Sotheby's EST. 1744 Wine

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2018 BORDEAUX REPORT

VINTAGE REPORT

BY NICHOLAS JACKSON, MW

The 2018 Bordeaux vintage is, with qualifications, a great vintage for red wines.While there is more variation across properties than great vintages often show, there are enough truly outstanding wines to merit that description.What follows is a brief report that derives from the Sotheby's tasting team eight day stay in Bordeaux in early April 2019, tasting barrel samples. The team comprised of: Serena Sutcliffe MW, David Peppercorn MW, Nick Jackson MW, Jamie Ritchie, Adam Bilbey and Victor Rabot.

THE WEATHER

The 2018 growing season in Bordeaux had a Janus-like character. Until mid July, the season was notably wet and humid. After one final storm on Bastille Day (14 July), the remainder of the summer and early fall were unusually hot and dry. Each side of the coin had a powerful impact on the resulting wines.

The humidity in the first part of the year caused widespread and repeated outbreaks of downy mildew, a fungal disease which, if left untreated, renders grapes unsuitable for wine production. The standard preventative treatment for mildew is to spray copper and synthetic treatments. Those who practise organic and biodynamic viticulture are - importantly - permitted to use less of these than their conventionally-minded counterparts.

The hot second half of the season encouraged sugar, flavour and tannin development. The drought-like conditions, meanwhile, concentrated the grapes and thickened the skins. The result? Red grapes with high levels of sugars, rich in flavour and tannin.

THE WINE

The results of this peculiar season are writ large all over the wines. First, the bad. For producers using organic - and particularly those using biodynamic viticulture - the mildew substantially reduced yields and resulting volumes of wine. Many conventionally farmed properties produced three, four or even five times as much wine as biodynamic estates Palmer or Pontet Canet, whose 2018s will be rarities in the years to come.

As for the good, well, there's plenty to talk about. The warm growing season has given red wines of immense fruit concentration, tannin and freshness. That last point is important because usually in warmer years, the acidity dwindles. But the acidity in 2018 is the vital component that makes the wines so eminently appealing and drinkable.

The small, concentrated berries with thick skins have also resulted in reds that can be hugely tannic and that will benefit from decades of aging - even though the tannins are ripe and usually quite supple. But some wines have such high levels of tannins that I wonder if they will ever fully integrate into the fruit. The second effect is that alcohols can be quite elevated, with few chateaux producing wines of less than 14% alcohol, and some even tipping 15%.

On the Left Bank, what looks on paper like a classic Cabernet year (Cabernet usually performs better than Merlot in hot years) is more complicated, with many growers praising their Merlot. Rauzan Segla and Beychevelle even have a majority of Merlot in their blends. The excellent performance of the Merlot could be because it tends to be grown on cooler, more water retentive clay soils rather than on the hot, dry gravel of the Cabernet. Nonetheless, the Medoc first growths and other top wines rely heavily on Cabernet - and it performed gloriously, producing perfumed, powerful, aristocratic wines.

On the Right Bank there are some fabulous, plush, classically defined Merlot wines. But Merlot's tendency to over-ripeness is also found, with some wines excessively ripe. Overall, this is neither a Left Bank nor a Right Bank year: there are brilliant successes on both sides of the river.

The warmth of the growing season did not favour the white wines, which often lack acidity and can be rather soft. The best estates nonetheless made very good - but certainly not great - whites. Due to a lack of the all-important botrytis, the Sauternes tend to be simple, sweet and in short supply.

2018 has produced powerful, ageworthy, profound wines which may be happily compared with the best vintages of recent years: 2016, 2010, 2009 and 2005. The best wines have the tannic structure of 2005, the fruit of 2009 and the precision of 2010 or 2016.

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PRICING

Initial signs suggest that pricing may not be too far above last year's 2017s - wines that were good but which are not at the same level as the starry 2018s. If that happens, this will be a vintage to buy broadly and in depth. Much of the eight April days we spent tasting in Bordeaux were with broad smiles and delight, so good were the wines, even at this embryonic stage. Yes, due to the tannins, the first growths and super seconds will take 15+ years to drink well, but if this were ever a vintage to lock in futures pricing, this is it. I wish it were as easy as saying, buy anything and everything from this vintage, but there are degrees of success in 2018. Our notes and scores should help clarify the best from the rest.

OUR SELECTIONS

What's so exciting about this vintage is that while most of the best properties produced appropriately brilliant wines, there are many supposedly lesser chateaux which made the best wines that I have tasted from them. Pichon Baron is magisterial; Brane Cantenac enchanting; Duhart Milon exceptional; Malartic Lagraviere profound; Haut Bailly thrilling.

On the Right Bank, lesser known properties such as Quinault l'Enclos and Petit Village are gorgeous and should offer good value, while Conseillante, Trotanoy and especially Vieux Château Certan, Ausone and Petrus are simply mesmerising.

On the Left Bank, Lafite made us breathless when tasting, so stunned were we by the purity and beauty on display. My pick of the St. Estephe appellation is Montrose, although Calon Segur will win many fans. In St. Julien, Leoville Las Cases was excellent, although for value, Leoville Barton and especially Beychevelle are wonderful. In Margaux, Pavillon Rouge and Margaux itself are the picks along with the aforementioned Brane Cantenac. Among the Pessacs, Haut Brion, La Mission, Haut Bailly and Malartic Lagraviere deserve a place in any collection.

Adam Bilbey & Victor Rabot Tasting at Chateau Montrose

Our tasting team at Chateau Pichon Lalande

Our team having completed their tasting at Chateau Pavie Macquin

Enjoying a sunny lunch in Cap Ferret

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FAVOURITES FROM OUR 2018 BORDEAUX TASTING TEAM

SERENA SUTCLIFFE, MW

TOP 10 REDS

1. Lafite
1. Pétrus
2.Ausone
3. Latour
4. Cheval Blanc
5. Mouton
6. Le Pin
7. La Mission Haut Brion
8. Margaux
9. Léoville Lascases

10 VERY SUCESSFUL REDS

1. Lafleur
2. Hosanna
3. Vieux Château Certan
4. Léoville Barton
5. Eglise Clinet
6. Calon Ségur
7. Pichon Baron
8. Canon
9. Pavie Macquin
10.Brane Cantenac

10 SECOND RED WINES

1. Carruades de Lafite
2. Chapelle d'Ausone
3. Petit Cheval
4. Chapelle de la Mission
5. Pavillon Rouge
6. Pensées de Lafleur
7. Petit Mouton
8. Forts de Latour
9. Echo de Lynch Bages
10.Griffons de Pichon Baron

5 FAVOURITE WHITES

1. Mission Haut Brion Blanc
2. Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc
3. Domaine de Chevalier Blanc
4. Malartic Lagravière Blanc
5. Haut Brion Blanc

NICHOLAS JACKSON, MW

TOP 10 REDS

1. Lafite
2. Petrus
3. Ausone
4. Trotanoy
5. Vieux Chateau Certan
6. Pichon Baron
7. Margaux
8. Haut Brion
9. Mouton Rothschild
10. Belair Monange

10 VERY SUCESSFUL REDS

1. Brane Cantenac
2. Haut Bailly
3. Duhart Milon
4. Malartic Lagraviere
5. Armailhac
6. Giscours
7. Quinault l'Enclos
8. Petit Village
9. Pavie Macquin
10. Langoa Barton

10 SECOND RED WINES

1. Carruades de Lafite
2. Chapelle d'Ausone
3. Petit Cheval
4. Pavillon Rouge
5. Pensées de Lafleur
6. Petit Mouton
7. Reserve de la Comtesse
8. Clarence de Haut Brion
9. Chapelle de la Mission
10. Aromes de Pavie

5 FAVOURITE WHITES

1. Haut Brion Blanc
2.Mission Haut Brion Blanc
3.Pavillon Blanc
4.Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc
5.Malartic Lagraviere Blanc

JAMIE RITCHIE

TOP 10 REDS

1. Lafite
2. Ausone
3. Petrus
4. Latour
5. Cheval Blanc
6. Haut Brion
7. Margaux
8. Mouton Rothschild
9. Belair Monange
10. Calon Segur

10 VERY SUCESSFUL REDS

1. Vieux Chateau Certan
2. Trotanoy
3. Palmer
4. Pichon Lalande
5. Pichon Baron
6. Eglise Clinet
7. Haut Bailly
8. Pontet Canet
9. Brane Cantenac
10. Conseillante

10 SECOND RED WINES

1. Chapelle d'Ausone
2. Petit Cheval
3. Carruades de Lafite
4. Pavillon Rouge
5. Forts de Latour
6. Petit Mouton
7. Pensees de Lafleur
8. Clarence de Haut Brion
9. Reserve de la Comtesse
10.Aromes de Pavie

5 FAVOURITE WHITES

1. Haut Brion Blanc
2. Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc
3. Pavillon Blanc
4. Mission Haut Brion Blanc
5. Malartic Lagraviere Blanc

ADAM BILBEY

TOP 10 REDS

1. Lafite
2. Petrus
3. Ausone
4. Mouton Rothschild
5. Latour
6. Haut Brion
7. Palmer
8. Margaux
9. Belair Monange
10. La Mission Haut Brion

10 VERY SUCESSFUL REDS

1. Montrose
2. Vieux Chateau Certan
3. Calon Segur
4. Pichon Lalande
5. Lynch Bages
6. Pichon Baron
7. Haut Bailly
8. Figeac
9. Conseillante
10. Troplong Mondot

10 SECOND RED WINES

1. Carruades de Lafite
2. Chapelle d'Ausone
3. Forts de Latour
4. Petit Mouton
5. Pavillon Rouge
6. Petit Cheval
7. Pensees de Lafleur
8. Le Clarence de Haut Brion
9. Reserve de la Comtesse
10. Griffon de Pichon Baron

5 FAVOURITE WHITES

1. Haut Brion Blanc
2. Pavillon Blanc
3. Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc
4. Blanc de Lynch Bages
5. Mission Haut Brion Blanc

VICTOR RABOT

TOP 10 REDS

1. Lafite
2. Ausone
3. Petrus
4. Mouton Rothschild
5. Margaux
6. Latour
7. Palmer
8. Belair Monange
9. Trotanoy
10. Vieux Chateau Certan

10 VERY SUCESSFUL REDS

1. Calon Segur
2 .Palmer
3. Eglise Clinet
4. Haut Brion
5. Lafleur
6. Pichon Lalande
7. Pontet Canet
8.Rauzan Segla
9. Haut Bailly
10.Troplong Mondot

10 SECOND RED WINES

1.Chapelle d'Ausone
2.Carruades de Lafite
3.Petit Cheval
4.Forts de Latour
5.Petit Mouton
6.Pavillon Rouge
7.Reserve de la Comtesse
8.Pensees de Lafleur
9. Clarence de Haut Brion
10.Griffon de Pichon Baron

5 FAVOURITE WHITES

1. Haut Brion Blanc
2.Pavillon Blanc
3.Mission Haut Brion Blanc
4.Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc
5.Domaine de Chevalier Blanc

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2018 FUTURES / EN PRIMEUR WISHLIST

INSTRUCTIONS: Thank you for your interest in our 2018 Futures campaign. Please complete and return this form indicating below how you would like to participate in the 2018 campaign by choosing the Buy List, Wish List or General List, and by marking the wines you are interested in buying. This form does not guarantee that you will receive any or all of the wines that you request.

☐ **Buy List - First Priority:**
This is our highest priority list and the first list we use when allocating Futures that are limited in supply. This list gives you the opportunity to ask us to automatically purchase certain wines up to a maximum price. Clients who choose this option receive their allocations ahead of the Wish List and General List clients. Please be sure to indicate on the form the quantities you are interested in, as well as the price per bottle you are willing to pay for each wine (in either US$ or HK$).

☐ **Wish List - Second Priority:**
This is our second highest priority list and allows clients to indicate the number of cases of each wine they are interested in buying without making any commitment to buy. Once we have allocated the wines to clients who submitted a Buy List, we send emails to clients who have provided us with their Wish List indicating any quantities of wine that we can allocate for them.

☐ **General List - Third Priority:**
By signing up for this list, clients will receive our Futures offers for all wines that remain available after those have been offered first to the Buy List and then to the Wish List. You are only required to provide your contact information below.

Name: _____ Work: _____

Address: _____ Cell: _____

_____ Email: _____

Location: ☐ New York or ☐ Hong Kong

Please fill out and email to wine@sothebys.com or fax to +1 212 606 7880

	WINE	DESIRED QUANTITY	SOTHEBY'S RATING	NICHOLAS JACKSON	WINE ADVOCATE	WINE SPECTATOR	VINOUS GALLONI	2016 OPENING PRICE		YOUR TOP PURCHASE PRICE	
								US $ PER BT	HK $ PER BT	US $ PER BT	HK $ PER BT
RED-FIRST WINES											
1	**Angelus**		94-96	94-96	97-100	95-98	95-98	$390.00	$3,025.00	$356	$2,605
2	**Armailhac**		92-94	92-94	91-93	91-94	90-92	$45.00	$337.00		
3	**Ausone**		97-99	97-99	98-100	N/A	97-100	$763.00	$5,940.00		
4	**Batailley**		92-94	91-93	92-94	89-92	91-94	N/A	N/A		
5	**Beausejour Duffau Lagarosse**		94-96	93-95	95-97	95-98	94-97	N/A	N/A		
6	**Belair Monange**		96-98	96-98	97-99	96-99	93-96	$167.00	$1,150.00		
7	**Beychevelle**		92-94	94-95	94-96	94-97	93-96	$78.00	$585.00		
8	**Branaire-Ducru**		93-95	93-94	92-94	94-97	93-96	$54.00	$408.00	$55	$410
9	**Brane Cantenac**		94-96	94-96	92-94	N/A	92-95	$72.00	$548.00		
10	**Calon Segur**		95-97	94-96	96-98	96-99	96-99	$88.00	$675.00		
11	**Canon**		94-96	94-96	97-99	96-99	94-97	$100.00	$775.00		
12	**Canon La Gaffeliere**		92-94	93-95	N/A	95-98	95-98	N/A	N/A		
13	**Cheval Blanc**		96-98	95-97	97-99	N/A	97-100	$685.00	$5,344.00		
14	**Clerc Milon**		93-95	93-95	93-95	93-96	91-93	$68.00	$520.00		
15	**Clinet**		93-95	91-93	94-96	N/A	91-94	$98.00	$750.00		
16	**Conseillante**		94-96	95-97	96-98	N/A	95-98	$197.00	$1,525.00		
17	**Cos d'Estournel**		94-96	94-95	97-100	N/A	97-100	$156.00	$1,205.00		
18	**Domaine de Chevalier Rouge**		93-95	93-95	94-96	94-97	94-97	$72.00	$550.00		
20	**Ducru Beaucaillou**		94-96	94-95	97-99	96-99	95-98	$184.00	$1,430.00		
21	**Duhart Milon**		93-95	93-95	93-95	90-93	88-90	$75.00	$562.00		
22	**Eglise Clinet**		95-97	95-97	96-98	95-98	95-98	$294.00	$2,288.00		
23	**Figeac**		94-96	93-95	97-99	97-100	96-99	$197.00	$1,525.00		

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								US $ PER BT	HK $ PER BT	US $ PER BT	HK $ PER BT
REDS											
24	**Fleur Petrus**		94-96	94-96	94-96	96-99	94-97	$225.00	$1,650.00		
25	**Gazin**		91-93	91-92	91-93	93-96	91-94	N/A	N/A		
26	**Giscours**		93-95	92-94	90-92+	93-96	93-96	$60.00	$460.00		
27	**Grand Puy Lacoste**		93-95	93-95	92-94+	95-98	93-96	$81.00	$625.00		
28	**Gruaud Larose**		92-94	93-95	95-97	N/A	89-92	N/A	N/A		
29	**Haut Bailly**		95-97	95-97	96-98+	N/A	94-97	$112.00	$865.00		
30	**Haut Batailley**		92-93	92-93	92-94	92-95	89-92	N/A	N/A		
31	**Haut Brion**		96-98	96-98	97-99+	N/A	93-96	$539.00	$4,150.00		
32	**Hosanna**		92-94	92-93	95-97	95-98	93-96	$140.00	$1,000.00		
33	**Issan**		92-94	92-94	94-96	N/A	92-95	$65.00	$490.00		
34	**Lafite Rothschild**		98-100	98-100	98-100	N/A	93-96	$640.00	$4,875.00		
35	**Lafleur**		96-98	96-98	97-100	N/A	97-100	$795.00	$2,375.00		
36	**Langoa Barton**		92-94	92-94	92-94	93-96	90-93	$52.00	$388.00	$52.00	$390.00
37	**Larcis Ducasse**		93-95	91-92	96-98	94-97	94-97	N/A	N/A		
38	**Latour**		97-99	96-98	98-100	N/A	96-99	NOT AVAILABLE FOR SALE			
39	**Le Pin**		95-97	95-97	97-99	N/A	94-97	N/A	N/A		
40	**Leoville Barton**		94-96	94-95	94-96	96-99	93-96	$87.00	$675.00		
41	**Leoville Las Cases**		94-96	94-96	98-100	97-100	95-98	$236.00	$1,825.00		
42	**L'if**		91-93	91-93	N/A	93-96	95-98	N/A	N/A		
43	**Lynch Bages**		95-97	95-97	96-98	96-99	93-96	$129.00	$985.00		
44	**Malartic Lagraviere**		92-94	93-95	92-94	92-95	92-95	N/A	N/A		
45	**Malescot St Exupery**		91-93	91-93	94-96+	93-96	93-96	N/A	N/A		
46	**Margaux**		96-98	96-98	97-100	N/A	95-98	$555.00	$4,335.00		
47	**Mission Haut Brion**		96-98	95-97	98-100	N/A	90-93	$434.00	$3,350.00		
48	**Mondotte**		93-95	93-95	97-98	96-99	94-97	N/A	N/A		
49	**Montrose**		95-97	95-97	96-98	N/A	95-98	$136.00	$1,030.00		
50	**Mouton Rothschild**		96-98	96-98	97-99+	N/A	94-97	$555.00	$4,169.00		
51	**Palmer**		96-98	93-95	97-99	97-100	95-98	$317.00	$2,450.00		
52	**Pavie**		94-96	94-96	97-100	96-99	94-97	N/A	N/A		
53	**Pavie Decesse**		92-94	91-92	96-98	95-98	92-95	N/A	N/A		
54	**Pavie Macquin**		94-96	93-95	95-97	95-98	92-95	N/A	N/A		
55	**Petit Village**		91-93	91-93	N/A	92-95	90-93	N/A	N/A		
56	**Petrus**		98-100	98-100	N/A	N/A	97-100	$2,495.00	N/A		
57	**Pichon Baron**		95-97	96-98	97-99	95-98	94-97	$151.00	$1,160.00		
58	**Pichon Lalande**		95-97	95-97	97-99	97-100	95-98	$159.00	$1,220.00		
59	**Pontet Canet**		94-96	93-94	97-99	N/A	96-99	$143.00	$1,110.00		
60	**Quinault l'Enclos**		92-94	91-93	92-94	N/A	91-94	N/A	N/A		
61	**Quintus**		91-93	91-93	94-96	N/A	89-92	$130.00	$1,010.00		
62	**Rauzan Segla**		93-95	93-95	97-99+	96-99	97-100	$83.00	$645.00		
63	**Smith Haut Lafitte Rouge**		94-96	92-94	97-99+	95-98	91-94	$104.00	$790.00		
64	**Talbot**		92-94	92-94	91-93	93-96	91-94	$58.00	$438.00		

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								US $ PER BT	HK $ PER BT	US $ PER BT	HK $ PER BT
REDS											
65	**Tertre**		91-93	91-93	89-91	91-94	89-92	$42.00	$310.00		
66	**Troplong Mondot**		93-95	93-95	93-95+	95-98	94-97	N/A	N/A		
67	**Trotanoy**		95-97	96-98	97-99+	97-100	96-99	$325.00	N/A		
68	**Trottevieille**		93-95	92-94	91-93	91-94	93-96	N/A	N/A		
69	**Vieux Chateau Certan**		95-97	96-98	97-100	N/A	94-97	$265.00	$1,025.00		
RED-SECOND WINES											
70	**Aromes de Pavie**		92-94	92-94	N/A	90-93	90-93	N/A	N/A		
71	**Carillon d'Angelus**		91-93	89-91	N/A	90-93	91-94	$100.00	$750.00	$110.00	$807.00
72	**Carruades de Lafite**		93-95	93-95	N/A	N/A	89-91	$195.00	$1,355.00		
73	**Chapelle d'Ausone**		93-95	93-95	93-95	N/A	91-94	$192.00	$1,488.00		
74	**Chapelle de la Mission Haut Brion**		91-93	91-93	91-93	N/A	87-89	$88.00	$666.00		
75	**Clarence de Haut Brion**		92-94	92-94	92-94	N/A	89-91	$134.00	$1,020.00		
76	**Dame de Montrose**		91-93	91-92	90-92	N/A	90-92	$38.00	$282.00		
77	**Echo de Lynch Bages**		91-93	90-92	90-92+	89-92	91-93	$42.00	$315.00		
78	**Forts de Latour**		93-95	93-95	93-95+	N/A	90-93	NOT AVAILABLE FOR SALE			
79	**Griffons de Pichon Baron**		92-93	91-92	N/A	N/A	91-93	N/A	N/A		
80	**Haut Bailly II**		91-93	91-93	N/A	N/A	90-93	N/A	N/A		
81	**Pagodes de Cos**		90-92	91-93	93-95	N/A	91-94	$45.00	$335.00		
82	**Pavillon Rouge du Chateau Margaux**		93-95	93-95	93-95	N/A	91-94	$148.00	$1,150.00		
83	**Pensees de Lafleur**		92-94	93-95	N/A	N/A	90-93	$159.00	N/A		
84	**Petit Cheval**		93-95	93-95	93-95	N/A	90-93	$159.00	$1,230.00		
85	**Petit Mouton de Mouton Rothschild**		93-95	92-94	N/A	91-94	90-93	$180.00	$1,400.00		
86	**Reserve de la Comtesse**		92-94	92-94	92-94	90-93	89-92	$42.00	$321.00		
DRY WHITE											
87	**Blanc de Lynch Bages**		91-93	89-91	90-92	90-93	87-88	N/A	N/A		
88	**Clarte de Haut Brion**		90-92	89-91	90-92	N/A	89-91	$80.00	$615.00		
89	**Domaine de Chevalier Blanc**		91-93	90-92	93-95	93-96	90-93	$93.00	$720.00		
90	**Haut Brion Blanc**		94-95	94-95	94-96+	N/A	91-94	$775.00	$5,998.00		
91	**La Mission Haut Brion Blanc**		92-94	93-95	92-94	N/A	90-92	$620.00	$4,780.00		
92	**Malartic Lagraviere Blanc**		91-93	91-93	91-93	90-93	91-93	N/A	N/A		
93	**Pavillon Blanc du Chateau Margaux**		93-95	93-95	93-95	N/A	91-94	$157.00	$1,220.00		
94	**Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc**		93-94	92-94	94-96	94-97	91-94	$98.00	$750.00		

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RED-FIRST WINES

ANGELUS

S 94-96 NJ 94-96 WA 97-100 WS 95-98 VG 95-98

65% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc. This immediately has style on the nose, bursting with black fruits, blueberries predominating. The use of 30 hl foudres (especially good for Cabernet Franc) with the new barrels in the ageing process gives just the right dose of wood, enabling the fruit to shine. The texture is mouth-coating, but with youthfulness and a 'lightness of being' which is enchanting. A starry success. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

So succulent and deep, with lovely layers of flavour. Toasty. Really well detailed red fruits, a touch of orange and with a velvety texture. Long, exuberant and spicy. This is an exotic expression of St. Emilion and very successful in that mould. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Raspberries, red cherries, spice, chocolate and coffee. Good balance and intensity, with a freshness and purity. Has a toasty, oaky, smoky finish that slightly dominates. There is a definitely a move towards a lighter more elegant style with more precision and balance. Jamie Ritchie

ARMAILHAC

S 92-94 NJ 92-94 WA 91-93 WS 91-94 VG 90-92

55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc, 5% Petit Verdot. Yield 32hl/ha which is low for d'Armailhac, due to the drought and very small berries. Very spicy and full of breed on the nose. Excellent freshness and coffee flavours on the palate. Richly vanillin and there is complexity and elegance in the smooth tannins. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

A plush nose and a powerful palate. Huge structure for this wine, all coated with ample fruit. Quite austere because of those tannins and certainly will need a bit longer than usual for this wine. But could be quite an epic. Ambitious and successful, and will probably prove a landmark Armailhac. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Blackcurrant, cassis and plums. Lots of energy and life with a mocha and spice lift. Wow, serious power here with great intensity and weight of fruit - really impressive nose. Great grip and tannin structure with a sweetness of blackfruit to the core. Lovely saline edge to the fruit that counters those glycerol tannins. Great length with a spice and clove finish. Could be the finest vintage ever. Adam Bilbey

AUSONE

S 97-99 NJ 97-99 WA 98-100 VG 97-100

60% Cabernet Franc, 40% Merlot. Complex, intellectual, fascinating nose – intensely and gloriously scented. Creamy, classy, harmonious and seductive on the palate. Roses and superbly tended black fruit, with volume, tenderness and persistence. Just eternal on the finish. A dreamy wine and at the pinnacle, for me, in 2018. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

What a texture! So seamless and heavenly. Just caresses the palate. A deep core of fruit at the heart of the wine ensuring a long life. Those flavours of Cabernet Franc smokiness are just endless. A dream of a wine. So sensual and weightless and unforced. A compelling vino di meditazione, both reassuring and cerebral at the same time. Not sure how St. Emilion gets much better than this. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Always an impressive lineup at the Chateau. The Vauthier family has produced an intense wine with an impressive perfumed nose with a lot of freshness. On the palate the wine offers complex layers of fruit and toasted notes. An incredible wine. Victor Rabot

BATAILLEY

S 92-94 NJ 91-93 WA 92-94 WS 89-92 VG 91-94

74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 3% Petit Verdot. 53hl/ha. This has a grand Pauillac nose, totally of its origin. There are coffee notes on the palate, with a silky, polished texture overlaying the absolute fidelity to its great terroir. An important success. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

This is classic Pauillac from a warm vintage: concentrated and powerful. Authentic and ageworthy. Hard to know what to compare it with - perhaps in the Lynch Bages mould? Inky and dense. You will need to wait, but should unfold beautifully. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Red and black currants, cedar, spice and lead pencil. Well made, classic, honest Pauillac and the best young Batailley tasted in recent years. Jamie Ritchie

BEAUSEJOUR DUFFAU LAGAROSSE

S 94-96 NJ 93-95 WA 95-97 WS 95-98 VG 94-97

80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc. 27.5hl/ha. Made by the brilliant Nicolas Thienpont, the site is like a garden on a limestone rock. As a result of both terroir and winemaking, there is real breed on the nose, followed by a concentrated cassis taste. So well crafted, it is soft and supple with violets caressing the palate and length and power behind it. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Briary nose. So big and rich and sweet - real impact! Then those layers of flavours just unfold on the palate. Really quite luscious but with the dry character coming through on the finish. Big wine that will need quite a long time, but has all the complexity and length to be excellent. Lovely perfumed finish. Very long. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Purity of fruit and terroir expression to the nose with great complexity. A volume of fruit that fans out of the glass with cherries, plums, violet and a coffee bean and clove lift. Evolving in the glass. Serious. The palate has a wonderful concentration of fruit with great texture. Seems to be more fullness of fruit than Pavie Macq and Larcis, with fine and structured tannins there coaxing the fruit. The cream and spice of oak carries through to the finish. This has great potential and the great terroir shines through. Adam Bilbey

Sotheby's EST 1744 Wine

Belair Monange

S 96-98 NJ 96-98 WA 97-99 WS 96-99 VG 93-96

90% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc in the vineyard. An ethereal scent of real, perfumed breed. Spiced plums, glühwein taste, with a mineral note on the finish and a sign-off of balanced, ripe sweetness. It is seductive and powerful at the same time, a winning combination. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

All the spiciness of the CF on the nose, already! Then deep and sweet and convincing. So much stature and structure. Chalky and profound. This will need a lot of years, but has all the stuffing to make an epic wine. Will surely be one of the longest lived of all wines from this vintage. Really outstanding in a pure, unexaggerated mould. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A powerful and complex wine that is built to age and will reward people with patience but can still be enjoyable at its youth. A balanced wine with an imposing structure. Christian Moueix and Edouard are making one of the best Saint Emilion. Victor Rabot

Beychevelle

S 92-94 NJ 94-95 WA 94-96 WS 94-97 VG 93-96

50% Merlot, 41% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Petit Verdot, 3% Cabernet Franc. The nose is quite discreet at the start but one sees at once the big structure here. A great coffee and raisins taste, with incredible glossiness and blueberry, silky fruit. Extremely powerful and imposing, especially from a block of old Merlot vines. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Lots of tannin and structure and concentration - a real vin de garde here, from a chateau that can often be more accessible than this. Ripe, glycerol sensation on the palate coating all the structure. Really gourmand and sumptuous. A wonderful Beychevelle, combining finesse with power and an outstanding fruit expression. This is a bit more serious somehow than many vintages of this wine, and shows the full potential of the chateau.
Nicholas Jackson, MW

Fresh, juicy, bright red and black fruits: berries, cherries and currants. Mid-weight with good texture and purity. Red currant, red cherries, and blackcurrants with cigar box, cedar, spice and toasty oak on the finish. Tannins certainly present, but in balance with the fruit. Has plenty of grip, but enough flesh to balance out. A plush, savoury, structured, spicy, well made Beychevelle. Jamie Ritchie

Branaire Ducru

S 93-95 NJ 93-94 WA 92-94 WS 94-97 VG 93-96

58% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, 4% Cabernet Franc. 53hl/ha. Enormous, concentrated black fruit on the nose and great black cherries and glycerol on the palate. Rich, fleshy and fresh. This is a huge success for the chateau and my best experience of Branaire.
Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Deliciously ripe and succulent, with a velvety texture. Really high quality Cabernet tannins here - so suave and elegant. Quite a sumptuous wine but all in check, and beautifully balanced by acidity. A good example of that old cliché: a well tailored haute couture suit. Very well made.
Nicholas Jackson, MW

Fresh and vibrant, with blackcurrant, cassis, touch of violet and some meatier red fruit notes. Then that classic St Julien mulberry, cigar and cedar note. Very refreshing and healthy nose. Sleek black fruits and cassis core. Good grip and tannic structure with a polish, freshness and energy. Volume, weight and structure with lovely flesh of fruit. A lovely sweet red fruit, mocha and saline edge to the finish. Alcohol is present but all in check. Very good. Adam Bilbey

Brane Cantenac

S 94-96 NJ 94-96 WA 92-94 VG 92-95

74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot. 45hl/ha. 70% new barrels. An explosion of aromatic splendour on the nose. So vivacious and fresh on the palate, with classic Cabernet Sauvignon structure and purity of style. Lovely blackberry freshness. This is just delicious on every front and a superb Brane, arguably the best ever. Chapeau Henri Lurton! Oh, and only 13.4 alcohol, which is amazing this year.
Serena Sutcliffe, MW

What an immensely rich, deep nose of milk chocolate and spice! Not always what you expect here - in a good way! Beautifully charming palate. Soft but structured, rich and everything keenly balanced. Glycerol too. But of course at this property, everything is linear and pure - no fat here. A lingering, spicy, gourmand finish. Pretty glorious - never showy but so full of character and charm. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A deep colored wine with cherry and black fruit aromas with a charming structured palate. A very well-balanced wine. A remarkable Brane Cantenac with a healthy crop that allowed them to make 45h/L. Victor Rabot

Sotheby's EST 1744 Wine

Calon Segur

S 95-97 NJ 94-96 WA 96-98 WS 96-99 VG 96-99

65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot. 41hl/ha. 100% new oak barrels. Wonderfully suave, aromatic nose. This bursts with blueberry and sweet cassis fruit on the palate – heaven. So very sleek and gorgeously glossy, with silky tannins and fabulous freshness at the end, totally hiding the alcohol. This is undoubtedly one of the stars of 2018 and I adore it. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Full and thick and rich, but with a dry heart to the wine, keeping everything in check. Good acidity and balance. A big taste of chocolate and dark fruit compote - very gourmand. Top St. Estephe from a warm vintage. Intense and powerful but with a vibrancy and life that is quite compelling. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Healthy, juicy, vibrant, fresh, spicy blackberries and blackcurrants with layers of fruit. Lovely weight, combining purity and finesse with complexity and depth. Very fine grained and a lovely structure with everything in perfect equilibrium. Silky and harmonious, with intensity and length. Blackberries, black cherries and blackcurrant with cedar, spice, lead pencil, tobacco. A beautiful complex fresh finish. Big structure with fruit, tannin and oak. Outstanding. Jamie Ritchie

Canon

S 94-96 NJ 94-96 WA 97-99 WS 96-99 VG 94-97

72% Merlot, 28% Cabernet Franc. 42hl/ha. 52% new barrels. An explosion of beautiful, healthy fruit on the nose, all plums oranges and cinnamon. Great, classic Canon, big-shouldered and glossy. Fabulous roundness, opulence and structure, with a long, silky finish. Ace Canon. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Incredibly seductive and rich while remaining fresh and chalky. Beautifully sculpted. The fruit just kisses the palate. Lovely, appealing, juicy - almost opulent - but so authentic. An orangey taste with a dry, milk chocolate finish. Just a gorgeous expression - so unforced and elegant - the St Emilion of old but with a modern purity. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Plum and pure red fruit jumps out of the glass. Red currants, mulberry, orange peel and a touch of spice. Volume, freshness and energy. Impressive tannin structure, with grip and glycerol sweetness surrounding it. Incredibly light of foot given the power on the palate with plenty of fruit and lovely sleek flesh of fruit. Impressive again. Adam Bilbey

Canon La Gaffeliere

S 92-94 NJ 93-95 WS 95-98 VG 95-98

50% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon. 35hl/ha. 50% new oak barrels. A scent of heather on the nose, followed by a very sleek, smooth, opulent and glossy taste – very good wine. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Raspberry compote nose. Such bright and vibrant fruit, and really full of energy and tension. Chalky and correct and absolutely pure and balanced. Tannins wrapped up in that svelte red fruited frame. Seamless. Well done. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A juicy wine with an intense cassis and black fruit nose with smooth tannins and a balanced texture. Very nice and tempting. Victor Rabot

Cheval Blanc

S 96-98 NJ 95-97 WA 97-99 VG 97-100

54% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Franc, 6% Cabernet Sauvignon. Great, blooming freshness on the nose, with an aromatic 'pop'. Big, powerful, all-embracing volume on the palate, with luscious violets and fresh impact. Spicy plums, with cloves and oranges. Exceptional as it rolls round the mouth – dramatic, superb wine. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Gently fragrant red fruit nose. What a texture! So refined and pure and fine boned and - not delicate - but there's a weightless quality here. Lots of tannin but you'll never find riper, more supple tannins. Lovely fan of flavour on the palate. Long, haunting finish of tobacco and sweet red fruits. Not a blockbuster - it seduces rather than overpowers. Beautiful wine. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A very Cabernet Franc aroma, with plenty of depth, richness and power. Really coats the mouth with a velvety, thick texture. This has it all: intense, full, big, structured, tannic, dense, concentrated, multi-layered and complex. The tannin and concertation is significant, but the density, and freshness give it total harmony and balance. Huge, persistent power, length and depth. A landmark Cheval Blanc with breed and class. Jamie Ritchie

Clerc Milon

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 93-95 WS 93-96 VG 91-93

60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 27% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot, 1% Carmenère. There are 243 plots here and there is more Cabernet Sauvignon now. Real succulence on the nose leads to a blissfully juicy wine on the palate. This is an enchanting expression of beautiful grapes, so 'sweet' and winning and with length and harmony. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

All enveloping dark fruits and spice. A slightly different profile to usual. Darker and more brooding with great density of fruit. This is very northern Medoc style: intense, dry, dramatic. What an imposing and impressive wine; almost a style that we thought had gone out of fashion in Bordeaux - unashamedly tannic and long aging, and rather inaccessible for a long time. But quite stark and dramatic - does not leave you cold! Nicholas Jackson, MW

Slightly broader than the Armailhac. Nose suggests more Cabernet than is there. Blackcurrant, cassis with tobacco and spice. A lovely mocha edge. Serious power and structure here. Wow what concentration of fruit. Volume here with a lovely juicy black fruit core. Texture of fruit with a little broader and muscular tannins than the Armailhac, though a little more restrained in its build up. Finesse and sweetness in the persistent finish. Very well done. The team at Mouton have knocked it out of the park this year. Adam Bilbey

Clinet

S 93-95 NJ 91-93 WA 94-96 VG 91-94

85% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon. 38hl/ha. 75% new barrels. There is slightly more Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend than usual, helping to give the freshness to balance the alcohol. A huge, floral nose of great energy and health. True Clinet, true Pomerol, with lovely mineral/irony notes. A terrific mouthful and the best Clinet I have ever experienced. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Very sweet and ripe, with a brambly undertone. Quite structured in an old school Pomerol kind of way. Smooth, seamless, elegant. No hard edges here. Generous but authentic Pomerol - well done. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A very floral nose with a hint of wood on the palate with some juicy blackberry fruits. Overall, powerful but balanced - a wine for people with patience. Victor Rabot

Conseillante

S 94-96 NJ 95-97 WA 96-98 VG 95-98

83% Merlot, 17% Cabernet Franc. 32hl/ha. A lovely fresh nose of roses and youth. Great structure on the palate, covered by juiciness and energy. Balanced, with an admirable low pH for the year. Charm and beauty are much in evidence, with perfect coordination between all the elements. It lingers long in the mouth. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Very vibrant! Fresh and generous. Impeccable Pomerol: so delicious and balanced. Complex, subtle, layered. Dry and alive. A return to the Pomerol of old. Wonderful and the best wine in recent vintages at this estate - bravo! Nicholas Jackson, MW

Fresh violets, red and black currants. Very polished and finely grained. Luscious, rich and sumptuous with a juiciness that fills the mouth. Succulent, sleek and voluminous, with a lovely texture and weight, Finishes with intensity and great length. A very good La Conseillante, which is back on form with the 2018. Jamie Ritchie

Cos d'Estournel

S 94-96 NJ 94-95 WA 97-100 VG 97-100

74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot. 30hl/ha. 50% new barrels. Very scented plums on the nose, with a touch of violets. On the palate, a huge tannic structure, with that maritime feel of St. Estèphe. An intriguing sweet/salty taste, with some oak at the end. One to cellar and watch emerge. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Heady, dark, spicy nose. Suave and unforced palate with beautifully handled tannins. Quite firm and structured and a pleasant dry finish - quite classic. Lots of acidity too. One of the more balanced wines in the northern Medoc. Really enjoyable and will develop beautifully even if this is not a flamboyant or dramatic wine. Lovely finish of tobacco and milk chocolate (you can tell it's close to Lafite!). You just want to keep on tasting this. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Cassis, plums cedar, coffee and a gorgeous spiced lift. Very Cos. Power is there but it is supple and subtle in its buildup. Again, it is the energy that really grabs one's attention. A nice gentle extraction results in a wine with lovely flow and flesh of fruit, with a cashmere -like feel. Core of cassis and plum fruit with spice and grip from the oak. Alcohol is a little dominant right now but just enough freshness and weight fruit to balance. Amazing refinement given the richness of the vintage and terroir. Adam Bilbey

Domaine de Chevalier Rouge

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 94-96 WS 94-97 VG 94-97

65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot. One third new barrels. A low pH, low alcohol wine, in this year's context. An aromatic, beautifully balanced nose of cassis and flowers. The palate is immediately overwhelmed with spicy richness that lengthens out to blackcurrant opulence, with a really silky texture and a redcurrants sign-off. The clarity and expressiveness perhaps come from the two-thirds 'bio' part of the estate. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Smoky, intense, dry style. Lots of concentration. Ripe, supple tannins - really quite silky. Quite a classical DdC; no exaggeration or makeup. Not the most exotic wine from this estate in recent years, but will be unimpeachably classic and has handled the vintage conditions very well.
Nicholas Jackson, MW

A beautiful wine with notes of black fruits and a very good ripeness. A fresh and balanced wine with a lot of concentration and different layers of fruits which provides a long persistence on the palate. Victor Rabot

Ducru Beaucaillou

S 94-96 NJ 94-95 WA 97-99 WS 96-99 VG 95-98

85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Merlot. 35hl/ha. Lovely black fruit, small berry nose. On the palate, deep, tarry, liquorice and dark chocolate flavours, with impressive juicy freshness at the end to balance the volume and alcohol. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Very dense and powerful; dry. Real stature here: an epic! A lot of tannins but well managed. Deep blackberry taste. Intense St Julien in a modern register. One of the harder wines to taste this year just due to its dimensions. But everything is present and correct for a long and glorious life ahead!
Nicholas Jackson, MW

Blackcurrant and plum fruit. An energy and sheen here. Great power and muscular in build but very polished and sexy. One can feel the extraction but all is in check with an uncompromising energy of fruit. Modern but very classy in the Ducru in style. Great extraction with a huge sweet black core of fruit and a lovely supple yet huge tannin structure. There is a sheen and power and those tannins need some taming. At the centre of it all an incredibly tight core of fruit, that lingers on the finish. Well done. Adam Bilbey

Duhart Milon

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 93-95 WS 90-93 VG 88-90

65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot. 38hl/ha. Historically good Merlots here this year. A very classic pure nose of perfect definition – cassis and blackberries. On the palate, the most gorgeous expression of refined, ripe Pauillac. The glycerol covers the brilliantly crafted structure. So juicy at the end. This is truly joyful wine and 'epitome' Duhart. I was stunned – and in a totally good way! Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Rich and round, with a soft, succulent fruit - really seductive and gorgeous. Orangey nose. Very come hither! Already so delicious - I want to drink this right now! The tannins are soft but still providing an excellent structure. This is as good a Duhart as I have tasted. Lots of glycerol richness on the finish. Winemaker notes that Duhart always does well in hot years. Nicholas Jackson, MW

An elegant Duhart Milon with a nice balance between all components. Tannins are smooth, leaving room for some juicy red fruit notes and spices. A remarkable Duhart Milon. Victor Rabot

Eglise Clinet

S 95-97 NJ 95-97 WA 96-98 WS 95-98 VG 95-98

90% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc. 70% new barrels. This remarkable wine shows real precision with the start, date of the harvest. A nose of lovely toast and plummy fruit, drawing you in with its lush beauty. There is great complexity all through, with that magic, and sometimes elusive, combination of glycerol and freshness. Super-enveloping and super all round. A great achievement and a landmark Eglise Clinet, even by its own high standards. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Opulent and expansive. Very seductive and loose knit already. Beautifully marked, delineated fruit with a dry core and with so much definition and class. Tremendous energy and distinction. A wonderful, vibrant wine which positively hums with life. Very distinctive and unlike any other Pomerol. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Aromatic with fresh redcurrants and blackcurrants. Lots of spice, chocolate and orange. This combines richness, volume and weight, along with great energy and freshness, providing a wonderful tension. Cinnamon, clove and spice finish with underlying power, depth and concentration. In the top class this year. Jamie Ritchie

Figeac

S 94-96 NJ 93-95 WA 97-99 WS 97-100 VG 96-99

37% Merlot, 33% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Cabernet Franc. 39hl/ha. 100% new barrels. Great freshness on the nose – the Cabernet Franc was exceptional here this year, so think scent. Great clarity of expression on the palate, with a firm, deep centre and marked definition. A veil of cassis, in spite of less Cabernet Sauvignon than usual, with a finish of pure, linear fruit. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Very supple and sweet, beautifully textured and velvety. A wine of real sensuality. Gorgeous expression. Very perfectly expressed. Seamless and finely made in a faultlessly modern register. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Red currant, blueberry, cranberry with a woodland floor edge to it. Effervescent, energetic and healthy nose with freshness and expanse. Lovely flesh of fruit, with texture and. Lovely crunch and very honest expression of the terroir. The oak is there with the cream and spice working in balance with the fruit. Lots here with detail, complexity aided superb framework of tannins. Deceptively powerful with great length on the finish. Reminds me of a Bonnes Mares. Adam Bilbey

Fleur Petrus

S 94-96 NJ 94-96 WA 94-96 WS 96-99 VG 94-97

91% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot in the vineyard. The nose is so aromatic and spicy, perhaps the Petit Verdot showing? On the palate, some inky iodine notes and then the sweet succulence kicks in. A very long finish, with the final texture so fine-grained and persistent. Class, as always. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

This is the real thing! Wonderful layers of plush Pomerol fruit, with a good structural frame. Emphatic and convincing. Such delicious, deep, cushiony red fruits with a mineral core. Rich, dark chocolate cake finish. Really outstanding. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A delicate, fresh wine with different layers of chocolate and fruits. Delightful, well-structured and balanced. A top Pomerol in this vintage. Victor Rabot

Gazin

S 91-93 NJ 91-92 WA 91-93 WS 93-96 VG 91-94

Predominantly Merlot, this is an absolute copybook Gazin, 'sweet' and spicy, almost like a mild curry! This is far from being pejorative – it is exciting and this is a very good wine of immense appeal. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Loose knit, relaxed, with a generosity of fruit and a dry finish. Classic Pomerol which doesn't try to do too much other than be its own - thoroughly enjoyable! - self. This is another effortlessly satisfying Gazin. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A good Gazin with floral and blackberry notes that give a long juicy finish without too much oak influence. A wine that will delight followers of the estate for many years to come. Victor Rabot

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Giscours

S 93-95 NJ 92-94 WA 90-92+ WS 93-96 VG 93-96

55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 39% Merlot, 6% Petit Verdot. 32hl/ha. 50% new oak. On the nose, this has real opulence of fruit, but it is big and gentle at the same time – a very cassis, very Giscours bouquet. A taste of café crème, with very smooth and silky tannins. Perfumed Margaux to the end and an excellent Giscours at every level. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Dark and spicy and intense on the nose. Quite dramatic even. Big tannins for this property but they are sleek and beautifully handled. Really quite silky in spite of those tannins. May need a few years longer than usual to be ready, but this will make for incredibly satisfying drinking. Good stuff. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Red and black cherries, blackberries and blackcurrants. Good concentration and depth, with weight and intensity of fruit, along with a healthy dose of tannin and acidity that is in balance. Retains its Margaux nature, but with more stuffing than usual. Creamy, juicy fruit with a toasty, cedar, spice, graphite, mineral finish. A compact, powerful, structured, balanced Giscours. Jamie Ritchie

Grand Puy Lacoste

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 92-94+ WS 95-98 VG 93-96

78% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot. 40hl/ha. 75% new barrels. It is now 40 years since François Xavier Borie took over this great property – and this wine is a marvellous tribute to his work. A real cassis Pauillac nose leads to a wine of terrific heart. The heather and cherries on the bouquet carries through to the palate. I love the vigour of this wine, with its lush, almost walnutty taste rolling round the mouth, followed by a very fresh sign-off. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Perfect Pauillac! Soft but powerful and complete with a lovely cigary, tobacco scent already. Beautifully balanced and elegant, but with all the authority one could hope for from this site. An absolutely classic GPL but with a smidgen of extra fruit. Pretty gorgeous and delicious, but wait for the tannins to integrate. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A pure Cabernet nose. Blackcurrant, cassis cedar and spice, with a lighter red fruit and violet lift. Superb balance between power and elegance. Very refined and with a very subtle buildup of volume of fruit. Lots of grip and tannins structure here, balanced with streamlined blackfruit. Absolutely classic Pauillac palate with balance of structure and elegance. Great detail given the power. A touch of salinity and austerity that keeps it all in check. Well done. Adam Bilbey

Gruaud Larose

S 92-94 NJ 93-95 WA 95-97 VG 89-92

67% Cabernet Sauvignon, 24% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc. 32hl/ha. 80% new barrels. 60% of the estate is now biodynamic. This is a big wine, warm and welcoming. Huge black cherries and glycerol are all-enveloping and there is real mass and 'matière' here. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Rich and succulent. Very chewy and with really good substance. Classic St. Julien biscuity taste, with an additional milk chocolate note. Pretty charming and convincing, and without the huge tannic charge of some properties in the northern Medoc. Eminently attractive and drinkable from a relatively young age. As good a Gruaud as there has been for a number of years. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A well-structured and full-bodied wine with hints of cigar box and black fruits notes. This is a charming Gruaud Larose that will age very nicely. Victor Rabot

Haut Bailly

S 95-97 NJ 95-97 WA 96-98+ VG 94-97

55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, 5% Cabernet Franc. 21hl/ha. 60% first wine. A lovely, peaty/spicy nose of violetty strength. On the palate, this has a freshness and a peaty plumminess that is all-enveloping and mouth-coating, but with a sensitive hand, ending on a note of inky violets. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Beautifully velvety and rich. Lots of structure but the fruit is - à la Pauillac - totally enveloping the tannins. What a stunning combination of power and texture. This is quite ravishing in its deep, heady scent and profound fruit. Surely this is a landmark Haut Bailly? Wonderful. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Black cherry and blackcurrant. Dense, compact, powerful and complex. A mass of concentrated fruit with a big tannic structure and a lot of freshness. Very seamless, with everything in harmony. Multi-layered with a richness that coats the mouth. Finishes with a salty freshness, lots of blackcurrants, black cherry, cedar, graphite and minerals. Perhaps, the most rich and complete Haut Bailly made. Top class. Jamie Ritchie

Haut Batailley

S 92-93 NJ 92-93 WA 92-94 WS 92-95 VG 89-92

This immediately has that lovely, perfumed, seductive nose of Haut Batailley. Then there is lots of very attractive, smooth, gleaming fruit on the palate, combining a sleek texture with depth. Really well-done. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Rich and succulent. Just sink into it. Quite soft Pauillac but those tannins sneak up on you. This is beautifully accessible and charming and will drink quite early. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Freshness and energy here with black and red currant, cedar and spice. Very seductive. Good concentration of fruit with some grip of tannins and a lovely flesh and suppleness. The terroir and identity is still very much there, with a little more grip and stuffing than previous years. Adam Bilbey

Haut Brion

S 96-98 NJ 96-98 WA 97-99+ VG 93-96

49.4% Merlot, 38.7% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11.9% Cabernet Franc. 45hl/ha. This has real Haut Brion Havana cigars on the nose, of the very best quality, together with black forest fruit undertones. Very dark roasted coffee on the palate, thick and dense, coating the teeth. A Pessac 'black earth' finish, with sweet succulence covering the tannins. Rich and deep. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

A lot more purely fruit driven on entry than the La Mission. You want to surrender to the wave of velvety, deep, dark fruits. But then the signature of the place creeps up on you on the finish with that cohiba cigar taste. The tannins here are wonderfully integrated and enveloped by fruit; already the wine is seamless and plush. This is totally velvety and all consuming. Really wonderful and harmonious. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A concentrated, powerful wine with good structure, silky tannins and dark berries shining on the palate. A successful Haut Brion that is built to age. Victor Rabot

Hosanna

S 92-94 NJ 92-93 WA 95-97 WS 95-98 VG 93-96

70% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc in the vineyard. A wonderfully vivacious nose and creamy, vanilla fruit of the greatest quality. A total mouthful and an 'eventail' of fruit flavours, underpinned by mocha notes and Cornish cream! A heavenly Hosanna and one of my stars. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Deep raspberry nose. Pretty dense and chewy on the palate, where the flavours really fan out. A gorgeous long, spicy finish. Quite plush but a bit disjointed at this stage. Will come together. Good structure, quite sweet fruit. Wait - and then revel in this! Nicholas Jackson, MW

You immediately get the Cabernet Franc on the nose. Brambley red and black currants. Fresh and juicy, with layers of fruit. Raspberry and red cherry finish with toasty oak. Jamie Ritchie

Issan

S 92-94 NJ 92-94 WA 94-96 VG 92-95

60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot. 50% new barrels. 53% first wine. Freshness and roses on the nose, with a real perfume of Margaux. On the palate, dense textured for d'Issan, with very good black fruit, nicely vivacious and 'aérien' and all silky vanilla. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Rich and full, with a lovely milk chocolate taste. Juicy and fresh with lots of compact fruit. The fruit is quite crunchy and the finish perfumed. Classical wine but with a little extra impact and concentration thanks to the vintage. Delicious and eminently drinkable already: will only become more so after five years. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Classically Margaux on the nose with violets and black cherry. Great energy and intensity with a milk chocolate and spice from the oak. Lots unfurling here, with a flesh of fruit, seductive and impressive tannin structure. Lovely freshness and crunch around the dense and tightly wound fruit. This retains the D'Issan drinkability but an added structure and scale. Adam Bilbey

Lafite Rothschild

S 98-100 NJ 98-100 WA 98-100 VG 93-96

91% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8.5% Merlot, 0.5% Petit Verdot. 40hl/ha. Concentrated, packed-in, intensely complex, deep chocolate/cassis nose – but of such dimension. Terrific glossiness over important structure on the palate, together with such freshness and total health. Luscious and majestic at the same time. Black fruit at its apogee and great length. This will last a century and I am sorry I shall not be there to verify this. An absolute stand-out. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Incredible scent and taste of cedar and even a touch of pine. Marvellously expressive already. The tannins are almost imperceptible and wrapped in the most heavenly, soft, dark fruit. This is almost like an essence: of Cabernet, of the Medoc, of Lafite. Pure house style but with a generosity and purity of fruit that is spellbinding. An outstanding wine in every way. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A little more reserved on the nose than Carruades but you get the sense of that weight of fruit and power waiting to unfurl. Very refined, with great elegance and so much detail that makes you work for it. Cassis, cigar box, lead pencil and hint of a damson and forest fruit. So much detail and just evolving in the glass - this is monumental. Such purity of fruit. A very sleek core of black fruit, with huge but very fine boned tannins. Deceptively powerful with great definition and complexity, with layers of fruit, and pinpoint acid that gently keeps the fruit in check. A little more plush and approachable than many vintages tasted EP here, but that does not take away from the classical Lafite style. Great length. Outstanding and aristocratic Lafite for the new modern era. Adam Bilbey

Lafleur

S 96-98 NJ 96-98 WA 97-100 VG 97-100

54% Bouchet, 46% Merlot. A pure, noble, floral nose – does one sense the influence of clay here this year? On the palate, great depth, freshness and a real sense of the terroir. A lovely, vivacious 'lift' at the end, to match the teeth-coating volume. A super Lafleur that is both flattering and important. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Rather ample and soft and giving already - very loose knit for Lafleur. So spicy and flavourful. Lifted and irresistible, with a velvety texture and a real charisma. There is so much personality here! Mature vines speak here: serene and self-confident. What a texture. A wonderful wine.
Nicholas Jackson, MW

Notes of black fruits with a hint of smoke. On the palate you feel some beautiful layered fruits with well-integrated tannins. Full of energy with a very long finish. An incredible wine with a long life ahead. Victor Rabot

Langoa Barton

S 92-94 NJ 92-94 WA 92-94 WS 93-96 VG 90-93

63% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc. Lovely scented nose of pure place and glorious black fruit. A beautiful mouthful of great character, really luscious , fresh and succulent. Archetypal St. Julien fruit rolls round the palate in a blissfully glossy way. A stunning Langoa. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Wow - so much generosity of fruit, all sculpted within a firm structure. Ripe tannins integrated so beautifully into the sleek, elegant fruit. Dry - that's the Langoa terroir speaking - but the fruit more than compensates. This is - wait for it - seductive! Not a descriptor often used with Langoa. Convincing, correct, pure. Lovely wine. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Classic St. Julien nose. Energy and freshness. Very healthy with abundant fruit. Textbook, cassis, blackcurrant, a touch of tobacco, cedar and spice, with then the lift of raspberry and mulberry. Lovely. Ticks all of the boxes with pure and sleek cassis fruit and a ripe tannin structure. Classic but not rustic. Supple. Nice saline freshness that balances the gloss of fruit and tannins. Great work. Adam Bilbey

Larcis Ducasse

S 93-95 NJ 91-92 WA 96-98 WS 94-97 VG 94-97

89% Merlot, 11% Cabernet Franc. 33hl/ha. 72% first wine. A lovely nose of raspberries leads to beautiful harmony on the palate. A delicious, silky, seductive wine that could become addictive unless I rein myself in! Just flawless of the genre. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Mulberries nose. Delightfully fresh and chalky. Generous fruit but without being excessive or over-ripe. A pretty pure expression of St Emilion in a ripe vintage. Very drinkable. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A powerful wine with plenty of black fruits and enough acidity to make it balanced. Very nicely done with a remarkable freshness and long length. Victor Rabot

Latour

S 97-99 NJ 96-98 WA 98-100 VG 96-99

91% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Merlot. 37% of the production in the grand vin. 100% new barrels. The first vintage to be certified organic. A very deep, intense, complex nose, dominated by black fruit and purity. On the palate, the tannins are beautifully covered and integrated, with lovely coffee and vanilla notes atop the first class fruit quality. A gleaming texture and such freshness, plus a long aftertaste to die for – but better to live for it! A great Latour. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Ahh, the breadth and dimension here. It almost swallows you rather than the other way round! Wonderful, deep tobacco flavour already. So deep and rich with a brilliant core of Latour scent and breed. The level of tannins is moderate to high but all so enrobed with fruit they are barely perceptible. What impresses is just how unforced and naturally this comes. It's very relaxed and self-confident, bespeaking its noble terroir. Gorgeous wine with a long, chocolatey finish. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Dense, concentrated, compact blackcurrants, blackberries and black cherries. Juicy, vibrant and fresh. Immediately shows class, breed and distinction. Multi-layered, with depth, concertation and power. A mass of fruit, tannin and acidity are wrapped together in a seamless way, so that it is harmonious and balanced. Huge length and concentration at the finish with creamy blackberries and blackcurrants, graphite, cedar and tobacco. A giant Latour and one for the ages. Jamie Ritchie

Le Pin

S 95-97 NJ 97-99 WA 97-99 VG 94-97

100% Merlot. 30hl/ha. A wonderful, exotic nose that is utterly original, in true Le Pin fashion. Terrific coffee and cassis on the palate, with a backdrop of liqueur. Great fruit quality with excellent freshness. It could be a combination of the 2015 and 2016 vintages but lap it up over the years while considering this! Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Beautiful nose. So aromatic and generous and with such distinction on the palate. Layered and detailed and subtle. Not a blockbuster but oh so pretty. Exotic and distinctive and a totally different style from Petrus. Wonderfully spicy and exotic but remains very balanced and pure. So irresistible and moreish. There's a stamp of the breed of the site here. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Smoke, toast, cranberry and blueberry notes. Very voluptuous, expansive and hedonistic in the Le Pin fashion - an exotic little number! A lovely lift of Indian spice, raspberry and cinnamon. Such a luscious attention-grabbing mouthfeel. Fresh and such abundant and lively cassis fruit. A wonderful fresh fruit crunch on the mid palate that just guides the finish of raspberry, cream and spice. So much going on and does not try too hard and is not forced. Full of joy that does not detract from its breeding. Adam Bilbey

Leoville Barton

S 94-96 NJ 94-95 WA 94-96 WS 96-99 VG 93-96

82% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18% Merlot. 60% new barrels. A huge black fruit, 'grand vin' nose, with smoky cassis depth. So utterly juicy on the palate. Smooth and lustrous. Stupendous stuff, with great sweetness and a touch of vanilla and more than a touch of class! A classic of the genre, with a fresh, fruity farewell. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Quite tight on the nose still, but the purity of black fruits impresses (in a vintage where there are many red fruited wines). Then a deep tobacco and black currant taste on the palate. Powerful structure, great balance, no evident alcohol. It's as if in a vintage like this, Leoville becomes even more classic St Julien, which is no bad thing! Tight knit, focused, impeccable Leoville. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Powerful black fruit nose with no sign of over ripeness. A lot of concentration in the glass yet balanced. A remarkable Leoville that will age gracefully. Victor Rabot

Leoville Las Cases

S 94-96 NJ 94-96 WA 98-100 WS 97-100 VG 95-98

80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc. 35.5hl/ha. 90% new barrels. Very deep colour, then the great, big black plummy nose denoting Cabernet Sauvignon on terrific terroir. On the palate, this is beautifully balanced between opulence, structure and sheer fresh impact. Just one of the most expressive of them all. The black fruit is grandiose and the finish is sweet and succulent. 'Félicitations' is too restrained a comment. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

So intense and powerful with a deep, intense black fruit core. Fantastic depth and authority here. Oh yes. This is the real Las Cases this year. A journey to the heart of a terroir on the palate: layers of tobacco and cedar. Wonderfully energetic and vibrant. This is a real monument. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Bright, pure, dense nose of blackcurrants, black cherries and liquorice. Full and complete on the palate with richness and concentration. Finishes with red and black fruits, cedar, cigar and tobacco. Not the most showy, but four square with weight, that will add layers of complexity. A very good Las Cases. Jamie Ritchie

L'If

S 91-93 NJ 91-93 WS 93-96 VG 95-98

74% Merlot, 26% Cabernet Franc. 50% new barrels. A lovely cocoa nose leads to a very creamy taste, with flavours of chocolate and cocoa matching the energy of the wine. Juicy and flattering and a real charmer. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Very succulent! Really get your teeth into it. Lots of substance. Really fresh and attractive. Bright and charming and very well made. Drink this all day. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Fresh blueberry, violet and cocoa. Lots of bounce and life here, which is full of energy and healthy fruit. Lovely crunch of fruit with a texture, flesh and nicely rounded tannins that have some grip and spice with a cream of the oak. Seems to be getting better every year. Adam Bilbey

Lynch Bages

S 95-97 NJ 95-97 WA 96-98 WS 96-99 VG 93-96

72% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot. 38hl/ha. 75% new barrels. A 'grand vin' nose of sweetness, opulence and volume, so scented and 'of place'. Great harmony on the palate, with such sweetness. The tannins are so brilliantly absorbed by the richness, with freshness at the end. Divine top Pauillac, demonstrating yet again that the wizards behind this property know exactly what they are doing. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Wow - what an impact on the palate! A great wall of fruit and tannin density hits you and coats the palate. One of the great, statuesque Lynch Bages, displaying all the massive tannin of the vintage and of this great terroir. Nothing out of place or forced here: pure Pauillac and pure Lynch. It will outlive us all, and look a lot better than us all 50 years hence! Nicholas Jackson, MW

An intense wine in all aspects, starting with a very rich, sweet black fruit nose then on the palate, an explosion of fruit with an impressive structure of tannins. A long finish. Very good Lynch Bages. Victor Rabot

Malartic Lagraviere

S 92-94 NJ 93-95 WA 92-94 WS 92-95 VG 92-95

57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot, 3% Cabernet Franc. 35hl/ha. 70% new barrels. A lovely, spicy, very Pessac nose. On the palate, there is the strong peaty/irony character of the appellation (addictive for many of us!), with all the balance, fruit and harmony of a very fine wine. It wraps itself round you and has great personality – and patina. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Mulberry scent. Very rich and succulent with a deep coffee taste. So expressive already! Just coats the palate with layers of flavour. Gosh, this is a good vintage for this wine. So deep and heady with a plush texture and perfectly ripe, succulent tannins. A very pure example of Pessac. Another wine for which this is a landmark vintage, surely. The best Malartic I can remember. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Good concentration and density of blackcurrants and black cherries. Tightly wound and compact. Big impact with powerful, dense blackcurrants and a savoury cedar, cigar, tobacco, liquorice finish. Lovely rich, vibrant fruit, good weight, richness, concentration and freshness. Plush, textured. A very good Malartic. Jamie Ritchie

Malescot St Exupery

S 91-93 NJ 91-93 WA 94-96+ WS 93-96 VG 93-96

A very good nose leads to a taste that is all finesse and elegance – I really like the texture, which is Margaux at its purest. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Bright brambly fruit, rich and succulent, well managed tannin - a light touch, appropriate for this terroir. Well done - charming but structured. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Energetic and floral nose of cassis, spice and a polished black fruit core. Excellent. Lovely mouthfeel, good tannic structure, with ample textured fruit and enough freshness to balance the alcohol. Well done. Adam Bilbey

Sotheby's EST. 1744 Wine

Margaux

S 96-98 NJ 96-98 WA 97-100 VG 95-98

90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot. 36% of the production. This is just so scented, the very essence of Margaux. A super expression of Cabernet Sauvignon strikes you immediately, from bouquet to palate, with beautiful breed of texture and finesse of tannins. There is great aromatic expansion in the mouth and flavours of ripe blueberries, plus total silkiness. A very refined Margaux, with total precision and balance. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Hugely floral, smoky nose - even an unlikely hint of citrus! That wonderfully silky texture, with the full breed of the site emerging already: endless flavours of wood smoke, cedar and milk chocolate. Absolutely seductive and gorgeous. Just an unbelievably long finish. Very hard to spit! Superb. Also, there is such a good harmony between the cedary flavours here and the oak. You can almost eat this wine it's so gourmand. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A nice balance between smoky flavors with the juicy red and black fruits present on the palate. There is an impressive silky tannins structure, with an incredible persistence on the palate. A breathtaking Chateau Margaux. Victor Rabot

Mission Haut Brion

S 96-98 NJ 95-97 WA 98-100 VG 90-93

53.5% Merlot, 42.9% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3.6% Cabernet Franc. 53% of the production in the grand vin. A lovely fresh, vivid nose of ebullient black cherry fruit. Inky/irony flavours on the palate, with peaty notes that are true to type. Packed with black liquorice and volume and with a really sweet minty finish that is both tangy and rich. I loved this. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Beautiful almost glycerol richness on the nose. A palate that is deep and layered and structured. This is a wine that seems to extend in every dimension indefinitely! Structure, depth of fruit, length - all amaze. Dry, with such concentration and authority. A wine at ease with itself but just waiting to unfurl. This will be - it already is! - an epic La Mission. The finish: so peaty and smoky - is one that you want to go on tasting forever. Quite heavenly. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Fleshy, rich, powerful and structured. Lots of red and black fruit on the nose: currants, cherries, berries. Luscious, sumptuous texture that envelopes concentrated, dense black fruit, a significant amount of tannin, oak and the alcohol. Multi-layered and very complex, it has a rich unctuous finish of lead pencil, cedar, cigar and tobacco with blackcurrants and black cherries. Great harmony combines all these ingredients into a refined, but massive, wine. Jamie Ritchie

Mondotte

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 97-98 WS 96-99 VG 94-97

75% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Franc. 40hl/ha, the biggest yield at the property to date. 70% new barrels. A lovely nose of dense fruit, with notes of liquorice. Concentration and freshness on the palate, with delicious, thick black liquorice that is both seductive and charming. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Super vibrant! Wow. The acidity gives such energy - this really hums. Very detailed fruit expression and balanced. Really quite classical with a chalky, salty finish full of fruit. Very attractive. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Ripe, deep and powerful with fresh, bright, juicy and crunchy red and black currants. Very intense and concentrated with a healthy dose of ripe tannin. Finishes with cassis, cedar and tobacco. A very big, powerful Mondotte that will be very long lived. Jamie Ritchie

Montrose

S 95-97 NJ 95-97 WA 96-98 VG 95-98

72% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot. 25hl/ha. 52% grand vin. 60% new barrels. A complex, multi-dimensional nose, with refined aromas. On the palate, there is amazing silkiness with the big, tannic volume. A great, glowing, cassis wine all through, with exotic plums at the end and that Montrose maritime flavour that so often characterises the property. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Very opulent, spicy nose with evident oak. Very luscious and generous on the palate. Huge of stature and of structure, but everything beautifully fruit wrapped. This could be an epic Montrose in the style of the great 2009, but maybe with a little more freshness. Montrose is rarely a loveable wine, but rather a wine that inspires awe and respect: and this one certainly does. A great statement and a great Montrose. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Great power and opulence. A granite-like block of black fruit with very broad shoulders. However, there is a very fresh and saline lift to the nose that gives it a more meaty and savoury edge. A mulberry, cedar, spice and lead pencil lift offer a glimpse to its terroir. You get a sense of the density and layers here, like dropping a coin into the ocean that keeps on sinking. Great grip of tannins with a very pure core of plum and cassis fruit. Weight and power with flesh of fruit that envelopes out. The tannins are certainly there with mouth fulling structure. The weight and power is all very balanced and commands attention. Breeding and class - a great Montrose. Adam Bilbey

Sotheby's EST. 1744 Wine

Mouton Rothschild

S 96-98 NJ 96-98 WA 97-99+ VG 94-97

86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc. 28hl/ha. 65% of production in the grand vin. 100% new barrels. A very deep colour, dense to the rim. A creamy, dense, smoky coffee and Cabernet nose. On the palate, it is so thick textured you have to go into the heart of it to find the damsons, plums, cinnamon and black cherries. Candied fruit notes that gradually turn to cassis in the glass, juicy velvet. This is almost a food and certainly a superb Mouton. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Sleek, black fruited nose. Seems very healthy. Dry and intense and huge. Massive concentration and density in a style we have not seen in recent vintages. Huge all the way round. In a way, quite hard to taste at this time because it's so compact. Classical, but 'super'-classical Mouton, even old school in the density of the tannins. Dry and big - like a modern and more fruited 1986? This will last forever and always be a winner.
Nicholas Jackson, MW

Nose of black fruits followed by a touch of smoke and spices. Very high-quality tannins that are perfectly integrated in this powerful wine that lasts forever on the palate. It will be part of the best recent Mouton produced. Victor Rabot

Palmer

S 96-98 NJ 93-95 WA 97-99 WS 97-100 VG 95-98

53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, 7% Petit Verdot. 11hl/ha. 90% of production went into the grand vin. This is, obviously, a concentrated, very small production wine, drawing you in immediately with its spicy nose. On the palate, the highest ever tannins, fine-grained in type, are covered with richness and tastes of blackberry liqueur, very soft and palate caressing. Powerful Palmer! Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Extremely atypical year here due to tiny yields and huge tannin levels. Deep plummy, mulberry nose - somewhat port like. Massive, liqueur-like substance on the palate. Very sweet and seamless. Huge tannins, but all enveloped in fruit. A huge, impactful wine but far from a typical Margaux. A difficult wine to understand in the context of this chateau, but this is one of those cases where you trust - and know - that the terroir will emerge soon enough. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Very intense, concentrated, tightly wound black cherry and blackcurrant. The tiny yields make the Palmer 2018 a fun, intense, dense, concentrated, powerful, structured, multi-layered, complex and elaborate wine. Tannins are wrapped in dense concentrated blackcurrant fruit, with liquorice, cinnamon and spice. Beautifully structured and balanced with total harmony between all the elements. A very long, concentrated creamy blackcurrant finish that combines power with subtlety. An atypical but excellent Palmer. Jamie Ritchie

Pavie

S 94-96 NJ 94-96 WA 97-100 WS 96-99 VG 94-97

60% Merlot, 22% Cabernet Franc, 18% Cabernet Sauvignon. 38hl/ha. 80% new barrels. A spicy, aromatic nose of ripeness and sensuality. Really 'sweet' on the palate, with lots of glycerol and a voluptuous texture, finishing on a note of fresh fruit. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Already very scented nose showing a complex array of red fruits. Surprisingly dry palate, with a remarkable energy! Really throbs with life. And a long finish of perfectly ripe red fruits. Both pretty and profound. By the layers of fruit on the palate, a real terroir wine. Palate coating and delicious and you already get a distinctive taste of St. Emilion breed coming through. An aristocrat! Nicholas Jackson, MW

Highly aromatic nose. Very well built with serious muscle and notes of blackberry, mulberry, violet, spice and cinnamon lick. The oak is there with a cedar and vanilla edge. Breadth and depth, this has serious power and terroir talking. Big tannins but plenty of fruit to fill in and loads of energy. Glossy and plush black berry fruit with cassis and violet edge. Plenty of creamy oak and spice that does take you back but there is a fresh crunch and saline edge that does keep it all in check. The oak needs time to marry with the fruit but could be very, very good. Adam Bilbey

Pavie Decesse

S 92-94 NJ 91-92 WA 96-98 WS 95-98 VG 92-95

90% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc. 32hl/ha. 100% new barrels. A really tempting, perfumed nose, showing the limestone of its origins. There is real cassis fruit on the palate and a texture of limestone finesse that has completely covered the oak. I liked this very much. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Deliciously soft and juicy. Sink into it. Very generous and velvety. Quite hedonistic but balanced by a chalky backbone. Good St. Emilion.

Nicholas Jackson, MW

A powerful wine with notes of blackberries and cassis, tannins are present and will takes time to soften, there is enough freshness to make it balanced. This wine will require time before to be enjoyed. Victor Rabot

Sotheby's EST. 1744 Wine

Pavie Macquin

S 94-96 NJ 93-95 WA 95-97 WS 95-98 VG 92-95

78% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc, 2% Cabernet Sauvignon. 47hl/ha. 90% of production went into the grand vin. A fabulous year for Pavie Macquin, starting with a stunning nose of excitement and health of fruit. There is extraordinary dimension on the palate, so full of myriad flavours and succulence. Flesh, élan and energy, with sublime floral fruit and silky ripeness and sweetness. Yes, I like it, very much indeed. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Powerful, focused, dark, spicy nose. Bright and lifted and perfumed in the mouth. The fruit is so delicious and plummy. Hedonistic but fresh. This is really good. So succulent and deep. Gorgeous, irresistible wine. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Blackberries, red and black cherries and currants. Healthy, bright, ripe and fresh. Multi-layered and complex with good weight and texture. Very juicy, pure and bright on the palate. Good length and persistence at the finish, ending with crunchy blackberries and blackcurrant, graphite and minerals. Jamie Ritchie

Petit Village

S 91-93 NJ 91-93 WS 92-95 VG 90-93

72% Merlot, 18% Cabernet Franc, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon old vines. A real peppermint Pomerol perfume, with violetty scents. On the palate, there is power, softness and generosity. Petit Village gets better and better and it has 'flowered' in 2018. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Gosh - so sumptuous and hedonistic. Great amplitude and with that delicious, plummy Pomerol taste already. Hard not to love. Old school Pomerol structure but more modern clarity of fruit. This is real Pomerol! Really compelling and delicious and a testament to how things have improved here in recent years. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Blueberry and plums with a hint of white pepper and raspberry. Classic Pomerol fragrance. A lovely flesh of fruit enough structure to frame and guide. Graceful on the finish with more detail than recent vintages. An estate on an upward curve. Adam Bilbey

Petrus

S 98-100 NJ 98-100 VG 97-100

100% Merlot. 37hl/ha. A stunning explosion of black fruit on the nose – exotic, with mocha, cinnamon, liquorice and even ginger. There is huge volume on the palate, but 'controlled', with great, impressive projection. One thought of 1998, but it is riper, bigger, more generous and all-enveloping. There is glorious freshness at the end, mouth-coating and with superb, chocolatey black fruit. One sees the 'tenderness' of the wine here, with nothing exaggerated, but mega impact because it is so sensually sensational. Dreams are made of this. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Lovely rich, deep, milk chocolate taste with a toasty finish. A very unadulterated, pure Petrus. Not the rococo of 2016 or the huge impact of 2015. This is a return to the impeccably balanced, seductive, quintessential Pomerol of old. Almost the essence of Pomerol. Unimpeachable. No hard edges and just layers of velvety fruit. This should be one of the great wines from this estate. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A very elegant and powerful wine with an incredible nose of black fruits with spices, perfectly balanced. The wine opens slowly on the palate revealing perfectly ripe tannins and black fruits notes with a very long aromatic persistence. A very dense and concentrated Petrus but with plenty of freshness. This will be a benchmark of Petrus in the recent years. Victor Rabot

Pichon Baron

S 95-97 NJ 96-98 WA 97-99 WS 95-98 VG 94-97

78% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot. 80% new barrels. 50% of production went into the grand vin. This has a very grand Pauillac nose and immediately one sees it is a tremendously enjoyable, even fun, wine as it is so expressive. Great, flamboyant blackcurrants on the palate, exotic and multi-dimensional. There are tastes of all the South and Central American dark chocolates. The tannins are so silky – pure, harmonious 'glühwein', in the best possible way, and an absolutely splendid Pichon Baron. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Wonderful scent; outstanding breed on the nose. This is clearly a grand vin. Then that beautiful, sumptuous, mellifluous fruit that just caresses the palate. A miracle of ripeness and succulence from a particularly tannic part of Bordeaux in a tannic vintage. Unbelievably convincing and authentic. This is pure Pauillac with tannins to match, but so perfectly fruit coated. This is fantastically good and should be landmark vintage for the property. Buy! Nicholas Jackson, MW

Blackcurrant, black cherry and liquorice. Very structured and unleashes dense, powerful, concentrated blackcurrants with a certain smokiness, as well as big tannins that are very well integrated. Huge powerful, dense, creamy, spicy blackcurrants, oak, coffee and chocolate on the finish, with massive tannins, fruit and fresh acidity. Retains harmony and freshness. A landmark Pichon Baron. Jamie Ritchie

Sotheby's EST. 1744 Wine

Pichon Lalande

S 95-97 NJ 95-97 WA 97-99 WS 97-100 VG 95-98

71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot. 35hl/ha. 50% new barrels. Very scented elegance on the nose and a real core of concentrated black cherry fruit on the palate. Coffee flavours, plus a touch of tar. Total juiciness and succulence and a marvellous silky texture. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

The nose is quiet at present but those exotic flavours are waiting in the wings. An all enveloping velvety texture coats the palate. Quite classical in its proportions but so immensely seductive! The spice bazaar is here in all its multi-dimensional splendour. A wine of immense suppleness; of texture, of place. Pure, unabashed, glorious Pichon that recollects the great vintages of the 1980s, and the best Pichon for years - perhaps decades. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Vibrancy and scented nose with layers of supple black fruits. Cassis, blackcurrant, plums with a coffee bean and mocha lift. Silky and flowing this has an effortless expanse and power. Incredibly svelte and sexy, that is deceptively powerful and composed - the feminine to Latour the masculine. A very pure and layered core of cassis, blackcurrant and chocolate fruit on the palate. Cashmere like with great power and juicy tannins that are balanced with an energy and freshness. Great glycerol structure retains the classic seductive character. A great Pichon. Adam Bilbey

Pontet Canet

S 94-96 NJ 93-94 WA 97-99 VG 96-99

70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot. 10hl/ha. 55% new barrels. A nose of liquorice and then strong blackberries, with a real 'punch' of taste. Tannic, irony and full of glycerol. Rhubarb and cherries, but very pure, clear fruit. Very fresh and lush as well. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Amazingly healthy red fruited nose. Full of spice and energy. Rather slimline palate - all energy and race and lacy purity. Particularly vibrant this year, and with ample tannins, but all of which are so supple as to become thoroughly integrated into the fruit. There is a lot of charming substance and distinctiveness here. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A rich and powerful nose of Cassis. This full-bodied wine has a dominant black fruit palate with a very clean and pretty long finish with a hint of spice. Unfortunately, a very small amount of wine was produced and will make it difficult to find. Victor Rabot

Quinault L'Enclos

S 92-94 NJ 91-93 WA 92-94 VG 91-94

71.5% Merlot, 14.5% Cabernet Franc, 14% Cabernet Sauvignon. Will be aged in 500 litre barrels, 50% new. A wonderful, vivacious, healthy, 'natural' nose of such purity. Glorious fruit and coffee on the palate – the dose of chocolate and oak is perfect. Superb wine that went to my heart. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Wow! So much concentration and ripeness for this wine. Really a lot of fruit. And then velvety and with a toasty, spicy character. Full of personality. This seems to be a landmark vintage for this wine and shows the true potential of the site. Really splendid. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Herbal, mineral, blackcurrant nose. Polished and glossy with a lovely purity and definition. This has balance, integrity and definition and in 2018 it has gained weight, power and structure. This has glossy, pure blackcurrant fruit, with smoky, toasty finish. Good definition, intensity, purity, balance and structure. This is the first vintage of Quinault that I really recommend buying. Jamie Ritchie

Quintus

S 91-93 NJ 91-93 WA 94-96 VG 89-92

72.3% Merlot, 27.7% Cabernet Franc. 30% of the production went into the grand vin. A huge, powerful, voluminous, minty nose. Big, inky wine, with glycerol covering the tannins and a coffee/mocha finish. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Such purity of fruit! Very fine boned and elegant with a pure limestone expression. This is the essence of the place. Succulent fruit, yes, but with a firm acid backbone. Really finely done and will make great old bones in 20 years. Nicholas Jackson, MW

More expanse and weight of fruit than I recall from previous vintages. Polished black cherry, plum, mint and spice. Cream and spice coats the glossy black fruit. An orange peel and chocolate edge to the concentrated fruit. Good attack and mid palate guides the powerful finish. Not lacking in power, that's for sure. Adam Bilbey

Rauzan Segla

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 97-99+ WS 96-99 VG 97-100

56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot, 2% Cabernet Franc. 32hl/ha. 65% new barrels. A wonderful, grand vin, blackcurrant nose, showing the lovely Cabernet Sauvignon this year. Great volume, opulence and glossy fresh fruit on the palate. Beautiful definition and stunning structure, impact and an exotic finish. Harmony, power and finesse which is quite a feat. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Nose of considerable depth. Full and ample, soft and caressing. Not altogether typical for this property due to the proportion of Merlot, and a very generous, ample, supple Merlot it is. Hard to resist the generous, supple fruitiness. Some complex smoke and warm spice notes add a delicious complexity. Quite rich and sweet on the finish, where you do also find that lingering Margaux perfume. Feels a little ethereal at present, but should solidify. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Very charming nose of ripe black fruit. On the palate, the wine has a good structure with concentration and power delivering a very good wine with a long fresh finish. Victor Rabot

Smith Haut Lafitte Rouge

S 94-96 NJ 92-94 WA 97-99+ WS 95-98 VG 91-94

60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot. 21hl/ha. 60% new barrels. The perfume of raspberries steals up and woos you. The taste is all soft and velvety, reminding me of rose petals. Fine textured and with a lovely juicy finish. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Very sweet, jammy nose. Very substantial matière. Lots of tannin! Really quite unformed at this stage; certainly a big wine and will need a long time. Probably will settle down - no shortage of fruit and tannin but quite hard to taste at present. A good representation of the 'small berry' style of this vintage, which emphasizes the tannins. Good finish of deep cocoa and tobacco typical of Pessac. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Raspberries, red and black currants and cherries. Big, powerful compact nose with dense fruit. Juicy, creamy, luscious blackcurrants combined with toasty oak, leading to tobacco, cedar, cigar on the finish, along with lots of ripe blackcurrants. A big powerful Smith Haut Lafitte that has all the ingredients harmoniously bound together. Complex and complete Pessac. A big wine that will reward keeping. Excellent. Jamie Ritchie

Talbot

S 92-94 NJ 92-94 WA 91-93 WS 93-96 VG 91-94

66% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot. Immediately, this has the class of St. Julien on the nose. On the palate, it is all creamy fruit, both luscious and fresh. Lip-licking and mouth-coating, this is super and a huge success for Talbot, which I always love, and for winemaker Jean-Michel Laporte whose first vintage it is for the owning Cordier family. This wine really makes me happy! Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Rich but so balanced and all the elements beautifully integrated. Smokey and delicious. Already showing well. So tempting. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Polish and style to the deep blackcurrant and cassis fruit. Cigar box and cedar lift gives added complexity and sense of place. More gloss and energy than I remember at this estate. An exciting wine great energy and style to this classic terroir. The new regime is doing a great job! Superb. Adam Bilbey

Tertre

S 91-93 NJ 91-93 WA 89-91 WS 91-94 VG 89-92

40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 16% Cabernet Franc, 14% Petit Verdot. Very fruity, 'breath of fresh air' wine, right from the start. Then, on the palate, a concentrated heart to it. Balance and very good red fruit, plus true Margaux elegance, the result of great care and low temperature extraction. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Lovely spicy nose. The combined impact of the Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot really felt on the nose. Lots of mid palate fruit and yet still feels only medium bodied. Lovely texture with fine grained tannin. Coffee and spice on the finish. Really characterful - may not be the most traditional Margaux but so much personality! Nicholas Jackson, MW

Red and black cherries and currants with a touch of savoury plums. Fresh and pure with noticeable acidity and tannin, but there is enough fruit to support it. Elegant, refined, Margaux with good concentration. Jamie Ritchie

Troplong Mondot

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 93-95+ WS 95-98 VG 94-97

85% Merlot, 13% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Cabernet Franc. 49hl/ha. 60% new barrels. Very spicy plums on the nose and that is total Troplong. The generous yield really suits the property and balances the Merlot. This is restrained opulence which is truly exciting. There is lots of tannin, but great damson flavour to match it. Power contained and the superb property wins through. Aymeric de Gironde and his team are a breath of fresh air, reflected in the wine. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Healthy, vibrant nose. Really dry, mineral, limestone taste. So much freshness and elegance with beautifully sculpted tannins. Dark chocolate finish. A frank, expressive, open wine which is so seductive and healthy, and notably fresh for such a high Merlot content. Very delicious and compelling. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A fresh and elegant nose of black fruits. On the palate, the wine is powerful but elegant, very well balanced with an impressive persistant aromatic. The wine will age gracefully, but at the same time, will be already enjoyable once bottled. Victor Rabot

Trotanoy

S 95-97 NJ 96-98 WA 97-99+ WS 97-100 VG 96-99

90% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc in the vineyard. A wonderfully showy, plummy nose, flag-waving, perfectly produced Merlot. Quite a big, irony structure on the palate, covered with glossy black fruit. A wine built for the long term in view of its impressive fruit/acidity/tannin balance. Glistens on the finish, which is always a very good sign. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Ample fruit but that's not the point: it is just the outerwear for the tremendous, graphite, mineral core of the wine. This is already profound. What a statement of possibility: of what the best sites in Pomerol can achieve. It's strange that while there's so much fruit, it's not the focus: the ripeness of the fruit is the enabler for the expression of terroir - which is what it's all about. Without doubt a legendary Trotanoy. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Violets, red currants, black currants. Healthy, juicy, deep, rich and powerful. Very complete and harmonious with lots of weight, power and richness. Multi-layered with depth and complexity. A very big wine that combines rich succulent fruit, a lot of tannin and fresh acidity. It is very dense and powerful, but complete and will be very long lived. Finishes with spice, chocolate and coffee. A massive wine and a top class Trotanoy. Jamie Ritchie

Sotheby's EST. 1744 Wine

Trottevieille

S 93-95 NJ 92-94 WA 91-93 WS 91-94 VG 93-96

55% Cabernet Franc, 43% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Sauvignon. A really spicy scent, with lots of inky aromatics all through. Velvety and irony on the palate, with a whiff of the maritime element that can be present in the best St. Emilion sites. This is a very fascinating wine – and don't miss the chocolate it can develop later. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Chocolatey, smelty nose. Orangey too. Very alive and exuberant. Totally enjoyable in a hedonistic style. Lots of spice and lift and character. Well done. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Cabernet Franc jumps out of the glass with cherry, white chocolate, bramble and tea leaf. Lovely lick of liquorice, orange peel adds to the expanse of fruit. A lovely luscious mouthfeel here with crunch of fruit and good, rich and spicy tannins. There is a fresh saline edge that carries the glycerol and chocolate fruit. Finesse and texture to the lengthy finish. Very impressive. Adam Bilbey

Vieux Château Certan

S 95-97 NJ 96-98 WA 97-100 VG 94-97

70% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc. 40hl/ha. Two thirds of the crop went into the grand vin. Gloriously scented, with the raspberry influence of the Cabernet Franc which is superb this year. Very aromatic and crunchy on the palate. So juicy and so fresh, but with the concentration of old vines. This has it all – this is a wine that speaks to you, as always, in a very well-bred way. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Wow - such bite and attack on the palate. Great, crunchy substance here. That gorgeous Cabernet Franc detail allied to a wonderfully glycerol richness. And all fresh and clean and precise. A big wine but so tempting and moreish. Brilliant verve and character. Pretty wonderful and totally authentic. Wonderful perfumed finish à la Chambolle. Nicholas Jackson, MW

All the Cabernet Franc from the estate went into the first wine. An intense nose of roses and black berries. A powerful wine with a very good structure and a good balance between the oak and the fruit. Very charming with an incredibly long finish. An amazing Vieux Chateau Certan. Victor Rabot

Sotheby's EST. 1744 Wine

RED-SECOND WINES

Arômes de Pavie

S 92-94 NJ 92-94 WS 90-93 VG 90-93

65% Merlot, 18% Cabernet Franc, 17% Cabernet Sauvignon. 42hl/ha. 50% new barrels. One senses the class of the property on the nose, followed by real liquid blackberries on the palate. Liqueur-like texture. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Intense, orangey nose. Very rich but fresh too. Spicy and full of impact. A serious wine with excellent structure and balance. Very long. Impressive and moreish. Just goes on and on! Nicholas Jackson, MW

Juicy plums, redcurrants and blackcurrants with graphite and minerality. Fleshy and fruity, with weight, substance, complexity, depth and integrity. Finishes with toasty, creamy, spicy blackcurrants. Very voluptuous and charming. A serious Arômes de Pavie and a step up from previous vintages. Jamie Ritchie

Carillon d'Angelus

S 91-93 NJ 89-91 WS 90-93 VG 91-94

85% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc. 50% new barrels and from a selection of vineyard parcels, using only the oldest Cabernet Franc. The nose is all berries and cocoa, the palate juicy and with sleek and silky tannins. A real charmer. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Quite ripe and quite a lot of tannins. But pretty svelte and seamless. Once the tannins integrate a little, this will be a charming St. Emilion. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Fresh and full of energy. Blackberry, cranberry, spice and raspberry. Lovely mouthfeel, with a red berry crunch. A really generous plush texture of fruit with a lovely fresh acidity. Adam Bilbey

Carruades de Lafite

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 VG 89-91

56.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 38% Merlot, 5.5% Cabernet Franc. The most wonderful, vivid nose of black fruit, with everything in balance. On the palate, vivacious, glossy and harmonious, with spicy, blueberry fruit and elegant tannins that are so silky – or are they velvety? In any case, this is the best Carruades of my life and a tremendous achievement. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Very silky and elegant in a classic Lafite mould. Very cedary and seductive, with a milk chocolate finish. So finely sculpted. Tannins are very ripe and succulent; there is a good concentration and density here in a wine that can sometimes be quite light. This is a wonderful Carruades - so true to its noble origins. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Polished, glossy, silky red and black fruit. Pure and finely grained with a lovely texture and weight in the mouth. Excellent definition with an elegant, creamy, spicy, fresh finish. For Carruades, this is very expressive, opulent and plush. Fresh graphite, cedar, tobacco finish with red cherries. A super Carruades - the best tasted in recent years. Jamie Ritchie

Chapelle d'Ausone

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 93-95 VG 91-94

50% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Franc, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. 100% new barrels. A smoky, black fruit nose leads to lots of beautifully defined, crystal clear fruit on the palate – is this bio purity? Crisp, stunning, redcurrant flavours on the finish. Goodness, this is appetising. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Bright, orangey taste. Really detailed and subtle with a pixellated acidity highlighting every detail of flavour. Long, complex, tobacco finish. The acidity is so important here and brings the life to the wine. Not a trace of the heat of the vintage - everything just perfectly controlled and measured. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Bright red and black fruit with a zesty orange peel edge. Density and layers to the nose with great energy. Excellent structure with very fine tannins and a lovely saline edge to the sweet back fruit. Great power and so well put together with a glycerol edge. Energetic and focused, full of health and vibrancy. This is no second wine! Adam Bilbey

Chapelle de la Mission Haut Brion

S 91-93 NJ 91-93 WA 91-93 VG 87-89

51.6% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40.8% Merlot, 7.6% Cabernet Franc. Gentle, spicy fragrance on the nose, then the huge flavour hits you – a total compote of fresh red and black fruits. It has a lovely gloss to the texture, silkily youthful. A delicious, expressive mouthful that is immensely attractive. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Lovely classical style; fresh and crunchy with a good fruit concentration, especially felt on finish. Deep tobacco finish. Beautiful harmony and elegance here and with bags of character. Charm, suppleness, elegance, freshness: hard not to like it! Nicholas Jackson, MW

Bright red fruits on the nose with a balanced and elegant palate. This is a wine that will be very enjoyable when young. An abundance of freshness with a precise mouth-feel. Victor Rabot

Sotheby's EST. 1744 Wine

Clarence de Haut Brion

S 92-94 NJ 92-94 WA 92-94 VG 89-91

58.2% Merlot, 28.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9.7% Cabernet Franc, 3.6% Petit Verdot. Softly, densely aromatic on the nose. A thick texture on the palate, very plum compote – it really lines the interior of the mouth, with real sweetness at the end. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

A bit more structure and intensity than the Chapelle, with excellent acidity and clarity. Quite powerful and will resolve into a very classic Clarence, dry and cedary. In the context of the vintage, quite a dry wine. But I love that deep cigar scent - this really is a little Haut Brion. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A little more expanse and lift to the nose than the Chapelle. Glossy blackcurrant and black cherry fruit with a liquorice edge. An overriding freshness and this flows through to the svelte and cashmere like palate. Very well formed with a striking core of black fruit and weight that you rarely see in Clarence. Tannins are structured but well balanced with the fruit. A little more linear than the La Chapellle with a spice and mocha finish from the oak. Well done. Adam Bilbey

Dame de Montrose

S 91-93 NJ 91-92 WA 90-92 VG 90-92

52% Merlot, 39% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Petit Verdot, 4% Cabernet Franc. A minty, aniseedy nose of attractive appeal and scent – the sun gave this. Lovely sweetness on the palate, very juicy and just sheer seduction. It certainly did the trick for me. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Full, rich nose already. Lovely, fleshy, fruity substance here. Almost flamboyant! A return in style to the rich Dames of hot vintages of the recent past. Teetering on the edge of over-ripeness, but just about stays safe. Quite intoxicating, in every way! Nicholas Jackson, MW

Quite dense blackcurrants, with freshness and volume. Quite supple, with lots of weight and richness on the palate. Ripe, concentrated, juicy and healthy with a mineral, salty, graphite, cedar, blackcurrant finish. A very good, dense, supple Dame de Montrose. Jamie Ritchie

Echo de Lynch Bages

S 91-93 NJ 90-92 WA 90-92+ WS 89-92 VG 91-93

62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc. A lovely, exemplary, rosy nose. This is tremendous Echo and a stupendous Second Wine. Such beautiful, pure, rich fruit, absolutely in balance with the tannins. Succulent and juicy – what more can one desire? Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Big powerful, dry style with ample tannins. A wine of tannin rather than fruit. Will need a long time to mellow but then will become super classic Pauillac. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Hello, this has a serious edge to the usually joyful Pauillac fruit! Blackberry, cassis and a touch of tea leaf. Plenty of power and extraction with good sweetness. Some serious volume here. With grip and sweetness to the tannins and admirable length. A greatest Echo and top draw Pauillac. The team at Lynch are right at the top of their game. Adam Bilbey

Forts de Latour

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 93-95+ VG 90-93

65.6% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot, 0.4% Petit Verdot. 42% of the production. Wonderful, fresh black fruit on the nose – there is remarkable clarity here. A very big, blackberry and tar taste, with a lovely, creamy texture. Very sleek and accurate and superbly presented.
Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Ripe, almost orangey scent. Full and rich, quite sweet and ripe. Very beautifully handled tannins - very elegant. Combines power and elegance to great effect. Very stylish and so balanced. This will be excellent. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A nice tension in the wine with good purity and ripeness in the fruits. Balanced with notes of dark fruits and dark chocolate. A very good Forts de Latour. Victor Rabot

Griffons de Pichon Baron

S 92-93 NJ 91-92 VG 91-93

52% Cabernet Sauvignon, 48% Merlot. 30% of the production. 60% new barrels. A whiff of Cabernet Sauvignon nobility on the nose here – all of Griffons used to be in the grand vin. So classic and full of concentrated cassis – this is a dance around the Cabernet Sauvignon on good terroir. Sleek and smooth, with lots of flavour. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Dark and powerful and focused. All intense, fruity and linear with a real authority. An age worthy wine thanks to its concentration. Super classic and dry; a touch austere at present but will be super in 5+ years. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Structured blackcurrant and black cherry. Juicy, succulent fruit with vanillin, oak and blackcurrants along with a big tannic structure that is held together by the ripe sumptuous fruit. Cedar and lead pencil on the finish. A very good Griffon. Jamie Ritchie

Sotheby's EST. 1744 Wine

Haut Bailly II

S 91-93 NJ 91-93 VG 90-93

65% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Sauvignon. Spicy, classy nose of great appeal. This has a lovely, velvety, vanillin taste, with great chocolatey seduction – it got to me. And not just because this is the first vintage with the new label for Haut Bailly's second wine. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Ripe, supple, generous, sweet tasting fruit. Very different from other more tannic vintages - this is much more accessible. Lovely cigary finish. Will drink so well from the beginning. Hard not to love. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Raspberry, red cherry, black cherry and liquorice. Lovely weight and richness which coats the mouth. Has power along with a mass of fruit and tannin. A dense, concentrated, tannic, blackcurrant wine with a finish of tobacco, cedar, lead pencil. A very big, powerful second wine and a great way to introduce the new name: Haut Bailly II. Jamie Ritchie

Pagodes de Cos

S 90-92 NJ 91-93 WA 93-95 VG 91-94

54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 37% Merlot, 6% Petit Verdot, 3% Cabernet Franc. 20% new barrels. Candied fruits on the nose, with a saline touch. Eucalyptus too. Mint and cassis on the palate. Juicy and sweet. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Deep, dark nose followed by an elegant but concentrated dark fruit palate. Lots of spice and black wine gum notes. Very well sculpted tannins; quite imperceptible. Seamless and elegant. Should be very classic. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A very attractive nose with plenty of dark fruits and touch of spices. On the palate the wine is very juicy and fresh with a nice structure. A very pleasant Pagodes de Cos. Victor Rabot

Pavillon Rouge du Chateau Margaux

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 93-95 VG 91-94

69% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Merlot, 9% Petit Verdot, 3% Cabernet Franc. 30% of the production. The very small berries gave the highest proportion ever of tannins in Pavillon Rouge, which is difficult to perceive as they are so fine. Lovely spicy nose. Tempting red fruits on the palate, very juicy and red curranty. Just so vivacious and so easy to lap up. A very good Pavillon. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Beautiful red fruit, smoke, sweet spice and milk chocolate nose. A lovely sweet taste. Very toothsome. And then that wonderfully fine grained texture that sets this property apart. A very long, fragrant finish. Really gorgeously perfumed on the finish. Totally unforced and seamless in spite of having the highest tannins ever for this wine. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Raspberries and cherries on the nose. Youthful, bright, pure, fresh and finely grained. Quite juicy and sumptuous with good concentration of fruit and lots of tannin. Structured and balanced. Finishes with smoky, raspberry, strawberry and black cherries. Finesse and purity, in combination with tannin, fruit and acidity. Good length. An impressive Pavillon Rouge. Jamie Ritchie

Pensées de Lafleur

S 92-94 NJ 93-95 VG 90-93

54% Bouchet, 46% Merlot. Made from separate parcels of vineyard as distinct from Lafleur. Real density on the nose, plus minerality and a certain peaty quality. A huge blueberry taste, with luscious richness covering the tannins. Impressive. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Orangey - very ripe! So succulent and deep. Impressive depth. Very mineral. Makes you stand up and take notice; so deep and tempting. Just sink into it. A profound wine in its own right. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Darker fruit here, with the forest floor lift. Blackberry, blueberry and plum lift with a floral touch. Great structure - the tannins are strong but silky and balanced with a great core of blueberry fruit. A very subtle linear quality here, with a mineral edge, whilst maintaining the flesh and rich texture we love. Adam Bilbey

Petit Cheval

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 93-95 VG 90-93

70% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc. Made from 5 plots – these same 5 plots in 2016 were in Cheval Blanc! Overall, 43hl/ha were made at the property. Intense aroma of scented richness, arabica coffee and black fruit. On the palate, voluptuous and seamless, with really glossy flesh, like a Rubens! So sweet at the end. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Huge, spicy nose. So full of energy and life. Huge impact on nose and palate. Just stains the palate with flavour. That beautiful Cabernet Franc sensation of the flavours fanning out on the palate. Gorgeous graphite sensation. Really one of the best Petit Chevals - I don't remember a better one. Incredibly seductive. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A beautiful Petit Cheval, only a small part of the production was reserved for it (10%). A very floral and smoky nose with hints of liquorice. A full-bodied wine with silky tannins and layers of black fruits. Intense and powerful, a wine which remains long in the mouth. Very impressive. Victor Rabot

Petit Mouton de Mouton Rothschild

S 93-95 NJ 92-94 WS 91-94 VG 90-93

56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc. 60% new barrels. Such a concentrated nose of great impact and expression. So absolutely sweet on the palate, with strong black cherry flavours. Glossy and utterly pleasing, with fine-grained tannins and cocoa notes. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

So expressive and brambly on the nose. That deep chocolatey taste already on the palate with more than a touch of spice. Lovely roundness and tannic structure - this is really a vin de garde. Strong family resemblance between this and the Clerc Milon. Very intense for a second wine. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Compact redcurrants, blackcurrants and cherries. Structured, dense, concentrated and powerful with an intensity and richness that makes it an atypical Petit Mouton. Creamy, luscious, concentrated black fruit. Has structured acidity and a long fresh cedar, cigar, tobacco, graphite, lead pencil finish. A very good Petit Mouton. Jamie Ritchie

Reserve de la Comtesse

S 92-94 NJ 92-94 WA 92-94 WS 90-93 VG 89-92

53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 42% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot, 1% Cabernet Franc. A lovely, healthy, fruity nose of red cherries. On the palate, the coffee notes are strong, plus violets and a black liquorice centre. Silky tannins and a touch of vanillin at the end. There is refinement here, as well as body and flavour. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Already a Pichon nose of warm spice. Really broad and expansive on the palate. This is a fabulous Pauillac in its own right. And then that gently herbaceous note from the Pichons of old - so exotic and interesting. Finishes on tobacco. What a lovely wine. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Really fun and healthy nose with lots of energy. Blackcurrant, cherries and a lifted spice and liquorice edge. A sumptuous palate with lots of juicy black fruit and lovely fleshy mouthfeel. Mocha and spice to the finish, this is a charmer and the sweet and structured tannins give it ageing potential but will drink so well in its youth as well. Adam Bilbey

Sotheby's EST. 1744 Wine

DRY WHITES

Blanc de Lynch Bages

S 91-93 NJ 89-91 WA 90-92 WS 90-93 VG 87-88

59% Sauvignon, 21% Sémillon, 20% Muscadelle. Ageing 6 months in barrels, 50% new wood. A lovely, fresh nose – one feels the north and proximity to the ocean here! On the palate, candied lemons, greengages and limes. This avoids the softness of some dry whites this year and is so delectable. And the grape variety combination is so right for where it is made. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Bright and fresh but not that much acidity in this vintage, although you do find lots of delicious fruit. Early drinking style. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A lovely fresh nose with passion and tropical fruit notes with enough acidity to be well balanced. It will be extremely enjoyable when bottled. Victor Rabot

Clarté de Haut Brion

S 90-92 NJ 89-91 WA 90-92 VG 89-91

79.2% Sémillon, 20.8% Sauvignon. A tempting, lemony nose, signifying the Sémillon with its lanolin notes. Very soft, 'sweet' taste, with lots of perfumed allure. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Zesty lime fruit on the palate and with good phenolic grip. Good tension and vivacity. Really vibrant finish. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Fresh, creamy and spicy, with white flowers and lanolin. Good freshness with lovely weight, texture and finesse. Sweet fruit along with freshness. Finishes with ripe gooseberry, tart apple and limes. Will make nice early drinking. Jamie Ritchie

Domaine de Chevalier Blanc

S 91-93 NJ 90-92 WA 93-95 WS 93-96 VG 90-93

75% Sauvignon, 25% Sémillon. Fermented in 30% new French oak barrels. Superb, very Pessac nose, with ripe grapefruit notes. Then a super explosion of mandarin oranges on the palate, with a flinty finish. The wine has a lovely sheen to it and an exciting citrusy quality. Excellent, yet again. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

That distinctive Chevalier blend of fruit and minerality comes through immediately. Quite loose knit and open but a bit soft and easy going. At present, particularly delicious and fruity. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Some serious power to a classically Pessac Blanc nose. Citrus, stone fruit with a touch of peach and classic mineral edge. Refined and open knit palate with a lean core of citrus fruit. Purity and focus. A mineral and granite-like edge to the lengthy finish. Adam Bilbey

Haut Brion Blanc

S 94-95 NJ 94-95 WA 94-96+ VG 91-94

80.6% Sauvignon, 19.4% Sémillon. This has a higher proportion of Sauvignon than in any recent vintage. Immediately one sees the refined Sauvignon on the nose, fresh and up front. Gentle, sweet gooseberries on the palate, smooth and silky. Rich and elegant and not "typically" HBB – but lovely all the same! Serena Sutcliffe, MW

A record high proportion of Sauvignon Blanc in this wine. Beautiful lemony nose. Immediately so smooth and all enveloping palate. Just a touch soft around the edges. Lovely greengages on the palate too. Beautiful display of fruits that just fan out on the palate; so immediately appealing and attractive, if unlikely to be the longest lived Haut Brion Blanc. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A very high proportion of Sauvignon Blanc, with notes of ripe lemon and tropical fruit with a delicate oak touch. A good tension with a remarkable finish. Victor Rabot

La Mission Haut Brion Blanc

S 92-94 NJ 93-95 WA 92-94 VG 90-92

57.4% Sauvignon, 42.6% Sémillon. Unusual for La Mission Blanc, as usually the Sémillon dominates. That lovely, mineral, 'petrol' Pessac nose. On the palate, super balance, with outgoing, beautiful grapefruit and clementines flavours, together with a touch of flint. Long and far reaching and perfectly poised. Gorgeous. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Great smoky lanolin nose. Immediately a bold acid structure announces itself on the palate. Really good architecture here, shaping the wine. Lots of generous fruit on the mid palate and very focused. Powerful and pure with a long life ahead. It almost vibrates with life! Nicholas Jackson, MW

Citrus, limes, apple, pear and grapefruit. Quite tart, yet quite fleshy. Well balanced with a mineral finish. Jamie Ritchie

Sotheby's EST. 1744 Wine

Malartic Lagraviere Blanc

S 91-93 NJ 91-93 WA 91-93 WS 90-93 VG 91-93

90% Sauvignon, 10% Sémillon. 36hl/ha. 55% new barrels. Super richness and a 'petrolly' character that I love on the nose, plus candied lemons. On the palate, the freshness and opulence are deeply attractive, with flavours of scorched grapefruit skins – wonderful! And then comes a very long finish. All in all, a terrific wine. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Lovely peach pith nose. Lots of spice and impact on the palate. Really full of flavour and dimension. Lots of breadth with a long, pure peach finish. Not as much acid as in some years so will be an early drinker but pretty delicious. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Apricot, peach and stone fruit. Great intensity here. A breadth and opulence to the palate. A great flesh of fruit and intensity carries through the palate. That plump fruit and lower acid suggests immediate enjoyment when in bottle. Adam

Pavillon Blanc du Chateau Margaux

S 93-95 NJ 93-95 WA 93-95 VG 91-94

100% Sauvignon Blanc, harvested between 27-31 August. A really grapefruit, light, citrussy, floral nose. There is such freshness here, with a marked lemony taste. One of the most quaffable, delicious, aperitif-style Pavillon Blanc vintages. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Cantaloupe and grapefruit nose. Like grilled grapefruit on the palate. Excellent acid preservation. Charming, early drinking style but will be age worthy too. More accessible style than the heavier style of previously. Pretty delicious and tempting now - should be very charming for a long time and add additional complexity. Nicholas Jackson, MW

A very charming Pavillon Blanc with notes of citrus and white peach. The acidity level makes it very refreshing with a beautiful long finish and well-integrated oak. Victor Rabot

Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc

S 93-94 NJ 92-94 WA 94-96 WS 94-97 VG 91-94

90% Sauvignon Blanc, 5% Sémillon, 5% Sauvignon Gris. 50% new barrels. Their longest harvest for the whites, which gave total precision. A lovely, aromatic nose leads to a wine of extraordinary complexity, dimension and all-round excellence on the palate. Beautiful greengage flavours and a super-long finish. This is a stand-out Blanc in this vintage. Serena Sutcliffe, MW

Not as oaky as some vintages; purer and fresher. Very sleek and energetic. A very pure, lively style - which is the exact opposite of usual for this estate! But this has some of the best acidity we have seen in this vintage. This is age worthy and concentrated. Well done. Nicholas Jackson, MW

Apples, pears, peaches, pineapple and melons. Fresh with good concentration and depth. Well balanced between the depth of ripe fruit, weight and acidity. Lovely structure with freshness at the finish, which is mostly lacking in this vintage. Without doubt one of the best whites this year and a joy to drink. Very good. Jamie Ritchie