

Montrachet
Fine Wine Merchants
2016 Bordeaux En Primeur
Tasting Notes & Opinion



2016 BORDEAUX

Great reds from St Julien, Pauillac & St Estèphe

After a mild, wet winter that replenished water reserves, spring continued dull and humid. Bud break was as normal and there was a high risk of fungal disease as the mild winter hadn't killed off the dormant spores from the previous year. The only benefit was that the cloudy skies enabled Bordeaux to escape the frosts that hit Burgundy and the Loire on the night of the 29th April.

Bordeaux was also lucky to have a small window of fine weather at the beginning of June. A week of wind, warmth and sunshine enabled all the grape varieties to flower quickly and evenly. With a large number of fertile embryonic flower clusters having been laid down during the fine 2015 summer, Bordeaux, in contrast to eastern and northern France, was suddenly looking at a bumper crop. But with the weather quickly reverting to the cold and wet, how was this large crop going to withstand the pressure of mildew and oidium, and reach anything like full maturity?

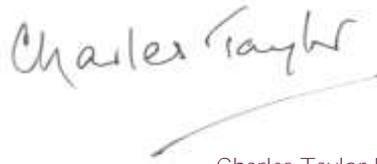
Fortunately, the weather improved dramatically. July and August were both hot and dry. The glorious weather continued into September, and many vines began to suffer from drought, particularly young plants without extensive root systems on free-draining sandy and gravel soils. Welcome rain, 30-40mm on 13th September, enabled the vines to photosynthesise again and accelerated the ripening process with no significant dilution effect as the soil was so dry.

Some of the earlier-ripening white vineyards had started picking before the rain. Fortunately, the high summer day-time temperatures had been complemented by no more than average night-time temperatures, enabling the grapes to retain much-needed acidity. The 2016 dry whites are pure and clean with plenty of ripe fruit and will give much immediate pleasure. However, they won't age as long as the finest white wine vintages, such as 2012 and 2014, both cooler summers. The reds, in contrast, are exceptional. The merlot on the right bank was harvested at the end of September, quickly followed by the merlot in the Médoc. The cabernets were picked more leisurely, often not finishing until the third week of October. As a result, 2016 was one of the longest growing seasons on record with the harvest also stretching over more than a month on some properties. Growers could choose the optimum moment to

pick each parcel, there being no constraints as the fruit was healthy and the weather continued fine well into October. Bordeaux is, happily, now choosing to make fresher, less alcoholic, less tannic wines. For Sauternes, the mid-September rain was most welcome, kick-starting the noble rot, and further modest amounts of rain in October continued the development of botrytis. The result is many rich, full-bodied wines, more akin to the 2015s than the fresher, crisper 2014s. 2016 is the fourth successful vintage in a row, unheard of in Sauternes, and happily combines both quality and quantity.

Overall, the best wines are from the northern half of the Medoc where there is the greatest emphasis on cabernet sauvignon. This later ripening variety withstood the summer drought best and could take full advantage of the fine weather that followed the mid-September rain. Unsurprisingly, the wines of St Julien and Pauillac are superb and those of St Estèphe and further north are often equally good and significantly denser and more concentrated than in 2015. The excellent quality happily descends right the way down the ladder with numerous crus bourgeois and petits châteaux producing their best ever wines.

In style the wines are less opulent than 2015 with lower levels of alcohol and higher levels of acidity. Less hedonistic, they are fresher tasting and will often require more patience. Many are comparing 2015/2016 with 2009 (more immediately appealing) and 2010 (backward but potentially longer-lived). Which brings me on to price. I fear that many top châteaux will take the opportunity of a great vintage and a euro which is weak against many currencies to raise prices significantly. The world-wide demand for these wines is so great that their successful sale is all but guaranteed. Fortunately, there will be affordable wines at the fourth and fifth growth level and the many crus bourgeois who continue to offer great value for money. These châteaux are making stricter selections every year and, with increased investment in both their vineyards and wine-making equipment, have, in 2016, often made their best ever wines. Despite the current weakness of sterling, these are wines to buy, hold and drink. They will give huge enjoyment in five to fifteen years time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. Below the signature is a long, thin horizontal line that tapers at both ends, serving as a decorative underline.

Charles Taylor M.W.

April 2017

PAUILLAC

Château Lafite Rothschild

1er Grand Cru Classé, 92% CS, 8% M

New estate director, Eric Kohler, continues to make the supremely elegant wines favoured by his predecessor Charles Chevallier. The 2016 is denser and more concentrated than the delicious 2015 with beautiful, creamy, old-vine, blackcurrant fruit and a wonderful close-knit texture. Has the silkiest of tannins and builds in the mouth to a fabulous finish. Drink 2026-2040.

Château Mouton Rothschild

1er Grand Cru Classé, 83% CS, 15% M, 1% CF, 1% PV

This tastes like a cross between the 2005 and 2010 vintages; it has the freshness and structure of 2005 with the extra ripeness and swagger of 2010. Another great success for estate director, Philippe Dhalluin. 53% of the crop was included in the grand vin which will, as usual, be aged in 100% new oak, although the fruit is so concentrated that the wood only peeps through. Fabulously rich wine with just the right amount of tannin and stunningly long aftertaste. Drink 2026-2040.

Château Latour

1er Grand Cru Classé, 92.9% CS, 7.1% M

Frédéric Engerer and his wine-making team have again made the densest and most concentrated of the Médoc first growths. Only 36% of the crop used for the grand vin, the fruit being selected from the central sections of L'Enclos. **Has all the elements for a great Latour;** intense, blackcurrant aromas, plenty of ripe tannin, rich, generous texture and extremely long finish. Unfortunately, as in previous years, the wine won't be offered en primeur but at a later date to be decided by owner, François Pinault. Drink 2026-2045.

Château Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande

2ème Cru Classé, 75% CS, 21% M, 4% CF

Nicolas Glumineau continues to refine the Pichon Comtesse style. He has managed to retain all the elegance and generosity for which the château was famous in the 1980s and 1990s whilst adding extra structure and depth. With masses of vivid, blackcurrant fruit on the nose and the silkiest of tannins on the palate this is a supremely, elegant wine that will be hugely enjoyable young but with the ability to age most gracefully. Drink 2024-2038.

Château Pichon Longueville Baron

2ème Cru Classé, 85% CS, 15% M

One of the finest wines of the Médoc outside of the first growths. Christian Seely restricts the production of the *grand vin* to just 45% of the estate, essentially the predominantly cabernet vineyards situated just across the **D2 road from L'Enclos of Château Latour**. This is deeper and more concentrated than the 2015, with fine, fresh, blackcurrant and cedar aromas. The tannins are ripe and carefully extracted giving a rich, succulent texture and impressive, long aftertaste. Drink 2025-2040.

Château Lynch-Bages

5ème Cru Classé, 75% CS, 19% M, 4% CF, 2% PV

Jean-Charles Cazes continues to produce Lynch-Bages with a little extra ripeness and opulence than in the past. This is rich and sumptuous with beautifully ripe, blackcurrant fruit. The ripe tannins add structure and the fresh acidity gives class and elegance. Overall a classic Pauillac combining power and elegance, a complete wine. Drink 2025-2040.



Château Batailley

5ème Cru Classé, 85% CS, 12% M, 3% PV

The classy 2016 continues the remarkable improvement made at Château Batailley since Philippe Castéja took over from his father and appointed Arnaud Durand as winemaker. Arnaud considers it a cross between the 2005 and 2010 with the attributes of both vintages to the fore. I find it rich and ripe with concentrated fruit, lovely freshness and fine structure. As good as any young Batailley I've tasted. Drink 2025-2036.

Château Pontet-Canet

5ème Cru Classé, 62% CS, 32% M, 4% CF, 2% PV

Owner Alfred Tesseron and winemaker Jean-Michel Comme continue to run the estate biodynamically and pick as late as they dare in order to achieve maximum ripeness. Part of the crop is now aged in 900 litre concrete mini-vats rather than the traditional oak barrels in order to reduce the influence of the wood on the wine. The 2016 is another unctuous, very ripe wine, with plenty of sweet, juicy fruit but not as much freshness as the other top Pauillac *crus classés*. Drink 2025-2035.

Château Grand-Puy-Lacoste

5ème Cru Classé, 79% CS, 21% M

Xavier Borie has given up the lease on his aunt's fifth growth Château Haut Batailley but continues to quietly make some of the highest quality, characterful, age-worthy Pauillac at Grand-Puy-Lacoste and, importantly, sells it at a sensible price. Only 60% of the crop is now used for the grand vin, the rest being sold as Lacoste-Borie. The 2016 is both fresh and spicy with fine, cassis fruit, carefully-judged tannins and a rich, succulent texture. Drink 2025-2038.



Château Clerc Milon

5ème Cru Classé, 55% CS, 29% M, 13% CF, 2% PV, 1% C

Another fine Pauillac fifth growth, splendidly situated just across the D2 road from Châteaux Lafite and Mouton-Rothschild. Owned by Château Mouton-Rothschild but run independently by director Jean-Emmanuel Danjoy. He has complete autonomy but can also call on the help of Philippe Dhalluin and the Mouton technical team. Overlooking the Gironde estuary, the cooler east-facing vineyard has a higher proportion of merlot resulting in a wine that combines warm, plummy fruit with fine freshness and acidity. Drink 2025-2035.

Château d'Armailhac

5ème Cru Classé, 62% CS, 28% M, 8% CF, 2% PV

Recently this estate, also owned by Château Mouton-Rothschild, has become one of the most improved Pauillac fifth growths. The proportion of cabernet franc in the vineyard has been steadily reducing as it is replaced with cabernet sauvignon. The result is a denser, more concentrated wine with masses of red and black fruits on both the nose and palate. More full-bodied than in the past, the texture has become more generous whilst retaining much-needed freshness and vitality. Drink 2024-2032.

Château Haut-Bages Libéral

5ème Cru Classé, 75% CS, 25% M

This may well be the best value Pauillac fifth growth this year. Claire Villars has excelled herself on this relatively small estate, splendidly situated just to the north of Château Latour. The 2016 has classic, cedar and blackcurrant aromas and a lovely, seamless texture with ripe tannins, intense plummy fruit and fresh acidity. Rich and powerful, archetypal Pauillac with an impressive, long aftertaste.

Drink 2024-2032.

Château Bellegrave

55% CS, 45% M

Great value *cru bourgeois* whose vineyard lies just to the north of Château Latour. The estate is run by brothers Ludovic and Julien Meffre and the 2016 is the best Bellegrave ever. Wonderful cedary nose and firm but ripe tannic structure. A glorious Pauillac at, hopefully, a very sensible price. Drink 2024-2030.

SAINT JULIEN

Château Ducru-Beaucaillou *2ème Cru Classé, 85% CS, 15% M*

After the longest vegetative cycle ever recorded at Ducru-Beaucaillou (bud-break at end of March, final day's harvest on October 17), Bruno Borie and new technical director Remi Lafourgue (ex Château Margaux) have made an exquisite wine combining polished, ripe fruit with the finest tannins and delicious, fresh acidity. This isn't as exuberant as Bruno's earlier vintages but has greater finesse and elegance. 13.6% alcohol but with wonderful concentration, a seamless texture and a marvelously long aftertaste. Will be aged in 100% new oak. Drink 2025-2038.

Château Léoville Poyferré *2ème Cru Classé, 60% CS, 33% M, 5% PV, 2% CF*

After forty vintages at Poyferre, Didier Cuvelier is thinking about retirement. As usual, picking started later (October 5) than at the other Leovilles and continued until October 20. This has even more depth and concentration than the opulent 2015 with a close-knit texture that really coats the mouth. Impressive length on the finish. This has all the elements to become a great Poyferré. Drink 2026-2038.

Château Léoville Barton *2ème Cru Classé, 86% CS, 14% M*

As usual, this is one of the densest and most tannic wines of Saint Julien but these are the ripest tannins that I've ever seen in a young Barton wine. Technical director, François Bréhant, has excelled and made a wine with rich cassis and cedar aromas and intense, vivid, blackcurrant fruit on the palate. As usual, the ripe tannins and fresh acidity will guarantee a long life. Will be aged in 60% new oak. Drink 2026-2038.

Château Gruaud Larose *2ème Cru Classé, 69% CS, 29% M, 2% CF*

Typical, rich, fleshy Gruaud which has masses of ripe fruit to complement the copious but fine tannic structure. A new, steel watchtower has been built in the vineyard enabling wonderful views of the vineyards of Saint Julien but this quality of wine needs little advertisement. Gruaud is consistently making one of the best value second growth wines and this great success will be aged in 80% new oak barrels. Drink 2025-2036.

Château Léoville Las Cases

2ème Cru Classé, 75% CS, 14% M, 11% CF

First growth quality as is often the case at this fine estate that makes the most powerful and concentrated wine of Saint Julien. Quantity as well as quality with the crop yielding 40 hl/ha. This is the finest young Léoville Las Cases that I've ever tasted, just beating the magnificent 2005 and 2010 vintages due to its combination of ripe fruit, seamless texture and silky tannins. A great wine in the making. Drink 2028-2040.

Château Langoa Barton

3ème Cru Classé, 55% CS, 37% M, 8% CF

Made in the same cellar and by the same team as Léoville-Barton but the extra merlot gives a suppler, fleshier wine. Almost identical blend of grape varieties as last year but the wine has slightly higher acidity and a fresher flavour. Length rather than breadth on the palate, this will age gracefully and develop extra volume and sweetness as it does. Drink 2025-2036.

Château Branaire-Ducru

4ème Cru Classé, 64% CS, 27% M, 6% PV, 3% CF

One of the most stylish wines of Saint Julien with wonderfully pure, blackcurrant fruit on both nose and palate. Lovely, close-knit texture that leads on to an impressive, long finish. This is another great success from owner Patrick Maroteaux and wine-maker Jean-Dominique Videau that maintains Branaire's position as one of the very best *crus classés* outside of the first and second growths and a source of great value for money. Drink 2025-2036.

Château Gloria

60% CS, 30% M, 7% CF, 3% PV

Under the same ownership as *4ème cru classé* Château Saint Pierre, Gloria is as good as many of the Saint Julien classed growths. Owner Jean-Louis Triaud and wine-maker Rémi di Constanzo continue to resist the temptation to incorporate more of the Gloria vines into Château Saint Pierre and this is rich and round with masses of ripe, spicy fruit. More tannic than the opulent and forward 2015, this will require greater time. Will be aged in 45% new oak. Drink 2025-2032.



Clos du Marquis

73% CS, 24% M, 3% CF

Not the second wine of Château Léoville Las Cases but a wine that stands on its own merits, made from separate vineyards situated on the western side of the D2 road where the soil is sandier and has more clay. Since 2015 there has also been a second wine, La Petite Marquise, which has enabled owner Jean-Hubert Delon to make a stricter selection and use a higher proportion of cabernet sauvignon. Will be aged in 55% new oak. Rich, powerful wine with lovely, succulent texture and beautifully fresh finish. Probably the finest Clos du Marquis ever. Drink 2025-2036.

Château Lagrange

70% CS, 24% M, 6% PV

Estate director Matthieu Bordes harvested 46 hl/ha, 10% less than in 2015 and the extra concentration shows in the wine. This is the best ever wine from Château Lagrange where much of the vineyards were planted in the 1980s following the purchase in 1983 by Suntory. Those vines are now 30 years old and in their prime, giving glorious wine that has both depth and class. Lovely, blackcurrant nose followed by intense, brooding fruit on the palate. This is solid yet generous with silky tannins and a long, sweet finish. Drink 2025-2035.

Château Moulin Riche

63% CS, 26% M, 11% PV

No longer the second wine of Château Léoville-Poyferré (that is now Pavillon de Poyferré) but essentially a separate 22 hectare estate situated a kilometre to the west of the Poyferré vineyards. With more cabernet sauvignon than last year and a generous quantity of petit verdot this is a full-bodied, tannic wine that will require patience. Made by the Poyferré oenologist, Isabelle Darwin, and in the same swaggering style, this is a great success.

Drink 2025-2032.

Château du Glana

56% CS, 44% M

One of the few remaining *crus bourgeois* in Saint Julien but with Gloria by far the best. Run by brothers Julien and Ludovic Meffre, only 40% of the crop is selected for the grand vin, a stricter selection than many *crus classés*. The new plantings on the more qualitative *riparia gloire* rootstock are now 15 years old and giving fabulous wine. This is rich and dense with lovely, blackcurrant fruit and silkier tannins than the Meffre brothers have achieved in the past. *Cru classé* quality. Drink 2023-2030.

SAINT ESTÈPHE

Château Cos d'Estournel

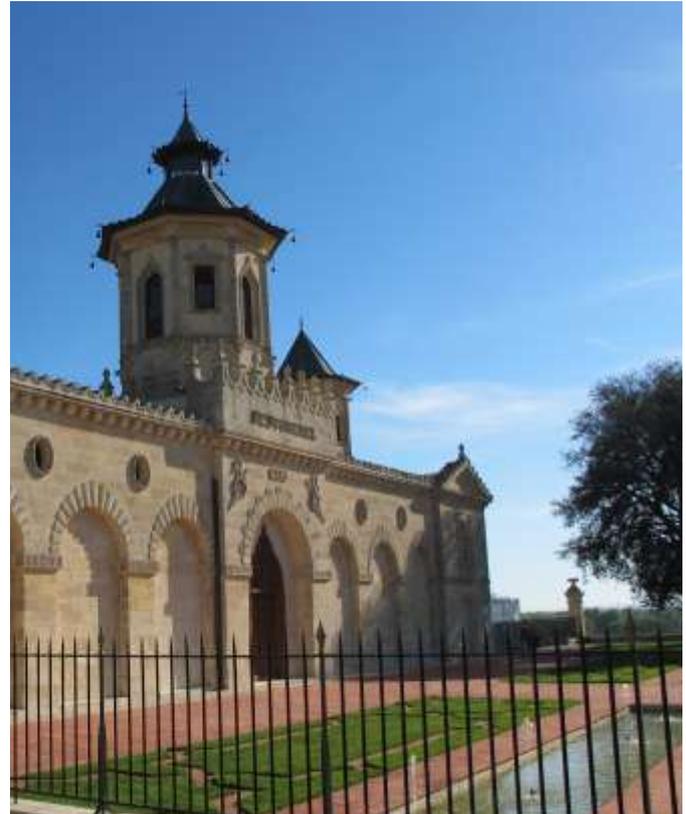
2ème Cru Classé, 76% CS, 23% M, 1% CF

The burly, alcoholic style of Cos in the 2000s is now a thing of the past with the beautiful, carefully crafted 2016 continuing the fresher, more refined style favoured by new estate director Aymeric de Gironde and winemaker Dominique Arangoits. The fresh-tasting 2016 is only 13.1% alcohol, lower than Montrose and Calon Ségur, and the wine has a wonderful purity of fruit, silky tannins and a rich succulent texture. Finishes fresh and long, the most harmonious Cos for many a year. Drink 2025-2038.

Château Montrose

2ème Cru Classé, 68% CS, 25% M, 7% CF

Another great success from Château Montrose and one of the wines of the vintage. Despite being lower in alcohol (13.3%) than the 2015 (13.5%) and 2014 (13.7%), the wine has more concentration and tannin but also a wonderful freshness and harmony that one rarely finds in Saint Estèphe. Only 36% of the crop was used for the *grand vin*, which will be aged in 60% new oak. Drink 2026-2040.



Château Calon-Ségur

3ème Cru Classé, 60% CS, 20% M, 18% CF, 2% PV

The most complete Calon-Ségur from Vincent Millet since his arrival from Château Margaux in 2006. He has now closed the gap with Cos d'Estournel and Montrose producing one of the finest wines of the vintage. Dense, rich and concentrated with beautiful, blackcurrant and cedar aromas, this has superb structure and a rich, generous texture as a result of a relatively gentle extraction and the use of 20% vin de presse. 2016 sees the return of the cabernet franc to the *grand vin*, the old vines bringing richness and freshness to the blend. Drink 2025-2038.

Château Lafon-Rochet

4ème Cru Classé, 67% CS, 25% M, 6% CF, 2% PV

Owner, Basile Tesseron, and technical director, Lucas Leclerc, have made another fine wine in their new cuverie which was inaugurated in 2015. This has more charm than most Saint Estèphe with the ripe tannins providing just enough structure to the vivid, ripe fruit. At 13.5% alcohol, this is both rich and fresh and will be aged in 50% new oak barrels. As the prices of the more famous Saint Estèphe classed growths continue to rise, this will hopefully remain great value. Drink 2024-2032.

Château Capbern

69% CS, 25% M, 4% CF, 2% PV

Owned by Château Calon-Ségur but vinified in its own, new cellar in the middle of the village of Saint Estèphe. Vincent Millet has made his best ever Capbern, a combination of masses of rich, blackcurrant fruit with plenty of ripe tannins and lovely, fresh acidity. This is easily of *cru classé* quality and must be one of the best *crus bourgeois* of the vintage. Drink 2024-2030.

Château Le Crock

46% CS, 40% M, 8% PV, 6% CF

Owned by Château Léoville-Poyferré; their oenologist, Isabelle Darvin, makes the wine in Le Crock's own, modern cellar at the beautiful château immediately to the north of Cos d'Estournel. This has masses of rich, glossy fruit and a full-bodied, generous texture. No shortage of tannin but more than covered by the intensity of fruit. Will age beautifully. Drink 2024-2032.

Château Beau Site

78% CS, 16% M, 3% PV, 3% CF

Another great value *cru bourgeois*, this time owned by the Castéja family of Château Batailley and made by the same technical team. This has an unusually high amount of cabernet sauvignon giving a firm, structured wine but in 2016 the tannins are ripe and well covered by delicious, blackcurrant fruit. Drink 2023-2028.

MARGAUX

Château Margaux

1er Grand Cru Classé, 94% CS, 2% M, 3% CF, 1% PV

Only 28% of the crop was used for the *grand vin*, the produce of the finest plots situated on the gravel plateau just to the north of the château itself. This is a lovely, soft, generous wine with beautifully pure fruit. Only 13% alcohol, this is fresh and aromatic, not quite as powerful nor concentrated as the Pauillac first growths but, with Lafite, the most elegant wine of the Médoc. Drink 2025-2040.

Château Lascombes

2ème Cru Classé, 50% CS, 47% M, 3% PV

I tasted the three component grape varieties separately at Lascombes with estate director Dominique Befve and it is clear that the cabernet sauvignon is of exceptional quality. Picked late from 13th to 25th October, the cabernet averaged 13% potential alcohol whilst retaining high levels of acidity. Befve is lightening the style a little with carefully extracted tannins and less new oak (70%) than in the past. This is a classic, perfumed Margaux, combining power and charm, probably the best Lascombes since Befve's arrival in 2001. Drink 2025-2032.

Château Brane Cantenac

2ème Cru Classé, 70% CS, 27% M, 2% CF, 1% C

Almost identical blend of grape varieties to that in 2015 with the fruit coming exclusively from the best parcels on the plateau of Cantenac right in front of the château itself. Owner, Henri Lurton, quietly gets on with making one of the best Margaux and this reminds me of the superb 2005 with its rich yet restrained fruit, close-knit texture and fine, ripe tannins. Needs time but quintessential Margaux. Drink 2025-2035.

Château Rauzan-Ségla

2ème Cru Classé, 68% CS, 30% M, 2% PV

The 2016 has more cabernet sauvignon in the blend than the opulent, hedonistic 2015. This gives a tighter, more age-worthy wine. Still has delicious, sweet, juicy fruit and a long, succulent finish. Another great success. Drink 2025-2032.



Château Palmer

3ème Cru Classé, 47% CS, 47% M, 6% PV

The third vintage when 100% of the vines were cultivated biodynamically (they will be officially certified as such in 2017). A wet spring resulted in a significant loss to mildew and a smaller than expected crop - only 29hl/ha, one of the smallest in the Médoc. There was again no sulphur added at harvest time, the first additions being made after the malolactic fermentation in barrel had finished. Rich and sumptuous. Not as powerful as 2010 or 2015 but beautiful ripe and opulent fruit, fresh acidity and the silkiest of tannins for which Palmer is so justifiably well known. Drink 2025-2040.

Château Kirwan

3ème Cru Classé, 55% CS, 33% M, 7% CF, 5% PV

The second vintage vinified in the impressive new *cuvée* that houses 33 brand-new, pear-shaped, concrete vats. Philippe Delfaut continues to co-inoculate the vats to ensure that the alcoholic and malolactic fermentations happen simultaneously, a practice he initiated whilst technical director at Château Palmer in 2005. Vivid red and black fruits on the nose, succulent texture and silky tannins make this one of the most elegant Margaux of the vintage. Lovely, sweet yet fresh finish. Drink 2024-2032.

Château Giscours

3ème Cru Classé, 81% CS, 19% M

Alexander Van Beek continues to up the proportion of cabernet sauvignon at the expense of merlot. Picked at optimum maturity this is rich and fresh with wonderful, pure blackcurrant fruit. Fresh and lively with fine, silky tannins, this follows on well from the great success in 2015. Drink 2025-2035.

Château Malescot St Exupéry

3ème Cru Classé, 55% CS, 37% M, 6% CF, 2% PV

Jean-Luc Zuger tends to pick late and makes lovely, rich, concentrated wine. This has good structure with dense fruit covering the firm but ripe tannins. Requires some patience but will age gracefully. Drink 2025-2036.

Château Angludet

50% CS, 38% M, 12% PV

The blend of grape varieties hasn't varied more than a percentage point or two over the past four vintages. This is fresh and fruity, less flamboyant than the 2015 but with an even longer finish. Angludet is consistently the equal of many of the Margaux *crus classés* so should be excellent value. Drink 2024-2032.

Château Le Coteau

75% CS, 20% M, 5% CF

Eric Léglise owns this fine little property of just 12 hectares, lying adjacent to the vineyards of Rauzan-Ségla and du Tertre. The estate has been in his family for hundreds of years and is one of only three non-classified châteaux in the commune of Arzac. The 2016 is every bit as good as the fabulous 2015 and completes a trio of fine vintages. Lovely, fresh, blackcurrant fruit on the nose, soft, quintessential Margaux texture on the palate and impressive, long aftertaste. Drink 2022-2028.



MÉDOC

Château de Camensac

5ème Cru Classé, Haut-Médoc, 50% CS, 50% M

Under the same ownership as Château Chasse-Spleen and made in a similarly chunky style, this property has improved dramatically over the past ten years and is now one of the best value *crus classés*. Situated just outside the Saint Julien appellation, it lies between Châteaux Belgrave and La Tour Carnet. Dense and backward, the 2016 requires time but has impressive depth and concentration. If the price remains reasonable, this rich, juicy wine will deserve a wide audience. Drink 2024-2032.

Château La Lagune

3ème Cru Classé, Haut-Médoc, 60% CS, 35% M, 5% PV

The whole estate is now being farmed organically and Caroline Frey has made another brilliant wine. Deep and rich with plenty of ripe fruit, solid, chunky tannins and a long, sweet finish. Drink 2024-2034.

Château Belgrave

5ème Cru Classé, Haut-Médoc, 69% CS, 28% M, 3% PV

Separated by just a ditch from the Saint Julien *cru classé*, Château Lagrange. Not as sophisticated as its more famous neighbour and only entitled to the Haut-Médoc appellation, it nevertheless represents great value for money in ripe vintages such as 2016. Dark-coloured, concentrated wine with plenty of cassis fruit, a generous dose of toasty oak and a firm, tannic structure. Not for the faint-hearted, this has plenty of character in a full-bodied, bold style. Drink 2024-2032.

Château Chasse-Spleen

Moulis, 50% CS, 42% M, 6% PV, 2% CF

Typically big, fleshy wine made by Céline Villars and her husband, Jean-Pierre Foubet. Rich and meaty with masses of ripe, plummy fruit and just the right amount of tannin. Robust and flavoursome, this has the freshness and structure to age well but will be enjoyable young due to the ripeness of the fruit. Drink 2025-2032.

Château Fourcas-Dupré

Listrac-Médoc, 55% CS, 44% M, 1% PV

Owner, Patrice Pagès, and *maître de chai*, Gilles Bergerot, continue to make brilliant progress at this 46 hectare property splendidly positioned at the highest point of the Médoc. The 2014, 2015 and 2016 vintages are probably their best ever, with the 2016 the most concentrated of the trio. Not quite as sunny nor opulent as the delicious 2015 but with even greater intensity and freshness. Lovely mixture of red and black fruits on the nose with just the right amount (one third) of new oak. Fresh and generous at the same time, this will age splendidly and should be a bargain if the price remains reasonable. Drink 2024-2030.

Château Patache d'Aux

Médoc, 60% CS, 35% M, 3% CF, 2% PV

Stéphane Derenoncourt has been hired as consultant since 2016 and the selection for the grand vin has been made more severe. Despite a generous crop, there will be 5,000 fewer cases produced than in 2015. Much of the vineyard was replanted in the 1960s and 1970s and these 40-50 year old vines are now producing glorious wine. **Aged in 35% new oak, this is the richest Patache d'Aux ever produced with masses of ripe, blackcurrant fruit and finer tannins than have been achieved in the past.** A great success. Drink 2022-2030.

Château Liversan

Haut-Médoc, 50% M, 44% CS, 4% CF, 2% PV

Situated just outside the Pauillac appellation in the village of Saint Sauveur near Châteaux Batailley and Grand-Puy-Lacoste. Liversan benefits from a fine gravel terroir and produces wine with plenty of Pauillac character. Derenoncourt has also been employed as consultant here and the 2016 vintage was the first to undergo its malolactic fermentation in barrel. Impressive red and black fruit aromas. Rich and fleshy on the palate. The most complete Liversan ever. Drink 2022-2030.

Château Lacombe Noaillac

Médoc, 62% M, 22% CS, 10% CF, 6% PV

Splendid property situated at Jau in the northern Médoc, the region most favoured by the fine, late summer weather. Vinified to be drunk younger than Patache d'Aux, **this also ages remarkably well in the medium term** as the delicious, open, plummy fruit is balanced by just the right amount of tannin. Drink 2020-2026.

Château Leboscq

Cru Bourgeois, Médoc, 60% CS, 35% M, 4% CF, 1% PV

Splendidly situated on the banks of the Gironde, Château Leboscq has 30 hectares of deep gravel vineyards and makes a rich, full-bodied wine. Shows lovely, ripe, cabernet fruit on the nose followed by a full-bodied, fleshy mid-palate. Drink 2021-2028.



POMEROL

Vieux Château Certan

Pomerol, 85% M, 14% CF, 1% CS

Picked relatively late, from 3rd to 18th October. Alexandre Thienpont marked individually any vines that suffered from stress during the summer drought and vinified them separately. The merlot was outstanding giving a rich, opulent wine of 14.5% alcohol but with fine, balancing acidity. Has wonderful, ripe fruit, silky tannins and a long, fresh finish. Will age gracefully. Drink 2024-2035.

Château La Fleur-Pétrus

Pomerol, 91% M, 9% CF

The property just to the north of Château Lafleur and Petrus has been quietly extended to 19 hectares by the Moueix family over the years. Quality has risen too. This is one of their most elegant wines with wonderful, plummy fruit, carefully-extracted tannins and fine acidity giving a splendid vitality to the wine. Drink 2024-2035.

Château La Conseillante

Pomerol, 80% M, 20% CF

The second vintage from estate director Marielle Cazaux who was previously wine-maker at neighbouring Château Petit-Village. Beautiful, plummy fruit, sumptuous texture and even more freshness with half a degree less alcohol (14%) than in 2015. A great success. Drink 2024-2035.



Château La Croix de Gay

Pomerol, 95% M, 5% CF

Chantal Lebreton has taken full charge of her family's four hectare property situated on the northern, higher half of the Pomerol plateau. A new cellar was built for the 2015 harvest and the 2016 is just as good with splendid, plum and damson fruit, a juicy, generous texture and an impressive, long aftertaste. Lesser-known and consequently one of the very best value Pomerols on the market. Drink 2024-2030.

Château Lafleur-Gazin

Pomerol, 94% M, 6% CF

9 hectare estate adjoining Châteaux Lafleur and Gazin as the name implies. Flavourful, gutsy wine with masses of fruit, excellent, meaty mid-palate and lovely, fresh acidity on the finish. Drink 2024-2030.

Clos Beauregard

Pomerol, 100% M

Well-positioned, great value Pomerol on the southern side of the plateau where the clay is less dominant and the wines are softer and less tannic. This has plenty of ripe, glossy fruit matched by just the right amount of new oak. Delicious Pomerol that will drink well young but has the depth and concentration to age well. Drink 2022-2028.

Château La Sergue

Lalande de Pomerol, 85% M, 12% CF, 3% M

From 45 year old vines within sight of the plateau of Pomerol, La Sergue is often called 'poor man's Petrus'. The wine is fermented in three wooden vats and the malolactic fermentation takes place in barrel. This is dense, rich and opulent. The dry summer restricted the yield and the 2016 harvest comprises just 9,000 bottles. Drink 2023-2028.

Château Haut Chaigneau

Lalande de Pomerol, 90% M, 10% CF

The home of the Chatonnet family, this is a delicious, open-textured wine with masses of ripe, plummy fruit. The *grand vin* is made from vines of a minimum fifteen years of age from the best plots situated in front of the château from where you can look down on the plateau of Pomerol and the vines of Petrus and Gazin. Rich and generous, the wine is aged primarily in one year old barrels so as not to dominate the fruit.

Drink 2022-2027.

SAINT EMILION & THE COTES

Château Ausone

1er Grand Cru Classé A, Saint Emilion, 50% CF, 50% M

Just 7 hectares of south-east facing, precipitous vineyards produce the most sought after wine of Saint Emilion. Alain and Pauline Vauthier picked relatively late (merlot 10th-14th October, cabernet franc 14th-19th October) to guarantee optimum ripeness of the generous-sized (40hl/ha) crop. A restrained but classic Ausone, reminiscent of the 2005 with impeccable breed and freshness. Carefully extracted tannins with rich fruit and fine acidity. The finest St Emilion of the vintage. Drink 2025-2040.

Château Cheval Blanc, 1er Grand Cru Classé A, Saint Emilion, 59.5% M, 37.2% CF, 3.3% CS

The driest summer since 1898 but the reserves of water enabled the vast majority of the vines to withstand the drought conditions. Only three parcels were deemed not worthy to be included in the *grand vin* and they enabled Pierre Lurton to produce a small quantity of Petit Cheval again this year. The cabernet franc suffered more from drought than merlot with the result that at 59.5% the 2016 has a higher proportion than normal of merlot. One of the best right bank wines with opulent fruit, carefully extracted fine tannins and splendid freshness, a great Cheval Blanc. Drink 2025 - 2040.

Château Canon

1er Grand Cru Classé, Saint Emilion, 74% M, 26% CF

Lovely, elegant wine with beautiful, pure, blackcurrant and blackberry aromas. Ripe and juicy with fine, silky tannins and delicious, fresh finish. The most successful wine of the Saint Emilion limestone plateau and a worthy successor to last year's brilliant wine. Drink 2024-2034.

Château L'Archange

Saint Emilion, 100% M

A single 1.2 hectare plot of old merlot adjoining Châteaux Figeac and La Dominique which is owned by Pascal Chatonnet and vinified in his winery in Pomerol. As a result of the wine being made outside of the territory of Saint Emilion, L'Archange loses its right to the Saint Emilion Grand Cru appellation. The wine, however, is indisputably of *grand cru* quality; dense and concentrated, it has wonderful, vibrant fruit, a full-bodied, tannic structure and remarkable persistence on the finish. Drink 2023-2028.

Château Fonbel

Saint Emilion, 70% M, 16% CS, 7% PV, 7% C

Owned by Alain Vauthier of Château Ausone and vinified by the Ausone team at another of the Vauthier properties, Château Moulin Saint Georges. Fonbel lies further down in the plain away from the Côtes where the soil is sandier. **Obviously, this doesn't have the class of Ausone** but has fine, ripe, blackberry and plum fruit which fills out its full-bodied, gutsy frame. Finishes sweet and fresh. Always modestly priced, it is a consistent bargain in fine vintages. Drink 2022-2028.

Château Jacques Noir

Saint Emilion, 100% Merlot

Tiny, 5.5 hectare property situated on the *pieds de côtes* at Saint Etienne de Lisse. Acquired by the Ducourt family in 2001 the château and winery have been rebuilt and the vineyards renovated. The wine is now hugely improved and deserves a wider following. Rich, plummy fruit with just the right amount of new oak, this is a soft luscious Saint Emilion at a bargain price. Drink 2021 - 2026.

Château Faizeau

Montagne Saint Emilion, 100% M,

A 12 hectare estate planted with a high proportion of old merlot vines. Full-bodied with plenty of firm but ripe tannins, this is a serious wine that will repay ageing and shows just how good the Saint Emilion satellite appellations can be in a fine vintage. Drink 2022-2027.

Château Plaisance

Montagne-Saint Emilion, 94% M, 6% CS

30 hectares of vines in the southwest of the appellation where it adjoins Lalande de Pomerol and Saint Emilion itself. Fresh, ripe fruit is well balanced with firm but ripe tannins. A generous wine which will be aged for twelve months in French oak barrels. It has the structure and freshness to age gracefully. Drink 2021-2026.

Château des Demoiselles

Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux, 72% M, 28% CS

A lovely, forward, juicy wine bursting with red and black fruits from this superb property at Saint Magne de Castillon just outside the eastern edge of the Saint Emilion appellation. This is delicious and brilliant value. Drink 2020-2026

PESSAC-LEOGNAN & GRAVES

Château Haut Brion

1er Grand Cru Classé, 56% M, 37.5% CS, 6.5% CF

At 13.9% alcohol, a full degree lower in alcohol than last year. 53% of the crop was used for the grand vin and only 0.6% *vin de presse* added. The result is a rich, concentrated wine with a most generous texture and the finest and ripest of tannins. The most aromatic of the left bank first growths with masses of plum and mulberry fruit. More restrained than the opulent 2015, this is supremely elegant with splendid depth and succulence. Drink 2026-2040.

Château La Mission Haut Brion

Cru Classé, 57.5% M, 42.5% CS

Despite lying just across the road from Haut-Brion and sharing the same owners since 1983, La Mission continues to make a firmer, leaner wine. Marginally less alcoholic (13.7%), the aromas are more cabernet and the tannins a little more present. 50% of the crop was selected for the *grand vin* and 0.8% *vin de presse* added. Dense and concentrated, at present less harmonious than the Haut Brion but with equal ageing potential. Drink 2026-2040.



Domaine de Chevalier

Cru Classé, 65% CS, 30% M, 5% PV

The 2016 is even more impressive than the glorious 2015; lush, plummy fruit on the nose, impressive close-knit texture and flavour that builds in the mouth to a splendid long finish. The quality of the tannins is superb and this is destined for a magnificent life. Drink 2025-2035.

Château Haut-Bailly

Cru Classé, 53% CS, 40% M, 4% PV, 3% CF

Not as opulent as the 2015 but with beautiful purity of fruit and the silkiest of tannins. Véronique Sanders and Gabriel Vialard have made a beautifully balanced and elegant wine that has the depth and concentration to age wonderfully. Drink 2026-2038.

Château de Fieuzal

Cru Classé, 70% CS, 20% M, 5% CF, 5% PV

The lowest (18hl/ha) yield that winemaker Stephen Carrier has harvested since his arrival at Fieuzal in 2007. This was the result of frost on the night of 29th April when temperatures descended to -5 C and a large swathe of this fine Léognan property was affected. The fruit that survived has given a dark-coloured, dense wine with splendid, concentrated, blackberry and blackcurrant fruit, firm but ripe tannins and an impressive long after-taste. Certainly the most backward and age-worthy Fieuzal since the magnificent 2010. Drink 2024-2032.

Vieux Château Gaubert

Graves rouge, 60% CS, 40% M

Dominique Haverlan owns the finest estate of Portets in the central part of the Graves, just to the south of the Pessac-Léognan appellation. Much of it was replanted by Dominique in the late 1980s. These vines are now 35 years old and giving magnificently rich wine. Aged in 35% new oak barrels, fine, glossy fruit on the nose and a dense, ripe texture. Drink 2022-2029.

Château Picque-Caillou

Pessac-Léognan, 60% CS, 35% M, 5% PV

Paulin Calvet owns 22 hectares of vines in the Bordeaux suburb of Mérignac, just to the north-west of Château Haut Brion. Beautifully fresh with masses of red and black berry fruits, clean and precise on the palate, a rich generous texture and long sweet finish. Will be enjoyable young and will age gracefully. Drink 2022 - 2030.

Château Civrac-Lagrange

Pessac-Léognan, 50% CS, 42% M, 8% PV

Previously known as Château Pontet-Caillou until the use of the name was objected to. This shows the wonderful freshness and fine, tannic structure typical of the best Pessac-Léognan wines in 2016. Fermented in stainless steel vats followed by ageing for up to 18 months in 40% new French oak barrels. Lovely richness and concentration. This is surely one of best value wines of appellation. Drink 2022 - 2028.

DRY WHITES

Château Haut Brion Blanc

Pessac-Léognan, 70.5% Sauvignon, 29.5% Sémillon

Fine, aromatic sauvignon with just a touch of new oak gives a rich, tasty wine with plenty of body but also a refreshing, crisp finish. Slightly less alcoholic than in 2015, but still a full-bodied 13.85%.

Drink 2020-2026.

Château La Mission Haut Brion Blanc

Cru Classé, Pessac-Léognan, 62.7% Sauvignon, 37.3% Sémillon

Jean-Philippe Delmas felt that the sauvignon did better than the sémillon this year so for the first time ever there is a majority of sauvignon in the white La Mission Haut Brion. With slightly lower alcohol than in 2015, this is remarkably fresh and aromatic. Fermented and aged in oak barrels for 10 months to add richness and complexity, this is one of the finest white wines of the vintage despite its change of character.

Drink 2020-2026.

Domaine de Chevalier Blanc

Cru Classé, Pessac-Léognan, 75% Sauvignon, 25% Sémillon

More closed and backward than 2015 but has even greater depth and concentration. It has a winning combination of concentrated ripe fruit and thrilling acidity. It will be aged for up to 18 months in barrel as usual. One of the very finest dry white wines of the vintage. Drink 2021-2030.

Château de Fieuzal Blanc

Pessac-Léognan, 60% Sauvignon, 40% Sémillon

This fine Léognan property, owned by Irishman Lochlann Quinn, was one of the few to be hit by late spring frosts that so devastated Burgundy and the Loire. The result was a pitifully small yield and a fabulous, concentrated wine that is one of the most intense of the vintage. A little riper and more opulent than neighbour Domaine de Chevalier but in its way equally fine with rich, aromatic fruit, a lush texture, great depth and a fine, long finish. Drink 2020-2024.

Vieux Château Gaubert Blanc

Graves Blanc, 60% Sauvignon, 40% Sémillon

Dominique Haverlan's fine property lies just outside the Pessac-Léognan appellation at Portets in the heart of Graves. After a short maceration in stainless steel vats, the grapes are pressed and then fermented in 30% new oak barrels. Rich and aromatic, this has crisp sauvignon aromas coupled with a richer texture from the sémillon. Drink 2018-2020.

Château Picque-Caillou Blanc

Pessac-Léognan, 60% Sauvignon, 40% Sémillon

Just 1.7 hectares is devoted to white wine at this fine Paulin Calvet estate, situated inside of the Bordeaux ringroad not far from the airport. 25% is fermented in new oak, 20% in 1 year old oak and 55% in 2 year old barrels. The 2016 is fresh and clean with crisp, lemony acidity and bright fruit flavours. Drink 2019-2022.

Château Fourcas-Dupré Blanc

Bordeaux Blanc, 73% Sauvignon, 27% Sémillon

Patrice Pagès has planted 1.2 hectares of a limestone section of his vineyard in Listrac with sauvignon and sémillon. The result is a delicious, aromatic white, fermented and aged for 6 months in new oak barrels. Crisp and fresh with a rich, generous texture and lovely, crisp finish. Drink 2018-2020.

Château Thieuley Blanc, *Bordeaux Blanc*

45% Sémillon, 40% Sauvignon Blanc, 15% Sauvignon Gris

Sisters Marie and Sylvie Courselle run this family-owned estate near Créon in the middle of the Entre-Deux-Mers. This is a brilliant example of crisp, fresh, unoaked, white Bordeaux. The 2016 combines the richness of 2015 with the crispness of 2014. Will be delicious for drinking this summer or over the next 2-3 years if you appreciate the additional complexity. Drink 2017-2019.



SAUTERNES AND BARSAC

Château d'Yquem

1er Cru Classé, Sauternes, 75% Sémillon, 25% Sauvignon

Lighter and fresher than the monumental 2015 d'Yquem, this has wonderfully fresh, lemony fruit, a fine balance of acidity and a lingering aftertaste. The vintage stretched from 27th September to 4th November and most of the crop was picked during the third pass through the vineyards between 18th and 22nd October. 60% of the crop was selected for the *grand vin*, a wine of exquisite charm and balance that will age gracefully.

Drink 2025-2035.

Château Guiraud

1er Cru Classé, Sauternes, 65% Sémillon, 35% Sauvignon

The whole estate is farmed organically and joint owners, Olivier Bernard, Stephan Von Neipperg, Robert Peugeot, and Xavier Planty have found that the fruit is now riper and more concentrated. This is one of the freshest and most elegant wines of the vintage, the higher proportion of sauvignon giving a lift and crispness to the wine despite its 125g/l of residual sugar. Drink 2022-2028.

Château Climens

1er Cru Classé, Barsac, 100% Sémillon

The second generous (20 hl/ha) harvest in succession for biodynamic pioneers, owner Bérénice Lurton and technical director Frédéric Nivelles. Their dedication to organic treatments paid off throughout a wet spring and their efforts were rewarded by a hot summer and a splendid autumn that produced a fine crop of wonderfully ripe grapes with the required amount of botrytis. The 2016 resembles the magnificent 2015 but with a little extra freshness and vitality.

Drink 2022-2030.

Château Coutet, 1^{er} Cru Classé, Barsac

75% Sémillon, 23% Sauvignon, 2% Muscadelle

The Baly family make, after Château Climens, the finest wine of Barsac. At 13.7% alcohol and 153g/l of residual sugar, this is one of the richest wines of the vintage yet retains great freshness and class. The Balys have been **pricing Coutet most sensibly in recent years so let's hope** for a continuation of that policy. Drink 2022-2030.

Château Lafaurie-Peyraguey, *1er Cru Classé, Sauternes*
93% Sémillon, 6% Sauvignon, 1% Muscadelle

Owned since 2014 by Swiss businessman Silvio Denz but still directed by Eric Larromana, this splendid estate lying just below Château d'Yquem has made a fine, elegant (13.6% alcohol + 133 g/l residual sugar) wine from three tris harvested between 29th September and 5th November. Rich but fresh, Eric likens it to his 2009 and 2011 vintages, both great successes. Drink 2022-2028.

Château La Tour Blanche, *1er Cru Classé, Sauternes*
83% Sémillon, 14% Sauvignon, 3% Muscadelle

New director Miguel Aguirre has made an impressive first vintage at La Tour Blanche. The picking stretched over seven weeks from 6th September to 26th October with the best juice being harvested between the 3rd and 10th October. The 2016 is rich and opulent but with impressive elegance and vitality. Aguirre describes it as combining the freshness of 2014 with the richness of 2015. Drink 2022-2028.

Château Doisy-Védrines, *2ème Cru Classé, Barsac*
83% Sémillon, 17% Sauvignon

At 13.8% alcohol and 141g/l residual sugar, the 2016 is even richer than the monumental 2015. It has a similar flavour to last year and ranks alongside the best vintages of the past 10 years. Rich and honeyed, it has great depth and concentration whilst retaining typical Barsac freshness. Drink 2021-2027.

Château Lamothe-Guignard, *2ème Cru Classé, Sauternes*
90% Sémillon, 5% Sauvignon, 5% Muscadelle

Philippe Guignard runs the finer of the two Lamothe estates, situated on north and west-facing slopes just to the south of Château La Tour Blanche. At 23hl/ha the harvest was the biggest since 2010 and stretched from 29th September to 7th November. Similar richness (14% alcohol plus 130g/l residual sugar) to the 2015, this is crisp and aromatic with just enough acidity to give a clean, fresh finish. Drink 2021-2026.

Château Broustet, *2ème Cru Classé, Barsac*
75% Sémillon, 15% Sauvignon, 10% Muscadelle

The Merlaut family of Château Gruaud-Larose have been in charge here since 2010 and this is possibly the finest yet. Made in a lighter, fresher style (13.5% alcohol and 131g/l residual sugar), this is a lovely, zippy, elegant wine that finishes clean and fresh. Drink 2021-2026.

How our 2016 Bordeaux En Primeur Offer works:

- The recommended wines
This booklet represents my personal selection of the most successful wines of the vintage. I have tried to include wines at every level and from a wide spread of appellations. At the time of going to press we do not have prices of any of the châteaux so I cannot make ultimate judgements of value for money. There are other excellent wines that I have tasted that I will buy if the price is right. Conversely, I may decide that the price asked for some of my chosen wines is too high.
- Let us have your wish list
Please let us know as soon as possible if there are any specific châteaux (whether they are on my list or not) in which you are interested and we will make you an offer as soon as the wine is released.
- Prices by email
As the châteaux release their wines onto the market, we will send out the prices by email. If you have not already received any 2016 Bordeaux information from us by email, please let us have your email address so that we can keep you informed.
- Order by email, telephone or fax
Email: primeurs@montrachetwine.com
Telephone: 020 7821 1337
Fax: 020 7821 1626

We would urge you to place your order as quickly as possible. Even in less hyped vintages the châteaux often have a limited supply and the most successful wines sell out within hours.
- Timetable
We expect the individual châteaux to release their prices at any time between now and July. The wine is sold whilst still lying at the châteaux for delivery after bottling. i.e. 2016 Bordeaux will be shipped to the UK in spring/summer 2019.

For further information or to place an order, please contact:

Charles Taylor M.W., Louisa de Faye-Perkins,
Katie Withers Green or Poppy de Courcy-Wheeler

Telephone: 020 7821 1337

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Terms and conditions

Wine will be invoiced at an IN BOND price, lying at London City Bond, Creek Road and excludes costs such as duty, VAT and delivery charges. The IN BOND price for the wine must be paid for at the time of the order. The duty, VAT and delivery are due, if applicable, when the wines are shipped in 2019.

Wine is generally sold in 12x75cl bottle cases (i.e. 9 litres) and we supply all 'En Primeur' purchases in this size unless otherwise instructed. Wine can be bottled in different formats: Halves 24x37.5cl, Magnums 6x150cl, Double Magnums 3x300cl etc. There is a surcharge for this; please specify your requirements at time of ordering.

We ask that your minimum total order of wines from the 2016 vintage is 8 cases or £600.

*Whilst detailing the blend of varieties at the individual châteaux I have abbreviated the grape varieties as follows:
Cabernet Sauvignon - CS, Cabernet Franc - CF, Merlot - M, Petit Verdot - PV and Carmenère - C*



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