

# WINE CLUB CHRONICLE



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## THIS JUST IN

Hey there, Bordeaux... it's been awhile! One of our first Christmas releases (the first maybe?) was "Christmas in Bordeaux" and that was merry Christmas, indeed! This is certainly one of the most important wine regions in the world, based on the scale of production, and influence over the world of wine. The cost of Bordeaux keeps us from visiting more often, but we're always on the hunt, and this month, we scored big! Tap into your inner Bon Vivant, and really dig into these wines... make a great dinner... have some friends over... drink a bottle by yourself on a Thursday around a backyard fire. Vive le Bordeaux!



## COLLECTOR CLUB



### 2009 LASSÈGUE

A Grand Cru from Saint-Émilion + a phenomenal vintage = Winner!

**Merlot (60%) Cabernet Franc (20%) Cabernet (20%)**...And this is exactly why Merlot doesn't suck! If this was mostly Cab Sauv the wine would still be closed and uptight; but the Merlot makes it wonderfully approachable while young (for Bordeaux that is), and the Cab Sauv and Cab Franc give it the stuffing to develop years more. Earth and tobacco and cedar on the nose; the palate is just beginning to hint at its age through subtle notes of brown butter and a hint of walnuts. **Drink Now-2030, maybe longer? Give it the grand treatment: lamb and fresh rosemary sprigs with shallots in a Bordelaise sauce**

## BORDEAUX

### CELLAR WINE CLUB



#### 2016 DUCOURT BORDEAUX BLANC

Grown in the Entre-Deux-Mer (see page two)

#### Sauvignon Blanc & Semillon

Move over New Zealand! As it turns out, Sauv Blanc likely originates in the Bordeaux region, where it is often joined by the Semillon grape. This bottle shows just a touch of the stoniness and light waxy notes that Semillon provides, and plenty of the clean citric/grassy elements that make Sauv Blanc so distinct. If ever there was a wine for shellfish and summer, this is it! **Drink Now with all the oysters you can handle :-)**

#### 2014 CHATEAU SAINT-SULPICE

Rocking your basic Bordeaux appellation, this wine is from a 100-acre estate south of St-Émilion in the Entre-Deux-Mer.

#### Merlot (70%) Cabernet (20%) Cabernet Franc (10%)

We found two very different personalities in this wine, depending on how much air it had. Straight out of the bottle it's green, snappy, and bright - which some of you will love! .....but which most might find a tad underripe. Give this bottle some air and it fleshes out and gains a bit more richness and plummy fruit. Try pouring a glass, waiting twenty minutes, and then tasting the wine in the glass against some freshly poured, and see which you prefer! **Drink Now thru 2020 with steak tartare.**



### CLUB RED

#### 2012 LES CADRANS DE LASSÈGUE

The second label from Lassègue. From the same Saint-Émilion Grand Cru vineyards and pretty darn good for half the price! **Primarily Merlot with a healthy bit of Cabernet Franc (about 30%)**

Stepping up big time in body from the Saint-Sulpice, we're getting all sorts of rich and funky notes here: fresh potting soil, pencil lead, leather, but also some alluring black raspberry and edgy cassis. All in all, this actually needed a bit more time to open up than its older brother; it took maybe thirty or forty minutes before the palate started getting all sexy and interesting. **Drink now - 2024 with braised brisket and a green peppercorn sauce**



The 2004 film, *Sideways*, depicts a down and out wine nerd on his quest for redemption (gross oversimplification). In the film, the protagonist HATES on Merlot, which in real life, negatively affected the sales of Merlot in the U.S. market for years (while increasing the demand for Pinot Noir). At the end, Miles (our anti-hero wine nerd) drinks a cherished bottle of Bordeaux from a paper cup (or plastic... not important), That wine is depicted as a 1961 Chateau Cheval Blanc a very rare and expensive Bordeaux... that is made primarily from Merlot. Roll that one a round for a bit!)

*One of the most legendary wines to be sold at auction was a six liter bottle of 1947 Cheval Blanc. The wine is the only known Imperial size bottle of that iconic vintage, and in 2010, fetched a cool \$304,375. It has since been outdone by an Alexander Valley Cabernet called The Setting... sold for \$350,000. NBD*



### CLASSIFICATION OF 1855

In 1855, Napoleon III hosted an exposition in Paris (think fancy French fair). He asked the merchants of Bordeaux to rank the Chateau. The merchants based this ranking mostly on historical selling price of the wine, and ranked the wines of Bordeaux from First Growths all the way down to Fifth Growths (which were still considered to be superior wines). The classification has stayed remarkably intact for 150+ years.

Bordeaux is a complicated place... It is in France after all ;) Here's the quick & Dirty:

**Red** is the Médoc - Home to most of the great Bordeaux properties, including three of the original four, First Growths.

**Orange** is Graves - Famous for the sweet wines of Sauternes, but also for the fourth of the original First Growths, Chateau Haut-Brion.

**Green** is Entre-Deux-Mer - Confusingly named "between two seas," this is where the majority of value Bordeaux comes from, including many excellent wines; especially white.

**Blue & Purple** - The most important "right bank" communes including St. Émilion and Pomerol.

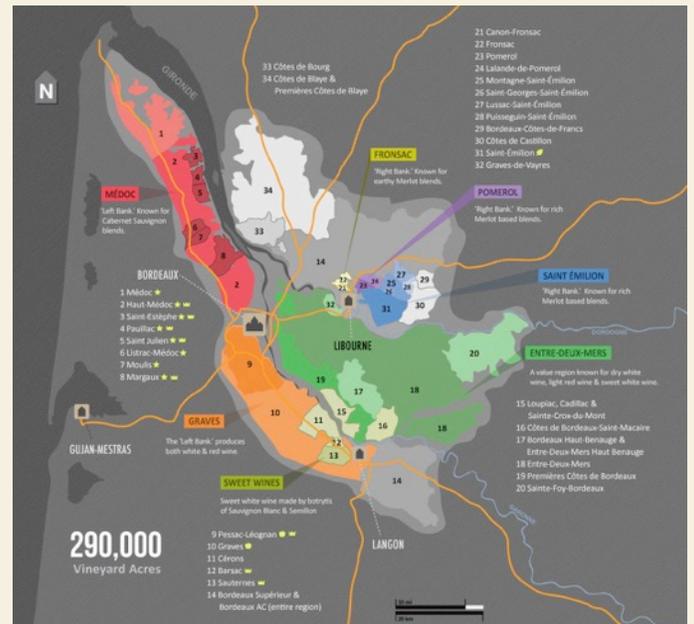
**Grey & White** - This is where much of the value red production originates. There are some very good wines from here... and also some very bad wines... tread lightly.

### ORIGINAL FIRST GROWTHS

- Lafite-Rothschild - Pauillac
- Margaux - Margaux
- Latour - Pauillac
- Haut-Brion - The First Growth not in the Médoc

### ADDITIONS

- Mouton-Rothschild - Added in 1973 because they whined a lot.
- d'Yquem Sauternes - Classified in 1855 under a different list, this is the only dessert wine to be considered a First Growth.
- Ausone & Cheval Blanc - Classified with all of St-Émilion in 1955, these two Chateau are considered First Growth wines.
- Pétrus - A very famous Chateau in Pomerol that has never been officially classified, yet has always been considered among the best Bordeaux, and is considered a First Growth.



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