touch but in a silky, svelte package. A real star.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 89-92. RP: 92-95. MJ: 18. GD: 90-93)

## CH COS D'ESTOURNEL, ST ESTEPHE

500 - 800

2012 – 2022

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 to his Far East conquests. Today run by the outspoken and innovative Jean-Guillaume Prats whose family owned the château until 1998 when it was sold to the Merlaut family.

Recently they have started using satellites and an electromagnetic sensor to analyse all the subtleties marking their *terroir*. This helps them determine the various components of their soil as well as the water availability across their now divided 97 parcels of vineyard land. As a result, they can achieve more even ripening and better match the varieties to the soil than before.

Vibrantly deep in colour, this 2007 opens onto the palate with an attractive sweet core of black cherry, blackberry and dark chocolate. Very masculine, yet very polished, it is evident that an obvious amount of care went into its making. This was one of our favourites of the vintage.

(JR: 17-. WS: 88-91. RP: 90-93. MJ: 18. GD: 89-92)



Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

**CH PICHON LALANDE, PAUILLAC**

**500 - 800**

**2012 – 2023**

This estate was once merged with neighbouring Pichon Baron to form a much larger domaine. Due to inheritance problems, 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 to Edouard and Louis de Mialhe. It remained in their family until Edouard's daughter, May Eliane de Lencquesaing, sold it to Louis Roederer last year.

This château has one of the highest amounts of Merlot in its blend amongst its Pauillac peers. In 2007, 36% made it into the *grand vin*. Despite the presence of this more sumptuous variety, it is more Pauillac than Pichon in style. Full-bodied with a sweet and sour core and textured tannins, it finishes on notes of blueberry and the ubiquitous cassis and lead pencil. Notable concentration and length. (JR: 16. WS: 88-91. RP: 88-90. MJ: 17. GD: 88-90)

**CH DUCRU BEUCAILLOU, ST JULIEN**

**500 - 800**

**2011 – 2022**

Instantly recognisable by its sunny Mediterranean-hued label, Ducru Beaucaillou is always a favourite amongst wine aficionados. Owned by the Borie family over the last 60 years, it has been run by Bruno, the youngest son of the late Jean-Eugène, since 2003. This change in leadership seems to have had a highly positive effect in all vintages since.

Like certain other châteaux in Bordeaux, Ducru carries out cold macerations during their vinification process, a technique in which grapes are steeped in their own juice at low temperatures to gently extract vibrant colour and fleshy fruit. It has become instrumental to their style as it brings forth lots of juicy fruit and softer tannins.

Due to very irregular ripening in 2007, they carried out severe crop thinning at *véraison* (when the berries turn colour) which they nicknamed the 'pink harvest'. During this time, they eliminated grapes that were not deeply coloured but merely pink or even still green. Healthy, ripe berries were their number one concern.

Polished with notes of fleshy dark fruit and liquorice, this full-bodied 2007 is opulent, yet restrained. Full and plump with fine, velvety tannins and lots of freshness. Wine Spectator described it as "solid" and "impressive for the vintage".

(JR: 17-. WS: 89-92. RP: 90-92. MJ: 18. GD: 89-92)





Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

**CH PICHON BARON, PAUILLAC**

**400 - 550**

**2011 – 2022**

Along with Pichon Lalande, this estate was only one of two Pauillacs to be classified as a Second Growth 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.

Despite having the 2nd smallest yield in the Médoc (less than 33.5 hl/ha), they, like other producers in the region, wanted to further concentrate flavours and sugars. They opted for the traditional *saignée* method, that is drawing off juice after about 12 hours in order to have richer musts. This technique seemed to help do the trick as the 2007 was wonderfully succulent with ample fruit and velvety mouthfilling tannins. Despite a slight comparison to 2002, they insisted that it was rounder and more plush. Impressive.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 88-91. RP: 90-92. MJ: 17.5. GD: 89-92)

**CH MONTROSE, ST ESTEPHE**

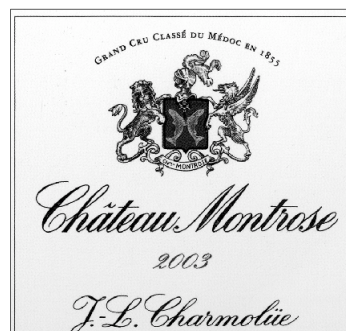
**400 - 500**

**2012 – 2022**

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.

Fragrant on the nose with pretty violet notes and blackberry, cassis and subtle leafy flavours, this medium to full-bodied 2007 offers fine, yet chalky tannins and a fresh finish. Its mid-palate is a bit restrained which should fill out in time. Wine Spectator described it as "friendly and caressing". This rings true with 2007's softer touch. Produced from 64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 87-90. RP: 89-92. MJ: 17. GD: 87-90)





Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

**CH LEOVILLE BARTON, ST JULIEN**

**300 - 400**

**2014 – 2023**

One of the great names in classically styled Bordeaux, Léoville Barton has been owned by the same family throughout its entire existence – an unheard of rarity. Unusual for the Médoc region, there is 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.

Despite the 2007's sweet core, this is one powerful wine. It is tight and textured with dark notes of black cherry and fresh tobacco and fine, chewy tannins. Masculine and brooding, it is not the most supple and charming at this stage, but we cannot fault its concentration and presence. One to watch. (JR: 16.5. WS: 88-91. RP: 87-90. MJ: 17.5. GD: 89-92)

**CH LEOVILLE POYFERRE, ST JULIEN**

**300 - 400**

**2011 – 2020**

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 least known. Fortunately this is changing. Through modernisation, exceptional vineyard management and meticulous winemaking, it is emerging as a star in its own right.

Wonderfully pretty and pure, the 2007 opens up on the nose with fleshy, plump fruit and mocha. On the palate it is more clenched with a deep and focused mineral core and a salty tang finish. Very elegant and notably Poyferré.

(JR: 16. WS: 86-89. RP: 89-91. MJ: 18. GD: 89-91)



**CH RAUZAN SEGLA, MARGAUX**

**250 - 350**

**2011 – 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 became 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 have continued this drive for quality.

The 2007 offers a tight nose but a voluptuous palate with red and black berry fruit, fine velvety tannins and underlying freshness which surfaces on the finish. Rauzan Sègla has been making excellent strides over the past decade, and this is another fine example for the vintage.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 88-91. RP: 89-91. MJ: 17. GD: 89-91)

**CH GRUAUD LAROSE, ST JULIEN**

**240 - 320**

**2011 – 2020**

Gruaud Larose is one of the most dispersed châteaux. The estate is almost like a hamlet unto itself, with stone building after stone building all decorating the property like life size Monopoly board pieces. Reviewing its family history, it is easy to understand why. For many years it had been shuffled from one owner to the next, subsequently divided, pieced back together only to be divided again.

After all these divisions and transformations, the estate stands today at 150 hectares, 82 of which are planted with vines. Its current owners, the Merlaut family, purchased the château in 1997. Their other holdings include Chasse Spleen, La Gurgue, Haut Bages Libéral, Citran and Ferrière. Considerable financial investment has contributed to the château's new found dynamism. Not only is it one of the more self-sufficient châteaux in Bordeaux, it 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. Their dynamic approach can be deeply felt in their wines.

Instantly alluring with notes of roasted coffee and fleshy red plums and blackberries. On the palate, it is fresh and focused with excellent minerality and purity. Its linear, less opulent character gives it definition, soul and a sense of realness. Stands out from the crowd.

(JR: 16. WS: 88-91. RP: 87-90. MJ: 17.5. GD: 88-91)

**CH BRANE CANTENAC, MARGAUX**

**200 - 250**

**2010 – 2018**

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 variable quality, it started improving in the late 1990s and 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".

Silky and plump, this medium-bodied 2007 displays pretty flavours of red and dark berry fruit that turn treacle-like on the finish. Notable balance and femininity.

(JR: 15.5. WS: 84-87. RP: 86-88. MJ: 16. GD: 87-89)

# THIRD GROWTHS

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

## CH PALMER, MARGAUX

800 - 1200

2011 – 2020

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 original classified Third Growth status which can be confirmed by its price.

The 2007 Palmer was one of the favourites amongst the tasters during the UGC week. Super juicy and plush with attractive ripe flavours of red raspberry and sweet cherry that is further fleshed out with black fruit. It offers a really succulent mouthful and not a smidgen of greenness in sight. Very pretty. (JR: 17. WS: 88-91. RP: 91-93. GD: 90-93)

## CH CALON SEGUR, ST ESTEPHE

250 - 350

2011 – 2022

The most northerly classified growth in the Médoc, Calon Ségur has had a gracious history. In the 18th century, it was the most beloved property of its owner, the Marquis Nicolas-Alexandre 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 queen-like hostess who captures the essence of *La Vieille France* with all its tradition and etiquette.

When we met with Hélène, Madame's daughter, and their cellar master, Vincent Millet, both were enthusiastic over the results of the 2007. A thorough green harvest and leaf thinning, plus an additional decrease in quantity (down 20% from last year) and an elevated level of Cabernet Sauvignon (75% instead of 65%) contributed to a top quality wine for the vintage. Plump and pleasant, it is aromatic and intriguingly 'sauvage' with almost *garrigue*-like flavours that are fleshed out by blackberry and black cherry compote. Calon Ségur has always been a wine with real soul when tasted *en primeur* that still holds true in 2007.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 87-90. RP: 86-88. MJ: 17.5. GD: 89-91)



Estimated £/cs      Drinking dates  
 In Bond UK

**CH LANGOA BARTON, ST JULIEN      250 - 350      2011 – 2020**

This château is owned by the Barton family (with Léoville Barton). Serving as a home 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.

A pretty wine with a personality to please, the medium to full-bodied Langoa offers an appealing nose of lovely red berries fruits, crunchy cranberry and plump blueberry. It finishes fresh and clean on notes of chocolate and dried cherry. Very appealing.

(JR: 16. WS: 88-91. RP: 87-89. MJ: 17. GD: 89-92)

**CH GISCOURS, MARGAUX      240 - 320      2010 – 2018**

A diamond in the rough, for many years Château Giscours was an inconsistent performer. In 1995, the estate was sold to Eric Albada Jelgersma, 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.”

Deep ruby, purple in colour, the 2007 Giscours offers a refined nose of red and blackcurrants and gentle leafy notes adding extra dimension and depth. On the palate, it offers notable balance and purity which was difficult to attain in this challenging vintage. Finishes light and fresh.

(JR: 17. WS: 85-88. RP: 85-97. MJ: 17. GD: 87-89)

**CH D’ISSAN, MARGAUX      240 - 320      2010 – 2018**

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 a favourite of Emperor François-Joseph of Austria. Since 1945, the property has been owned by the Cruse family with Emmanuel Cruse at the château’s helm since 1993.

But, its wines are not its only feature to draw admiration. It is the only château in the Médoc to have its own working moat making it also one of the most picturesque and romantic.

With all the supplementary work in the vineyard that this past vintage demanded, 2007 became the most expensive vintage that d’Issan ever produced. This extra attention to detail is apparent in the wine. Fleshy with an ample palate of sweet blueberry and crunchy black cherry, this 2007 further offers notable freshness and a zesty salty tang finish. Quite a succulent Margaux that should be approachable early yet will have some structure for a bit of ageing.

(JR: NA. WS: 84-87. RP: 87-90. MJ: 17. GD: 89-91)

# FOURTH GROWTHS

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

## CH BEYCHEVELLE, ST JULIEN

£275.00

2011 – 2012

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 visible from the main road, the D2. 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 "*bèche velle*" meaning "lowered sails" and "sailing vessel", respectively.

A blend of fruit, floral and savoury flavours combine to form quite an interesting 2007. It is medium-bodied and offers some fine, polished tannins to back up its plump core. Despite, its lack of overt power (this is 2007 after all), it still offers delightful balance and should make for fine drinking once released.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 84-87. RP: 87-90. MJ: 16.5. GD: 87-89)

## CH TALBOT, ST JULIEN

180 - 240

2010 – 2011

A mark of the significant English influence in Bordeaux, Talbot was named after John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, who fought gallantly but unsuccessfully against the French in Castillon in 1453. For many years, it was a twin to 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 owned by his daughters Nancy and Lorraine.

Talbot has produced a continuous stream of excellent wines vintage after vintage and as a result has become synonymous with consistency. A 20% reduction in yield and a higher selection enabled them to make a silky, polished wine. Fresh and bright, the 2007 offers aromatic violet, subtle leafy Cabernet and ripe bramble fruit, all supported by gentle spice. Clean mineral finish.

(JR: 16.5-. WS: 87-90. RP: 84-86. MJ : 17.5. GD: 87-90)



Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

**CH DUHART MILON, PAUILLAC**

**180 - 240**

**2011 – 2019**

Owned since 1962 by the Rothschilds of Ch Lafite, this wine is often overlooked. Yet it usually comes through with impressive results, its style replicating its more renowned big brother with outstanding purity and finesse.

Raspberry and black cherry are prominent on this 2007's medium to full-bodied palate. Some earthy notes take over as the fine, Lafite-style tannins lead to a dark chocolate, liquorice finish. This is denser than Carruades with a bit more life ahead of it.

(JR: 17. WS: 86-89. RP: 86-88. MJ: 16.5. GD: 87-90)

**CH LAFON ROCHET, ST ESTEPHE**

**150 - 200**

**2010-2018**

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 using a higher percentage of Merlot in the blend – a trend which has a strong following in St Estèphe at the moment.

Further developments are on the cards, and 2007 marks the first vintage of utilising oenologue extraordinaire, Denis Dubordieu, as consultant. Basile Tesseron feels that the vintage stylistically resembles 1999 and 2004, both of which were friendly and well-balanced.

Fresh and plump, this medium-bodied wine offers crunchy cranberry, sweet raspberry, black cherry and floral notes on the palate. It shows nice purity and focus. 2007 was one of the most difficult vintages that the Tesseron have ever worked carrying out 4 green harvests as well as leaf plucking – all done by hand, of course. From the *en primeur* tasting, it appears that their hard work paid off.

(JR: 15.5. WS: 84-87. RP: 85-87. MJ: 17. GD: 87-89)





# FIFTH GROWTHS



Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

## CH LYNCH BAGES, PAUILLAC

350 - 450

2011 – 2020

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 partially owned and run by Jean-Michel Cazes a highly admired and charismatic Bordelais whose vision and *joie de vivre* have influenced many wine lovers the world over.

The 2007 really got rave reviews during the UGC week. With a stand out nose of rich fleshy fruit and a lush round palate, it was easy to see why. Two weeks later at the château, it displayed a bit more muscle and restraint but still showed lovely sweetness, excellent focus and a salty mineral finish. Based on the Jancis' and Wine Spectator notes, their samples were most likely not as fresh or pure. As Johnny would say, "This is a proper wine."

(JR: 15.5. WS: 85-88. RP: 87-89. MJ: 17.5. GD: 89-92)

## CH PONTET CANET, PAUILLAC

350 - 450

2012 – 2022

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-leafing 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.

Alfred had the lowest yields in the Médoc – most likely the lowest in all of Bordeaux – a mere 28 hl/ha (normally 40-45). He told us that he wanted to be sure that his selection was just right despite having a slight pained look on his face. Such is the sacrifice for excellence in such challenging circumstances. Needless to say, this forfeit in quantity was worth the gamble. The 2007 is an utter charm with a core of ultra sweet red cherry, blueberry and blackcurrant. On the finish, it turns seductive with brown sugar undertones yet remains sturdy with a bit of structure. It is a true pin-up in a vintage like 2007. Like Rita Hayworth on a 1940's wall.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 88-91. RP: 91-94. MJ: 18. GD: 89-92)

## CH GRAND PUY LACOSTE, PAUILLAC

250 - 350

2011 – 2022

Grand Puy Lacoste sits on top of one of the steepest slopes 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.

He was all smiles while meeting him to taste through his 2007s. Besides providing inexpensive and entertaining fun in the form of wine labels for the Goedhuis team at the end of our long day, he also produced some very good wines. Similar in flavour profile to the 2007 Haut Batailley, Grand Puy Lacoste was even more rich, more dense and more structured. It offered notes of violets, black currant and roasted meat. A bit more pensive as well. François-Xavier has been producing really top notch wines in the past few years, and this is yet another one to be proud of.

(JR: 17+. WS: 88-91. RP: 89-91. MJ: 17.5. GD: 90-92)



**CH CLERC MILON, PAUILLAC**

**200 - 300**

**2010 – 2018**

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, better winemaking and by adding a higher percentage of Merlot to create friendlier, yet more concentrated bottlings. Over the years, it's become a favourite of Robert Parker who often regards this château as "a must buy".

Exuberant and open, the medium-bodied 2007 displays a good balance of crunchy red and black fruits and subtle licorice tones. It was a bit disjointed during UGC week but with the two more weeks following our second tasting, it came together beautifully. It's amazing what a bit of lipstick and blusher can do. Cheerful and friendly.

(JR: 16+. WS: 88-91. RP: 88-90. MJ: 16.5. GD: 87-90)

**CH D'ARMAILHAC, PAUILLAC**

**180 - 240**

**2011 – 2020**

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. If that was not enough, 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 and this rings true again in 2007. Silky and alluring, it displays attractive flavours of dark chocolate, licorice and blackberries that transform into pencil lead and cassis. Its tannins are fine and smooth. A darker wine than Clerc Milon due to lesser Merlot and more Cabernet Franc (22% in 2007), this will not disappoint fans who follow this château.

(JR: 16+. WS: 86-89. RP: 87-88. MJ: 17. GD: 88-91)

**CH HAUT BATAILLEY, PAUILLAC**

**150 - 200**

**2010 – 2018**

Ch Haut Batailley is under the thoughtful eye of François-Xavier Borie. It is less well-known than its stablemate, Grand Puy Lacoste, though it is 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.

Haut Batailley is perennially one of our favourites. In 2007, it was intensely aromatic with violets which were followed by bramble fruit and subtle earthy notes. Tender and succulent, it is charmingly silky without being too fat. Wonderfully feminine.

(JR: 17-. WS: 87-90. RP: 85-87. MJ: 17. GD: 88-90)

# PESSAC LÉOGNAN/ GRAVES

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

## CH LA MISSION HAUT BRION 1500 - 2000 2012 – 2022

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 such as in 1975, and 1982 and 2006.

Merlot had difficulty ripening in 2007 in the Graves which included the vines at La Mission Haut Brion. Some may feel that the 2007 is stylistically slightly different from other vintages due to a lesser amount of Merlot (a minority at 43%, down from its customary 60-70%). Despite having a larger production than 2005 and 2006, it was still significantly less than 2004. In addition, the château's selection was far greater forcing them to declassify more than usual.

Deep ruby-purple in colour, this full-bodied 2007 displays notes of black cherry, blackberry, violets and liquorice. On the palate, it has notable structure and crisp acidity which makes it taut and less forthcoming than usual. Its tannins are polished but not too velvety adding character and definition. A bit of time will hopefully add a bit more flesh and opulence.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 88-91. RP: 90-94. MJ: NA. GD: 88-91)

## 2ND WINE

### LA CHAPELLE DE LA MISSION 200 - 300 2011 – 2019

Fresh and bright, this medium-bodied 2007 has a sweet core of cassis, raspberry, chocolate and fresh tobacco leaves. It is refined and focused with a slight gripping finish that is telltale of La Mission. Despite having Merlot in the blend, it is its Cabernet that stands out at the moment. Produced from 64% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Cabernet Franc.

(JR: 16. WS: 85-88. RP: 89-90. MJ: NA. GD: 87-89)

### DOMAINE DE CHEVALIER 200 - 250 2011 – 2020

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 impressive *terroir*.

An aromatic and savoury nose of violet, sweet black cherry and meat add flesh to this 2007's medium to full-bodied palate. Its chewy tannins and good mineral focus carry it through its long length. A fine Pessac-Léognan which was produced from 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 5% Petit Verdot. Wine Spectator felt that it is "very close to the 2006 in quality."

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

### CH HAUT BAILLY 300 - 400 2012 – 2022

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 alike.

A more reclusive, brooding wine, the 2007 displays dark berry and plum flavours on a finely tuned palate that finishes fresh and clean. Though it does not display as much sweet and obvious fruit, it makes up for it in power and potential complexity. One to watch.

(JR: 16.5. WS: NA. RP: 90-92. MJ: NA. GD: 87-90)

# ST. EMILION



Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

## CH AUSONE, 1<sup>ER</sup> GRAND CRU CLASSE

4000 - 7000

2012 – 2022

Known the world over for its magnificent terroir, Château Ausone is located at the core of St. Emilion at the top of a south facing hillside from which one can breathe in the spectacular views over the Dordogne Valley. Breathing in to prevent a heart attack may not be such a bad idea either as its steep, slippery and ancient cobbled one-lane road is absolutely frightening. But after reaching its heights, one is transported to calm serenity by its cathedral-like hushed presence and of course its profound and silky wines.

Ausone takes its name from the Roman poet Ausonius who supposedly owned vineyards around St. Emilion many years ago, and although he has long departed another creator has taken his place. Since the mid 1990s, the meticulous and thorough Alain Vauthier has been in charge of this historic estate. No expense has been spared in helping him create the most alluring wines possible. Notably modern in style, they are rich and clean with nuances of fine new oak barrels and opulent fruit. Despite his success, the same problem remains...very little wine. Its vineyard area measures less than 1/5 the size of neighbouring Cheval Blanc.

Its 2007 is very successful. Dark berry fruit and crunchy cherry fill out the palate of this dense, full-bodied wine. It is ample yet restrained and draws to a close on fine, chalky tannins which add a bit of earthiness to the finish. Compact and powerful, it has a good life ahead of itself.

(JR: 17++. WS: 90-93. RP: 91-94. MJ: 19. GD: 90-93)

## 2ND WINE

### LA CHAPELLE D'AUSONE

300 - 600

2011 – 2019

Comprised mostly of young vines that are not ready to go into their *grand vin*, the 2007 offers a sweet core of dark fruit, roasted coffee and subtle leafiness. Though it is not as plush as Petit Cheval, it should be appealing to those who like focused, more structured wines. It finishes firm and with a salty tang. Still much in the style of Ausone.

(JR: 16-. WS: 85-88. RP: 91-93. MJ: 17.5. GD: 85-87)

## CH CHEVAL BLANC, 1<sup>ER</sup> GRAND CRU CLASSE

2000 - 3000

2012 – 2024

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 chateau 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.

What a wine. It was granted the status of "the most perplexing wine" of our first *en primeur* trip as it seemed to fall outside Cheval Blanc's typical character of overt voluptuousness. On our second trip, its velviness began shining through, though it cannot be denied that its 55% Cabernet Franc is having an impact. Concentrated and complex, this 2007 displayed a whirlwind of flavours including red currant, crunch black cherry and tapenade. Though a plush curvaceousness surfaces, it still has notable structure, though refined, which suggests more Pomerol than St. Emilion at this early stage. In fact, we're still intrigued...and quite keen to see how this develops.

(JR: 18-. WS: 89-92. RP: 88-91. MJ: 18.5. GD: 91-94)

**2ND WINE****LE PETIT CHEVAL****300 - 600****2011 – 2018**

A charmer with a bit of muscle may be the best way to describe Cheval's second wine in 2007. This is mostly due to its blend of 70% Cabernet Franc and only 30% Merlot (they declassified much of their Merlot which went into a previously unknown 3rd wine). On the palate, it offers crunchy red and black fruit characters that are enveloped in velvety tannins and further enhanced by its vibrant acidity. Jancis described it as "lovely and charming and really superior" and "SO different from the St-Émilion norm!"

(JR: 17. WS: 84-87. RP: 85-87. MJ: 17.5. GD: 88-90)

**CH TERTRE ROTEOEUF, GRAND CRU****700 - 900****2011 – 2020**

François Mitjivale bought this 5.7 ha property in the mid-1980s. With heavy investment and unmistakable savoir faire, he began producing wines that Robert Parker has described as "Bordeaux's most luxurious, sensual and sexy". Despite his affinity for upfront fruit and velvety tannins, his wines also have a sense of place and a soul. Parker words it best as he states, "Contrary to what one might be tempted to think, Le Tertre Rôteboeuf does not belong to the so-called modern school of vinification prevailing in St. Emilion. It has an inimitable style of its own and has not, up to now, been duplicated" (Robert Parker, Bordeaux). It is this uniqueness that has earned its cult-level status.

"Very rich and round and sumptuous. Very different from most St-Émilions – much more luscious. Great freshness and some meatiness. Neat with no dryness. Lots of richness. Slightly sweet but not sickly..."

(JR: 17)

**CH TROPLONG MONDOT, GRAND CRU CLASSE****400 - 600****2013 – 2023**

Located on a limestone plateau overlooking Pavie, 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 that has set it apart from some of its flashier peers.

A bit brooding with roasted coffee, ripe cassis and sweet blackberries, this full-bodied wine offers fine, chewy tannins and a long finish. This will need a bit of time to soften and mellow, but its concentration is impressive. Produced from 90% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 88-91. RP: 90-93. MJ: 18. GD: 88-91)

**CH FIGEAC, IER GRAND CRU CLASSE****400 - 500****2012 – 2023**

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 Beauregard 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 forming the parameters of one of St Emilion's most recognisable châteaux.

Figeac is known to be almost Médoc-like with its more savoury and pensive character. As a result, it is not always easy to taste *en primeur* as it takes time for its true character to surface. This is certainly true again in 2007. Its appealing deep ruby colour was the first attraction. No opaque inky purple in sight! On the palate, it displayed a velvety core of crunchy ripe fruit and savoury characters. A really soulful wine that did not feel thoroughly "worked" – a rarity in this vintage. Besides Cheval Blanc and Ausone, this was our favourite St. Emilion. Tasted twice with consistent notes.

(JR: 16.5++. WS: NA. RP: NA. MJ: NA. GD: 90-93)

**CH CANON, IER GRAND CRU CLASSE****300 - 400****2012 – 2023**

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. It is also one of few the St. Emilions that despite being notably polished also reveals its own unique character and soul making it stand out from the crowd of overflashy and overworked

Merlot-based wines. This might be partially due to its oenologist who also consults for Cheval Blanc. Since 1996, it has been owned by the Wertheimer family who also owns Chanel and the Margaux château, Rauzan Sègla.

The 2007 has followed their renowned reputation for consistent high quality. Discreet on the nose, but more revealing on the palate, it displays notes of plump blueberry, black cherry and bramble fruits which are more dark in flavour than red – a hallmark of the vintage at this stage. Because of their low yields of only 35 hl/ha, they were able to incorporate 70% of the harvest into the *grand vin*. And this lower yield is nicely displayed in its concentration, slightly gripping finish and longer length. A nice effort that Wine Spectator describes as “pretty” and “in harmony for the year”.

(JR: 16+. WS: 87-90. RP: 88-90. MJ: NA. GD: 87-90)

**CH PAVIE MACQUIN, GRAND CRU CLASSE 300 - 400 2012 – 2022**

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 of Pomerol. It is managed by the ultra dynamic Nicolas Thienpont who uses oenologists Michel Rolland and Stéphane Deroncourt as his right hand men.

Nicolas explained that they picked much later than most of their neighbours in order to harness the maximum amount of phenolic ripeness from the grapes. This technique seems to have had a beneficial effect as his 2007 came across well, particularly during our second tasting.

Ripe and plump on the nose, the 2007 is powerful and fleshy with fine, but slightly drying tannins. In addition to its round, polished fruit, it displays overt spicy new oak flavours. Despite its seeming approachability, it will benefit from a few more years ageing to show its true potential.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 88-91. RP: 88-90. MJ: 17. GD: 88-91)

**CH LARCIS DUCASSE, GRAND CRU CLASSE 250 - 350 2012 – 2023**

Larcis Ducasse is next to Ch Pavie and has excellent terroir and is made by the Nicolas Thienpont and Stéphane Deroncourt team. The 2007 has all the markings of a successful wine. Its sweet core fleshes out its polished and pronounced tannic structure. A touch of savouriness adds extra dimension to the finish while its racy acidity adds freshness and lift.

Its huge Wine Spectator and Parker scores catapulted the 2005 price (from an already “highly undervalued position” according to Nicolas). The 2006 was more conservative and in-line, so we can only hope that the 2007 will be priced fairly.

(JR: 15.5. WS: 87-90. RP: 92-94. MJ: 16.5. GD: 87-90)

**CH MOULIN ST GEORGES, GRAND CRU CLASSE 180 - 240 2012 – 2020**

This château is owned and run by Alain Vaultier of Château Ausone, and like Ausone receives similar care in its making. As they say, the fruit does not fall far from the tree as the 2007 displays the same polish and style. Its moderately sweet core exhibits notes of cassis, liquorice and a touch of spicy black pepper. It will require a few more years to open and soften revealing its true persona. Produced with 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc.

(JR: 16. WS: 86-89. RP: 89-91. MJ: NA. GD: 86-88)

**CH FONBEL, GRAND CRU 70 - 90 2011 – 2018**

Yet another lucky star in the Vaultier constellation which is known for its consistent quality and classy appeal. The 2007 was vibrantly deep in colour and offered a refined and sweet palate of blueberries, blackberries and violets. Notably smooth and round. Jancis describes it as “flattering” and feels that the 2007 offers “lots of bang for your buck” and “could be a good buy.” We could not have said it better ourselves.

(JR: 16. WS: NA. RP: 85-89. MJ: NA. GD: 86-89)

# POMEROL

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

## LE PIN

5000 - 8000

2011 – 2019

A true pioneer, proprietor Jacques Thienpont was one of the first *garagistes* in Bordeaux. He purchased a very small vineyard in 1979 and named it after the lone pine tree that stands guard over the property. 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. But it seems to fit as though he has added to his original purchase, he still only has 5 acres of vines and produces only 600-700 cases per year.

He differs from many of his fellow *garagistes*, in that he insists on producing *terroir*-driven, balanced Pomerol, while many others still produce over-extracted or ultra-ripe wines.

The 2007 is a charming, delicious wine. Wonderfully perfumed with notes of violets, blueberries and liquorice, it is gentle, wonderfully sweet and succulent with soft, silky tannins. Produced from 100% Merlot.

(JR: 17++. WS: 90-93. RP: 91-93. MJ: 18. GD: 90-93)

## CH L'EGLISE CLINET

800 - 1200

2011 – 2022

Tasting with Denis Durantou is always a visual feast. Not only do we get to savour a range of great wines, but we also normally get to view one of the Right Bank's most striking and unusual 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. Denis has a way of capturing the most his vineyards have to offer while retaining their unique personas and this rings true again in 2007.

Made from a blend of 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc, the full-bodied 2007 displays denser, dark mouthfilling fruit with not a glimpse of hollowness in sight. The pronounced fine tannins kick in on the finish suggesting this is not a light weight. Wine Spectator was impressed with Denis' efforts as well describing it as a "real wine for the vintage" and giving it the same score as 2007 Pétrus.

(JR: 17. WS: 89-92. RP: 91-94. MJ: 17.5. GD: 88-91)

## CH L'EVANGILE

700 - 900

2011 – 2020

L'Evangile has long been one of the most sought after Right Bank châteaux. Unlike many châteaux, it has only had a handful of proprietors including the Ducasse family whose ancestors acquired the property and whose descendants owned it for a lengthy time from 1862 until 1990 when the Rothschild family acquired the estate. Since its purchase, much investment has been carried out and its quality has rivalled neighbouring Pétrus and Lafleur.

L'Evangile was one of our favourites during the en primeur week. Wonderfully polished with a rich, concentrated palate of roasted coffee, plum and crunchy red cherry. Poised, yet not overly round nor extracted like other Pomerols, this is refined, balanced and full of soul. The château feels that it has all the freshness of the 2006 with all the sweetness and fineness of the 2004. We just thought it was delicious.

(JR: 17.5+. WS: 88-91. RP: 88-90. MJ: 17.5. GD: 89-92)

## 2ND WINE

### BLASON D'EVANGILE 200 - 300 2010 – 2016

Delicious from the outset, this second wine got our huge thumbs up on first taste. Juicy and pretty with sweet plum, dark chocolate and soft plush tannins. Very succulent. Finishes racy and fresh. It was hard not to drink it.

(JR: 16.5-. WS: NA. RP: 80-83. MJ: 17. GD: 88-90)

### VIEUX CHATEAU CERTAN 600 - 800 2011 – 2020

What is there not to like about this château and its amiable, soft spoken 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.

According to Alexandre, the Merlot was weak this vintage and though it made up its usual 70% of the blend, it was saved by the first-rate Cabernet Franc that attained good maturity and ripeness. Due to the extremely long vegetative cycle, the old vines also just “seemed to give up” and produced less concentrated fruit. As a result, more middle-aged and young vines than normal went into the *grand vin*.

The more pronounced Cabernet Franc seems to dominate the wine a bit more at this stage. Its flavours of liquorice, blackberry and red plum combine with a touch of Cabernet leafiness that gives it a bit of lift and nuance. Despite its lack of old vines. Alexandre feels that he succeeded in producing a tender, soft and approachable wine that will make for fine early drinking.

(JR: 17.5-. WS: 88-91. RP: 89-91. MJ: 18. GD: 89-92)

### CH LA CONSEILLANTE 500 - 700 2011 – 2020

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'Évangile and Pétrus.

Produced from 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc, this 2007 is wonderfully poised and elegant with pretty notes of raspberry, black current and blueberry. With lovely minerality and focus, it finishes very fresh and lifting.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 88-91. RP: 87-89. MJ: 17.5. GD: 88-90)

### CH LA POINTE 150 - 200 2011 - 2019

One of the most traditional looking Pomerols, Château La Pointe began its life in the early 19th with approximately 21 hectares of vines. It was named after its topography as it is located at the southwestern ‘point’ of the Pomerol appellation. Despite an erratic performance in the 1970s and 1980s, it began producing solid wines since the 1990s which have captured the attention of aficionados who have, in turn, created a bit of a following for this château.

The 2007 is notably Pomerol with a medium to full-bodied palate that offers plump, sweet fruit and chewy tannins. Though they only use 35% new French oak barrels, the spicy oak openly revealed itself at the time of tasting. This will no doubt gently integrate over time. Jancis described it as “fully ripe and relaxed” with “lovely balance”.

(JR: 17. WS: NA. RP: 82-85. MJ: NA. GD: 87-89)



# CRUS BOURGEOIS/ PETITS CHATEAUX

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

## CH ROC DES CAMBES, COTES DE BOURG 250 - 350 2011 - 2017

Owned by François Mitjavile of Tertre Rôteboeuf, Roc des Cambes is located 18 miles north of Bordeaux on the right bank of the Dordogne River. Twenty-three acres are under vine with the majority being Cabernet Sauvignon (75%) followed by Merlot (20%) and Cabernet Franc (5%). He produces the wine in a similar fashion as Tertre Rôteboeuf with lots of flesh and opulence but with underlying structure and finesse that enables it to still be a *terroir*-driven wine.

(JR: 16.5)

## CLOS DU MARQUIS, ST JULIEN 200 - 250 2011 - 2018+

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.

Open with a sweet core of fleshy red and black bramble fruit and an underlying savoury meatiness. Gently smoky, it has moderately fine tannins and a poised structure. Finishes on a salty tang. The château feels that this is better than their 2004.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 87-90. RP: 90-92. MJ: 17.5. GD: 87-89)

## PETITE EGLISE, POMEROL 100 - 150 2011 - 2018

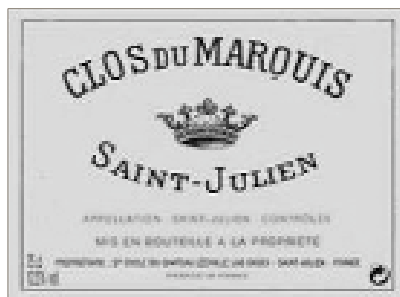
We just learned this year that Petite Eglise is not actually a second wine but rather a wine in its own right as it is consistently produced from separate parcels than L'Eglise Clinet. Denis did not seem too bothered of this general misconception as he knows that the quality speaks for itself. And 2007 is no exception. Aromatic with notes of black berry, purple plum and brown sugar, this medium-bodied wine offers lots of freshness and a soulful finish. Produced from 100% Merlot.

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

## CH POUJEAUX, MOULIS 100 - 150 2010 - 2016

Another over achiever from Moulis, Château Poujeaux is known for its consistent quality and smooth edges. It was a true standout winning hands down as the top wine at the UGC Médoc/Haut Médoc tasting in Bordeaux. Plump and fleshy with sweet black currant, bramble fruit and subtle black pepper. Notable weight and concentration for the vintage. Tasted three times with consistent notes.

(JR: 15. WS: NA. RP: NA. MJ: 17. GD: 86-88)



Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

**CH LA SOURCE, BORDEAUX**

**100 - 130**

**2010 - 2016**

In a small picturesque enclave east of St Emilion lies Château de Sours. With the new owner, now in his fourth year, came a new winemaker, Sebastien Lamonthe. Not withstanding his Hollywood good looks, he is a very talented winemaker with a particular skill 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 – an attribute that imparts elegance, purity and freshness.

Deeply coloured and aromatic with notes of violet, plum and subtle liquorice. The 2007 is gentle and balanced with fine tannins and fresh acidity. This will make for pleasant and easy drinking when released.

(JR: 14.5. GD: 86-88)

**CH LES CRUZELLES, LANDE DE POMEROL**

**100 - 120**

**2010 - 2016**

A wine in the L'Eglise Clinet Porfolio, this 25-acre property was purchased by Denis Durantou in 2000. This 2007 opens onto the palate with notes of toasted coffee, fleshy purple plum and sweet black cherry. Its slightly rustic tannins add a bit of charm and character. Due to the appellation and excellent winemaking, this wine usually provides very good value.

(JR: 15.5. WS: NA. RP: NA. MJ: NA. GD: 86-88)

**CH BEAUMONT, HAUT MEDOC**

**£70.00**

**2010 - 2015**

A classic claret nose and palate offering a touch of violets, cassis and lead pencil. It is moderately simple but very "correct" with good density and balance. A good value, this was released at less than 2004 and the same as 2002.

(JR: 15.5. WS: NA. RP: NA. MJ: 15. GD: 86-88)



# WHITE WINES

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

**CH HAUT BRION, PESSAC LEOGNAN**                      **3000 - 4000**                      **2012 – 2022**

This wine is produced from vines that are an average of 63 years old and from vineyards whose gravelly soil is ideal for Sauvignon Blanc. Rich and aromatic on the nose, this 2007 unveils itself on the palate with crème brûlée, sleek minerals and lemon curd. Despite its weight, it is wonderfully focused and crisp. The château described it as being similar in quality to the 2004 and as smooth as the 1999, but better.

This wine was absolutely adored by Wine Spectator who described it as having “incredible intensity” and being “more structured than most reds in 2007.”

(JR: 18. WS: 97-100. RP: 96-100. MJ: NA. GD: 93-96)

## 2ND WINE

**LES PLANTIERS DU HAUT BRION**                      **200 – 300**                      **2010 – 2016**

A newer wine on the en-primeur platform as it had been usually reserved for restaurants in France. Though we were unable to taste it, Plantiers often reveals itself as a lighter version of Haut Brion Blanc. Considering the impressive results of the grand vin, this should be excellent in 2007.

**CH LAVILLE HAUT BRION, PESSAC LEOGNAN**                      **1500 - 2500**                      **2011 – 2019**

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 château. Due to its cooler Semillon-friendly soil, this variety is the most planted followed by a smaller amount of Sauvignon Blanc. Its 2007 is amazingly light, racy and crisp with notes of peach, pink grapefruit, beeswax and toasted brioche. Produced from 83% Semillon and 17% Sauvignon Blanc.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-95. RP: 93-96 MJ: NA. GD: 91-93)

**PAVILLON BLANC, MARGAUX**                      **700 - 900**                      **2010 – 2017**

Pavillon Blanc is the best known (and best) white wine produced in the Médoc (north of Bordeaux). A meticulous Sauternes-like harvest (with 3 sortings in the vineyard) and a certain amount of grapes that dried naturally on the vine produced a fantastically powerful 2007. Plush with succulent peach, pineapple and lime zest fill the palate while its excellent freshness adds lift and depth. Despite having a noteworthy 15.5% alcohol, it is not overly rich. Its superb complexity carries it through its long length. Impressive.

(JR: 18. WS: 91-94. RP: NA. MJ: 18. GD: 90-93)

**DOMAINE DE CHEVALIER, PESSAC LEOGNAN**                      **400 - 500**                      **2011 – 2018**

Despite a slight closed nose, the 2007 opened up beautifully on the palate. Its pronounced flavours of sweet, juicy peach, kiwi, lemon and orange zest amplify once in the mouth. It has notable concentration and impressive acidity that cuts through all the flesh. Profoundly fresh. Produced from 90% Sauvignon Blanc and 10% Semillon.

(JR: 16++. WS: 91-94. RP: 90-92. MJ: NA. GD: 89-92)

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

**CH SMITH HAUT LAFITTE, PESSAC LEOGNAN 350 - 450 2010 – 2016**

One of the most popular white Bordeaux, Smith Haut Lafitte is produced from a less traditional blend of 90% Sauvignon Blanc, 5% Semillon and 5% Sauvignon Gris. It is then fermented and aged in oak barrels of which 50% are new. The 2007 was a delight to taste with its relaxed approachable palate. Fleshy peach and apricot with candied almonds fill out the palate while its fresh grassy undertones and mineral salts added complexity and lift. Inviting and tender finish.

(JR: 17. WS: 90-93. RP: 94-96. MJ: NA. GD: 89-92)

**CH MALARTIC LAGRAVIÈRE, PESSAC LEOGNAN 240 - 320 2010 – 2016**

Super fresh with a pretty and poised palate of zingy lemon zest, crunchy minerals, kiwi and lemon curd. Very thirst quenching. Finishes with a salty tang. Can't get much more lipsmacking than this. Jancis described this wine as "opulent", "ambitious" and "a superstar" and included it in her top four dry white Bordeaux putting it alongside Haut Brion Blanc and Laville Haut Brion. Some praise, indeed!

(JR: 17.5. WS: 89-91. RP: NA. MJ: NA. GD: 88-91)

**CH CARBONNIEUX, PESSAC LEOGNAN 150 - 200 2010 – 2016**

One of the most reliable châteaux in the Graves for its whites, its 2007 opens up nicely on the palate with freshly sliced lemon, plump peach and gooseberry. Very Sauvignon. Finishes with soft, pretty minerals.

(JR: 16. WS: NA. RP: 90-92. MJ: NA. GD: 87-89)

**CH LA SOURCE, BORDEAUX 100 - 140 2010 – 2015**

La Source Blanc 2007 is a hand-made white wine produced in very small quantities. Produced from 70% Sauvignon Blanc and 30% Semillon (from 50+ year-old-vines), this medium-bodied wine offers zingy citrus notes and a slab of clean-cut minerality. Very refreshing.

(JR: 15.5. GD: 87-89)



# SAUTERNES

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

## CH D'YQUEM, 1<sup>ER</sup> CRU SUPERIEUR

3500 - 4500 2014 - 2040+

The greatest wine ever produced to some, Château d'Yquem is nothing less than legendary. Its wines have long been collected by savvy aficionados such as Thomas Jefferson and its vines have produced some of the longest lived bottles in the world. But its magical golden aura goes beyond its astounding ageability. Its seductive qualities have even been able to inspire non-wine drinkers to seek out a corkscrew. It had been owned by the Lur Saluces family since the 18th century until a few years back when it was sold to LVMH. It is now run by Pierre Lurton, the managing director of Cheval Blanc.

David Marc, Yquem's smiling cellar master commented that 2007 was similar to 1997 in terms of weather conditions, harvest and analysis. And with these glowing conditions of excellent morning mist, mid-day sun with drying East by Northeast winds and cool night temperatures came good quantities. Yquem was capable of yielding double the normal harvest (18hl/ha instead of 8-9). Yet, like all châteaux, their selection was rigorous and only 40% made it into the *grand vin*.

What a wine. Round and rich, the 2007 is fleshy and opulent with notes of juicy ripe peach, apricot and peach pit. A gentle smouldering spiciness surfaces mid-palate. Despite its pronounced concentration, it remains ethereal and poised – in typical Yquem fashion. It finishes with even further depth and freshness than it lets on in the beginning suggesting that its slight coyness might be holding something back. Produced from its usual blend of 80% Semillon and 20% Sauvignon Blanc. Wine Spectator commented that "it should be a perfect wine."

(JR: 19. WS: 97-100. NM: 96-98. MJ: NA. GD: 95-97)



**CH DE FARGUES** **550 - 750** **2013 – 2030+**

Château de Fargues has been owned by the long-time previous owner of Château d'Yquem, Comte de Lur Saluces, since the 18th century. For many, it is considered to resemble Yquem in certain vintages when young, yet is usually 1/3 of Yquem's price. As a result it can offer good value for the Sauternes collector if one can find any. Not only is its vineyard area significantly smaller than Yquem's, slightly more than 1/10th its size, but its yields are even lower – a rumoured 2/3 glass per every vine (compared to Yquem's 1:1).

Quite a powerful and upfront Sauternes, the 2007 de Fargues offers notable complexity and concentration with notes of dried apricot, mirabelle plum confiture and subtle grassy tarragon. One can almost separate all the layers on the tongue. Finishes fresh and ample. One of the richest Sauternes present at the tasting, yet it remained focused and lively.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-95. NM: 94-96. MJ: 17. GD: 90-92)

**CH CLIMENS, PREMIER CRU** **500 - 700** **2012 – 2030+**

One of the most celebrated châteaux in the Barsac/Sauternes region is Château Climens. Its wines are unusual in that unlike other properties that include Savignon Blanc and occasionally Muscadelle, Climens is made with 100% Semillon, a variety that current owner Bérénice Lurton believes to work particularly well with the *terroir*. It has long been one of the most elegant Sauternes and one that many believe marries the best with food.

We were unable to taste Climens this year, but luckily Jancis did. "...It had a heady aroma of hazelnuts and was amazingly substantial in terms of both body and richness, the keynote of the best 2007 Sauternes. A slightly dry finish (something evident on the Yquem 2007 too) but so fascinating in terms of its array of elements. The wines from the first trier were much lighter and simpler but had great clarity and freshness while the third trier's produce seemed lighter than the second too. But overall, this should be a very promising year for Climens."

(JR: 18. WS: NA. NM: 98-100. MJ: NA. GD: NA)

**CH RIEUSSEC, PREMIER CRU** **£495.00** **2012 – 2028+**

Château Rieussec was originally established by Carmelite Monks on one of the highest hillsides in Sauternes. Unusual for Sauternes, or anywhere in Bordeaux, its 90 hectares of vineyards lie in one continuous parcel, much of which shares a border with Yquem. It has long had an excellent reputation which has further improved since its purchase in 1984 by Domaines Barons de Rothschild, the same owners as Château Lafite and l'Évangile. As a result, its style is reminiscent of their other properties – powerful yet with notable finesse and complexity.

Medium to full-bodied, this 2007 dances across the palate with poised and pretty pirouettes before releasing its core of ample peach, dried apricot and marzipan flavours. Finishes with a touch of bitter almond and gentle toasted spice on the back palate adding an extra dimension and length. A lovely 2007 that finishes dry and pure.

(JR: 19. WS: 93-96. NM: 92-94. MJ: 18.5. GD: 91-93)



Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

**CH SUDUIRAUT, PREMIER CRU**

**£440.00 2012 – 2028+**

Due north of Yquem lies one of the most famous Sauternes estates, Château Suduiraut. Though it has had a long illustrious history beginning in the 16th century, its more recent past has included its present owner, the wine division of AXA Millésimes who bought the property in 1992. Following their purchase, they invested heavily in the property and began to show the world what Suduiraut was capable of. Today, it has achieved a reputation for consistency and creating particularly rich, luscious wines.

Ripe, dense and notably unctuous, the 2007 displays primal fruit flavours of grape, baked apple and honey. Not as poised as some, but it is hard to fault its fleshiness. A definite success for Suduiraut fans. This is always one of the richest Sauternes year-in and year-out.

(JR: 17.5. WS: 92-95. RP: . MJ: 18. GD: 91-93)

**CH LA TOUR BLANCHE, PREMIER CRU**

**£345.00 2012 – 2025+**

At the time of the original classification of Sauternes in 1855, La Tour Blanche was ranked just behind Château d'Yquem. Yet unlike Yquem which has remained in private (and designer) hands throughout its history, La Tour Blanche became a property of the state. In 1910, its previous owner, Danile Iffla, donated his château to the Ministry of Agriculture upon the agreement that it would also house a wine school. This was accepted and today it educates over 80 students. Due in part to its more educational alliance, it has drawn top viticulturalists and oenologists to its premises who have contributed to its excellent reputation as one of the most enjoyed Sauternes today.

Despite a slightly closed nose, this 2007 opens amply on the palate with hedonistic notes of tropical fruit, fleshy peach and orange blossom honey. Mineral undertones kick it on the mid-palate adding extra focus and refinement. A lovely, balanced 2007 that is succulent and has a lingering finish.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 90-93. NM: 86-88. MJ: 18.5. GD: 91-93)

**CH GUIRAUD, PREMIER CRU**

**270 – 350 2012 – 2025+**

A solid performer, Guiraud has been one of the most sought after wines in the last 25 years. Despite, its high percentage of Sauvignon Blanc (35%), its wines tend to be rich, fleshy and powerful. This concentration was no doubt due to its previous owner, Hamilton Narby, a Canadian, who began using Yquem-like techniques from 1981 onwards in its vineyard management and winemaking.

In July 2006, it was purchased by businessman, Robert Peugeot, and three renowned château owners/winemakers, Olivier Bernard of Domaine de Chevalier, Stephan Von Neipperg of Canon La Gaffelière and La Mondotte and Xavier Planty, the long-time manager of Guiraud itself.

Rich and dense with lots of layers. Quince, apricot and honey form the core in this excellent 2007. Despite its admirable richness, its sleek acidity shines through adding extra lift and freshness.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 91-94. NM: 92-94. MJ: 18. GD: 91-93)

**CH LAFaurIE PEYRAGUEY, PREMIER CRU**

**£280.00 2011 – 2024+**

An imposing property with its 13th century fortified château, Lafaurie Peyraguey has become one of the most compelling Sauternes in the region. Purchased by Cordier in 1917, their wines have gone from strength-to-strength particularly in recent vintages following additional investment in the vineyards and in the chai. It has been a favourite of Robert Parker who states, "This is consistently one of

Estimated £/cs  
In Bond UK

Drinking dates

the finest wines of Sauternes, always made in a full-throttle style.” (Robert Parker, Bordeaux, 2003)  
The 2007 displays slightly more of an Alsace-like feel with its spicy richness and honeyed fruit. The palate expands with fleshy pear, juicy peach and zesty pink grapefruit. Despite, its concentration, it offers finely tuned minerality and an ethereal personality that prevents it from being heavy or cloying. A fine 2007.

(JR: 15.5. WS: 91-94. NM: 91-93. MJ: 18+. GD: 90-93)

**CH DOISY DAENE, DEUXIEME CRU**

**£250.00 2012 – 2025+**

Doisy Daëne is located in Barsac and has been owned by the Dubordieu family since 1924. It is currently run by Monsieur White Bordeaux, the renowned oenologist, Denis Dubordieu, who also makes the sought after dry white, Clos Floridène. He revolutionised white wine winemaking introducing the importance of cool temperature macerations (steeping the grape skins with their juice before fermentation) to gently extract extra flavour. It is no doubt that this technique has also increased the aromatic profile of Doisy Daëne.

An enticing Sauternes, this 2007 opened with a wonderfully pure nose of white peaches, dried apricot, pineapple and honey. On the palate, its sleek minerality and racy acidity add focus, purity and poise and give it the perfect balance between sweetness and freshness. It just has a certain je ne sais quoi that made us go back for more. Finishes with a salty tang. A definite favourite. Highly recommended.

(JR: 18.5. WS: 90-93. NM: 94-96. MJ: 17. GD: 93-95)

**CH DOISY VEDRINES, DEUXIEME CRU**

**£210.00 2011 – 2022+**

Like the Pichons and the Léovilles of the Médoc, Doisy Védrières was part of a larger single estate which was divided in the 18th century into Doisy Védrières, Doisy Daëne and Doisy Dubroca. It is currently owned by Olivier Castéja who is a cousin of the Borie family of Ducru Beaucaillou, Grand Puy Lacoste and Haut Batailley.

One of the top Barsac estates, Doisy Védrières is known for producing balanced Sauternes that are rich but not overly heavy. The same holds true in 2007. Flavoursome with pronounced notes of sultanas and peaches, its palate is refreshing with crunchy fruit and salty minerality. Despite the fact that it is several years from release, it was particularly delightful to ‘drink’. Such a cheeky little number.

(JR: 16.5. WS: 89-92. NM: 94-96. MJ: 17. GD: 90-92)

**CH FILHOT, DEUXIEME CRU**

**£160.00 2011 – 2020+**

Filhot is a lighter styled Sauternes that often offers wonderful finesse and balance. It is particularly appreciated by those who like drier styles of dessert wine. The 2007 is true to form. Pretty and elegant, its palate is notably tender with notes of golden peach and ripe pear. It finishes fresh and clean with notable focus and finesse. This offers good value in 2007.

(JR: 15.5. WS: 87-90. NM: 85-87. MJ: 17. GD: 89-91)