



THE 2009 BORDEAUX VINTAGE

Not since the great 2005 vintage have I spent a week tasting so many compellingly good wines across all regions. The Bordelais are already hailing this to be a golden year on par with their best vintages ever. In some cases they are right, as certain chateaux have made brilliant wines that even eclipse their 2005s. Others have the overt ripeness of 2003 or the rich opulence of the 1982 and 1990. Each region and Chateau have their own hypothetical comparisons, even though every vintage is unique. The beauty of this vintage is that the purity of ripe fruit and fine tannins can be appreciated now and in many wines there is also structure to age for several decades.

From the vine to the wine

This was an ideal vintage for the vigneron as nature allowed for a long, healthy growing season. The cool winter temperatures in early 2009 killed off undesirable bugs and delayed budding and the vegetation cycle. When the vines eventually did bud in early April they had managed to avoid the late frosts allowing for perfect flowering in the sunny last weeks of May and early June. A freak hail storm damaged some vineyards in Margaux on the 11th May but apart from this incident most vines continued to flourish right up to harvest.

The late ripening Cabernet Sauvignon performed perfectly for most growers, achieving optimum ripeness and concentration under warm sunny skies well into mid-October. The light breeze and lack of rain intensified the fruit sugar concentration and tannins resulting in some of the highest phenolic levels ever recorded, such as Cos d'Estournel at 99 IPT and also some high alcohol contents, like Pavie-Macquin with 15% volume alcohol. However, there is a freshness and balanced acidity in the best wines. As with the 2003 and 2005 vintages, there were long warm days and little rain between June and September, but the cool evenings running up to this harvest conserved the acidity levels.

Merlot as a grape is more susceptible to draught and this showed in some wines where it had been left to hang and ripen too much to express *terroir* typicity. Those soils with good water retention produced the best grapes in the driest vineyards. The better growers managed to cope by strict fruit selection and timely harvests. Chateau Margaux decided to sacrifice most of their merlot this year with just 9% making the grand vin. The poorer efforts resulted in some jammy alcoholic wines with uneven tannin ripeness. Those who picked their merlots in September generally made better balanced, fresher wines than those who let them hang well into October.

The yields have been abundant this year and even in Sauternes, Chateau Yquem recorded one of its largest crops since 1900. This is a glorious vintage for Sauternes, Barsac and other noble rot appellations. There are similarities with the 2001s in terms of quality, with plenty of power and luscious sweet fruit

from the more humble estates to premier grand cru level. The dry whites were less consistent as better growers had to pick their grapes earlier to avoid loss of acidity, flabbiness and high alcohols. A few of the usual suspects achieved the balance required.

Below is a list of some the best performing chateaux with scores out of 100 points. There were also many superb cru bourgeois, second labels and petit chateaux. We have listed a few which will be worth purchasing en primeur.

Buying en Primeur this year

We have noticed unprecedented demand already for the top growths in this vintage. As usual we will try to please all existing and new customers where possible. Those regular customers will automatically receive an option to buy their allocations at the release stages. Newcomers should register their interest shortly to avoid disappointment. Those who buy a spread of Chateaux from different classifications will be favoured on release price offers.

The Notes

MARGAUX	Price (12 / 75cl)	GW Score	Other Scores
Alter Ego - Second label of Ch Palmer. 51% Merlot and 49% Cabernet Sauvignon. Very pure blackberry, white pepper and mineral nose. Fresh robust cassis fruit, earthy minerality and silky tannins. Good depth. Drink from 2017.		91-93	89-92 RP 91-93 NM
Palmer – Slightly higher yields than 2005. 34 hl/ha of perfectly ripe bunches picked from Sept 23 rd to 14 October. 41% Cabernet Sauvignon, 52 % Merlot and 7% Petit Verdot. Fresh aromas of blackberry, white flower, pepper and dried herbs. Robust fleshy cassis underbelly with minerality and balanced acidity. There is a full layered composition that slowly builds like a symphony. Pure ripe tannins and a long focussed finish. Compelling stuff . Drink 2022-2040+		95-97	95-98 JS 94-96 RP
Brane-Cantenac- Gutsy and full flavoured. Chunky plummy fruit with mocha notes. Long with textured ripe tannins. Drink 2016-2025+		91-93	93-95 RP 89-92 JS
Cantenac Brown – rich chewy ripe cassis fruit with chunky tannins. Quite a masculine four-square style but layered with good balance and full flavour.		92-94	94-96 RP 93-96 JS
Giscours- Pure sweet berry fruit aroma that follows through on a full fleshy mid palate. Ripe black cherry, mocha and soft tannins. Big and opulent style. Drink 2016-2025+		92-94	92-95 JS 91-93 RP

Kirwan - Minerally, sweet black fruit and mixed herb aromas. Medium bodied, fleshy ripe tannin and some structure. Well balanced finish. Drink 2015-2020	90-92	90-92 RP 92-95 JS
Lascombes -Intense aromas of cassis, currant and cloves. Solid, extracted fruit, earthy with textured soft tannins. Long powerful finish. Made from 48% both Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. A blockbuster. From 2017-2027+	94-96	94-96+ RP 92-94 JS
Malescot St Exupery – A massive chunky style. Fat, rich plummy, berry fruit. (65% Cabernet Sauvignon). With liquorice and plain chocolate undertones. Moderately high alcohol, soft tannins and a seamless long finish. Drink 2015-2025+	92-94+	97-100 JS 93-97 RP 17.5 JR
Margaux -Another brilliant effort by Paul Pontallier and his team. A massive wine made from 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. Fresh blackcurrant, cherry and vanilla nose. Layers of textured ripe, pure berry fruit packed with graceful tannins and moderate alcohol of just 13.2%. Elegant, fresh with restrained power. Great potential. Only 36% went into this grand vin. 2025-2040+	96-98+	98-100 RP 96-99 JS 19.5 JR
Marojallia - Deep purple, Intense aromas of cassis, bilberries with notes of vanilla and lavender. Very full bodied, concentrated crème de cassis, glycerine, seamless smooth tannins. Ripe, sweet, rounded with a powerful finish. Drink 2015-2035	92-95	92-94+ RP 92-95 JS
du Tetre -Fresh aromas of vanilla & blackcurrant. Pure and gutsy. Rich, earthy, full bodied with fine ripe tannins on a long dry finish. 2014-2022+	91-93	90-92 RP 88-91 NM
Rausan Segla –Intense, pure berry and white pepper aromas. Creamy unctuous with full, chewy currant and mocha flavours harmonising with elegant, ripe tannins. Highly consistent style with long lasting flavours. From 2017-2027+	93-95	96-98 NM 93-95 RP
Pavillon Rouge - One of the best second labels making up 41% of the blend. Intense fresh cassis and spice aromas. 67% of Cabernet Sauvignon & 29% Merlot. 4% Petit Verdot. Higher cabernet than usual giving freshness and purity of fruit. Seductive berry	92-94	91-93 RP 92-94 NM

mid palate with full velvety tannins. Good length . 2017-2024+

SAINT JULIEN	Price (12 / 75cl)	GW Score	Other Scores
Beychevelle -Aromas of blackberry, pencil and earth. Medium bodied forward black fruit, and mineral tension. Textured polished tannins. Well balanced. Classic. From 2015-2025		91-93	92-94 RP 93-95 NM
Branais Ducru - Powerful cassis, pepper and cedar wood. Solid backbone made from 65 % Cabernet Sauvignon, 28 % Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot & 3% Cabernet Franc. Focussed, pure berry fruit and big ripe tannins, Great structure and St Julien elegance. 2017-2027+ .		92-94	92-95 RP 92-95 JS
Clos de Marquis – The superb second label of Ch Leoville Lascazes is as good as ever according to Robert Parker-			91-93 RP 89-92 JS
<i>'The 2009 Clos du Marquis (70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot, and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot) came in at 13.75% alcohol. It exhibits a deep ruby/purple hue along with sweet notes of crème de cassis, great purity, a full-bodied mouthfeel, and terrific texture as well as length. It should evolve for 20-25 years. (Tasted once.) Drink 2010-2035'</i>			
Ducru Beaucaillou – Not tasted but James Suckling notes:- <i>'This has an impressive powerful and hearty structure, with seductive floral, currant and licorice aromas and flavors, showing powerful tannins at the end. This sneaks up on you at the end. Structured and very, very powerful. The blockbuster tannins are sweet and fruit-coated. This is a classic, powerful style of Ducru. May be best yet. Wow.'</i>		-	96-99 JS 96-98+RP 17JR
Gruaud Larose - Pure berries & herbs with hints of liquorice and mocha.. Deep, blackberry and currant with a firm tannic and slightly austere finish. 2017-2025+		91-93	94-97 JS 92-94+RP
Lagrange –73% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% merlot. Intense blackcurrant and vanilla from 60% new oak. Chunky textured fruit with mocha and solid ripe, tannic backbone. Full flavoured powerful style to put away. Drink 2017-2027+		91-93	90-93 RP 93-95NM 17 JR
Langoa Barton – Pure, ripe berry, cedar and herbal notes. Elegant, focussed, long grip but		91-93	90-92 RP 92-94 NM

classic and well balanced. 2015 –2024+

Léoville Barton – Intense cassis with cedar, black olive and spice box nose. Edgey, cassis, mocha flavours with earthy sinews between the fruit and tannic structure. Top class St Julien with a long layered finish. 2018-2035+ . Classic stuff similar to the 2000 in style.

93-95+

93-95+ RP
92-95JS

Léoville Las Cases- Not tasted sadly, but here is the note from Neil Martin

96-98 NM
96-100 RP
97-100 JS

A blend of 76% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Merlot and 9% Cabernet Franc, with 6.4% vin de presse, delivering 13.4% alcohol and a pH of 3.65. The nose has brilliant delineation: this is the first thing that hits you, as if you can peer into the clos of the vineyard itself. Very expressive, almost feminine and wily, crystalline (this is something that I did not expect.) The palate is medium-bodied, saturated and supple on the entry, seamless tannins, a sense of controlled opulence here, very pure, rounded towards the finish, again, gliding across the mouth and caressing, rather than gripping it. The finish is very pure, almost Napa in style, but retaining sufficient structure and prudence of alcohol to allow that Saint Julien terroir to shine through'.

Léoville Poyferré – Full intense sweet ripe cassis fruit and toasted oak. Chewy, chunky fruit and well extracted. Lovely purity, concentration and creamy seamless finish.

93-95

97-100 RP
93-96JS
17.5 RR

Talbot – Powerful berry fruit and leaf aromas. Dry, full and robust. Berries, minerals, tobacco with pepper notes and dry tannins linger on the finish.

92-94

92-94 RP
92-95 JS

PAUILLAC	Price (12 / 75cl)	GW Score	Other Scores
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Armailhac – A blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 24% Merlot, 14% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. Pure ripe berry, earth and vanilla.

90-93

92-94 RP
92-95 JS

Pure berry fruit, minerals and vanilla. Textured elegant berry fruit with notes of pepper and toasted oak. Silky tannins on the finish. A serious wine superb balance.. Drink 2013-2020+

Batailley- Classic Pauillac nose of blackcurrants, pencil and oak. Robust with

90-92

90-92RP
94-96 NM

chunky black fruit , textured tannins on a long dry finish. Superb for the chateau and usually good value. Drink 2013-2030.

Carruades de Lafite – The most popular second label of all. This makes up 55% of the crop
Cassis, berry, earth and oak vanilla on the aroma. The fruit is sweet and ripe on the palate with a forward fleshy opulence. Polished with some cedar, minerals and textured tannins on the finish.. From 2014-2025+

91-93+

92-94+
89-92JS

Clerc Milon – Fresh, aromatic cassis, liquorice and white pepper notes. Fresh, medium bodied pure blackberry, minerals and bold tannins. Powerful, focussed with depth and structure. The tannins are quite dominant so this will need some time. A serious Clerc. 2015-2024+

91-93

93-96 JS
90-92 RP
17 JR

Duhart Milon – 63% Cabernet Sauvignon and 37% Merlot. Rich cassis, acacia, minerals and cigar smoke. Big but ripe tannins with pure textured berry fruit with minerals and vanilla. Deep serious but still approachable. Better balance than the Carruades.. Long dry finish. Drink 2015-2035+.

93-95

94-96RP
91-94 JS
91-93 NM

Lafite-Rothschild – A massive 82.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot and 0.5% Petit Verdot.
45% of the crop went into this incredible grand vin. Intense pure crème de cassis aromas with notes of liquorice,, mixed spice and minerals. Powerful full-bodied yet so so elegant. All the pure cassis fruit, minerals, cedar and spice are all so harmoniously integrated with the silky seamless tannins. Beautifully balanced with elegance, compelling finesse and class. Great terroir expression and a structure composed for several decades. A perfect wine will evolve without doubt . Drink 2018-2060+
My wine of the vintage and the best young Lafite ever tasted.

98-100

98-100JS
98- 100RP

Latour – A high 91.3% Cabernet Sauvignon and 8.7% Merlot. Classic nose of cassis, dried herb, rock minerals and cedarwood. Massive, powerful yet compact and restrained.. Layers of fresh berry fruit, minerals, tobacco leaf.

97-99

98-100 RP
97-100 JS
19 JR

Normal alcohol of 13,7% with fresh balanced acidity and very fine tight tannins. A back tingling finish that builds on and on. A gigantic wine that will evolve slowly. Great and up there with the best. From 2030-2050+

Les Forts de Latour – The second label represents 46% of the estate’s production with 65% Cabernet Sauvignon and 32% Merlot.. Intense aromas of currants, smoke, graphite, minerals with a hint of plain chocolate. Chewy, robust fruit with mineral tension, spice and ultrafine tannins. Excellent depth, acidity and balance. Will age well. Drink 2020 2035+.

92-94

93-95RP
92-95JS

Lynch-Bages – A blend of 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, raised in 70% new oak. Pungent aromas of cassis, black cherry, smoke and cigarbox. Full flavoured ripe cassis and dry brooding tannins. Big extraction but the balance is there with a fresh acidity on the cool dry finish. Close in style to the great 1990 but possibly greater. Drink 2018-2040+ Essential for the cellar.

94-96

94-96 RP
94-96 NM
96-99 JS

Pichon –Comtesse de Lalande - The popular second growth is made from 75% cabernet sauvignon, 20% merlot and 5% petit verdot. Intense nose of berries, white flower, graphite and vanilla. Super textured berry fruit with spice, mineral tension and purity. Voluptuous with balanced power and precision. There is fresh acidity that accentuates the long finish. Drink from 2017-2040+ Outstanding. effort from Champagne Roederer who now own the chateau.

94-96

96-98 RP
95-98 JS

Pichon-Baron – 67% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot and aged in 80% new oak. Intense blackcurrant, cigarbox , graphite and vanilla. Full bodied, layered berry fruits with spice and minerality. A cloaked powerful classic that has the structure to age for years. Drink 2020-2040+

93-95+

93- 5RP
95-97 NM

Pontet-Canet - Alfred Tesseron has been making one of the best value and most consistent crus in the region over the last few years. Sadly I did not try the 2009 but here is an enthusiastic note from Robert Parker, clearly a fan of the style:-

97-100 RP
94-97 NM
95-98 JS
18 JR

'This vineyard, which sits on the high plateau of Pauillac adjacent to Mouton Rothschild, has produced a 2009 of extraordinary intensity and purity. It is outrageously concentrated, with silky tannin (the sweetest I have ever tasted in a Pontet-Canet as well as the highest measured), an opaque purple color, and copious notes of graphite, cassis, licorice, and subtle smoke and forest floor. Full-bodied and unctuously textured with striking purity and definition, it is a wine of colossal weight as well as elegance (in itself a poster boy for this paradox in 2009). This brilliant Pauillac requires a decade of cellaring despite its voluptuous texture. It should evolve for 50-75 years. (Tasted four times.) Drink 2020-2095.'

Le Petit Mouton –63% Cabernet Sauvignon 22% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc make up the lovely second label of Mouton. Aromas of black fruits, graphite with spice and pepper. Full textured mid palate with opulent dark berries, silky tannins and a fresh acidity that lifts the dry finish.

90-92+ 91-93 JS
90-92 RP

Mouton Rothschild –88% Cabernet Sauvignon and 12% contribute to a fresh aroma of blackcurrant, white flower, cedar and tobacco leaf.. Small yields of 30hl/ha go into this wine. Concentrated forward black fruit, currant mid palate with underlying mineral tension. Creamy, silky tannins but well structured. Fresh and elegant but gradually builds on the palate. A powerful beauty that ranks close to the great 1982. Drink 2020-2035+

96-98+ 96-98+RP
97-100JS
18.5 JR

GRAVES / PESSAC-LEOGNAN	Price (12 / 75cl)	GW Score	Other Scores
Le Clarence de Haut-Brion – The second wine of Haut Brion has a chewy, ripe juicy concentration of berry and plum fruit, dried meat, herbs and minerals . Long finish.		90-92	90-93RP 90-93 JS
Domaine de Chevalier Rouge –This property now is consistently making some of the best value and best quality wines from the appellation under the guidance of expert Stéphane Derenoncourt who is the consultant winemaker (of Pavie Maquin fame & la Mondotte, etc). Medium bodied, textured berry and blueberry fruits with underlying herb, minerals and spice. Beautifully balanced and		92-94	94-96 RP 93-96 JS

elegant style with fine tannins and the classic Pessac earthy minerality . Drink 2018-2026+

Domaine de Chevalier Blanc – Another good vintage for this property. This has some fresh apple and pineapple fruit balanced by some firm acidity. Serious though tight for now with depth and power lurking beneath. It should age well.	91-93+	95-98 JS 90-92 NM 17.5 JR
Haut-Brion – The blend consists of 46% merlot, 40% cabernet sauvignon and 14% Cabernet franc. An intense, heady nose of sweet cassis, currants, mocha, black pepper and cedar. Layered concentrated flavours of cassis, vanilla, tobacco, earthy minerals and spice. Evocative, dense tannins and a powerful long lingering finish. Better than the 2005 and more like the great 1989 in it's structure. From 2024-2050+	96-98+	98-100 RP 97-100 JS
Haut-Brion Blanc – 38% Semillon, 62% Sauvignon. Fresh aromas of peardrop, grapefruit, melon and honey which follow on the palate. Very pure and fresh with zingy citrus depth and a powerful lasting finish. Balanced acidity, weight and a graceful, long finish. Drink 2012-2030.	94-96	94-97JS 17 JR
La Chapelle de La Mission Haut-Brion -The second label of La Mission boasts an aroma of blackberries, smoke and graphite. Rich robust black fruit, pepper and mocha. Ripe firm tannins and a lasting warm finish. Drink 2016-2024.	91-93	91-94 RP 90-93JS 17.5JR
La Mission Haut Brion – This year La Mission is made with 47% merlot, 47% cabernet sauvignon and 6% cabernet franc. It boasts an intense aroma of currants, liquorice, minerals and cocoa. Powerful chunky very ripe berry fruit, herbs with some big dry tannin extraction. A powerful (14.7% alcohol), robust style with a long warm finish. Drink 2020-2030+	94-96	98-100RP 95-97NM 94-97JS
Les Carmes Haut Brion - Intense berry and mocha, prune, briar and tobacco notes. Medium bodied with full delineated flavours. Pure focussed fruit, chewy tannins and a mineral undertone. A long dry finish. 2017-2027+	92-94	90-92 RP
Pape Clément Rouge – Low yields and hand selected grapes (40% merlot & 60 % cabernet	94-96	95-97+ RP 94-96 NM

sauvignon) make up the assemblage, with elevage in new oak. Powerful nose of sweet currants, smoke and vanillin. Layers of pure chewy fruit with mineral earthy complexity and espresso notes. Very full-bodied with brooding tannins but a polished finish. Packed. Drink 2018-2028+ 94-97JS

Pape Clément Blanc – An exotic floral nose with grapefruit and fruit salad flesh. Pure with forward fat mid palate. Good weight but missing freshness and balanced acidity. Drink 2011-2015+ **89-91** 92-95JS

Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc – Fresh, floral nose. Clean austere citrus and racy acidity. Pure dry and elegant. 2012-2015. **90-92** 93-96 JS
17 JR

Smith Haut Lafitte Rouge – Powerful aromas of currants, gravel, tar and bitter chocolate. Sumptuous pure ripe textured fruit with broad textured tannins. Quite a lot of extraction here creating a wine with stuffing and lots of depth. This should age gracefully. Drink 2018-2028+. A superb sleeper. **92-94+** 96-98+RP
95-98JS

SAINT EMILION	Price (12 / 75cl)	GW Score	Other Scores
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Ausone - Deep colour almost opaque. 55% Cabernet Franc and 45% merlot make the blend from a small 27hl/ha yield. Floral, ripe berry, cassis, herb and oak. Rich, very full bodied with robust layers of black fruits, chalky minerality, fine slightly tight tannins, pepper and spice. Intense style that will take a decade to come round. A classic. Only 1333 cases made. Drink 2020-2055+. This may merit a higher score in bottle as the balance is exquisite but the tannins are a little austere.	POA	96-98	95-97+RP 97-100JS
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Chapelle d'Ausone – The excellent second label of Ausone. Pure aromas of blackberries, graphite and plain chocolate. Fine depth and elegance. Pure satin soft tannins, oak and an earthy mineral finish lifted by subtle acidity. Only 500 cases made. Drink 2015-2025+ Delicious !		93-95	93-95 RP 95-98JS
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Cheval Blanc - Possibly the best Cheval since the legendary 1998. The merlot was picked in late September making up 58% of the assemblage. Cabernet franc unusually only made up 42% in this vintage. Evocative, intense smoky aromas of black fruit, blueberries, spice and tobacco notes. Opuent		97-99	98-100RP 96-99JS 100 TA
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sweet concentrated cassis, prune, glycerine and layers of ultra fine silky tannins. Powerful with 14.5% alcohol though light on it's feet. Precise with a very long full sensational finish. Drink from 2020-2050+. Beguiling.

<p>Canon – Owned by Chanel and the investment is now showing good return after years of neglect. This is the best Canon since the legendary 1982. 75% Cabernet sauvignon and 25% merlot. Intense aromas of acacia, blueberry and vanilla with fresh purity of fruit which follows on a voluptuous fleshy palate. Sumptuous long finish. From 2017-2040+</p>	<p>94-96</p>	<p>93-95RP</p>
<p>Canon-La-Gaffeliere – 55% merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc and 10% cabernet Sauvignon. Rich aromas of currant, earth and plum. Layered ripe blackberry jam concentration, liquorice with vanilla. Depth, fine tannins and a warm sweet finish. Pure and polished . 2012-2030+</p>	<p>92-94+</p>	<p>94-96 RP 94-97JS 17 JR</p>
<p>Clos Fortet- Powerful aromas of cassis, plum and rock. Flashy textured full ripe cassis and plum fruit. Almost chewy concentration with notes of espresso, minerals and spice.. Velvety tannins and layered fruit. Harmonious. Drink 2017-2035+</p>	<p>94-96</p>	<p>95-98RP 94-97JS</p>
<p>Larcis Ducasse – Pure,charcoal, prune and spice aromas. Rich and textured with creamy plummy fruit. Fine tannins and a warm smooth finish. Pure and stylish.. Drink 2015-2033+.</p>	<p>92-94</p>	<p>91-94RP 92-95 JS</p>
<p>Fonbel – The small plot below Ausone and made by the same owner, Alain Vauthier. Fresh black cherry and plum fruit with soft dry tannins. Well balanced and drinking soon. 2010-2018.Good value</p>	<p>88-90</p>	<p>87-89RP 89-915JS</p>
<p>Figecac –Smoky, herbal, tobacco aromas. Medium bodied blackberry fruit, cedar notes and a very fine dry tannin finish. A powerful, full meaty classic style with a high percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon 35%. Stunning depth and poise.. From 2015-2035+</p>	<p>94-96</p>	<p>97-100JS 17+ JR</p>
<p>Grand Mayne –One of the finest offerings from this chateau in years. Aromas of lush black cherries, cassis and chalky notes. Robust, chewy ripe fruit and tannin grip but structured well. 2015-2028+</p>	<p>90-92</p>	<p>92-94 RP</p>

<p>La Gaffelière – A classic blend of 80% merlot and 20% cabernet franc picked 29 September to 9 October. This reminds me of the great 2005. Pure richness of black fruit, minerals and mocha. Full fleshy body with sublime purity and layers of ripe silky tannins. There is a freshness and good terroir expression beneath a balanced 13.5% alcohol. Drink 2015-2040+</p>	<p>94-96</p>	<p>94-96 RP 93-95 NM</p>
<p>Monbousquet Rouge - 60% merlot, 30% cabernet franc and 10% Cabernet sauvignon. 28hl/ha. Serious winemaking by Cuves inox and elevage in 60% new oak a40% one wine wooden barrels. Rich aromas of black plum, chocolate and mixed herbs. Textured jammy black fruit, opulent with a hint of tar and tobacco. Good depth and silky finish. Drink 2012-2020.</p>	<p>92-94</p>	<p>92-94RP 89-92 JS</p>
<p>Moulin St Georges – Fresh, cassis, smoke and mineral nose. Plain chocolate, chunky black fruits, oak, tar and mineral complexity. Deep textured finish. Excellent. 100% new oak elevage like Ausone. Alain Vauthier owns and makes this for a fraction of an Ausone price. Excellent value. Drink 2014-2020+.</p>	<p>91-93</p>	<p>90-93 NM 91-93 JS 88-90 RP</p>
<p>Beau-Séjour Bécot – Smoky,blueberry,graphite aromas. Fresh , pure crème de cassis, kirch, minerals and fine tannins. Smooth and polished finish. Surprisingly 15% alcohol but light on it's feet and harmonious.</p>	<p>93-95</p>	<p>93-95 RP 93-96 JS</p>
<p>Bellevue-Mondotte – Mainly merlot, 90%, from two hectares above Pavie on a limestone plateau. Small yield of 22hl/ha. Explosive powerful aromas of black fruits, currants, herbs and charcoal. Full blown dry palate of black fruits and tobacco tar. Brooding, austere tannin indicate some over extraction. Perse used 100% new oak but perhaps 80% new with 20% 1 year old, as used for Pavie, would have contributed to a better balanced, less forced style. Drink 2025-2045+</p>	<p>92-94</p>	<p>95-100 RP 95-98 JS 16.5 JR</p>
<p>Pavie-Decesse - 90% merlot and 10% cabernet franc. Similar winemaking techniques as Pavie. Very chunky black fruit, mocha and rock aroma. On the palate it has a full bodied chewy fruit, layered with raw tannin, minerals and 14.5% alcohol. Big and bold from 2025-2045+</p>	<p>92-94</p>	<p>95-100RP 95-98 JS</p>
<p>Pavie – 28hl/ha with a final assemblage similar</p>	<p>95-97+</p>	<p>98-100 RP</p>

to the 2005 of 70% merlot, 20% cabernet franc, 10% cabernet sauvignon. Hand selected grapes harvested in early-mid October, vinified in cuves bois with elevage in 80% new oak for 24 months. 4-5 week maceration and no fining nor filtration. Owner Gerard Perse has made an intense powerful style with exceptional depth and purity. Aromas of crème de cassis, tobacco leaf and chalk. The palate is very full, opulent with layers of silky black cherry and cassis fruit, minerals, glycerine and ripe tannins. Enormous yet completely balanced with a breathtakingly long finish. Focussed, precise and fresh with enough acidity to counteract the 14.5% alcohol. Profound style that shows it's terroir in a concentrated form. This may turn out to be a perfect wine once all the components integrate but time will tell. Drink 2024-2050+

95-100WS

Pavie-Macquin – Aromas of crème de cassis, clove and graphite.. Full bodied cassis, black cherry with spice and minerals. Fine purity and freshness for a 15% alcohol cru. Polished with depth of opulent fruit intermingled with silky ripe tannins. Focussed and classy. From 2015-2035. Stéphane Derenoncourt is the talented winemaker here.

93-95

94-96+RP
93-95 NM

Petit Cheval – This is a blend of 35% merlot 65 % cabernet franc. Fresh blueberry, smoke and clove aromas. Full pure sweet berry fruit, quite chunky, spice and silky fine tannins. The relatively high acidity lifts the finish. 2012-2022+. One of the best second labels.

92-94

91-93 RP
90-93 JS

Troplong Mondot –Aromas of violets, black fruits, oak and spice. Robust, full bodied with chewy black fruit and big brooding tannins. Long dry finish. A serious structured wine but a bit forced on the extraction and astringent on the finish. Drink 2018-2030. I preferred the 2005.

92-94+

95-97RP
94-97JS
86-88 NM

POMEROL	Price (12 / 75cl)	GW Score	Other Scores
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Beauregard –Fresh aromas of berry, damson, vanilla and minerals. Charming silky dark fruits. A lighter style Pomerol for earlier drinking. Usually good value.

89-91

Clinet – With a final blend of 87% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc and 3% Cabernet Sauvignon this boasts powerful aromatics of blueberries, minerals, smoke and tar. Robust, chewy fresh cassis fruit with tobacco notes and toasted oak. Big tannic style with depth and structure for long term ageing. Long dry finish. Drink 2018-2035+

93-95

97-100RP
95-98JS

L'Evangile –(not tasted but here is a note from Robert Parker)

96-99 JS
96-100+RP

-The prodigious 2009 l'Evangile may be the greatest wine made at this estate during my 30+ years of tasting Bordeaux. Yields were 39 hectoliters per hectare, and the harvest was relatively long, with everything being picked at perfect maturity between September 11 and October 7. The estate is doing malolactic in barrel (a la Burgundy), and the final blend (95% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Franc) achieved 14.5% natural alcohol. Amazingly, this cuvee is aged in 100% new oak barrels, yet no oak is present in the aromas or flavors.. Dense, full-bodied, and opaque purple-hued, it boasts an extraordinary bouquet of spring flowers, blueberries, blackberries, and boysenberries. A blue and black mountain fruit character suggests coolness, but an intensity and voluptuous texture present the paradox of 2009. The wine has all the characteristics of a hot vintage in terms of power, texture, and richness as well as elements of a cool vintage in its precision, elegance, freshness, and vibrancy. Make no mistake about it, this is an enormous wine that is incredible to taste. . This wine should drink well for 30-40 years. Bravo!

L'Eglise-Clinet – Another spectacular offering from proprietor Denis Durantou, the 2009 ranks close to the 2005 in quality. Harvested 14-28 September this blend of 85 % Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc has an inky/ruby/purple colour followed by a fresh bouquet of black cherries, plum, pepper and espresso. A very powerful layered palate with silky smooth tannins and glycerine in it's fullness. It has a huge finish yet with finesse and structure for long term ageing. Anticipated maturity: 2020-2050+. Monumental effort.

96-98

98-100RP
96-98 NM

Petit Village – This is a fine aroma of black fruits and spice. Silky textured lush plummy fruit with smoke and fine tannins. Balanced acidity and smooth finish. Best in years for this property. Drink 2012-2025+

92-94

92-95 JS
88-90 RP

Ch Pétrus – Not tasted but Robert Parker notes:-

96-100 RP

Harvested between September 17 and the beginning of October, the 2009 Petrus reminds me of what the 1982 tasted like at a similar age. Sweet tannins along with extraordinarily pure mulberry and black cherry fruit intermixed with hints of licorice and truffle are found in this 2009 in addition to a voluptuous mouthfeel, an unctuous texture, and, for Petrus, relatively high alcohol of 14.2%. Stuffed, rich, and creamy-textured with a full-bodied, powerful, exuberant personality, it should be approachable in a decade, and last for 40-50 years

La Conseillante – Aromas of fresh black fruits, violet flower, earth and espresso. Full and fleshy fruit with textured fine tannins and a long powerful finish. Pure, layered, with structure and great finesse. Only 3000 cases made. Bravo to their talented winemaker Jean-louis Laporte. Drink 2015-2040+

94-96

95-98+RP
96-98 NM

Lafleur – Sadly not tasted but Neil Martin notes:-

98-100 NM
97-100 JS
94-97RP
18.5 JR

A blend of 47% Merlot and 53% Cabernet Franc, the Merlot cropped the 16th, 17th and 23rd September and the Cabernet Franc on 28th September and 1st October, representing around 50% of production in 2009. A lucid purple hue, the Lafleur '09 has a cerebral bouquet much like the 2008, but with perhaps a little more purity and femininity. Blackberry, a touch of small black cherry, some notes of violets coming through with aeration. The palate is full-bodied with firm, more masculine tannins than implied by the aromatics; deep broody dark fruits, blackberry, tar, graphite, more linear on the tightly wound finish where the minerality is really evident. More cohesive at this stage than any vintage I have tasted since the 2005, long and persistent towards the finish. Undoubtedly one of the wines of the vintage. Thrilling. Tasted April 2010.

La Fleur Petrus - Not tasted. Parker notes:-

96-98+RP
95-98 JS

'A mind-boggling effort, this is the finest La Fleur Petrus I have ever tasted. Layers and layers of black raspberry and black currant fruit intermixed with licorice, truffles, and earth are found in this dense ruby/purple-colored elixir. With extraordinary purity, decent acidity, melted tannins, and massive fruit along with elegance and precision, it should drink well for three decades or more.'

SAINT-ESTEPHE

Price (12 / 75cl)

GW Score

Other Scores

Calon Ségur – Not tried but Robert Parker notes:-

93-96 JS
92-94+ RP

Made in a very different style for this estate, the 2009 is composed of 90% Cabernet Sauvignon (the highest I have ever seen here), 7% Merlot, and 3% Petit Verdot, and achieved 13.8% natural alcohol. It is a big, rich, tannic, structured, dense ruby/purple-tinged wine offering a sweet kiss of creme de cassis, loamy soil, and spice box. Remarkably, despite the use of 100% new oak because of the 2009's power and intensity, there is not a hint of wood in either the aromatic or flavor profile. Never that showy from cask, this traditionally made St.-Estephe should be forgotten for 10-15 years, and drunk over the following 40-50 years. My rating is very conservative, and I expect it to rise considerably as this wine comes out of its infancy.

Cos d'Estournel – Made with 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, and 2% Cabernet Franc. Very low yields of 31hl/ha. Rich, intense cassis, pepper, cloves and exotic spices. Big brooding tannins, loads of opulent sweet cassis, spice and black fruits. Beautifully focussed, polished with a very powerful long warm finish. Relatively low acidity of 3g/l and at least 14.5% alcohol that accentuates the full rounded 'Napa' style. One of the highest phenolic tannin concentrations of 99 IPT. Some may not like this huge extracted Cos but it is a phenomenal wine that has the structure to last several decades. Drink 2022-2040+

97-99

98-100 RP
97-100 WS

Dame de Montrose - In marked contrast to the grand vin this second label has over 80% ripe plummy merlot with notes of wall flower and graphite pencil on the aromas. Easy juicy, silky sweet cassis with some tarry grip on the finish.

90-92

91-93 RP
88-91JS

Pagodes de Cos – The second wine has 69% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% merlot and 1% Petit Verdot. Serious second label with all the hallmarks of the grand vin itself. Asian spices, silky ripe cassis, big ripe tannins and depth of finish. The best Pagodes ever! Drink from 2017.

91-93 91-94RP
90-93 JS

Montrose - A blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, and the rest 5% Cabernet Franc as well as a 1% of Petit Verdot, it possesses a black inky hue followed by a sweet, provocative nose of creme de cassis, dried flowers, graphite, and cedar wood. Fleshy, full-bodied, elegant yet powerful, fresh blackcurrants with notes of white pepper and plain chocolate. The textured layered flavours and ripe big tannins (98 IPT) contribute to a huge finish that lingers for over half a minute. A absolute classic that will eclipse the great 2005,2003 & 1990 vintages, but patience will be required. Anticipated maturity: 2025-2050.' Kudos to Jean-Bernard Delmas the great former winemaker of Haut Brion

97-99 96-100 RP
97-100 JS
95-97 NM

Phelan Ségur – Intense, deeply textured cassis. Chunky yet polished fruit. Ripe tannins and fine length. Consistent as usual. Drink 2015-2024+

90-93 90-93 JS
90-92 RP

Lafon Rochet – Deep, pure berry and graphite notes. Full, fresh fruit and chewy dry tannic edge . Focused brooding character. Drink 2018-2025+

91-93 91-93 RP
91-93 NM
89-92 JS

SAUTERNES & BARSAC

Price (12 / 75cl)

GW Score

Other Scores

Rieussec – From the Lafite team comes another outstanding performance from this popular Sauternes. Intense aromas of honeysuckle, mineral and spice. Unctuously full bodied but delineated and balanced by fresh acidity. Almost as good as the 2001 showing honey, peaches and cream and an exhilarating long clean finish.

94-96+ 95-97 JS
92-95 JS

Suduiraut – AXA who own the property have consistently produced a splendid Sauternes and this ranks as a personal favourite of the vintage surpassing both the 2007 & 2001 successes. Intense floral and citrus aromas with honey, peach and lemon curd. Very pure powerful full bodied style with layers of sweet succulent honey and zesty citrus fruits, minerals and glycerine. Textured and imposing

97-99 97-99 NM
94-97 JS
18.5 JR

with a long yet finely balanced finish. Drink 2015-2040+

La Tour Blanche – Fresh aromas of ripe nectarine, honey and blossom. Fat and unctuous with honey, apricot, tropical fruits and minerals. Full monstrously rich and decadent in style. The layers keep building on the long voluptuous finish. 2017-2050+ Sensational.

95-97 94-96NM
18 JR

Guiraud – Fabulous style. Not a heavy weight but medium bodied. Lots going on with fresh floral aromas of peach, blossom and cinnamon. Honeyed fruit, with some spice and minerality on a fleshy creamy mid palate. Sumptuous long, pure and finely balanced. Delicious.

94-96 95-98 JS
94-96 NM
18 JR

Coutet– Floral nose with honey and pear. Full bodied style with sweet honey, pineapple and tangerine peel. Powerfully long finish and a hint of burnt botrytis on the finish. The Mouton Rothschild team, who own this Barsac chateau, have made one of their best ever. Drink 2012-2018+

94-96+ 96-98 NM
95-98 JS

Yquem– Not tasted but here is James Suckling's note:-

97-100 JS
96-98 NM
19 JR

'It's an explosion of fruit, yet it's very refined. I absolutely love the nose on this, with apricot tart, apple crumble, caramel and crème brûlée. Full-bodied, superripe and spicy, with mango, papaya, spices and sweet dried lemons. Incredibly long. It really rocks your socks off. Amazing. This could be even better than 2001.'

Winemaker, Pierre Lurton, says that there is record sweetness of 155g/l sugar but everything is balanced and this could surpass the perfect 2001 and past vintages once bottled

PLEASE ASK OR CHECK OUR SITE FOR QUANTITIES AVAILABLE & OTHER CHATEAUX.

Scorers (out of 100 points):

GW= Guy Willings, MD of L'Assemblage Ltd. (All non italic notes).

RP= Robert Parker Jnr, 'The wine Advocate' publication.

NM=Neil Martin

JS=James Suckling, 'The wine Spectator' publication.

JR= Jancis Robinson (out of 20 points).

2009 BORDEAUX SCORES

Outstanding wines	GW	Excellent wines	GW	Very good wines	GW
Ch.Lafite -Rothschild	98-100	Ch.La Mission Haut Brion	94-96	Ch.Pavillon Rouge	92-94+
Ch.Latour	97-99	Ch.Pichon Comtesse	94-96+	Ch.Pape-Clement	92-94+
Ch.Cheval Blanc	97-99	Ch.Figeac	94-96	Ch.Beau-séjour Bécot	92-94+
Ch.Montrose	97-99	Ch.Canon	94-96	Ch Brane Cantenac	92-94+
Ch.Ausone	96-98+	Ch.Pichon Baron	93-95+	Ch Branon	92-94+
Ch.Haut Brion	96-98+	Ch.La Gaffelière	93-95+	Ch Beychevelle	92-94
Ch.L'Eglise-Clinet	96-98+	Ch Leoville Poyferre	93-95+	Ch.Les Carmes Haut Brion	92-94
Ch.Margaux	96-98+	Ch.Carruades de Lafite	93-95	Ch.Pavie Macquin	92-94
Ch.Cos d'Estournel	96-98	Ch.Duhart Milon	93-95+	Ch.Monbousquet	92-94
Ch.Mouton Rothschild	96-98	Ch.Lynch Bages	93-95	Ch.Giscours	92-94
Ch.Palmer	95-97	Ch Lascombes	93-95	Ch.Petit Village	92-94
Ch.Pavie	95-97	Ch.Malescot Saint- Exupery	93-95	Ch Canon –La-Gaffelière	92-94
NOT tasted by GW	RP	Ch.Rauzan Segla	93-95	Ch. Gruaud Larose	92-94
Ch Petrus	96-100	Les Forts de Latour	93-95	Alter Ego	91-93+
Ch Trotanoy	98-100	Petit Cheval	93-95	Ch Talbot	91-93+
Ch Pontet Canet	97-100	Ch Smith Haut Lafitte	93-95	Ch Phelan-Segur	91-93+
Ch.Leoville Lascases	96-100	Chapelle D'Ausone	93-95	La Chapelle de la Mission	91-93
Ch.L'Evangile	96-100	Ch Marojallia	93-95	Ch.La Dame de Montrose	91-93
Vieux Ch Certan	96-99	Ch. Larcis Ducasse	93-95	Ch.Cantenac-Brown	91-93
Ch La Fleur Petrus	96-98+	Ch. La Conseillante	93-95	Ch.ClercMilon	91-93
Ch Lafleur	95-97+	Ch Troplong-Mondot	93-95+	Ch.Saint Pierre	91-93
Ch Ducru Beaucaillou	96-98+	Ch Clos Fortet	93-95	Ch Beauregard	91-93
Ch La Dome	95-97+	Ch Bellevue Mondotte	93-95	Ch.Cos Labory	91-93
Le Pin	95-98	Ch Domaine de Chevalier	93-95+	Ch.Lafon Rochet	91-93
Ch Calon Segur	92-94+	Ch Leoville Barton	93-95+	Ch.La Lagune	91-93+
		Ch Branaire Ducru	93-95	Ch.Le Clarence Haut Brion	90-92
				Ch.Tronquoy Lalande	90-92
				Ch.De Pez	90-92
				Ch.Lagrange	90-92
				Ch du Tertre	90-92
Dry Whites	GW			Sauternes & Barsac	GW
Ch Haut Brion Blanc	97-99			Ch.Yquem	97-100
Ch La Mission	94-96			Ch.Suduiraut	97-99
Ch Dom.Chevalier	94-96			Ch.La Tour Blanche	96
Ch Pavillon Blanc	93-95			Ch Rieussec	96
Ch Pape Clément	92-94			Ch.Guiraud	95
Ch.Smith Haut Lafitte	92-94			Ch.Climens	95
Ch Fieuzal	91-93			Ch.Coutet	95
GW: Score out of 100 points by Guy Willings, L'Assemblage				Ch.De Malle	94
RP - Score out of 100 points by Robert Parker Jnr, The Wine Advocate					