

2003 Bordeaux pre-arrival offer



2003 Vintage

The 2003 vintage in Bordeaux, and for all of France, will be remembered for its heat. The summer temperatures eclipsed the previous hottest year on record, 1976, and the start of the harvest on August 12th was the earliest start since 1893. Fortunately for Bordeaux, or at least parts of Bordeaux, the cold and wet winter that preceded the fierce summer temperatures, and the gradual increase in temperatures leading up to August, allowed the vines to cope better than they might have otherwise. The end result of all this seems to be mixed, with the high points very high, and the low decidedly low. In a rare show of unanimity, the critics have decreed that the best wines of 2003 have come from the northern communes of the left bank, with St Estephe, the most northerly, faring particularly well. For Pomerol and St Emilion it is a much more uneven story, and careful selection of producers was crucial.

It is also another excellent year for Sauternes, the wines are fat and rich, with exotic flavours and opulent texture, somewhat in the mould of 1990. So much so that Chateau d'Yquem made the highly unusual step of offering their wine for indent – not seen since 2000.

All in all this is a year that promises to live up the hype that surrounds a good vintage.

We hope you appreciate our selection from the multitude of wines available. Please enquire if something you would like is not listed.

The Wines

Notes by Jancis Robinson (JR), Robert Parker (RP), James Suckling – Wine Spectator (WS)

2003 Belair: Ch. Belair is the immediate neighbour of Ausone on the southernmost slope of St Emilion. They have 13Ha on a diverse range of soils. The vineyard consists of 60% Merlot 40% Cabernet Franc. No reviews are currently available but they always promise to make fantastic wines.

2003 Cheval Blanc: Cheval Blanc is a personal favourite, for the sheer pleasure that it can bring, with its purity of juicy, opulent red fruit, and its elegance. "Seductive juice. Long and beautiful." James Suckling. JR 17.5/20 WS 95-100 RP 89-92

2003 Gruaud Larose: One of the stars this year is Gruaud, earning 95 - 100 from James Suckling of the Wine Spectator, and also one of Jancis Robinson's favourites. Always a favourite too in Australia. We have a limited amount of stock, so please order early to avoid missing out. "Awesome wine. This is very close in quality to the 2000." James Suckling. Fortunately it is less than half the price of the 2000 at today's prices! JR 17.5/20 WS 95-100 RP 86-88?

2003 Ducru Beaucaillou: Ducru can produce wines at the very highest level, as they proved with their famous 1995, among the wines of that vintage. This year's wine is "opulent, viscous, pure, and juicy," (RP) with a high percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon (82% of the blend). "It's very rich in tannins but then shows lovely elegance." James Suckling. JR 16.5/20 WS 92-94 RP 93-95

2003 Cos Labory: Historically a house with more potential than performance, the 2003 marks a coming of age for this house. We have had decent sturdy examples from here, including the 1995 which was a good effort, but the 2003 has generated lots of excitement at the tastings in Bordeaux. "Deep, exciting crimson. Exciting, classic tension. Serious stuff! Full, opulent, and the extraordinary ripeness is, just, kept in check by the corset of tannins." Jancis Robinson. JR 17/20 WS 89-91 RP 87-89

2003 Ormes de Pez: Ormes de Pez, owned by Jean-Michel Cazes, is one of the big success stories of the vintage. Given some very favourable reports, including one from former importer Jeremy Holmes, who tasted this alongside Lynch Bages two weeks ago. Combining the intensity and balance that all the St Estephe wines show, with juicy approachable fruit, it should be high on everyone's list. JR 16/20 WS 89-91 RP 86-88

2003 Cos d'Estournel: Cos surprised the trade when they released at a price significantly higher than Montrose. Nevertheless they have made one of the stars of the vintage, following on from great successes in 2000, 2001, and 2002. It seems that everyone that has tasted this wine has been blown away. "Great star of the vintage." Jancis Robinson. "...it is the most impressive young Cos I have ever tasted." Robert Parker. JR 18.5 WS 95-100 RP 95-98

2003 Haut Batailley: 22 hectares under vine, the vineyard is planted with 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. The vines have an average age of just under 30 years. RP87-90

2003 Duhart Milon: From the Lafite Rothschild stable, Duhart Milon is the first of the great names of the left bank to be released, and in James Suckling's view, the 2003 is the "best Duhart that we have ever tasted." The style is classic Pauillac, with cassis, mineral and cedary notes a common theme. One of the big successes of 2003. RP 90-93, WS 92-94, Jancis 17/20.

2003 Pontet Canet: Pontet Canet seems to be a producer on the up, and it is available at reasonable prices, for the time being at least. "With considerable purity, depth, texture, and personality, it is a wine to buy by readers looking to maximize their purchasing power in 2003 Bordeaux." Robert Parker. JR 16.5 WS 95-100 RP 92-94+

2003 Lynch Bages: "43 hl/ha. Harvested. Good colour. Open, plummy, accessible nose. Good rich Cabernet fruit on the nose. Ripe but a little astringent on the palate. Good intensity on the follow-through and the after taste. Very good plus" Clive Coates. JR 16/20 WS 92-94 RP 88-90

2003 Lafite Rothschild: Lafite is a house that we have close links with, which helps us to get a good allocation. Happily they are in great form, and they have made the most of the conditions in 2003, making a wine that has been described as "exciting, yet polished and refined," (JS) "exciting...the dancing finesse of Lafite on song" (JR) and "profound...this is one first growth worth mortgaging the house for." (RP) JR 18.5+ WS 95-100 RP 98-100

2003 Mouton Rothschild: We have managed to secure quite reasonable quantities of Mouton, especially given the low yields and scarce availability. This is another wine where critics cannot help but reference great wines of the past in comparison, in particular 1982. "This enormously endowed 2003 is still sorting itself out, but it is unquestionably one of the greatest efforts of the vintage." Robert Parker. JR 17.5/20 WS 95-100 RP 95-98

2003 Latour: The top wines from Pauillac all excelled this year, and Latour is no exception. Only around half the harvest made it into the Grand Vin, reflecting the work going into making great wines at Ch Latour. "As one might expect, this is the wine that seems set for the longest life of all among 2003 reds. Fiercely tense and taught in constitution, it is in fact, amazingly rich and sweet on the nose, with a hint of smoked meats - certainly an expression of the vintage as well as the estate...An unusual combination of Latour rigour and 2003's ripeness." Jancis Robinson JR "...a tour de force as well as a modern day legend in the making." Robert Parker JR 18.5 WS 95-100 RP 98-100

2003 La Lagune: "Possibly the finest La Lagune produced in over a decade, recent investments in new, state of the art winemaking facilities appear to be paying off. This Burgundian-like 2003 exhibits a deep purple-tinged color in addition to a striking perfume of sweet cherry jam, vanilla, and spice box scents, excellent purity, soft tannin, and a medium-bodied, nicely textured mouthfeel. Not a blockbuster, it is a beautifully knit, attractive red to drink well for 10-12 years." Robert Parker. JR 16.5/20 WS 85-88 RP 88-90

2003 Ferriere: Happily this is a house that is under the radar of Monsieur Parker, and hence the value looks terrific. Highly rated by Jancis and James Suckling from the Wine Spectator, Ferriere is a house that has been quietly improving over the last few years, and it is one of a few Margaux properties on the way up. "Very and elegant for the vintage," accordingly to the Wine Spectator, and given 16.5/20 from Jancis, which is well above the norm for this price bracket.

2003 Prieure Lichine: This is another exciting house, making some super wines of late. Made by Stephane Deranoncourt, whose Burgundian inspired methods deliver grace and fragrance as well as concentration, this is one to check out, and to follow while the prices are still reasonable. "...a sexy, seductive, soft wine with low acidity, ripe berry and cherry fruit, medium body, excellent purity, and an alluring texture." JR16.5/20 WS 89-91 RP 88-90

2003 Rausan Segla: Now a consistent performer, Rausan Segla is making lovely fragrant and elegant wines in the classic Margaux style. "Full bodied and rich with a decadent berry aftertaste. Long finish. Wild retro red." James Suckling JR 16/20 WS92-94 RP 88-90

2003 Palmer: Ch Palmer is reliably very close to the first growths in quality, and this year they have used some of the smallest yields in Bordeaux, at just 25 hl/ha. At the price this looks to be quite reasonable value this year. JR 16.5/20 WS 89-91 RP 88-91

2003 Margaux: Margaux have also been in great form lately, with their 2000 a particular success. Unlike in Pauillac, where a number of great houses compete closely, Margaux stands head and shoulders above the competition in Margaux. Great concentration has been achieved, with yields of 30 hl/ha, and only 45% of the crop going in to the first wine. "The most concentrated Margaux ever." James Suckling "...this 2003 exhibits an opulent texture, tremendous structure as well as definition, and an ethereal lightness of being despite its prodigious concentration." Robert Parker JR 18/20 WS 95-100 RP 96-100

2003 Domaine de Chevalier: "A fresh and fruity red with plum and tobacco character. Medium body, with a solid core of fruit and fine tannins and a medium finish. Nicely done. Almost 89-91." Wine spectator. JR 16.5/20 WS 85-88 RP 88-90

2003 Haut Brion: Inevitably the comparisons are being made with the legendary 1989 Haut Brion, which has a reputation as the best Haut Brion ever. "A deep ruby/purple colour accompanies classic aromas of cranberries, scorched earth, minerals, and blue as well as black fruit notes." Robert Parker "This reminds me of the 1989. Jean-Phillipe Delmas says that it could be better than the 2000. I certainly agree." James Suckling JR 17?+ WS 95-100 RP 95-98

2003 Coutet: An old favourite that needs little introduction. Even in a big powerfully styled vintage like 2003 Coutet retains its innate elegance and class. "Long and exciting." James Suckling. RP 93-96, WS 95-100.

2003 Filhot: Filhot tends to be a light and elegant style, without the massive weight of wines like Guiraud and Rieussec. Very solid scores from both JR 16.5/20, WS 80-84, RP 87-89

2003 d'Yquem

Ch d'Yquem have released en primeur for the first time since the 2000 vintage, when they released a wine from a moderate vintage for Sauternes at a very high price. This time they have released a wine from a great vintage for Sauternes, at a price that appears reasonable. Please note that Yquem is released much later than the red wines of Bordeaux (and the other Sauternes) and we do not anticipate being able to make delivery until late 2008! This is a long wait, but at least in the case of Yquem, we know that it will be a great wine when it does arrive.

2003 Bordeaux pre-arrival offer

June 2004 (updated 30/6/2004)

All wines are due for arrival mid 2006 (except d'Yquem, which is due in 2008)

Prices are "best nett". i.e. No further quantity discount available.



The Wines		Pre-Arrival Pricing		Bottles Req'd	Total Cost
		Total price	Payable now		
Belair 1er grand cru (b)	St Emilion	\$124	\$93		
Cheval Blanc 1er grand cru (a)	St Emilion	\$690	\$518		
Gruaud Larose 2éme	St Julien	\$103	\$77		
Ducru Beaucaillou 2éme	St Julien	\$285	\$214	sold out	
Cos Labory 5éme	St Estephe	\$61	\$46		
Ormes De Pez	St Estephe	\$71	\$53		
Cos d'Estournel 2éme	St Estephe	\$360	\$270	sold out	
Haut Batailley 5éme	Paulliac	\$69	\$52		
Duhart Milon 4éme	Paulliac	\$77	\$58	sold out	
Pontet Canet	Paulliac	\$126	\$95		
Lynch Bages 5éme	Paulliac	\$131	\$98	sold out	
Lafite Rothschild 1éme	Paulliac	\$675	\$506		
Mouton Rothschild 1éme	Paulliac	\$675	\$506		
Latour 1éme	Paulliac	\$750	\$562	sold out	
La Lagune 3éme	Haut Medoc	\$86	\$65		
Ferriere 3éme	Margaux	\$59	\$44	sold out	
Prieure Lichine	Margaux	\$71	\$53		
Rausan Segla 2éme	Margaux	\$125	\$94		
Palmer 3éme	Margaux	\$285	\$214		
Margaux 1éme	Margaux	\$750	\$562		
Domaine De Chevalier	Pessac Léognan	\$85	\$64		
Haut Brion 1éme	Pessac Léognan	\$675	\$506		
Coutet	Barsac	\$85	\$64		
Coutet 375ml	Barsac	\$44	\$33		
Filhot	Sauterne	\$59	\$44		
Filhot 375ml	Sauterne	\$31	\$23		
d'Yquem	Sauterne	\$600	\$450		
d'Yquem 375ml	Sauterne	\$300	\$225		

Minimum order quantity is 3 bottles - which can be mixed.

We reserve the right to adjust any orders if stock runs out, but will notify you of any changes, prior to charging. Please return this order form via post, email or fax – details below – **asap**. The nature of Bordeaux sales falls rightly into a first come-first served basis. If you are seeking anything in particular, please don't hesitate to ask.

Payment terms

The total price is as listed, and will not change unless the WET (Federal Government Wine Equalisation Tax) amount changes upon arrival. Payable now, is approx 75% of the cost, as indicated by the "Payable Now" price. We will contact you confirming your order.

<p>Name _____</p> <p>Contact Tel _____</p> <p>Contact Email _____</p>
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<p>Payment Method (Please select <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Diners <input type="checkbox"/> AMEX</p> <p>Number _____</p> <p>Expiry Date _____</p> <p>Signature _____</p>
