

EN PRIMEURS 2013

First Growths 2013

All of these were tasted non-blind at the chateaux.

Even for the First Growths, this was an uneven year, where there were significant gaps between the first and second wines. As you would expect, all Firsts put in a good performance with their main wine; a credit to terroir, determination and cash.

Haut-Brion

At Domaine Clarence Dillon, production of first wine was 39% for La Mission Haut-Brion, 28% La Chapelle de La Mission, and the rest declassified into Clarendelle (the branded wine of Clarence Dillon, which is also blended with grapes from other estates). At Haut-Brion itself, production was 45% first wine, 36% Clarence de Haut-Brion, and 18% into Clarendelle (as a comparison in 2012 they put 40% in the first wine and 43% in 2011, so in fact this was a pretty high percentage, although yields were down overall – with just 5,900 cases to be bottled compared to 8,900 last year). At Quintus they made just 25% first wine, 43% Dragon de Quintus and a full 32% declassified ('which meant that even with the new vineyards, our overall wine produced was the same!').

Director Jean-Philippe Delmas gave a quick recap of the 2013 vintage. 'July was hot with the hail storms on July 23 (not at Haut-Brion luckily), and August was sunny but not so hot. It was quite close to 1969 in terms of the weather conditions but not the wine, thanks to 45 years difference with knowledge and technical know-how...'. In front of each vat room at Château Haut-Brion and Château La Mission Haut-Brion, a sorting table was installed to produce a further selection prior to destemming and before the introduction into an optical sorting machine (a "tribaie" densimetric sorting machine at Château Quintus) which helped fine tune the selections made by the pickers and sorters.

Le Dragon de Quintus AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Touch of tight just-ripened berry fruits. Blend here is 56.5% merlot, 30.5% cabernet franc, 13% cabernet sauvignon. This has a touch of pyrazine for me. I do like the elegance, and the effect is less green than the savoury fruit that is a marker of this vintage. This is improving in the glass, good juiciness on the palate, helped no doubt by the alcohol coming in at just under 13%. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2017-2027.

La Chapelle de la Mission Haut-Brion AOC Pessac Leognan 2013

Love the restrained fruit on the nose, and there is some sweet dark cherry fruit shot through here, 52% merlot, 12.5% cabernet franc, 35.5% cabernet sauvignon. Elegant, will be pleasurable drinking, get layers of flavour and a good lift at the end, although not as complex as some years. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2017-2027.

Le Clarence de Haut-Brion AOC Pessac Leognan 2013

Good deep purple colour, very easy silky tannins, good grip, this feels like a 'real wine' with layers and interest, they have really expertly extracted the fruit. Herbal, savoury, just ripe but very clean, fresh, good. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2017-2027.

Chateau Quintus AOC Saint Emilion 2013

This is silkier, more gloss than in other years at this property, l'Arrosée has contributed around 20% of the vines (mainly merlot), towards an overall blend of 80% merlot, 20% cabernet franc, and the medium-weight fruit manages to avoid a mid-palate dip. With the purchase of neighbouring Chateau l'Arrosée, Domaine Clarence Dillon now has 28 hectares in Saint Emilion, compared to 15ha last year -but production is almost the same because of all the selection and sorting! 91-93. Highly recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau La Mission Haut-Brion AOC Pessac Leognan 2013

Great tannin astringency and freshness in the mouth, feels effortless, elegant, beautiful, less exuberant than in 2009 and 2010 of course, blend 65% merlot, 3% cabernet franc, 33% cabernet sauvignon. Beautiful persistency, this is understated, really just a lovely wine. 92-94. Highly recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Haut-Brion AOC Pessac Léognan 2013

Blend is 50% merlot, 45.5% cabernet sauvignon, 4.5% cabernet franc. A build in power from La Mission. Just love Haut-Brion in difficult vintages, always such a lesson in expert winemaking. This is gorgeous, and they managed a full 45% of first wine, a fairly high proportion in 2013. The tannins do some mouth coating, which I haven't felt in many places this year, this will develop and age. Not a long-haul, but a great medium term wine. 93-95. Highly recommended to Outstanding. Drink 2018-2030.

La Clareté de Haut-Brion AOC Pessac Léognan Blanc

Great aromatics on the nose, coming in somewhere between the 2011 and 2012. On the palate it is a little more underpowered than the 2011, which even at this stage was just delicious and full of life. 88. Recommended. Drink 2014-2020.

Chateau la Mission Haut Brion Blanc AOC Pessac Léognan Blanc 2013

Here the nose is delineated, pure, gorgeous. The leap up from second wine Clareté de Haut-Brion this year is huge. Excellent varietal characteristics, 24% sauvignon, 76% semillon, tunnel of lemon, rounded citrus, but with great squirt of acidity, from pH 3.25

close to 2011 (2010 was even lower at 3,10). A mouth-watering wine. 94. Highly recommended. Drink 2016-2026.

Haut Brion Blanc AOC Pessac Léognan Blanc 2013

The best of the whites here, huge impact from the very first nose, 66% sauvignon, 34% semillon. they manage to make such a high degree of sauvignon blanc be not overpowering but a rhapsody of gentle, subtle but piercing fruits, some acacia, gentle citrus, herbal, you get the cut grass but it is so well stitched together. Love this wine, easily my favourite so far. Huge persistency. Could keep going with this! 95+. Outstanding. Drink 2016-2026

Chateau Margaux

The works are still ongoing here, so we tasted in the Orangerie (apparently the second biggest in France after Versailles). The new 18m long 9m high cellar will be ready for harvest 2014. Thibault Pontallier on 2013: 'Long winter that lasted til June. Spring never showed up, we had delayed flowering, lost lots of berries, but then faster maturation for what was left. August very dry but less hot than July, so good aromatics. Then explosion of grey rot at end of September. To ensure we got the grapes in quickly, we doubled our harvesters from 150 to 300 pickers overnight, and brought everything in in just 8 days – but around perhaps five days earlier than we would have ideally liked, in keeping with many local estates. Extremely severe selection.'

Pavillon Rouge AOC Margaux 2013

Lowest percentage of Pavillon Rouge ever, with just 21% of overall production, and 41% of production that made it into neither the first nor second, leaving 38% for the first wine (compare this to 20 years ago, when 70% would routinely go into the first wine). And a full 25% was declassified from the estate entirely, ensuring that the new 3rd wine, Margaux de Chateau Margaux, could also maintain its quality. The final blend here is 10% merlot, 84% cabernet sauvignon, 2% cabernet franc, 4% petit verdot. Much higher cabernet sauvignon than usual. Yields around one third less than usual. 'To keep quality decision correct, because we are aware that the price of Pavillon demands a certain stringency', says Thibault. On the palate, this Pavillon is good and clean, but a touch underpowered compared to most vintages. Not density or depth but has the floral nose and lovely balance of an earlier year, maybe 2007. Some gentle spice. 22hl/h yield. Around 50% new oak. Clearly early drinking, but real pleasure. Gentle extraction obvious. Alcohol is 13% (was 13.4% in 2010) 89-90. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2017-2025.

Chateau Margaux AOC Margaux 2013

They used 80% new oak this year instead of the usual 100%, to keep the signature floral nose. It's certainly an essential element to the overall construction of this wine, as there

is less power and density on the palate than we have found in recent vintages. The final blend here is 94% cabernet sauvignon, 5% cabernet franc, 1% petit verdot. No merlot for the first time, because the two plots that normally go into the first wine were not up to their usual standard and so are used this year in Pavillon Rouge. Very soft, smooth tannins, very elegant, get lovely grip and mouth-watering acidity. This is delicate, full of finesse, beautifully made. But feels fleeting, just out of reach of its usual self. 91-93. Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2035.

Pavillon Blanc AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2013

A fresh 3.4ph. This vintage suits the style perfectly of Pavillon Blanc, which has been going more mineral and clean ever since the 2008 vintage (if you compare to particularity 2006 and 2007, you will clearly see a fatter and rounder style). No grey rot on these grapes, perfectly clean and harvest was completed 24 hours before the explosion of rot on the red grapes. The wine is, as usual, 100% sauvignon blanc, with 60% declassified to ensure quality of the main wine (so here again they hope in a few years to introduce a second wine). 30% new oak. Great density and mouthwatering fruit. Love this. Excellent persistency, 13%abv. Hugely floral nose, less fat than the Haut Brion blanc, this is a little more aerian. 1,000 cases however! 94. Highly recommended. Drink 2017-2030.

Mouton Rothschild

The three Pauillac Rothschild properties touch, but were affected very differently by coulure and other problems of this growing season. Their organic plots were the most affected – Dhalluin says, ‘we have been experimenting with organic farming for over a decade now, but are still not entirely convinced’. This was a year where the money that First Growths are able to throw at problems came in very handy, specifically in terms of being able to bring grapes in quickly by increasing the numbers of pickers - on October 9, 695 meals were served to harvesters, an all time record...

Chateau d'Armailhac AOC Pauillac 2013

Armailhac has a more open, floral nose than Clerc, which is a little bigger and tighter. Armailhac more obvious oak influence, beautiful bright purple primeur colour. A rich, fruit-filled nose, but the oak is a touch over intrusive on the palate. Not so many compromises made to the vintage perhaps as many wines this year, managing to convey ambition and a good tunnel of bright acidity. Less early easy drinking than some, which is perhaps a good thing, definitely enjoy the winemaking skills on show here. Blend 59% cabernet sauvignon, 28% merlot, 12% cabernet franc, 1% petit verdot. 88-89. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Clerc AOC Pauillac 2013

A little darker fruit, higher acidity, overall a little more structured than the Armailhac. Feel it has more staying power. Lovely bright purple fruits, feel a whoosh of acidity that

is not evident in many properties, this is ambitious and successful, although lacks some of the fleshiness of the best vintages, but this is enjoyable, a good wine that you feel will age well. Lost a lot of the merlot crop here because of coulure. Blend 58% cabernet sauvignon, 27% merlot, 12% cabernet franc, 2% petit verdot, 1% carmanere. 91-92. Highly Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Petit Mouton AOC Pauillac 2013

Yummy nose here, plum fruits, that finesse, that well brushed sexiness, there is clear toasted oak, simmering coffee, the flashiness that Petit Mouton does so well. I love that you get such a signature in this wine. The finish heads upwards as it should do in a good vintage, where you get the lift on the finish, and the firm hint of tannins, but there is a softness overall that again suggests it will be only a medium term drinker. The blend is a very high 93% cabernet sauvignon and 7% merlot. For me one of the more successful second wines. 91-92. Highly Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Mouton Rothschild AOC Pauillac 2013

The nose is a touch more closed and tight than the Petit Mouton, as you would hope and expect. On the palate, there is impact and power. There is a sheen to Mouton that never leaves it. Compared to Pontet, it is less rustic tannins, less 'honest to goodness wine', but there is a slow build of power. This has plenty of the signature Pauillac power in it. Where Chateau Margaux this year is more delicate, floral, intellectual, Mouton is more ample, good power, you feel that you are in expert hands, a gentle freshly milled white pepper and exotic cloves. Merlot pretty normal at Mouton, not affected by poor fruit set, meaning the blend here is 89% cabernet sauvignon, 7% merlot and 4% cabernet franc. 94-95. Highly recommended to Outstanding. Drink 2018-2030.

Aile d'Argent AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2013

To preserve that signature Mouton warmth and glamour, this is the only property in Bordeaux (that I know of) to do malolactic fermentation of its sauvignon blanc grapes – here 15% of the grapes underwent malo to soften the acidity. The overall blend is 67% sauvignon blanc and 33% sémillon. This has real weight and mouthfeel; up to the 2011 standard of this wine. Love. 95. Outstanding. Drink 2017-2032.

Lafite Rothschild

Carruades de Lafite AOC Pauillac 2013

Blend is 64% cabernet sauvignon, 29% merlot, 4% cabernet franc, 3% petit verdot. Good typicity of Pauillac on the nose, tight dark fruits. But this is for me the least interesting Carruades for a number of years. Good nose, crunchy dark fruit on the attack, then falls off through the mid-palate. There is always plenty to like in this wine, and it will be an enjoyable medium-term drinker, but not the heights of recent years. 88. Recommended. Drink 2017-2029.

Chateau Duhart Milon AOC Pauillac 2013

Good rich ripe purple blush colour. This is continuing Duhart's good run, structured, serious, great Pauillac typicity. still very tight tannins, astringent not drying, less of an early drinker than many wines this year. Has power and attitude, less charming perhaps than some you will find in 2013, but it's good. Blend is 80% cabernet sauvignon, 20% merlot. 91-92. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Lafite Rothschild AOC Pauillac 2013

There is a sweetness on the nose of the Lafite that is not evident in the Carruades. This has some of the elegance of Margaux and some of the mouthfeel of Mouton, but without the fleshy opulence. Less fun than Mouton, more elegant, the tannins are very well worked. The blend here is 98% cabernet sauvignon with 2% merlot (so another year with no cabernet franc in the first wine at Lafite). An attractive twist of tobacco leaf and cigar smoke on the finish gives definition, and the tannins are apparent, even if the structure is lighter than in many vintages. This is a classic Lafite, and will give great pleasure. 93-94. Highly recommended. Drink 2021-2038.

Chateau Latour

You can expect to buy these wines around 10 years from now, but still interesting to taste at this stage. Helene Génin is now full time technical director at Chateau Latour, as Penelope Godefroy is now consulting across other estates as well (notably the new investments in Pomerol and Lalande-de-Pomerol). Our tasting was given by Rufus, the estate's brand ambassador based in Shanghai. He pointed out the distinct lack of mainland Chinese here, 'top end Chinese certainly less interested in en primeur - plays in to what we are doing, supplying more mature vintages'. The production was split into 31.5% first wine, 44.5% second wine, 24% third wine.

Pauillac AOC Pauillac 2013

45.5% cabernet sauvignon, 53.7% merlot, 0.8% cabernet franc. Pretty tight and just ripe. This has some clean fresh black fruits, really good definition, like this more than I expected to, certainly far more successful than some of the second wines I have tried in this vintage. 88. Recommended. Drink 2017-2017.

Les Forts de Latour AOC Pauillac 2013

Blend of 62.7% cabernet, 35.1% merlot, 2.2% petit verdot, particularly open nose, juicy black fruits, surprised by the freshness in this wine, there is a very soft tannic structure. That is a good wine, lovely plush fruit. 89. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Latour AOC Pauillac 2013

Very classic Pauillac. This has an excellent structure, some really serious fruit and tension, supercharged, elegant, poised. Only 31% of the production made it into the first wine, only 6000 cases (incidentally, Engerer has said he never wants to make more than 10,000 cases per vintage according to several merchants I have spoken with. He was in Burgundy not Bordeaux during the primeurs, so wasn't able to verify this directly with him). In the L'Enclos, they now have 24 hectares in biodynamic farming, and almost all ended up in the first wine. Love this, for me the most successful of the First Growths in this vintage along with Mouton. 94-95. Highly recommended to Outstanding. Drink 2018-2032.

And the older vintages on display...

Pauillac AOC Pauillac 2008

Rich oak on the nose, this is still fairly evident and gives it the feel of a still young wine. Clove and eugenol. Would be supremely easy to drink. Quite high alcohol. Good wine. 87.

Les Forts de Latour AOC Pauillac 2006

The nose here is still almost entirely primary, very young whoosh of fruit, this is bilberry, blackcurrant, creme de cassis, absolutely excellent. 91.

Chateau Latour AOC Pauillac 2004

The most smoky of all these noses, but gunsmoke, terroir smoke, that is a seriously seriously good wine, fruit is tight, pure, concentrated, tannins still firm but no longer unyielding, thoroughly enjoyable. 96.

Is their new strategy working? They say: 'It will be 8 years until the release of our first new wines that are not already in the market, so it is so hard to judge right now. Really is the long term view. Looking to release the wines that are just waking up'.

CHEVAL BLANC

Not tasting Quinault L'Enclos this year because only 8hl/h so won't bottle anything under this label.

Le Petit Cheval AOC Saint Emilion 2013

This has soft tannins, and is light in structure, floating, ethereal, pretty and well placed. The blend is 79% merlot, 21% cabernet franc, so much more merlot than usual (so many unusual blends in 2013, reflecting the highly capricious growing season). All blends at Cheval Blanc are done blind, always looking for nuance, and no set parts of the vineyard go into first or second wine – entirely depends on how the vines have performed in any given vintage. The wine was divided into 20% Petit Cheval, with 20% declassified, and the rest first wine. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Cheval Blanc AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

60% first wine with 53% cabernet franc and 47% merlot. Good grip, here really wanted to reflect what the vintage has given, 3,67ph, a lot of structure but supremely elegant. They didn't change their barrel regime, 100% new oak low toast. This should age with great elegance for 20-30 years. The fruits are light and summer, cherry and redcurrant, there is an elegance here that is gorgeous. Picking date 30th September to 9th October. 91-93. Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2035.

Ausone

Chateau Simard AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Blend of 65% merlot, 35% cabernet franc. Pure tight fruit, again these well worked floating tannins. Fleeting on the finish though. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau de Fonbel AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

More grip, fruit extraction and power here, deeper, richer dark cherries on the attack, but a touch short and tiny bits of greengage and redcurrant on mid palate and continuing through the finish for me, suggesting slightly underripe fruit but very smoothly fattened up through oak on the attack. The blend is 65% merlot, 25% cabernet franc, 10% petit verdot 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Moulin St Georges AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

80% merlot, 20% cabernet franc. Half the quantity for all the estates. Here redcurrants and gooseberries and a lovely lovely elegance. Short again. But real charm. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

La Chapelle d'Ausone AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

60/25/15 cab sauvignon. Clear elegance, good persistency, but far below the best years of Chapelle. It has some mocha torrefied notes that are more usually well integrated. incredibly tight selection, this has pert, pure fruit and excellent precision. 90-91. Highly Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Ausone AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Silky tannins, all the elegance that you would expect from Ausone, but not leaps and strides ahead of the others as it is in many years. There are gently insisting tannins, that expression of tannin that I love so much, when it is gentle and elegant but the support is there if unobtrusive. Very good, builds slowly in power. Intellectual, carefully placed, understated, 13%abv. 92-94. Highly Recommended. Drink 2020-2035.

Petrus

Chateau Petrus AOC Pomerol 2-13

Good, firm rich nose, clear white pepper spice, this is well structured without intrusive oak. Harvest took place over three days - 2-4-6 October, bringing in a yield of 25 hl/h

compared to 33 hl/h last year in 2012, 12.5% natural alcohol. In contrast to many estates, here they believe 'above all you should not chaptalise; you need to take what nature gives you and make the most of it. Nature is the boss', says Olivier, 'you either try to push it too far, add oak, plump it up, or you go for pleasure, harmony, balance, and happiness when you open the bottle'. They have certainly achieved that here, lovely violet and red currant, nothing bulked. Good acidity, good finesse. This should open up slowly, because it has both acidity and freshness. Olivier compares this year to 1999 and 2004. Extraction was very carefully managed – so pumping over during first week once a day, that wetting the must, so less powerful extraction. 91-93. Drink 2019-2035.

ANGELUS

No 3 d'Angelus AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Clean nose, a little short, the fruit is plush, firm, fairly dark and ripe, this is a good third wine that compares favourably to many second wines this year. But still short. 85-86. Drink 2016-2023.

Carillon d'Angelus AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Firm dark fruit, feel some vibrancy and pleasure. Firm, good tannic structure, does this have the sexy rush of Angelus? Good smooth tannins, nose surprisingly closed, sample fairly cold. The Carillon has an excellent attack, but the acidity is really quite biting in the mid palate, it suffers from the vintage and no doubt the intense selection made for the first wine. 88-89. Drink 2017-2025.

Chateau Angelus AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Blend of 62% merlot, 38% cabernet franc. Long harvest 28th September to 18th October. Bright clean, fresh, elegant, some sexy smudge that Angelus does so well. Good persistency, clear bright well defined fruits. I know they were disappointed that with all the work they did still not achieve a perfect result, but this is a very good wine. Lacks the fleshiness of the best vintages of Angelus perhaps, but again there is a power to the wine that gently builds up, with good acidity, structure and very attractive florality. 93-94. Drink 2020-2034

Fleur de Bouard AOC Lalande-de-Pomerol 2013

85% merlot, 12% cabernet franc, 3% cabernet sauvignon. This works pretty well, in a hugely modern way - throws into relief how restrained they have been with Angelus, this is far more old school right bank, coffee and cupcakes. Will have an audience. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2018-2025.

Le Plus de Bouard AOC Lalande-de-Pomerol 2013

Nose more restrained. Closed, big, this actually works better than the Fleur, which for me is very unusual, but there is some cleaner use of oak, not so exuberant but more

structured. Short though, compared to many years. 89-90. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2018-2025.

YQUEM

Chateau Yquem AOC Sauternes 2013

A deeply flavoured luscious take on Yquem. Harvested over four passes through the vineyard from 25 September to 24 October, short periods between each one. Last year 19 days of rain when harvesting 1-29 October. This time just a few days of rain. And at lucky moments 15 hl/h which is above average, but only 40% made it into the first wine. Fairly high 3,7ph, with 4g total acidity, 13,1%abv, 140g residual sugar. Rich and round. Assistant winemaker David Marc says, 'we got rain at lucky moments this year that encouraged a good spread of noble rot. For me, this lacks a touch of the soaring acidity of 2011, but it is a complex, more-ish wine with excellent potential for future development. 94. Highly recommended. Drink 2010-2050.

UGC Pessac Leognan

Tasted at Pique Caillou, blind.

AT A GLANCE: The whites performed more strongly than the reds, as expected.

REDS

Chateau Ferrande AOC Graves 2013

Attractive firm colour, ripe plum, medium extraction, soft tannins, oak-influenced nose is attractive after opening up in the glass, but this does have a little harsh green on the palate, not one where the length has been sufficiently fleshed out. Extraction not as smart as in some. This is a little underwhelming. 83. Recommended. Drink 2017-2026.

Chateau Rahoul AOC Graves 2013

Evident oak, rich round fruit flavours cradled by vanilla bean, a little more successful on nose than palate, this is still a little short, fruit not entirely fleshed out, but they have still gone a good, competent job with the winemaking here, not pushed too hard in the extraction, have teased out pretty floral character. 86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Chantegive AOC Graves 2013

Under-ripe character on the nose. Again they are not pushing it by over extracting, but even with a soft touch, there is just not enough good raw materials to elevate this wine. Will offer some early drinking pleasure, and should fatten up over the ageing, as there is a pretty texture to the fruit and some sweet oak aromatics. The nose opens up and widens in the glass, but still fruit spectrum is on the redcurrant-greenage just-ripe guage. 83-84. Recommended. Drink 2017-2026

Chateau Carmes Haut-Brion AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

This is a very rich deep colour, and the texture visually is thick and silky, suggests high alcohol. Good nose, some heat, with ripe fruits and subtle but still evident oak influence. This has ambition in its structure certainly, and has been assembled with care. There are ripe fruits here, but for me just a touch of sourness in the finish, think they may have overdone extraction by a bar or two, get some slightly off flavours in the close of play.

But have to look for them - this is a good job from the winemaking team, rich, layered, powerful with food astringency in the tannins that should soften over ageing. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Carbonnieux AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Expressive, cheerful sandalwood and red cherry fruit on the nose, a medium cherry colour, not as dark as some in this lineup. This is a very pretty wine, floral, good minerality, lovely level of extraction, medium drinking but with great pleasure. An excellent example of working with the vintage, not trying too hard, not being over ambitious. Acidity perhaps renders the fruit a touch sour, but I like the lift, a good 2013. Harvest for the merlot became on September 30 and ended on 7th October, and the cabernets from 7 to 15th October. They have a new vineyard manager here, Charles Knight Lafite, who was formerly the head of vineyards at Chateau Rieussec working under Charles Chevallier (this year, it was probably particularly useful to understand about grape bunches reaching maturity at different moments!). 89-90 Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2019-2033.

Chateau Bouscaut AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Medium extraction ruby colour, hints of purple. Strong percolated coffee aromas on the nose, definitely gone for the empreumatic toasting of the oak. Attractive and modern, sophisticated but does mask the fruit. On the palate there is a delicacy to the fruit, creme caramel as again the oak dominates, but it is done with delicacy and a deft touch. A interesting wine, but needs a little more fruit to be fully in balance. Still, plenty to enjoy, and again a pretty medium term drinker. 86-88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Pique Caillou AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Sour cherry on the nose, not as precise as some. This has touches of bitterness coming through in the mid palate, the fruit flavours lack a little definition, although it does have some attractive black cherry and soft oak dusting. Blend is 38% merlot, 62% cabernet sauvignon. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2026.

Chateau La Louviere AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Deep ruby colour, medium to fuller intensity. Cloves and smoky bacon on the nose, but quite subtle, some graphite pencil lead alongside suggesting terroir not just oak. Good firm dark fruits, more black cherry and damson than summer fruits, so may have managed to get further along the ripening cycle. Some interesting firm hold of tannin and acidity. But still lacks that vibrancy and lift to take it to the truly enjoyable. But good potential here. Good chewy tannins. 89-90. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Latour Martillac AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Subtle nose, some complexity and deftness here, and good medium to full extraction on colour alone, heading to deep ruby. Firm extraction, just holding back before it gets too much. There are strands of slightly tart fruits, but like the overall lift and definition, can feel the construction and the ambition at play, feels intellectual and considered. Opens up quite nicely in the glass, imagine alcohol a touch higher here than some. Feels more like a primeur sample than many this year, with more development to come. 88-90. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Smith Haut Lafitte AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Enjoyable layered nose, liquorice and pencil lead, a touch hot perhaps but a successful opener overall. But this has good extraction on the attack, juicy firm black flesh, coffee, eugenol, feel oak comes in strongly in the mid palate, suggesting the fruit needed a little

boost at this point. This is well constructed, and opens up well in the glass. 89-91. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2019-2032.

Chateau Pape Clement AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Clear sweet oak influence, caramel and mocha flavours as opposed to dark coffee and cloves. On the palate a good rush of fruit and acidity, with a tannic hold catching behind. A good primeur sample, with development and life ahead of it, pushing the vintage a little more than many seem to have dared. Cedarwood and damson plums, some elegance and weight. I remember liking Pape Clement in 2011 as well – for me it's an estate that does well in times when nature forces the winemakers to take their foot off the pedal. 91-92. Highly Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Olivier AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Here we go with the empreumatic percolating coffee. Interesting how clear the different oak approaches are this year, toasting levels and origin are going to make a big difference over the course of the ageing. Touch hot, but aroma is fairly ripe. On the initial attack, things gets a little over extracted, but calm down mid palate and through to close of play. Interesting, ambitious, potential, a little overshoots the vintage. 87-89. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Malartic Lagraviere AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Good deep rich colour, with high extraction on the nose, plum purée, some black spices. This is heading to over extracted, feel they are really kicking against the pricks of this vintage, to quote Nick Caves and the Bad Seeds (and the King James Bible before them). Jean-Jacques Bonnie says that brought in their last cabernets here on October 22, so very late for the vintage, explaining for me why there is such matiere here compared to some others in the line-up. Severe selection also, with just 40% going into the first wine, from an already small 26 hectoltires per hectare yield. It is good and ambitious, definite potential. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Larrivet Haut Brion AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Interesting nose, this is pretty and floral, different to many here, but a little sweet, overly ripe roses, *fleurs fannés* as they would say at the DUAD. Sweetness suggests ripeness, although my guess is this is clever use of oak and chaptilisation. Pleasure certainly, but a triumph of nurture over nature. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Haut Bergey AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Toasted almonds, pinenuts, pleasant oak nose, a little short on the finish, this has a real hole in the mid palate. Good tannins on either side, they have certainly done their best here, just fruit too light. I like the oak flavours though, they are lightweight, dinner party canapés, light and smart, and nearly get away with their conjuring trick. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Haut-Bailly AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Plenty of impact right from the first nose, this is well extracted with medium intensity ruby in colour, with a slightly sweet cherry and cedarwood nose, fairly classic for the appellation and not pushing too hard against the vintage. There is good freshness on the attack, with the tannic structure silky and soft, coming in at the mid-palate to cradle the fruit. Moutwatering, with appealing astringency suggesting the wine will develop and fatten over ageing. A serious wine, with great potential. 89-91. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2020-2036.

Chateau de France AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Finessed nose, feel in hands of experts. Lovely colour, ripe and rich plum/ruby. Like this, it has a softness, a dying fall, but it has elegance also, a Miss Haversham but with lots of charm, not fighting the vintage. Perhaps a little short, this is definitely a medium drinker. 85-87. Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Fieuzal AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Clean, rich nose, understated but good fruit on the nose. Slight candyfloss sweetness, and on the palate this loses its charm. Started really well, doesn't follow through. Has the ingredients of acidity, tannic structure... Not enough fruit. Picking from October 4th to 22nd. Cellar renovated here in 2011. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Domaine de Chevalier AOC Pessac-Léognan 2013

Firm, rich, deep extraction, this is rich in colour, high extraction, silky rich and round texture, seems clear alcohol. Interest. Damson, dark black cherry. Definite ambition, broad brush strokes of success. Juicy, tannic hold, big, pact, there will be fans of this wine. Picking dates October 1st to 5th merlot, October 9-18th cabernet sauvignon. Optical sorting. Olivier Bernard told me that they added an average of 0.2% alcohol through chaptalisation across all tanks – so none in some, and a little higher in others, and used a very small amount of concentrator machines to further adjust alcohol levels. 'It was like a tightrope; everything had to be done so carefully'. Bernard said he couldn't remember the last time he chaptalised. 'Possibly in the 1980s.' 89-90. Highly Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Whites

Ideally, a Pessac Leognan white needs varietal signature, some structure and ageing ability, plus a sense of exuberance and fun. I found some great examples this year. But some misses also.

Chateau Venus AOC Graves 2013

Like this nose, warm damson fruit, oak is a bit too intrusive, this squeezes to the finish, sample may be a little tired (four days after delivery to my house), but can see there is charm and potential. 85. Recommended. Drink 2018-2026

Chateau Venus AOC Graves Blanc 2013

Highly aromatic nose, on the palate this is a little flat. However, clean stone fruit flavours come through. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2016-2016.

Clos Floridene AOC Bordeaux 2013

Textbook nose of sauvignon, real clear cut grass, not quite as far as grapefruit but a very enjoyable, bright and zingy wine. Lots of pleasure. 89-90. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2015-2023.

Chateau Ferrande AOC Graves Blanc 2013

Sweet, touch of candyfloss, not final fining or filtration done yet as still a touch cloudy. This has sweet ripe grapefruit and pear flavours, not as poised as some whites are this year. 84. Recommended. Drink 2015-2023.

Chateau Rahoul AOC Graves Blanc 2013

Rich round colour, interesting nose, very much about lees stirring I would imagine, floral, plenty of personality. Successful, bursting with flavour, straw and hay, sauvignon lead but with semillon fattening. 88. Recommended. Drink 2015-2026.

Chateau Chantegive AOC Graves Blanc 2013

Crisp, clean, a little short, more cut grass than round ripe lemon curd, acidity a little high just sours things on the finish, but this has plenty of fresh appeal. 85.

Recommended. Drink 2015-2024.

Chateau Carbonnieux AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Floral, white blossom, clean, not overly bursting out of the glass, but enjoyable. And on the palate also, this is the definition of juicy fruit, it is practically flowing out of your mouth, an abundance of lemons, limes, lifted up by white blossoms. Very enjoyable. 90-91. Highly recommended.. Drink 2015-2026.

Chateau Bouscalt AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Slightly more subdued and sophisticated on the nose, get more semillon, more oak influence, more restrained overall. Not as enjoyable right now, but more structure, this should unfurl and age, and it does still have minerality. Will benefit from a little ageing 91+. Highly recommended. Drink 2016-2026.

Chateau Pique Caillou AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Clean, crisp fruit on the nose, a little less attractive on the palate, this heads to squeezed fruit on the attack, takes time to get going. But there is some good juiciness and structure through the mid-palate. Good ageing potential. 60% sauvignon, 40% semillon, Dubourdieu-Levigne team of oenologists, no new oak. Guntz gravel soils. Early maturing. 89. Recommended. Drink 2015-2024.

Chateau La Louviere AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Rich, good varietal characteristics on the nose. Love the acidity on this. A good wine, firm insisting citrus fruits, good acidity, some structure and hold, lacks perhaps the pure exuberance of the best Pessacs whites this year, but impressive. Icing sugar sweetness on finish. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2016-2026.

Chateau Latour Martillac AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Crisp, clean varietal nose, a little tart, a little gooseberry, pH clearly low on this, get some real new zealand expression of sauvignon, but without the plush finish. Delicate. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2015-2024.

Chateau Smith Haut Lafitte AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Good rich roundness, some lees stirring here I imagine, with some clear oak influence. Touches of vanilla, and clear ripe fruit influence in terms of apricots and stone fruit flavours. There is alcohol here, but balanced by ambitious, laser-like focus beam of acidity. A really ambitious white wine. 92-93. Highly recommended. Drink 2017-2028.

Chateau Pape Clement AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

A more relaxed, floral, happy exuberant expression of Pessac Leognan white. Tiny bit subdued when you get to the palate, possibly restrained by high alcohol. White blossoms though, nice floral expression. 89. Recommended. Drink 2016-2024.

Chateau Olivier AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Here there is sauvignon blanc definition and varietal characteristics immediately apparent on the nose. This delivers on typicity on palate also. Delivers also on juiciness, grip, acidity, perhaps half a whisker too high, but this is a lovely wine, full of character and highly appealing. 92-94. Highly recommended. Drink 2018-2032.

Chateau Malartic Lagraviere AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Richer, rounder spectrum of flavours, we have some confectionary flavours on the nose, but they translate into a rich, gourmet expression of the vintage on the palate. Citrus

flavours have great clarity, and this should age very well, deepening in complexity. 90. Highly Recommended. Drink 2015-2026.

Chateau Larrivet Haut-Brion AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Pure varietal sauvignon nose, but clean rather than over the top. On the palate, feels placed rather than naturally evolved, has the juiciness and the structure of an expertly made wine. 89. Recommended. Drink 2016-2026.

Chateau Haut Bergey AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Bright, whoosh of varietal character here. Tart, bright, some lovely coming together on the finish. This is good, very characterful. Juicy, well structured. Not as sophisticated as some, but thoroughly drinkable, enjoyable stuff from owner Helene Leveque and consultant Alain Raynaud. 89. Recommended. Drink 2015-2024.

Chateau de France AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Pleasant, more straw and hay than grapefruit so assume high semillon. Very good, clean flavours, not trying too hard, savoury, good grip, should age nicely, really a confident wine. Perhaps a touch of dip on final furlong. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2016-2026.

Chateau Fieuzal AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Rich and round colour. Less successful on the attack though, as it majors more on tart flavours than lulling acidity. There is some attractive honeysuckle on the finish. 85. Recommended. Drink 2016-2024.

Domaine de Chevalier AOC Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2013

Lovely nose, combination of sweet citrus and clean minerality. Good deft shot of acidity, great zing of minerality, very good indeed. The blend here is 80% sauvignon blanc, 20% semillon. 92-93. Highly recommended. Drink 2016-2028.

Pontet Canet AOC Pauillac 2013

Beautiful nose, very spring like, beautifully nuanced, very effortless. The yield was 15 hl/h, less than half the usual, but still 90% first wine as usual. As ever with Pontet, it feels vibrant and elegant, although there is not the depth and power of the past few years here. This would be a gorgeous wine to own and drink in the medium term. Nettle hints on the palate, certainly there is a strong hedgerow, brambles. Could drink it now, so soft are the tannins, but clearly this will age well, if less robustly than many Pontet vintages. Jean-Michel Comme was, as ever, quietly proud of the achievement, 'It was a year that was different in every way. We have focused on merlot over last few years, because the cabernet was pulling away so far, biodynamics has brought back quality to the merlot. Zero green harvesting, zero adding of cultivated yeasts; everything is different here'. 92-93. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Aymeric de la Gironde at Cos d'Estournel

Year of paradoxes, particularly difficult during flowering, 26hl/h in total, only 11hl/h for the merlot. Harvest 27 september to 10 october.

Goulee AOC Médoc 2013

Lowest alcohol ever at 12.6%, this is clear, fresh, good vibrancy, this is surprisnly pleasant. Blend is 33% cabernet sauvignon, 60% merlot. They might not want to hear this, but this wine does very well with low alcohol, making it far more approachable than in many other years. A good drinking claret. 84. Recommended. Drink 2014-2020.

Pagodes de Cos AOC Saint Estephe 2013

12.7%abv. Soft, but with a sense of energy. A little tight and short on the finish. But has poise and precision and tingling fruit. Savoury again, enjoyable and delicate, crushed blackberries with a cigar smoke edge. 64% cab, 28% merlot, 4% franc, 4% petit verdot. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2017-2027.

Chateau Cos d'Estournel AOC Saint Estephe 2013

Lowest alcohol since the 1960s, at 12.7%abv. Harvest 27 September to 10 October without stopping. Just under 50% first wine which was an achievement this year, and the rest was Pagodes (so no third wine, no declassified juice - they managed to make wine of sufficient quality with their entire crop). Lovely rich ripe tannins and well-defined autumnal fruits, again blackberry but here also bilberry, blackcurrant, more depth of flavour, and with the fruit speaking more clearly because the alcohol is not hiding it. These are lovely soft wines, 3,55ph. 78% cab sauvignon, 20-% merlot, 2% csb franc. 91-92. Highly recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Cos d'estournel Blanc AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2013

Flinty, gorgeous, pure, precise wine, 76% sauvignon, 24% semillon, 7% cabernet franc, 3.52ph, 3.3 TA. 13.34%abv, 4.9 acidity, 2.99ph, 7% new barrels, loved it. 94. Highly recommended. Drink 2015-2025.

Bruno Borie wines

Bruno Borie calls 2013 'classicism reinvented.'T his year, with the rain, could not follow the 125 days after flowering rule for picking. Instead, picked from sept 26, knew botrytis spores were present, were one of the earliest in Saint Julien to pick - that was needed this year, have to adapt each time. They use cameras now measure anthocyanins.

Fourcas Borie AOC Listrac Medoc 2013

This is fresh, elegant, gentle pepper. Will this vintage start a new style? We have to accompany mother nature, so cant force it. This is delicate, refreshing, does also have some power, pretty, enjoyable, an early drinker but good value at €15 maximum consumer price. 83-84. Recommended. Drink 2017-2016.

Lalande-Borie AOC St Julien 2013

The vines for this wine are just behind Talbot and Lagrange, created back in 1972, so today a little over 40 years. Easy approach wine. 33% new oak used. There is good sweetness to the fruit. Some real elegance. €20 to consumer, maybe €25 maximum. 70% cabernet sauvignon, 26% merlot, 4% cabernet franc. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2017-2027.

Croix de Beaucaillou AOC Saint Julien 2013

Can feel a plusher more pumped up fruit here, some lovely freshness, 100% new oak, 3% petit verdot in the blend, gives a lovely spice. Can feel the impact of the oak, fleshes things up, gives a sense of heightened mouthfeel, works right now, would worry about it ageing well, but this should have a good ten years of pleasure to offer. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2026.

Chateau Ducru Beaucaillou AOC Saint Julien 2013

Did not change anything in terms of extraction and ageing for the Ducru, even though picked grapes earlier than usual. The attack is dominated by violet, red cherry not black, redcurrants not blackcurrants, should ease into leather and tobacco leaf over ageing. This is delicious, there is not enormous persistency on the palate, but there is juicy fruits, redcurrant, gooseberry leaf, some real lift of acidity. This has grip, soft tannins again, 90% cabernet sauvignon, 10% merlot. 13%abv. Floral touch, elegant. 91-92. Highly recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Ulysses cazabonne tasting

Chateau Serilhan AOC Saint Estephe 2013

Tight nose, fruits are cleanly extracted and fresh, firm blackcurrents, but overall this feels a little forced, needs time to settle into itself. Blend here is 57% cabernet sauvignon, 35% merlot, 8% cabernet franc. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2017-2027.

Dame de Montrose AOC Saint Estephe 2013

A recent vertical reminded me how amazing this wine can be in some vintages (step forward the 2010 particularly), so this is a little disappointing, although good firm and fairly plush fruit. But short. 87. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Montrose AOC Saint Estephe 2013

No chaptalisation at Montrose this year except for two small lots of merlot, the first ones picked. The rest reached 13.13.5% naturally, with picking finishing up Tuesday 15 October. Around 35 hl/h yield globally, very successful in terms of quantity compared to many in the Médoc. I tasted some lots of this wine in the vats just after the picking, so was very interested to retaste the en primeur sample. Overall this has chewy tannins

that have real form and depth to them. Understated power and a good sense of elegance. The grapes had fragile skins at harvest, so no severe extraction here, seven day vinification with gentle maceration (18-20 days, compared to 26 days in 2012), 3.4ph. This has a slightly overblown attack, but settles down from the mid-palate onwards and is a hugely pretty wine. Great winemaking and construction skills on view. 89-91. Recommended to Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Chateau Calon Segur AOC Saint Estephe 2013

Plusher richer fruit, straight from nose this feels and smells like a well wrought wine. Clear oak influence but gently toasted, not overdone. A little short compared to the best years, yes. Great spiciness, some real grip, like this a lot. One of the more successful in this vitage, it manages to feel juicy and personality-driven, really enjoyable. Medium term drinking, but with great pleasure. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Marquis de Calon AOC Saint Estephe 2013

Firm rich ripe fruit on the nose, but this has less of the deft touch of the first wine, tannins more stalky and rustic, big leap down from calon. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Meyney AOC Saint Estephe 2013

The one to watch this year, late picked fruit, managed to avoid some of the main difficulties in Saint Estephe, with the oldest plot of merlot particularly avoiding the rot, and being picked far later than many of its neighbours. Lovely vanilla bean suggesting a well-placed dusting of oak, and feel here this is more effortlessly ripe than many. Like this a lot. Some juiciness on display, with a swirl of dark pepper spice, and should be excellent value. Blend 55% cabernet sauvignon, 33% merlot, 12% petit verdot. 89-90. Recommended to Highly recommended. Drink 2018-2032.

Chateau Mauvesin-Barton AOC Moulis 2013

Good, sweet but oak dominated nose. Can see where they are going with this. But short, underpowered. 82-84. Fair to Recommended. Drink 2018-2026.

Chateau Bellevue AOC Haut Medoc 2013

Another vintage where this estate punches above its weight. Yes the fruit could be a touch less tight, perhaps they turned the extraction up a touch high, but texture is good, coffee and bitter chocolate gives added interest. A little short, but good value for money. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau d'Escurac 2013

This tastes over extracted, green, lacks the ripeness to carry the fruit through to the close of play. 82. Fair. Drink 2017-2015.

Chateau d'Arsac Winemaker's Collection Ntsiki Biyela 2013

Not a lot of room for debate on this, a whole lot of green, not achieved its potential. 82. Fair. Drink 2017-2024.

Chateau Rollan de By AOC medoc 2013

Rich, chewy tannins, some power here, some good structure and potential, not uplifting, but solid and successful. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2018-2027.

Tasted blind at Malescot St Exupery**Chateau Fourcas Dupré AOC Lustrac 2013**

Colour is medium, intensity, and nose seems to have been held back in terms of extraction, assume ripeness was an issue. On the palate this is confirmed with a touch of underripe fruit here. They have not over extracted however, so been careful with it, but I get a touch of geosmin. Fresh, fruity on the bright side. 82-84. Fair to recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Chateau Fonreaud AOC Lustrac 2013

Promisingly bright en primeur purple here, suggests raw materials for the extraction were of a good quality. Certainly the level of extraction is higher here, but again this is a little sour on the palate. The texture is good, it is silky, and the tannins are not harsh, but it lacks enough depth of fruit to really come out of the glass. 84-85. Recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Chateau Fourcas Hosten AOC Lustrac 2013

An attractive medium intensity blush of purple, with some good Medoc anthocyanes. Nose fairly restrained. This has some confident extraction, get some promising levels of acidity balanced by fruit, and a nice hold of tannins, feel there is potential for things to fatten up over ageing. But still feels a little lacking in bright fruits, and will be a medium term drinker. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2032.

Chateau Clarke AOC Lustrac 2013

Things are getting deeper and richer anthocyanine-wise, now the purple has made it to glass-staining levels. First one with chewy tannins, and again a good hold, silky texture. Slightly sour fruit, but some pleasant gentle coffee on the retro-olfaction. This has potential. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Chateau Poujeaux AOC Moulis-en-Medoc 2013

Medium intensity cherry red, more merlot than cabernet colours, gentle nose, this is an attractive early drinker, has some poise and elegance, good summer fruits, cherry and redcurrant. the fruits may not have reached optimum ripeness, but this is an expert handling of what they were given. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Chateau Chasse Spleen AOC Moulis-en-Medoc 2013

Only medium cherry red, but lovely brightness on the colour. Perky fruit on the nose also, this is charming smells clean and focused. Light and fresh on the attack, unfortunately sour cherry comes in the mid-palate, they have really done a good job of constructing a fresh early to medium-drinking wine, clearly couldn't over extract, and have used oak to get some sweetness, just about pull it off. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Maucaillou AOC Moulis-en-Medoc 2013

A firmer, substantial nose, with clear oak influence, but well balanced by fruit. Good, this has well placed fruits and well controlled extraction. Feels like this will develop and go medium term, with some real dark berry spice, soft coffee undertones, like it. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2020-2033.

Chateau tour de By AOC Medoc 2013

Firm colour extraction, tiny whiff of heat on the nose. This is less successful in terms of overall balance. Good tannins, not at all drying, and some lively acidity providing a central backbone, but the fruit simply isn't rich enough to hold on, and the hot finish is a little distracting. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Marquis de Terme, AOC Margaux 2013

Rich medium intensity purple, like the nose here, extracted but full and firm, good empreumatic aromas, coffee and strong eugenol/cloves coming through on the palate. They were able to extract enough fruit to just about balance the oak, although it is evident. Still, this is modern, subtle pinenut toasting, will have its fans. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2020-2033.

Chateau Monbrison AOC Margaux 2013

Withholding on the nose, like a surly teenager. This is a little short, the fruit drops off, but they are 75% of the way to a good easy drinking wine, has firm crunchy fruit and a fine attack, but stops short in mid palate. Again, it is a gentle waft of cappucino that accompanies you to the finish line, and there are worse flavours than that. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Labegorce AOC Margaux 2013

Damson plum colour, good rich nose, firm fruit, at least on initial impression, this is well made. On the attack we get fairly rich fruit, riper than some, spectrum is moving darker and riper here, with a good lift and smooth tannins. This falls away on the finish, and again it is more medium than long term, but showcasing skills. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2020-2033.

Chateau Prieure Lichine AOC Margaux 2013

Promising nose, with impacted, they have done a great job of finessing aromatics. Good use of oak in terms of softly smoky strands, but less successful on the palate. Right from the attack this feels a little unbalanced, with the fruit just a little underpowered. this falls again into the camp of a good medium-term drinker, that will offer pleasure. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Chateau Siran AOC Margaux 2013

Good colour extraction, back to a touch of glass-staining. Good tannins, firm and a little rustic but not drying, This is an interesting wine. Fruit has just about made it to the finish line in terms of ripeness, although the acidity is a little high suggesting the fruit could have done with a few more days to ripen. Still, this is fresh and charming. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Malescot St Exupery AOC Margaux 2013

Here again the nose has been well prepped, black spice, good rich colour, extraction of colour well handled, although clearly lighter than in many vintages. A bit short on the finish. 'Correct' as the French say, this has firm grip and good potential, but just doesn't lift off. Battle between tannin and fruit that should work itself out over ageing. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2021-2033.

Chateau Rauzan Segla AOC Margaux 2013

Medium to full intensity with coffee, even some chocolate on the nose. Good lift, this has the tannins and acidity wall that you want en primeur. But of the triumverate, rich joyous fruit is missing. Still, this is again one of the better ones in terms of a representative en primeur sample that just might develop and fatten over ageing - kind of the point of this exercise. 90-91. Highly Recommended. Drink 2022-2036.

Chateau Lascombes AOC Margaux 2013

Touch souring on the nose, this for me is in danger of being over-extracted on colour alone. Firm medium to full intensity. On the palate, it confirms that extraction has been pushed too far, the fruit is smudged and the oak extreme. It is not drying, there is potential here, but very little elegance and lift. Shame, as for me Lascomes has produced excellent wines in recent years, but here they are struggling against the vintage. 84-85. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Kirwan AOC Margaux 2013

Sweet, vanilla nose, quite different from the rest. Cherry flavours, vanilla, creme anglaise, this is charming but overly sweet, really an early drinker, will find its target but not one to be laid down for years. But wouldn't be surprised at all if this is a food early drinker that gives lots of pleasure. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2031.

Chateau Rauzan Gassies AOC Margaux 2013

Again, the colour seems to have been extracted to its full extent, and nose is fairly promising, fully fruited damson, and on the palate this is one of the more successful. Chewy tannins, extracted with restraint and skill, fruit is not obviously underripe, which is saying a lot, and you get a matchup of the damson on nose and palate. 89-90. Recommended to Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2033.

Chateau du Tertre AOC Margaux 2013

Deep rich colour, the extraction here nudges over to not playing the vintage game. threatens to derail things, but on the palate there is lovely texture, and firm tannins. Just overplayed a touch, but potential to really come into itself over ageing. 86-88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2031.

Chateau Giscours AOC Margaux 2013

(First bottle had a fault) Bottle two, rich, firm fruit. I still get slight bandaid, but it has softened into dental eugenol, so this must be barrel effect. Good texture, smooth and silky, rich damson fruits, which for me are the best you can get on the Medoc this year, very little cassis on show. It's good, firm, fresh. Great potential. 89-90. Recommended to Highly recommended. Drink 2021-2036.

Chateau Dauzac AOC Margaux 2013

Pretty, charming ruby colour, deft fruit extraction on the nose. Early drinker, but successful within the vintage, not trying too hard, even if a little short. 86-88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2031.

Chateau Desmirail AOC Margaux 2013

Among the lighter on the colour spectrum. Really enjoyable nose though, fresh and pretty fruit. On the attack it starts out promising, but kirsch and drunken cherries take precedence over firm ripe fruits. Feels unbalanced. But again, no obvious faults, early drinking pleasure. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2031.

Chateau Ferriere AOC Margaux 2013

Medium to full intensity, rich ruby in colour, slight clove and coffee burnt notes on the nose, fruit on the just ripe spectrum. This is ambitious, feels higher in cabernet than

merlot, good rich dark fruits, touch of green pepper on the finish pulls it up short. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2019-2031.

Chateau Angludet AOC Margaux 2013

Bright reflected anthocyanes, ruby red, good start, nose a little tight and forced, but bright. On the palate there is a subdued attack, then things become more intense on the mid palate, quite unusual. Just feel that overall not balanced, although there is charm. 84-85. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Brane-Cantenac AOC Margaux 2013

Coffee empreumatic nose, good fresh fruit, modern, almost exuberant and sexy, this feels like one of the most Margaux for me, actually graphite and smokiness. A wine that should fatten up and become more complex over ageing. 89-91. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2021-2034.

Chateau Cantenac Brown, AOC Margaux 2013

Rich, round, good nose, again slightly smoky graphite edge. Like this, some juicy rich fruit, good extraction, feel it has some way to go. A little too short to be great, but this has done a good job of replacing the holes left by lack of perfectly-ripe fruit with interesting building blocks. The vintage is like a game of Jenga. 89-90. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2021-2034.

Alter Ego de Palmer AOC Margaux 2013

The warm July and August really dropped down the pyrazine that was threatening from such a slow early season, 3,55ph. In terms of numbers, 10% of the crop was rejected, 2/3 went into Alter Ego, and 1/3 Palmer. All tanks underwent chaptalisation at Palmer this year, 12.25%abv naturally, chaptalised up to 13%, first time chaptalised under Duroux, probably last time was 1994 (even in 1997 they didn't chaptalise). Good deep black spice, this has some real personality on the nose. the blend here is 46% merlot, 46% cabernet sauvignon, 6% petit verdot. It has charm and personality, not up to recent years with Alter Ego, but this is a wine that you would always be pleased to drink. 86-88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2031.

Chateau Palmer AOC Margaux 2013

3,6ph, a little lower than normal meaning less violet-blue colour and more red, with a blend of 51% cabernet, 49% merlot. This is one of those interesting anomalies in 2013, as right next door at Chateau Margaux they were not able to use any merlot in their first wine (Duroux says that they have the merlot on gravel at Palmer, so it got ripe, and that Palmer without merlot would not be Palmer). The tannins here are very silky, great poise on the fruits. Fermentation 27-28 degrees c. During maceration started it at 25, then let it naturally slip down to 20/21. Between two- four weeks maceration. Next year, 2014, will be 100% biodynamic, and by 2017 they hope to be fully certified in both organic and biodynamic. Real purity of fruit. 91-92. Highly recommended. Drink 2022-2038.

UGC Paillac, Saint Estephe Saint Julien

Tasted blind at Chateau Clerc Milon

Chateau la Tour Carnet AOC Haut Medoc 2013

Firm ruby-purple spectrum here, looks like they achieved good ripeness of the fruit, were able to extract some good colour. On the attack, the tannins are fairly chalky, does

have a quiet elegance to it. Improves over opening in the glass. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2032.

Chateau de Camensac AOC Haut Médoc 2013

Ripe fruit on the nose, well textured on the palate, feel the tannins manage to offer support without being drying, and there is some clever construction going on that conveys confidence. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2018-2032.

Chateau Citran AOC Haut Médoc 2013

Again, some impressive colour extraction and tannic hold, this is almost too much, but in the end feel we have expertise here, and some actual plush purple en primeur fruit, could develop over ageing, offers potential, while still remaining elegant and working with the vintage, but not being afraid to push things just a little. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2018-2032.

Chateau Cantemerle AOC Haut Médoc 2013

Fairly open plum on the nose. Like this. Great anthocyan extraction, some purple-violet tones. Potential, poise, power, not over done, well worked, good winemaking skills. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2032.

Chateau de Belgrave AOC Haut Médoc 2013

Medium to full extraction in colour, purple plum blush. Here the fruit is a touch more underripe than the others here. Still well constructed, feel the building blocks being well placed. Get some mid palate weight, and it finishes if not exactly with a flourish but at least not a dip. The fruit is overly tight, less potential to soften, as heads to bitterness, but overall they have worked well with the vintage. 85-87. Recommended. Drink 2018-2029.

Chateau Lamarque AOC Haut Médoc 2013

A more obvious oak nose, have some eugenol clove and empryematic flavours, touch of kirsch, feel alcohol is high here and not so in balance (chaptalisation?.) Feel they kicked against the vintage, extraction overly full. Of course ambitious, there is potential. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2016-2026.

Chateau Beaumont AOC Haut Medoc 2013

Soft sweet oak on the nose. Overly sweet on the palate. This is cherry and vanilla, more red fruit than black, feels less northern medoc than it should, indications that the fruit didn't reach full ripeness. 83-84. Recommended. Drink 2016-2026.

Chateau Coufran AOC Haut Médoc 2013

Back to a more expertly extracted nose. This has some good firm fruit, blackcurrant, clearly trying to maitrise the extraction, perhaps a notch over the top, as there is a lot of

weight without perhaps the correct freshness to balance it out. Feels a little overworked. Still, certainly potential, and has characteristics of northern medoc. 86-88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Branaire Ducru AOC Saint Julien 2013

Sweeter fruit and new oak nose, hints of a more burnt complex oak, but overall this is underwhelming and over extracted, even though it is fairly lightweight in texture, so quite an achievement, suggests that the fruit was simply not ripe enough. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chatea Langoa Barton AOC Saint Julien 2013

Again, over extracted and underwhelming. There are tannins, there is acidity, there is structure, just not in balance at this stage of its development. Retro-olfaction offers attractive coffee notes, which may well open up over ageing. This needs time to reveal its potential, but it may well reward the effort. 87-88 Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Lagrange AOC Saint Julien 2013

A high extraction level, things are tight and uplifted, but at least the fruit is abundant which balances out the tannins and acidity. This has depth and layers, feel some complexity, black pepper spices, great potential. Harvest 30th September to October 14th. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Chateau Talbot AOC Saint Julien 2013

Closed unobtrusive nose, and things are also closed and tight on the palate. This has juiciness, there is some fruit extraction, but things end pretty abruptly, and the fruit has less complexity than the best years at this property. They have two new sorting lines at Talbot this year, and use both optical sorters and La Tribaie machine. 86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2028.

Chateau Leoville Barton AOC Saint Julien 2013

As with Langoa (and these are tasted blind) the extraction is a little distracting. Can see where they are going, there is a construction job going on, but the tannins are bursting out rather than gliding. Once it calms down in the mid palate, this plays into itself, and there are attractive liquorice and bilberry notes. 86-88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Gruaud Larose AOC Saint Julien 2013

Firm extraction, fruit a little sour, things a little unbalanced, but like they they have had the ambition in these appellations to at least try to construct an *en primeur* wine, which

has tannins and acidity and will benefit from ageing. 88. Recommended. Drink 2020-2031.

Chateau Leoville Poyferre AOC Saint Julien 2013

Black black fruits, far more than most, high extraction, high oak. Ambitious. Coffee, chocolate, liquorice, tar, cigar.... Would like to restate this in bottle, out of kilter with the vintage, but some success is evident, not drying, clear potential. 90. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2033.

Chateau Saint Pierre AOC Saint Julien 2013

Sweet nose again, a little spur on the palate. Get some underripe here, although well masked. 85. Recommended. Drink 2019-2028.

Chateau Beychevelle AOC Saint Julien 2013

Merlot harvest 1-5 October, cabernet 6-10 October. Consultant Eric Boissenot. Nail varnish, suggesting a touch of volatile acidity. Asked for a second bottle to taste, and it was better, but still felt that the nose was a little unfocused, just suggesting that the fruit wasn't quite as clean as it might be. New sorting facility to harvest reception here, so certainly disappointing, but for me this is not a great Beychevelle. 84. Recommended. Drink 2019-2028.

Chateau Gloria AOC Saint Julien 2013

Again, not my favourite vintage of what is a hugely successful and reliable estate. The tannins are firm and present but a little rustic, feel phenolic ripeness just not quite reached. There is fruit which manages to stay present, and keep up with the tannins from attack to finish, but overall a little underwhelming. 84-86 Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Haut Bages Libere AOC Pauillac 2013

Light colour, medium extraction, a pretty cherry. This works with the vintage, medium term drinking, pretty quite floral, but the black fruit that dances in to mid palate reminds you of northern Medoc location. Not a blockbuster, but like this. Slightly chewy tannins. Not one to cellar for too long, but enjoyable. 89-90 Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Lynch Moussas AOC Pauillac 2013

Very strong coffee, percolating, quite intrusive, not in balance. I am opening up a case of coffee grounds here and it overpowers everything else. This is always a good value wine, and certainly here we have a good attempt to bring character out of the vintage, but for me the fruit is simply too light. 83-84. Recommended. Drink 2019-2028.

Chateau Grand Puy Ducasse AOC Pauillac 2013

Full fruited nose, black cherry and plum, with toasted pinenuts, cedarwood, good texture. A little short though. Hubert de Bouard is consultant at this estate, with Anne le Naour as technical director overseeing a blend of 52% cabernet sauvignon and 48% merlot. 89-90. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Grand Puy Lacoste AOC Pauillac 2013

Sweet nose, good grip, but lacks mid palate, not a great complexity. 84-85. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Pichon Longueville Comtesse AOC Pauillac 2013

Nose here damson, extraction a touch over enthusiastic, drying potential. The palate though fattens up, and the knots could very clearly work themselves out over ageing. This was an unusual vintage at this estate, as they used 100% cabernet sauvignon fruit for the first time. It has worked out well though, there is some lovely texture to the fruit, good weight in the mouth. Not hugely typical of the vintage, they have been able to push things a little further than many. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Chateau Batailley AOC Pauillac 2013

Subdued but elegant nose, dark fruits, oak subtle, good lift on the palate, a little abrupt on close of play, but ambitious, almost succeeds. 88-90. Recommended to highly Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Croizet Bages AOC Pauillac 2013

Lighter colour extraction, pretty nose, underpowered on the palate, shame, as this estate has had a run of good vintages, but here seems to have suffered from the vintage conditions. 82-84. Fair to Recommended. Drink 2018-2027.

Chateau Lynch Bages AOC Pauillac 2013

Like the nose here, subtle, warming, slightly spicy. Good tannic grip, this is a really pretty, elegant and sexy wine, have some lovely charcoal and cigar notes. Like a lot. One to savour. Lovely. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2034.

Chateau d'Armailhac AOC Pauillac 2013 (tasted blind here, and at Mouton. Gave it 87-88 here, 88-89 at Mouton)

A rich, fruit-filled nose, but the oak is a touch over intrusive on the palate. Not so many compromises made to the vintage perhaps as many wines this year, managing to convey ambition and a good tunnel of bright acidity. Less early easy drinking than some, which is perhaps a good thing, definitely enjoy the winemaking skills on show here. Blend 59% cabernet sauvignon, 28% merlot, 12% cabernet franc, 1% petit verdot. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Clerc Milon AOC Pauillac 2013 (tasted blind here, and at Mouton. Gave it same score)

Lovely bright purple fruits, feel a whoosh of acidity that is not evident in many properties, this is ambitious and successful, although lacks some of the fleshiness of the best vintages, but this is enjoyable, a good wine that you feel will age well. Lost a lot of the merlot crop here because of coulure. Blend 58% cabernet sauvignon, 27% merlot, 12% cabernet franc, 2% petit verdot, 1% carmanere. 91-92. Highly Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Ormes de Pez AOC Saint Estephe 2013

Smoky oak, smudged, damson and creme anglaise on the nose. A little short, not as sophisticated as some perhaps, but offers enjoyable early to medium term drinking, good winemaking skills on display here. 86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Phelan Segur AOC Saint Estephe 2013

Big, dour, over extracted, too dry on the attack, although the fruit fills out in the mid-palate. Seems a bit of a struggle. 82-84 Fair to Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Lafon Rochet AOC Saint Estephe 2013

Very tight, too extracted, too tannic, lacks charm. 82-84 Fair to Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Cos Labory AOC Saint Estephe 2013

Needs to work more with the vintage, as I again get over-strained tannins that feel over-traditional and over-extracted. Having a run of difficult Saint Estephes here. 82-84 Fair to Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau de Pez AOC Saint Estephe 2013

A dip in the mid palate, but this has smooth tannins and some good fruit on the attack, and manages a very attractive finish, good persistancy and uplift. Often offers good value and this has some drinking pleasure on offer. 88. Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Clement Pichon AOC Haut Medoc 2013

Rich and meaty nose. Pierre Meylheuc technical director has worked hard at extracting this. Certainly doesn't taste of underripe fruit on the attack, good texture, just a little short on the finish, where get some telltale green notes. 86-87 Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau d'Agassac AOC Haut Medoc 2013

Firm colour extraction. Tired sample, but even so the oak is drying and intrusive, needs to soften up over ageing and worry that it does not have the fruit available to do so. 83-85 Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Hourtin-Ducasse AOC Haut Medoc 2013

This organic estate made no wine in 2012, but has managed to produce an attractive 2013, with firm, sappy fruit. Acidity feels fairly high, but the fruit beneath it is well worked, and heads just towards full ripeness. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau de Retout AOC Haut Medoc 2013

55% cabernet sauvignon, 21% petit verdt, 20% merlot, 3.6% cabernet franc. 100% oak, with one-third new oak, 12.5%abv. Picking oct 1 to 11th across all grape varieties. This has some uplifting dark fruit flavours. A early drinker but really like this, a lovely cru bourgeois, simple and too the point in a difficult vintage. 85-86 Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Le Retout Blanc vin de France 2013

This is a blend of 41.5% gros manseng, 37% sauvignon gris, 13% savignin, 8.5% mondeuse blanc, 9 months in barrel, 34% new oak. The gros manseng is a late ripener and wasnt harvested until October 3 this year. As you would expect, this abounds with unusual flavours, herbal, slight touch of sweetness and fairly low acidity overall. Structured though, and round, but with a kick of lift. Enjoyable. 12.3% alcohol. Just 1.5ha, 5000 bottles. 88. Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau La Fleur Morange AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Toasted pinenuts on the nose, suggests lightly toasted oak with touches of cloves and bitumen tar. The hint of tar on the nose is ramped up on the palate, as they have gone for full extraction, liquorice, and smoky bacon. I can see where they are going, and this has clear personality, but for me over the top for 2013. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Le Dome AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Lovely spicy white pepper on the nose, seems like successful extraction from this highly regarded Jonathan Maltus property. Good depth of fruit, and the ripeness levels are shown through rich summer fruit flavours. They have achieved a good balalance with this wine, with the tiny fraction of underripe flavours turned very prettily into a savoury cushion. This is good. Of course not fatness and depth of 2009 or 2010, but a very solid achievement. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2018-2034.

Vieux Chateau Mazerat AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Jonathan Maltus brought grapes in second and third week of October, so managed to hold on to achieve a good ripeness across the range. Again, some good clean fruit puree, and here get some cassis expression, some definite cabernet coming through. Good, juicy, fresh, a little short. 88. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau La Dominique AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Of the Fayat wines tasted in this vintage, this is by far the most successful, good structure, savoury fruits because this is still not an overripe year, but here they have real interest, tannins are firm, the oak is there but not masking other flavours, gives a swirl of tar. Really pretty good. Soft spice from the cabernet franc. I am tasting here 95% of the final blend, no press wine at this stage, but may not include at the end either. Tasted again blind at UGC and gave it the same score. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Grand Cercle tasting

Chateau Trimoulat AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Not the best start, tight, short, good colour extraction, some vibrant fruit colour, the nose has some reasonable cherry and summer fruits, but it very quickly unravels in the palate. 82-84. Fair to Recommended. Drink 2018-2024.

Rol Valentin AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

The blend here is 90% merlot, 10% cabernet franc. A beautiful bright, sparkling colour. Some interesting plush plum flavours. Feel a touch of heat coming off this, they must have pushed the picking dates. Owners Alexandra and Nicolas Robin. Some success though, can see early drinking pleasure. Clear oak influence, this is granulated coffee on close of play. 84-85. Recommended. Drink 2018-2027.

Chateau Pindefleurs AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Oak dominates on the nose, and on the attack. Owners Audrey and Dominique Lauret are being ambitious, and there is a clear sense of personality, but it is one dimensional because the fruit isn't sufficiently present to balance out the oak. An excellent attempt however to being out character in the wine. Again heat on the finish. Blend is 90%/10% merlot/cab franc. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2017-2027.

Chateau du Parc AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Alain Raynaud's new Saint Emilion property. 80% merlot, 20% cabernet franc (recent purchases and plantings have upped the cabernet franc content). Good clean nose, some fresh fruit, plums and damsons. I like that there is a sense of restraint here, even alongside the coffee and toasted oak swishes that clearly add a touch of smoke and razzamatazz. But it works, because not over the top, and there is good ripe fruit behind it. Not exuberant, but contemporary. Assume five to eight years drinking window, no need to wait. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2016-2026.

Chateau Magrez Fombrage AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

80%/20% merlot/cabernet franc. Olivier Desmond is technical director here. This is veering towards over extraction. Mouthful of oak, not enjoyable on the attack, although there is good persistency here, and certainly has impact. A house style, clearly. 84-85. Recommended under caution. Drink 2016-2026.

Grand Barrail Marzelle Figeac St Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Good tannic extraction, a bit chalky, a touch short on the finish, starts well, good nose that has some clear fruit without being overly sweet or hot. Reasonable, not exciting. 75% merlot, 25% cabernet franc. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Croix de Labrie AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

A very attractive en primeur sample, good firm fruit, some real zing and life here. Still not a full, complete wine in the form of 2010-2009 even 2012 perhaps, but this has real promise, and offers pleasurable drinking possibilities. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Clos Dubreuil AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Sweetness on the nose, offers a promising start, but this does not hang together, shame, because Benoit Trocard is a great winemaker, doing really interesting stuff at this estate and I often praise his wine, but this feels like vanilla oak has been used to fill in the gaps. Blend of 90% merlot, 10% cabernet franc. It does have the benefit of good texture and again there is personality, but it feels overly constructed. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Barde Haut AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classe 2013

Sweet fruit, but at the back there is a touch of geosmin. Just comes in right on the finish. Until then clear sweet fruit, new oak. 84-85. Recommended. Drink 2018-2029.

Chateau Bellefont Belcier AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classe 2013

A power player compared to many here, from the off get the ambition, good fleshy fruit, firm brushed tannins, all present and correct. Good potential here, a little tight and pulled in, but the elements are here. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Chateau la Commanderie AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

Well worked fruit, but there is a touch of nail varnish on the nose suggesting volatile acidity, not sure sorting was at full speed. There are attractive touches, but the overall impression is underripe fruit picked before reaching full potential. 82-84. Fair to Recommended. Drink 2016-2026.

Chateau Destieux AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classe 2013

Clear clear oak in the nose, strong eugenol and cloves. Ambitious, modern, perhaps a little try hard in this vintage, will those knots unravel themselves? 85-87. Recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Chateau Faugeres AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classe 2013

Liquor heat rising off the nose here. For me not as successful as their 2012. The alcohol here is a little brittle, the fruit is clean but brittle. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Chateau Fleur Cardinale AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classe 2013

Bright en primeur purple blush. These were one of the latest to harvest in St Emilion, and you can feel the ripe fruit here. Rich, exotic flavours, continuing a run of good vintages from this estate. The structure and levels of freshness suggest that this will age well, and I wouldn't necessarily pick it as a 2013. Interesting to retry when in bottle. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Chateau Fonroque AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classe 2013

Clean fruit, again I might not place this as 2013, there is a definite vibrancy to the fruit, get some attractive acidity levels, red fruits, ripe to medium ripe. 90. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Chateau Grand Corbin Despagne AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classe 2013

Good to see that one of the Right Bank's most trusty winemakers Francois Despagne has delivered. Not try hard, no fireworks, but good wine, that you would want to drink. 90. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Chateau Yon Figeac AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classe 2013

Powerful, intense dark fruit on the nose, this is a little out of whack, may be chaptalisation here, dark coffee flavours, clear oak influence, but through it all this survives with personality intact. Good potential. 87-89. Recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Chateau de Pressac AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classe 2013

Rich, plush fruit on the nose, clear finesse. Good, perhaps overly coffee flavours, a little overly constructed, but cleverly so at least. Certainly a wine that is above average in the vintage. Harvest was from October 4th to 18th. The sorting table at Pressac measures

the density of the berries, retaining only the most fully ripe. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Chateau Mont Perat Castillon Cotes de Bordeaux 2013

This is flush with firm dark fruits, bilberry, good tannic frame, good hold. All very promising on the attack, and through the mid palate, but stops abruptly, with a brittle finish. 85-87. Recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Chateau Reynon AOC Castillon Cotes de Bordeaux 2013

Again, the nose is good. These guys know what they are doing, the immediate impact is of lovely plush plums and damsons, you start thinking here are all those markers of a good ripe year, but in the palate it's tough to keep that up through the mid palate and on to the final furlong. Still, clearly clever winemaking, a good early drinker. 86. Recommended. Drink 2017-2029.

Chateau de La Riviere AOC Fronsac 2013

Good, rich fruits, a little heat but overall slick, modern, enjoyable, easy drinking. 86-88. Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Les Trois Croix AOC Fronsac 2013

Not bad, tight, not huge complexity, but what is here is clean, well extracted, good astringency on the tannins. It holds your mouth, keeps your interest, not trying to fight against the vintage. Good. 87-89. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Siaurac AOC Fronsac 2013

Nice sweet fruit on the nose, a touch too oaky perhaps, but good, pleasing fruit. Aain, feels they are working with the vintage, not over extraction. Touch short on the finish. 88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

UGC Tasting, blind.

Chateau Canon la Gaffeliere AOC St Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Here we are in right bank vanilla, toasted vanilla beans, madagascar vanilla pod, with a touch of cherry coulis, stick a flake in it and you have yourself a day at the seaside. Fairly sharp fruit expression, this is good, well worked, squeezed out puree, but lacks cohesiveness, bit overly constructed. 88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Villemaurine AOC St Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

A little underripe. This has some green expression, the fruit is redcurrant, some floral touches, could be pretty, but all a little tight and controlled, needs to fatten up over ageing for it to reach its potential. 86. Recommended. Drink 2020-2030.

Chateau Soutard AOC St Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Schmoky, like a cigar-filled room after a good dinner. Good tannins, this has extraction and restraint. Enjoyable, delicate but powerful, there is some skilful winemaking at play here. Not perhaps the most compete, because the fruit structure flattens and dips towards the end, but still, plenty to like in this wine. 89-90. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2020-2031.

Chateau Beausejour Becot AOC St Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Like this nose, feels exuberant, fun. A little short, not quite as pleasurable on the palate as on the nose, but still good flesh, plumped up. Some persistency also. Modern, an ambitious take on 2013. 90-91. Highly Recommended. Drink 2020-2031.

Chateau Gaffeliere AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Things feel a little drying here. Get some alcohol coming off, but there is not enough structure or fruit here to balance it out, and the overall effect is drying. 83-84. Recommended. Drink 2020-2030.

Chateau Grand Mayne AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Firm tannins, some astringency, a good ambitious piece of winemaking, coffee, toasted pinenuts, touch of charcoal and day old embers, get all of that, just looking for more fruit. Potential. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2020-2030.

Chateau Figeac AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Sweet fruit on the nose, creme de cassis, puree of dark summer fruits. Some good firm grip, get a touch of dip in the mid palate, just a little sour. But this has promising fruit and structure, and is a success for the vintage. Harvest October 1st to 15th. Director Frederic Faye, and this is the first vintage with new consultant Michel Rolland, so no doubt all eyes will be on this wine. 89-90. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2020-2030.

Chateau Larmande AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

A spreading, oak-led nose. Vanilla, some white pepper spice. This is overly made up, for me a fail in the palate. Over extraction, pushing against the vintage. 82-83. Fair to Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Cap de Mourlin AOC St Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Cedar, sandalwood, drying, too short, sour plums, for me this has not overcome the difficulties of the vintage. 82-83. Fair to Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau Franc Mayne AOC St Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Pleasant damson nose, contemporary but restrained. A little drying from the oak but good clean smooth tannis, coffee percolating gently on the finish. Good. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2020-2030.

Chateau Larcis Ducasse AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Tight, a little underripe, some volatile acidity?? Not successful for me, too short, not defined enough, good rich fruit comes in, but this is not balanced. 83-85. Recommended. Drink 2018-2030.

Chateau La Couspaude AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Sour plums with a sweet edge, feels a little confused on the nose to me. Firm ripe red ruby in colour. On the palate, the fruit is underripe, overly oaked, out of balance. 82. Fair. Drink 2018-2026.

Chateau Canon AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Again the sweetness is apparent, feel the Right Bank has really really leaned on their barrels this year. This has some life, some good astringent tannins, but loses pace in the mid palate. there is structure here, and it has potential again for fattening up over the ageing process. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Chateau Berliquet AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Here there is promise on the nose, still a little underwhelming on the palate. A little underripe. In this tasting, am getting much more why 2013 is an up and down year. 84. Recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Clos Fournet AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Clean, fresh, good fruit, gentle oak notes on the nose, fingers crossed... This has weight and some good fruit on the palate also, like this, good weight, good fleshed out mouth feel. Perhaps again oak heads to overly coffee, but one of the better ones. 89-90. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Chateau Dassault AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Confectionry on the nose, is there a touch of volatile acidity here also. Like the rich plum colour, suggests good extraction of well-ripened anthocyanes. Things start well, there is clear flesh, clear ambition, falls short though. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Troplong Mondot AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Fleshy, well worked, lovely lift, actual tannic hold, actual vibrancy, an excellent en primeur sample. Troplong Mondot yielded 34 to 35 hectolitres per hectare, according to Xavier Pariente, who runs the chateau. Alcohol here is around 14%abv, fairly high for the year, and while there is a risk of over-extraction, I think they have navigated around it. This was a divisive wine among tasters, but for me they have successfully managed the vintage, and held back from pressing too hard on the extraction. 90-92. Highly Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Balestard la Tonelle AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

this is not so successful. Clear underripe fruit flavours, underwhelming. 80. Fair. Drink 2017-2026.

Chateau Pavie Macquin AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Another disappointing sample - fruit is forced and underripe, no lift to carry you through the palate. 82-84. Fair to Recommended. Drink 2017-2026.

Jean philippe janoeux**Sacre Coeur aoc bordeaux? 2013**

Extraction seems high, volatile acidity on the nose. 74. Faulty.

20,000 aoc bordeaux 2013

Deep colour, high extraction. Some good rich fruit, this is surprisingly good. Alcohol feels quite high, get clear oak influence, toasted, charred, dark cherry. Touch overdone, and get a dip off on finish. But certainly impact. 85. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Ch le Conseiller aoc saint emilion grand cru 2013

Same slightly unfocused nose, assume it is a sample that has been left too long since being drawn from barrel. Like the firm grip here, good levels of acidity, smooth tannins. All of these are fairly big expressions of the vintage. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau La Croix Mouton AOC Bordeaux 2013

Always a hugely popular wine, great value, but surface area hugely expanded over recent years, so quality not as consistent as it was. Still, here he has good full fruit extraction without trying too hard, and firm fruit tannins, like this. 86. Recommended. Drink 2015-2024.

Chateau la Confession AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2013

This has the most promising nose of the lot, with concentration and focus. Colour extraction fairly high, sweet cedar oak on the palate. These are modern contemporary wines, with a dash of warmth and humanity, open. Good. 88+. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Belair Monange AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Elegant, grippy, good firm fruits, red summer fruit, pretty, lovely expression, lilting and charming. 91. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2032.

Chateau Raymond Lafon AOC Sauternes 2013

Good, clean aromatics, stone fruits and lime blossom on the palate, enjoyable Sauternes with a very flattering mix of sweetness and fresh acidity. Pineapple lift on the finish. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2017-2033.

Chateau Chantegril AOC Sauternes 2013

A Denis Dubourdieu estate. I get a touch of sulphur prickle on the nose, imagine just the sample that I have here (tasted at Grand Cercle de Bordeaux). Once that clears this is fresh, light, a mouth-watering take on the vintage, nothing too complex, should be an easy drinker from a young age, quite a modern take on Sauternes. 85. Recommended. Drink 2017-2030.

Chateau de Fargues AOC Sauternes 2013

A wonderful example of tension and minerality in this 2013 vintage, this is textbook stuff. The nose is floral, white flowers, gorgeous. Easily my favourite Sauternes this year, highly appealing combination of fresh juicy limes and mangos, with clear sparkling minerality, this is lively and fresh even at this early stage, but with great complexity. Should develop and age over the long term. 92-94. Highly recommended. Drink 2017-2040.

Chateau Doisy Daene AOC Barsac 2013

Again an attractive nose, fresh and clean, hints of white pepper and lovely minerality coming through here. Again clean, lemony, citrus, 89-90. Recommended to highly recommended. Drink 2017-2035.

Chateau Coutet AOC Barsac 2013

Good tension here, a lovely wine, rich texture, so silky, great persistency, this is excellent, exotic and rich without straying into cloying. 91-92. Highly recommended. Drink 2018-2035.

Chateau Doisy Vedrines 2013

This is almost sharp, far less sweet than some, certainly majors on that Barsac minerality. Very pretty and floral on the nose, but twists into bitter orange on the palate. Acidity clear, almost ice wine sweet and sour sharpness. I like this, it is fairly unusual. 87-89. Recommended. Drink 2016-2033.

Chateau Guiraud 2013 AOC Sauternes

Get that sauvignon nose coming through strongly from the first attack, this is silky smooth, well textured, gourmet. Good, clean fruit flavours, and happily the acidity crisps up on the finish, giving it a necessary lift. This is a fairly consistent and impressive tasting from Sauternes in this vintage, plenty of wines to enjoy. 89-90. Recommended to highly recommended. Drink 2017-2035.

Chateau Fayat, AOC Pomerol 2013

Again, good fleshy start, clear oak influence, get some spice and eugenol from the oak, but feel touches of green fruit in this one that I didn't expect from Chateau Fayat after a series of very successful years. Not sure that this will soften up enough over the ageing. On questioning, Meylheuc (technical director) said the cabernet franc on sand didn't sufficiently ripen. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau La Graviere, AOC Lalande- De Pomerol 2013

Bright fruit. Good firm blueberry, still not huge length, but this is perky, and again there is a savoury edge that I like, because fruit not overripe. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Montviel AOC Lalande-de-Pomerol 2013

Firm and clean extraction and some juicy acidity, held in by well-smoothed tannins. A touch severe, perhaps betrays again a lack of full ripeness. Henri Parent says, 'the work we have done before helped in this year, even closer microvinification than usual, greater selection'. 80%/20% merlot cabernet franc. 88. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Manoir de Gay AOC Pomerol 2013

The second wine of Le Gay, since 2001 (they bought 2002, so immediately introduced this wine). A blast of oak and very short. To be kind, this must mean they practised excellence selection for the first wine. 82-84. Fair to Recommended. Drink 2016-2024.

Chateau Le Gay AOC Pomerol 2013

We have a tunnel of tannins and acidity on the attack, and overall this is very promising, but a hole in the middle where the fruit should be. The fact that such a reliable estate has difficulty in the mid-palate speaks volumes about how tough this vintage was. There is silky texture and the fruit is healthy on the attack, but not sustained. 86-87. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau La Violette AOC Pomerol 2013

There is some success in terms of texture and attack, but not huge persistency of fruit. Light and pretty, with some very attractive aromatics. This should give good pleasure in the medium term. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Bourgneuf AOC Pomerol 2013

Very different nose from many here. This opens up in the glass, really good fleshy fruit, fairly high alcohol levels, but a success within the vintage, crushed tobacco leaf and dark black fruits. 90%/10% merlot/cabernet franc. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Clos de Clocher AOC Pomerol 2013

Clean fruit on the nose, dark rich plums, a touch of kirsch even. But less successful on the palate, this stops very short. Retaste, query over sample.

Chateau Bellegrave AOC Pomerol 2013

Powerful attack, good fruit impact, but it is followed up by a wave of heat and clear oak aromas and tastes - eugenol, smoky bacon even, against kirsch and creme de cassis. Modern flashy within the context of 2013. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Clos de l'Eglise AOC Pomerol 2013

A touch over worked, the fruit is dark, medium intensity, good tannins that are not drying, but things are a little subdued overall. Sylvain Garcin-Cathiard and Helene Garcin Leveque have certainly worked hard to get the best out of the 80/20 merlot/cabernet franc, and the result is successful, although would benefit from a shot of freshness to uplift the palate on the finish. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

La Fleur de Gay AOC Pomerol 2013

Chantal Lebreton is owner here, and has produced one of my favourites wines in this line-up. Soft, delicate, floral, violet notes, silky texture, works with the vintage, charming. 100% merlot. Just two hectares though, will be a difficult wine to find. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2017-2030.

Vray Croix de Gay AOC Pomerol 2013

The estate owned by the Goldschmidt family that has been making headlines recently with investment from Francois Pinault of Chateau Latour fame. Alcohol a touch hot. I enjoy this wine in many vintages, but here there is heat without solid fruit backup. Texture good, weight good, tannins smooth, but not in balance. 85-86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2029.

Chateau Rouget AOC Pomerol 2013

Here the fruit has been well worked and is plush, alcohol a little out of balance, but I get where they are going with this, maybe a touch of rusticity in the tannins, but this has purpose and character, and feels terroir driven, not engineered by the oak. 89-90. Recommended to Highly Recommended. Drink 2017-2030.

Chateau Taillefer AOC Pomerol 2013

Catherine Moueix, 85% merlot, 15% cabernet franc. Good flesh and fatness on the nose, and some tight bright en primeur purple blush visually suggests well controlled extraction. Feel bright fruit here, slightly chewy, chalky tannins, there is astringency, heading to drying but manages to hold itself back. Interesting, 88-89 potential. Recommended. Drink 2018-2029.

Clos de la Vielle Eglise AOC Pomerol 2013

Rich burnt coffee aromas, a darker spectrum of fruits. Some good texture, not sure the balance is fully there, not the exuberance of the best years, but this is a brooding example of the vintage. 85-87. Recommended. Drink 2018-2029.

Chateau La Sergue AOC Lalande-de-Pomerol 2013

Pascal Chantnet's wine. Impressive, for a smaller appellation have fruit, grip, tannic hold, tiny bit of unbalanced acidity on the finish, but overall a strong showing. 84-86. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

UGC Tasting, blind.**Chateau Gazin AOC Pomerol 2013**

Lovely start to this tasting, great finesse on the attack, the nose is just a tiny bit fudged, not quite the pure precision of some years of this estate, get hint of underripe fruit, and on the palate this is expert use of oak, offering coffee and charcoal hints, but again the

fruit is betrayed by a short finish. Good, enjoyable, early to medium drinking.
88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau La Cabanne AOC Pomerol 2013

Sweet red cherry nose, some caramel, vanilla and creme anglaise. Which adds up again to an oak influence, but well done. On the palate here, the fruit is sufficiently plumped up by the oak, and by I'm sure careful sorting and picking that it carries through the shortfall in weight. Still the very end turns a touch short, there is not the build in power that there would be in a better vintage, but this is a very attractive wine, 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Clinet AOC Pomerol 2013

Lovely rich crimson in colour, understated nose and good rich fruit, more tar, bacon, frazzles quite clearly, saline touch from savoury fruits, grilled bread on the plancha. This is a good wine, has tannins, weight structure, and here the fruits head more towards a blacker darker expression of cherry with some great Pomerol typicity. The vintage comes through in the length, which is a little short, but plenty to enjoy here. 92. Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2034.

Chateau Petit Village AOC Pomerol 2013

Tart, short, tight, the fruit is struggling to reach its full expression here. Nice texture, but the nose has some geosmin, the acidity is too high and ends on a tart nose. 82-83. Fair to Recommended. Drink 2018-2028.

Chateau Bon Pasteur AOC Pomerol 2013

Some damson, plum, expression of fruit that is just ripe, hovering on the edge but clearly smart sorting and smart extraction. Not trying too hard to shoehorn a style. Good mocha edge after it opens up in the glass. This is good within context of the vintage, length again the issue. 89. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau La Croix de Gay AOC Pomerol 2013

Like this nose, warm enveloping, good extraction, fairly modern, coffee and chocolate, first one where really get that dark chocolate flashiness of a good Pomerol. You would not pick it as a 13 except for its slight dip in mid palate, but like the tannic hold, the texture and the freshness here. A good wine, medium term but with real potential for fattening up over the ageing. 90-92. Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2034.

Chateau La Conseillante AOC Pomerol 2013

Touch subdued in the nose, some tell tale geosmin notes. But very well hidden, and the tannins here have a great chalky aspect to them, some intensity, this has that balancing act of offering structure and hold without imposing on what fruit is available. 88-89. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau La Pointe AOC Pomerol 2013

Rich velvet red tones here, fairly restrained dark red fruits on the nose, quite a strong impact in the palate, coffee, mocha, percolated beans, gaiccol, toasted oak. But having said all that, it carries it off. A little smoky cigar maybe, might be in Ronnie Scotts at 1am, but actually really like this. Concern that fruit may not quite match up to these smoky tones. But good personality. 90+. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2032.

Chateau Beauregard AOC Pomerol 2013

Again colour good and firm fleshy, rich, sweet cedary nose, sandalwood. Bit overly sweet on the palate, feels lightweight, juicy, a clear early drinker, but mouthwatering, good expression of freshness. Interesting. 86-88. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030

Moueix tasting**Ch Vieux Lartigue St emilon Grand cru 2013**

tart and underripe, not a great start to the tasting. 82-84. Fair to Recommended. Drink 2016-2024.

Chateau La Serre St Emilion grand cru classé 2013

Far more velvety, plushed up, fatter fruit, really enjoyable, good grip, lean tanins, redcurrant gooseberry freshness, real potential, juicy. 89-90. Recommended to Highly recommended. Drink 2020-2034.

Chateau la Croix st Georges AOC Pomerol

Janoueix wine. Nose of marshmallow, a little imprecise, spreading. Over-extracted for me, lacks the elegance of some Pomerols this year, but has substance that comes in on the mid-palate and gives a fine firm finish. 85. Recommended, Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau les Vieux Ormes ,Lalande de pomerol 2013

Good clean fruit on the nose. On the palate, slightly chunky on the attack, the fruit here is rustic, lacks finesse, but not green - the issue comes on being short on the finish. 85. Recommended, Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Plince, AOC Pomerol 2013

Good juicy fruit, real structure, mouth watering, fresh, good grip, this has sides, clean fruit, good expression, powerful. 87-88. Recommended. Drink 2020-2032.

Chateau Lafleur Gazin AOC Pomerol 2013

Lovely, here is a lilting, clean and pure expression of fruit, pretty, well extracted, fresh and enjoyable, 91. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2032.

Chateau Bourgneuf AOC Pomerol 2013

Rich, pure, this is where things start to tighten and tunnel, starts to get interesting, good texture, pure. powerful big tannins, 92. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2032.

Chateau la Grave de pomerol, aoc pomerol 2013

A dip down again in power, this is more floral and pretty. 89. Recommended. Drink 2019-2030.

Chateau Certan de May AOC Pomerol 2013

This has a lovely backbone of tannins, very subtle, fresh, floral, very nice expression of 2013. Not over-extracted, not heavy, good subtle lilting elegance. 90-91. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2032.

Chateau Latour a Pomerol aoc pomerol 2013

Deep spicy black fruits, excellent precision, feel here that things are thought out, considered. Bu not as exuberant and expressive as some years. 89-90. Recommended to Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2032.

Chateau La Fleur Petrus AOC Pomerol 2013

Restrained but refined on the nose, good fruit expression, as ever the nose here is really quite exceptional, the perfumed sexiness of a great Pomerol. 91. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2032.

Chateau Trotanoy AOC Pomerol 2013

This has excellent structure, smooth tannins, tight black fruits, really like the potential here, has uplift and good acidity. A good well made wine, classic structured. 92+. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2032.

Chateau Belair Monange AOC Saint Emilion Grand Cru Classé 2013

Elegant, grippy, good firm fruits, red summer fruit, pretty, lovely expression, lilted and charming. 91. Highly recommended. Drink 2019-2032.