



Bordeaux

This is the first Stone, Vine & Sun list dedicated to Bordeaux. (Admittedly, when we founded the business ten years ago our messianic enthusiasm for the wines of the Rhône and Languedoc-Roussillon came with a contrarian disregard of Bordeaux). So why now? - apart, perhaps, from an indication of maturity (or rather middle age...). The reason is simple: the reds of the 2009 vintage. Last year we began selling the early releases of this great year, and their fruit, flesh and all-round appeal demanded that we zip down to Bordeaux in freezing January weather to hunt around for more. Whilst we were there Robert Parker was retasting the 2009s in Bordeaux. He re-affirmed his original judgement that *“this is unquestionably the greatest Bordeaux vintage I have ever tasted... What was clear in the tastings from the bottle...is the remarkable consistency of the vintage... Of course, everyone focuses on the top of the pyramid... yet, truth be known, they only represent a small percentage of what Bordeaux produces, and there are hundreds and hundreds...of wines under \$25 a bottle that represent absolutely compelling value”*. We couldn't put it better.

Of course this selection isn't simply of the 14 reds from 2009: we found fascinating little parcels of 2005s and 2006s. Then there are highly enjoyable and under-valued, beautifully perfumed whites: the unoaked examples with plenty of Sauvignon Blanc taste riper and weightier than wines from the Loire at the same price; and the oaked wines based on Semillon likewise offer a really fascinating alternative to white Burgundy. We also include a pair of rosés and four sweet wines.

STONE, VINE & SUN

WINE MERCHANTS

Mixed Cases

All include two bottles of each of the six wines listed, at a discount of at least 7.5%

Recent Vintages for Reds

This is a ridiculously over-simplistic summary (no space here for complex analysis of weather patterns) of the red wine vintages from 2005 to 2009. In part it explains the selection of reds for this offer, all bar one from the 2005, 2006 or 2009 vintages.

2005 A great year, but also a vintage producing powerful, very structured wines, with keeping potential, although many of the lesser wines are drinking perfectly now.

2006 A good rather than great year, but often excellent on the left bank. Most wines drinking well now.

2007 Oh dear. Heavily rain-affected year. Don't believe merchants who tell you the 2007s are "supple", "plump", "forward" or "charming": these are wine trade euphemisms for flabby, spineless, and lacking any sort of real heart. Avoid (like 1977, 1987, and 1997 - weird!).

2008 Again a good year - but the wines tend to be classic, stern and well-structured, so don't appear in this offer, though we may well feature them in the future.

2009 A really great year again; and as the wines have wonderfully open and lush fruit they can be enjoyed young. The only possible downside is the level of alcohol, as the perfect weather pushed up ripeness.

Bordeaux Values £85.50

(two whites, a rosé and three reds) Code BD112

- 2011 Château Haut Plaisance, Bordeaux Blanc (p.3)
- 2011 Château Ballan-Larquette, Bordeaux Blanc (p.3)
- 2011 Château Haut Plaisance, Bordeaux Rosé (p.4)
- 2009 Château Haut Moulinat, Bordeaux (p.5)
- 2009 Château Tour de Bellegarde, Bordeaux (p.5)
- 2009 Château La Plaige, Bordeaux Supérieur (p.5)

Class of 2009 £100.00

(six reds) Code BD212

- 2009 Château Tour de Bellegarde, Bordeaux (p.5)
- 2009 Château La Plaige, Bordeaux Supérieur (p.5)
- 2009 Château Les Petits Moines, Blaye, Côtes de Bordeaux (p.5)
- 2009 Château Les Gravières de la Brandille, Bordeaux Rouge (p.6)
- 2009 Château Galot La Chapelle, Castillon, Côtes de Bordeaux (p.6)
- 2009 Château Terres des Granges, Médoc (p.10)

Bordeaux Terroirs £141.00

(two whites and four reds) Code BD312

- 2010 Château Les Combes, Bordeaux Blanc (p.3)
- 2009 Château Beauregard Ducasse, Graves, Cuvée Albertine Peyri (p.3)
- 2009 Château Puy Fombrauge, Saint-Emilion (p.7)
- 2009 Château Les Gravières de la Brandille, Cuvée Prestige, Bordeaux Supérieur (p.7)
- 2006 Château Beauregard Ducasse, Graves, Cuvée Albert Duran (p.9)
- 2006 Château Pierre de Montignac, Cuvée Fernand Ginestet, Médoc (p.10)

Limestone Plateaux and Gravel Mounds £196.50

(six reds) Code BD412

- 2009 Vieux Château Palon, Montagne Saint-Emilion (p.8)
- 2006 Haut Faugères, St-Emilion Grand Cru (p.8)
- 2006 Château Beauregard Ducasse, Graves, Cuvée Albert Duran (p.9)
- 2006 Château Luchey-Halde, Les Haldes de Luchy, Pessac-Léognan (p.9)
- 2005 Château Loudenne, Médoc (p.10)
- 2006 Château Domeyne, Saint Estèphe, Cru Bourgeois (p.10)

White

2011 Château Haut Plaisance, Bordeaux Blanc, 12°

Bottle £6.95 Case £79.23 Code HAP111

This and the rosé overleaf come from M. Tramier's small vineyards at Pineuilh, east of Bordeaux towards Bergerac. A blend of 75% Semillon and 25% Sauvignon from vines averaging a healthy 35 years of age, this has attractive texture for a wine at this price. There's a pleasant scent of white flowers, followed by a fresh, easy-drinking mouthful of green apples. Perfect summer drinking. Now-2013

2011 Château Ballan-Larquette, Bordeaux Blanc, 12.5°

Bottle £8.50 Case £96.90 Code BAN111

From an estate owned by the Chaigne family, 40kms south-east of Bordeaux, and blended from halves of Sauvignon and Semillon. We have been offering this wine since the 2008 vintage and it is noticeable that we ship more each year as it finds an increasing number of fans. Attractive ripe apple scents; and that ripe red apple character follows on to the palate. Zippily refreshing, but with a little creaminess from the Semillon too. Charming. Now-2013

2010 Château Les Combes, Bordeaux Blanc, 12°

Bottle £9.25 Case £105.45 Code GRC610

See the box on page 7 for Frederic Borderie's estates. From 80% Sauvignon and 20% Semillon, this shows open, herbaceous aromas with undertones of gooseberry and asparagus. On the palate it has bags of acidity and lovely pink-grapefruit flavours. Impressive intensity. Now-2013

2010 Château Les Combes, Bordeaux Blanc - Semillon, 12°

Bottle £12.95 Case £147.63 Code GRC810

Terrific value for such a serious, full-flavoured, oaked white Bordeaux (8 months in barrel, half new oak, half second fill). Exotic scents of honeydew melon and ripe pears with floral hints of peach blossom. Splendidly ripe fruit - limes, waxy pears and guava. Perfect oak integration, giving a satisfying creaminess. Very persistent - this has huge potential. Now-2014

2009 Château Beauregard Ducasse, Graves, Cuvée Albertine Peyri, 13°

Bottle £14.75 Case £168.15 Code BDU109

See the box on page 8 for details of M. Perromat at Beauregard Ducasse. He only bottles 1,000 cases of this top white, named after the former owner of the vineyard, from halves of Semillon and Sauvignon, all in new oak. Lovely perfume: white peach, pineapple and melon, with vanilla. The creamy oak is so well integrated that this is ready to drink now, offering a delicious cocktail of white peach, passionfruit and even grape, with a twist of marzipan. The 2010 vintage, equally delicious, will follow. Now-2014

2010 Les Arums de Lagrange, Bordeaux Blanc, 13.5°

Bottle £23.50 Case £267.90 Code LGR610

A rather wonderful curiosity: since the 1996 vintage Lagrange, a Grand Cru Classé in Saint-Julien, has produced a tiny quantity of a white wine, Les Arums, from about 60% Sauvignon, 30% Semillon and 10% Muscadelle, barrel fermented and aged in oak. Powerful scents of white flowers and greengage. Entrancingly floral, rich and creamy, but the refreshingly sharp green fruit is also marked by a stony minerality. Great perfume and length. So stylish. Already terrific but will keep a few years too, becoming more honeyed. Now-2016

Rosé

2011 Château Haut Plaisance, Bordeaux Rosé, 12°

Bottle £6.95 Case £79.23 Code HAP511

A rosé carefully put together from halves of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Pretty scent of crushed red fruits, with a hint of boiled sweets. Fractionally off-dry - and all the more charming for it - fruity rosé, full of red fruits and perfect for enjoying on its own. Now-2013

2011 Château Les Combes, Bordeaux Rosé, 12.5°

Bottle £8.95 Case £102.03 Code GRC511

From Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, the latter *saignée*, i.e. juice drawn off a vat of crushed bunches of Cabernet grapes in the early stages of maceration. Pretty scent of cherries, lightly candied. Ample flavour, all cherries, strawberries and cream. This is a harmonious, dry rosé - perfect for picnics (cold poached salmon comes to mind). Now-2013

Great Value 2009s

Has any vintage, ever, produced such attractive Bordeaux Rouge?

2009 Château Haut Moulinat, Bordeaux, 13.5°

Bottle £7.25 Case £82.65 Code HAM109

From Jean Marc Rambaud in Saint-Pey-d'Armens, just east of St. Emilion, Scents of cherries, cream and a touch of vanilla. Light, fresh and juicy red fruit - *fraises de bois* - backed by a little well-integrated tannin. Smooth and elegant at this price. Surprisingly lengthy finish, displaying fruit and spice. "A soft, easy-going but ripe, strawberry and vanilla-flavoured wine with a nutty, savoury palate and a long finish. Great stuff. 89/100", www.thewinegang.com, September 2011. Now-2013

2009 Château Tour de Bellegarde, Bordeaux, 13.5°

Bottle £8.25 Case £94.05 Code TDB109

Crafted by the Janaud family at Villegouge near Fronsac, this 100% Merlot is all aged in barrel. So approachable, this delivers a pleasant scent of red fruits and a hint of fresh-cut oak. Opens out prettily on the palate, all bright redcurrant and red plums. Supple, with refreshing bite, and enlivened with hints of cinnamon and nutmeg. Balanced; and all too drinkable. Now-2013

2009 Château La Plaigne, Bordeaux Supérieur, 14°

Bottle £8.50 Case £96.90 Code PLA109

A return of an old favourite: we sold lots of the 2005 vintage, applauded by no less than Jancis Robinson, MW; and the 2009, from about 40% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc, and 25% Cabernet Sauvignon, lightly oaked, is just as good. Scents of really ripe red berries, with hints of vanilla, clove and even chocolate. Surprisingly fat and rich for a wine at this price. Raspberry and ripe redcurrant palate backed by soft but present tannins. Mildly spicy finish. Now-2014

2009 Château Les Petits Moines, Blaye, Côtes de Bordeaux, 14.5°

Bottle £8.75 Case £99.75 Code LPM109

Awarded a gold medal in the Bordeaux *Challenge International du Vin* in May 2011, Frederic Heraud's youthful and vigorous Bordeaux is so impressive. Very deep and solid hue. Attractive cassis and oak aromas. Weighty, silkily textured, this delivers powerful red and black fruit heightened with notes of mint and clove. This has the intensity, and correct tannic structure, of a more expensive Bordeaux. "What a brilliant value for money claret. For starters, it's mind-blowingly herbal in aroma thank to its very seductive streak of rosemary. Then on the palate it has a satisfying tight structure of well-defined tannins and a good balance of blackcurrant fruit and cloves to finish. Another French triumph. 90/100", www.thewinegang.com, August 2011. Now-2014

The Right Bank

This is the happy hunting ground for early drinking wines, based on Merlot, supported by the Cabernets, Franc and Sauvignon. Merlot ripens earlier and more easily than Cabernet Sauvignon, enabling higher yields (and thus a lower bottle cost); it is more suited to the clay and limestone sites of the right bank; and the resultant wine, often attractively red-fruited, is softer and plumper, enabling it to be enjoyed younger than the more structured and tannic, black-fruited Cabernet Sauvignon.

We were particularly struck by the quality coming out of what are known at the Saint-Emilion satellites: Lussac, Puisseguin, and especially Montagne Saint-Emilion. The latter has many vineyards on the same *calcaires à astéries*, limestone marked by starfish fossils, as the famed plateau of Saint-Emilion itself.

2009 Château Les Gravières de la Brandille, Bordeaux Rouge, 14°

Bottle £9.50 Case £108.30 Code GRC109

Magnum £19.95 Case (6 x 150cl.) £113.72 Code GRC209

Frederic Borderie's principal wine, 2/3 Merlot with about equal portions of Cabernets Sauvignon and Franc, unoaked. Deep hue but clear. Pretty scent of strawberries, cherries and vanilla. Berries on the entry too, but the mid palate develops with blackberry and plum. Deliciously ripe, concentrated and elegant, with fine tannins and a long, perfumed finish. We challenge you to find a better unoaked Bordeaux rouge! Now-2014

2009 Château Galot La Chapelle, Castillon, Côtes de Bordeaux, 14.5°

Bottle £9.95 Case £113.43 Code GLC109

A wine made at Château Brisson, from 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc, given 6 months ageing in old barrels. Pretty, red-fruited nose. Fleshy palate of raspberries, enlivened by hints of smoky, chocolatey oak. Although this is ready now, a decent tannic backbone gives this potential to develop too. Now-2017

2009 Château Franc Baudron, La Vallée, Montagne Saint-Emilion, 13.5°

Bottle £10.95 Case £124.83 Code FRB109

Michel Guimberteau, whose vines are on *argilo-calcaire* soils, is very much a vineyard man - now his land is in conversion to organic viticulture. From 60% Merlot, 20% each of Cabernets Franc and Sauvignon, this is crafted in a modern fruit-forward style, very open and fleshy. Lovers of Rioja will enjoy the mildly cooked strawberry fruit enhanced by vanilla and coconut notes. Not subtle, but hugely enjoyable. Now-2017

2005 Château Grand-Maison, Côtes de Bourg, 13°

Bottle £11.95 Case £136.23 Code GMA105

Côtes de Bourg is situated directly across the Gironde river, opposite the illustrious vineyards of Margaux. 89% Merlot, 6% Malbec, 5% Cabernet Franc. Offering aromas of cassis, cigar box and chocolate. Brambly fruit follows, with spicy and vanilla hints and excellent fat and concentration from the old vines here. Now-2014

2009 Château Puy Fombrauge, Saint-Emilion, 13.5°

Bottle £12.25 Case £139.65 Code PFM109

This estate, owned by the Rufat family since the 16th century, is very well situated on top of the line of hills in Saint-Christophe-des-Bardes just east of Saint Emilion, near Bernard Magrez's Saint Emilion Grand Cru, Château Fombrauge. There are 11 hectares of vines, 72% Merlot and 28% Cabernet Franc. Deep tone. Rather distinguished perfume of black fruit and toast. Bountiful blackcurrants and blackberries, with a liquorice note. Perfectly supple. Refined finish. Now-2018

2009 Château Les Gravières de la Brandille, Cuvée Prestige, Bordeaux Supérieur, 14.5°

Bottle £12.95 Case £147.63 GRC309

From 88% Merlot and 12% Cabernet Sauvignon, and a selection of older vines on prime gravel and clay soils, this has spent 12 months in oak barrels. It's already won a Gold medal in the major Paris Concours last year, and been named one of the five best Bordeaux Supérieurs of the vintage. Very ripe black fruit, with nutmeg on the nose. Overall impression is of a powerful but silky and aromatic wine, with menthol and spice notes around the core of black fruit. Solid, ripe tannins, promising keeping potential. Very good now, but perhaps even better 2013-2018.

2005 Château Mouchet, Puisseguin Saint-Emilion, 13.5°

Bottle £12.95 Case £147.63 Code MOU105

Pierre Tamone inherited this 6 hectare property from his grandfather in 1990. The blend is approximately 65% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc and 15% Cabernet Sauvignon. We were lucky to snaffle the last parcel of this vintage, which seemed to us very good value. Cooked red and black fruit aromas, with an attractive liqueur element. Very ripe and brambly, with spice and grip. Traditional, big-hearted wine which would still benefit from decanting. Now-2015

Frederic Borderie - Château Les Combes & Château Les Gravières de la Brandille

Frederic Borderie, in his late 30s, is one of our stars. How often does a wine get applauded by Jane MacQuitty in **The Times** and Jancis Robinson in the **Financial Times** on consecutive weekends? - yet Fred's 2005 Cuvée Prestige enjoyed that acclaim in December 2010. His grandfather started with just 10 hectares of vineyards, since built up to 40 near the cellar in Saint Médiard de Guizières. Fred has wide wine-making experience: having studied in the Loire and Rhône, he has also worked in the USA and Australia.

When we visited we were excited to see that every wine he made from the two family owned estates he runs - Château Gravières de la Brandille and Château Les Combes - was superb. We list his

two whites and rosé on pp. 3-4, and his reds here. He was especially pleased with his 2009 reds, although he had lower volumes than usual. He is quite matter-of-fact about them being the equal - both in quality and longevity - of more expensive wines from grander appellations. Modestly he ascribes their success to his vineyards being on gravelly river terraces of the Isle river, an underrated terroir with some similarities to the Médoc and Graves.



2009 Vieux Château Palon, Montagne Saint-Emilion, 14°

Bottle £20.75 Case £236.55 Code VCP109

The single most exciting encounter of our trip was with Gregory Naulet at Vieux Château Palon. A viticulturalist by training, he bought a 5 hectare estate, built a tiny, spotless, air-conditioned cellar and began bottling his own wine with the 2000 vintage. He is just the type of vineyard-focussed, perfectionist striver with whom we want to work - he reminded me of Yann Chave in Tain. Soils on his hillside vineyards are a mix of clay, limestone and sand, and his vines have a high average age of about 40 years. The single wine he makes, from 75% Merlot and 25% Cabernet Franc, goes into 4/5 new oak barrels and 1/5 second fill. This wine has already received multiple plaudits: including "Réussite exceptionnelle" in **La Revue du Vin de France** (June 2010) and 89-92/100 in **The Wine Spectator**. Entrancing scents of red fruit and mocha. Beautiful attack of red fruits, violets and spice (it reminded me of Côte Rôtie). This is silky, refined and so light in the mouth - one is barely aware of the tannins - but it has so much energy too. It's all red-berried finesse, and very long indeed. Now-2019

2006 Haut Faugères, St-Emilion Grand Cru 14.5°

Bottle £21.75 Case £247.95 Code HAF106

Haut Faugères is the second wine - beautifully presented - of Château Faugères, which has benefited from major investment (the new cellar, designed by Mario Botta, is breathtaking) from *parfumeur* Silvio Denz. From 85% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon, this is in a modern idiom, showing very ripe cassis on the nose, alongside savoury notes and smart oak. There's splendid volume and richness, with a core of ripe black fruit enlivened by exotic spice, coffee and earthy depths. Now-2016

Jacques Perromat at Château Beauregard Ducasse

Jacques Perromat's sixth generation family estate lies at Mazères near Langon at the southern end of the Graves, with about 50 hectares of gravelly vineyards on limestone sub-soils hacked out of the surrounding forest from 1850. This is as far removed - and not just in distance - from the grand estates of the Haut-Médoc as possible: here the farmyard is wholly unsigned (we struggled to find it!), and the cellar is a large old barn once used for drying tobacco. M. Perromat is a man of gruff charm but immense integrity, and prices his wine (see his white on p.4) so fairly. He certainly doesn't have any problem selling it - 50,000 bottles of his entry level 2009 red were being palletted up for Delta airlines at the time of our visit!



Graves and Pessac-Léognan

These two appellations make up the southern end of the left bank vineyards. The vineyards of the northern part of Pessac-Léognan have, in large part, been swallowed up by the growth of the city of Bordeaux - a few historic, highly valued estates such as Haut-Brion have resisted urbanisation but are now surrounded by housing. As in the Médoc, the land is distinguished by layers of gravels (hence the “Graves” name).

2006 Château Beauregard Ducasse, Graves, Cuvée Albert Duran, 13°

Bottle £12.95 Case £147.63 Code BDU606

We sold out of this lovely mature wine following Jancis Robinson’s review in the FT (see below), but have shipped more. See the page opposite for Jacques Perromat’s details. This is his top red, named after the ancestor who first planted the vineyards in 1850, based on older vines of 50% Merlot, 45% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Cabernet Franc. Mid ruby. Soft oak scents, and red berried fruit. This shows a pleasant balance between supple red fruit, with a hint of mint, and a true Graves stoniness. Good supporting tannins too. *“Excellent price for a five-year-old-wine. Lively, fresh, well-behaved, mineral claret”*, Jancis Robinson, MW, *Dazzling Reds* in the **Financial Times** magazine, 3rd-4th December 2011. Now-2015

2006 Château Luchey-Halde, Les Haldes de Luchy, Pessac-Léognan, 12.5°

Bottle £18.50 Case £210.90 Code HDL106

This enclave of vineyard at Mérignac, in the western outskirts of the city of Bordeaux, has a fascinating history: given over to the French Army for a military camp in 1917, it was not until 2002 that winemaking restarted here. The blend for this second wine is about 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, with about 5% each of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot, aged in barrels, about 1/3 new. Gentle ruby tone. Scent of soft red fruits, still showing some youthful charm, with cigar-box. Showing melting red and black fruits, this is supple, elegant and drinking so prettily. Now-2014

2000 Château Bahans Haut Brion, Pessac Léognan, 13°

Sold by case of twelve bottles only: £1200.00 Code BAH100

Just two **dozen** available of this second wine of Haut Brion. This wine is also priced at £1500-£2000 a case elsewhere.

“The 2000 Bahans Haut-Brion is fully mature, but I had indicated that back in 2003, giving it an anticipated maturity date of 2005-2016. Its smoky, soft berry fruit and notes of fresh porcini mushrooms intermixed with cigar tobacco and black currants are complex. This complexity is followed by a fleshy, elegant, silky wine to drink over the next 5-6 years. 91/100”, Robert Parker, **The Wine Advocate**, June 2010.

The Médoc

We are looking now at the thin strip of vineyards, some 70 kms long and 8 kms wide, stretching from near the Atlantic mouth of the Gironde, southwards along the left, west, bank via the Haut Médoc and the grand communes of St-Estèphe, Pauillac, St Julien and Margaux, to the northern suburbs of the city of Bordeaux itself. This is an unusual landscape, basically flat, with gentle rises signifying a greater depth of the gravel deposits which lie between the encroaching sands of Les Landes and the estuary. Trying to find value here (which is what, after all, we do) is not always easy. Our less expensive wines come from the north of the region, where the wines have true character but lack the finesse and breed of the Haut Médoc. Barring a few tiny spots of Burgundy, the central sector, very near the river, includes the grandest and most expensive vineyard land on the planet.

2009 Château Terres des Granges, Médoc, 14°

Bottle £9.50 Case £108.30 Code TDG109

From Alain Gheffar's 9 hectares of vines at Civrac in the north of the Médoc, 55% Merlot and 45% Cabernet Sauvignon, aged in old vats. Ripe red and black fruit scents, with a little smokiness. Very traditional, correct style, blueberry and blackberry. Now-2015

2006 Château L'Argenteyre, Médoc, Cru Bourgeois, 13°

Bottle £11.50 Case £131.10 Code ARG306

A blend of about 45% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot and 15% Petit Verdot, aged in oak, 40% new, from brothers Philippe and Gilles Reich at Bégadan, this is masculine, as a true Médoc should be. The nose has bags of blackberry and plum aromas with a touch of oak and coffee. On the palate it has excellent fruit concentration with black fruits and damsons, backed by traditional tannins. Now-2014

2006 Château Pierre de Montignac, Cuvée Fernand Ginestet, Médoc, 13.5°

Bottle £14.25 Case £162.45 Code PDM106

From a vineyard owned by the Salette family at Civrac, not far from the Gironde, a blend of about 62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot and 3% Cabernet Franc, crafted in a modern style. Aromas of cedar and toast, followed by an attractive black-fruited palate, rather classic in its restraint and purity. Now-2016

2005 Château Loudenne, Médoc, 13.5°

Bottle £15.95 Case £181.83 Code LOU105

55% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Cabernet Franc and a drop of Malbec. This goes into 1/3 new oak, 1/3 second fill and 1/3 third fill. The consultant here is Michel Rolland, and his hand shows in this ripe and powerful wine. Purple core. Terrific aromas, all cassis and prune wrapped in smart, smoky oak - expansive and expensive! Strong black fruit backed by a tannic structure. Very long. A really rich, well-composed 2005. Now-2017

2006 Château Domeyne, Saint Estèphe, Cru Bourgeois, 12.5°

Bottle £16.50 Case £188.10 Code DOM106

A Cru Bourgeois since 1932, Domeyne was bought by Claire Villars-Lurton of Haut-Bages Liberal in Pauillac and her husband Gonzague Lurton of Margaux

classed growth Durfort-Vivens, and they have set to revitalising it. From about 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Franc, this has a mature, deep tone, appealing scents of soft red fruits, cassis and vanilla, and an elegant, spicy palate, with fruit cake aromatics. Correctly structured and drinking perfectly. Now-2014

2009 Château Charmail, Haut-Médoc, 14°

Bottle £20.95 Case £238.83 Code CHM109

Charmail has very well-sited vines next to Saint Estèphe. This is Merlot dominated; and given the same oak treatment as Loudenne above, i.e. the barrels renewed every three years. We loved this, but Mr Parker puts it so much better. *“This is another over-achieving estate that tends to produce wines with lots of intensity and structure. This wine certainly has the formidable intensity one expects from Charmail, but the tannins are silky smooth and the result is the sexiest Charmail to date. An opulent, even voluptuously textured wine, full-bodied and dense purple in color, it is a seductive blend of 47% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Sauvignon and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. It was bottled unfinned and unfiltered and came in with natural alcohols of 14%. The low acidity, plush fruit and silky tannins all suggest drinking this over the next decade. Drink: 2012 - 2022. 90/100”*, Robert Parker, **Wine Advocate**, February 2012. From now, but best 2013-2019

2009 Château Deyrem-Valentin, Margaux, Cru Bourgeois, 14.5°

Bottle £23.95 Case £273.03 Code DYM109

Deyrem-Valentin, an estate in the north of the commune run by Jean Sorge with his two daughters, isn't well-known: an annual production of just 6,000 cases is modest by Bordeaux standards. 50% Merlot, 48% Cabernet Sauvignon, plus 1% each of Petit Verdot and Carmenère, again into barrels renewed every three years. Deep and opaque. Scents of brambly fruit with a lead pencil note. Ripe, rounded and supple. Cooked plum core, textured but not heavy at all, with again a hint of graphite. Perfumed finish. *“Ripe, sweet fruit with as yet unintegrated oak. Very tight, youthful and juicy - lovely balance and depth already evident though, and oozes style. 17+/20”*, Richard Hemming, www.jancisrobinson.com, 26th January 2011. 2013-2020

2009 Château de Pez, Saint Estèphe, 14°

Bottle £32.95 Case £375.63 Code PEZ109

In this vintage 47% each of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot with 6% Petit Verdot. Deep purple. Very, very ripe aromas, almost a hint of strawberry jam with vanilla. So fat and textured, smooth and velvety. A big, voluptuous wine, full of red fruit, cassis and a tobacco note. But fresh too, and with real grip on the finish. 2014-2021 Limited stock

2005 Château de Pez, Saint Estèphe, 13°

Bottle £35.50 Case £404.70 Code PEZ105

De Pez has been part of the Roederer stable since 1995. 45% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc and 3% Petit Verdot, given 16 months in barrel, 40% new. This is surprisingly open and gorgeous, showing overt toasty oak over cassis on the nose and velvety mass. Ripe blackcurrants, with savoury and mocha touches. Still on the way up. Now-2017 Limited stock

Sweet wines

Sauternes and Barsac, the great sweet wines of Bordeaux, used to be a bargain, but prices have risen sharply over recent years. One looks to outlying appellations such as Sainte-Croix du Mont, which lies just across the Garonne from Sauternes, and Monbazillac, far to the east, for value.

2009 Château Mestreyrot, Sainte-Croix du Mont, 12°

Bottle £8.95 Case £102.03 Code MSP109

Thierry Chasagnol makes this 100% Semillon at Mourlane not far from the Garonne. Pale gold. Scents of seville oranges and marzipan. Honeyed - showing the widespread botrytis characteristic of the 2009 vintage - rather than fully sweet, with a fresh palate showing orange blossom, fresh apricot and toffee. Perhaps not a true dessert wine, but lovely with cheese or perfect with foie gras. Now-2015

2005 Château Haut Bernasse, Le Clos, Monbazillac, 12.5°

Bottle £12.95 Case £147.63 Code HAB105

This would be double the price if it had Sauternes on the label! A blend of 70% Semillon, 20% Sauvignon Blanc and 10% Muscadelle. Deep gold. A lovely nose of honey, white flowers and vanilla botrytis. Extremely rich on the palate with honey and spice flavours and a touch of elderflower. Very sweet but balanced by excellent acidity and a touch of vanilla from 50% oak maturation. Now-2014

2008 Les Carmes de Rieussec, Sauternes, 13.5°

Bottle £22.50 Case £256.50 Code CMR108

The second wine of Château Rieussec, named after the Carmes de Langon monks who owned the estate in the 18th century. A blend of 85% Semillon, 10% Sauvignon Blanc and a little Muscadelle. Scent of freshly cut pineapple. Very sweet and intense, all marmalade and baked apple with brown sugar. Attractive, lemony finish. Now-2018

2007 Château Bastor-Lamontagne, Sauternes, 14° [37.5cl.]

Half bottle £15.95 Case [12 x 37.5cl.] £181.83 Code BLM107

A well-sited estate near Suduiraut, Bastor-Lamontagne tends to a fresh, citrusy style of Sauternes, from about 80% Semillon, 17% Sauvignon Blanc and 3% Muscadelle. Splendid nose - oranges, pineapple and stone fruit. The palate is both fresh and creamy, with a lemon-curd and vanilla character. Smooth, harmonious and with potential. Now-2018

Telephone: 01962 712351 Fax: 01962 717545

Email: sales@stonevine.co.uk Website: www.stonevine.co.uk

No. 13 Humphrey Farms, Hazeley Road, Twyford, Hampshire, SO21 1QA