

Bordeaux Wine Locators 2016 Bordeaux En Primeur Report

Earlier this month I led our teams from the UK & the USA to numerous château tastings of over 500 of the top Bordeaux. **This was my 32nd year of tasting barrel samples and it has been undeniably one of the most impressive vintages in all my years of coming to Bordeaux.** Many of you know we own Château Carignan in the Côtes de Bordeaux, and as such I was present during the buildup to the harvest. I therefore experienced firsthand the weather conditions approaching and during the harvest. Unlike 2015, when the communes of Saint-Julien, Pauillac and Saint-Estèphe suffered from the rains, **2016 is of exceptional quality throughout all regions producing red wines.** A wonderful purity of fresh ripe fruit, with super ripe tannins and balance, permeates the entire crop. There are outstanding wines for everyone's budget.

Cheers,

Andy Lench,

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Service to the fine wine industry since 1987!
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THE TOP WINES

MARGAUX

The first commune as you head northwards up the Medoc. Another exceptional year for this commune. Leaders Châteaux Margaux & Palmer are vying for top Margaux this year closely followed by Rauzan Segla, Giscours, Malescot St Exupery, Brane Cantenac, D'Issan and many others too numerous to mention.

SAINT-JULIEN

This commune continues from Margaux and borders Pauillac in the north. Much more successful this year than 2015 with many exceptional wines lead by Ducru Beaucaillou, Leoville Barton, Leoville Poyferre and followed closely by Saint Pierre, Gruaud Larose, Gloria, Leoville Las Cases and Clos Du Marquis.

PAUILLAC

The commune with the greatest number of Medoc First Growths. Pauillac has probably had its best ever vintage this year with two wines vying potentially for the wines of the vintage, those being Lafite Rothschild & Mouton Rothschild. This

is clearly the best Lafite barrel sample I have ever tasted. There are so many other superb wines, Latour, Pontet Canet, Pichon Baron— possibly the best ever! Pichon Lalande, Lynch Bages which reminds me of the great 1982. “I’ve now tasted more than 1,000 wines from the 2016 vintage in Bordeaux. I can again confirm that it’s an excellent year, producing dynamic and wellstructured wines that are fresh and balanced. These wines represent the new renaissance of Bordeaux where harmony, refinement and energy are the new keywords for the region — not raw power and high alcohol. Bordeaux is back.” - James Suckling 2 Grand Puy Lacoste, a favorite of the trade, to Petit Mouton, Les Forts De Latour, Carruades De Lafite, Clerc Milon & Armailhac. You really cannot go wrong here.

SAINT-ESTEPHE

The most northerly commune of the Medoc has had its greatest vintage since 1982. There are three stand out wines Cos d’Estournel, Montrose & Calon Segur followed by Haut Marbuzet & Les Ormes De Pez.

PESSAC-LEOGNAN ROUGE

Here we have a superb Haut Brion & La Mission Haut Brion followed by Les Carmes Haut Brion, Haut Bailly, the best Domaine De Chevalier ever, Pape Clement, Smith Haut Lafite and many other great wines.

PESSAC-LEOGNAN BLANC

Unfortunately the dry whites do not have the outstanding hallmark of the reds and given the historic nature of the vintage are disappointing. Given the superb recent vintages it would be difficult to recommend any of these wines.

SAINT-EMILION

Wow do we have some outstanding wines here eclipsed by Cheval Blanc possibly as good as the 100 point 1998 and a candidate for wine of the vintage. This is the best wine at its best and closely followed by an amazing Ausone, they really do show their true Premier Grand Cru Classe A status. These are followed by a number of outstanding wines, Figeac, Canon, Angelus, Clos Fourtet, Beausejour Duffau Lagarosse, Pavie Macquin, Larcis Ducasse, Canon Lagaffeliere and many other of the affordable wines. Caution as there is a propensity for many of the middle to lower tier properties to over extract which gives you a rather unbalanced and tannic wine. Such a shame when this vintage has such purity of fruit, ripe tannins and great balance.

POMEROL

This commune has excelled again this year with so many amazing wines and I look forward to comparing these wines to the 2015 vintage in the years to come. Wine of the commune and candidate for wine of the vintage is Lafleur which received my highest score of any 2016 wine 97-99. Then come the amazing Vieux Château Certan, L’Evangile and best La Conseillante since the wonderful 1989, Clinet & Gazin.

SAUTERNES & BARSAC

Unfortunately these wines were not showing very well at all and we think this is an average quality for this region. It is rather unfortunate given the outstanding quality of the reds. Despite possibly incurring the wrath of the Sauternais we are unable to recommend any of the wines due to the enormous current stock of available outstanding Sauternes already bottled.