

Wine Spectator Insider

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THIS REPORT OF RIGHT BANK BORDEAUX REDS is our third installment highlighting the superb 2009 vintage in Bordeaux (see the previous two *Insiders* for notes on Sauternes and the top Left Bank wines).

The Right Bank excelled in this vintage, with Pomerol edging out St.-Emilion overall, as some rains fell during harvest in the latter appellation. In Pomerol, the spiritual home of Merlot, both Pétrus and Le Pin deliver gorgeous cores of fruit, while Trotanoy provides a more classically structured style. Also in the more structured camp are L'Evangile and Vieux Château Certan, thanks to the Cabernet Franc components in the blends.

The gravel and limestone areas excelled in St.-Emilion, shrugging off the late rainwater; Cheval-Blanc, Figeac, Angéus, Canon-La Gaffelière and La Mondotte lead the way. There's also an eye-opening showing from Silvio Denz's Château Peby Faugères, a pure Merlot bottling from the appellation's limestone plateau.

There are values here too—châteaux Barde-Haut, La Dominique and Rol Valentin all produced delicious wines worthy of a decade's cellaring and can likely each be found for under \$50.

Six classics, the Hot Wines, are on page 5. Over 800 Bordeaux wines were reviewed for the 2009 vintage in total, so be sure to read the report in the upcoming March 31 issue of *Wine Spectator*.

—James Molesworth



La Mondotte owner Stephan von Neipperg

FRANÇOIS POURCEL/OCULT/MEDIA

FRANCE 2009 Red Bordeaux / Right Bank

VIEUX CHÂTEAU CERTAN

Pomerol 2009

97 points | \$280 | 4,300 cases made | Red

This shows gorgeous silk and polish, brimming with beguiling plum, cherry eau de vie and red currant fruit flavors laced with supple toasty vanilla and cedar hints. But in the background brews a darker side, with loam, maduro tobacco and iron notes, which take over on the finish. This feels like it will get a lot bigger before it fully melds—and that will be awhile. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2018 through 2035.—J.M.

CHÂTEAU ANGÉLUS

St.-Emilion 2009

96 points | \$345 | 8,165 cases made | Red

Rich and rather stolid now, this features a wall of roasted apple wood and charcoal flavors in front of the dense core of black Mission fig, steeped black currant fruit and espresso notes. Extremely dense on the finish, but the inlaid spice and tobacco hints are there just beneath the surface, needing only extended cellaring to emerge fully. One of the larger-scaled efforts of the vintage. Best from 2018 through 2035.—J.M.

CHÂTEAU CANON-LA GAFFELIÈRE

St.-Emilion 2009

96 points | \$95 | 5,140 cases made | Red

This is well-cloaked for now in roasted vanilla and espresso notes, but there's ample, fleshy fig sauce and mulled blackberry fruit in reserve. The finish sports a long melted licorice snap feel. Dense, but beautifully polished and pure. For the cellar. Best from 2015 through 2030.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU LA CONSEILLANTE

Pomerol 2009

96 points | \$245 | 4,000 cases made | Red

This delivers stunning toasted spice, mocha and black tea aromas, while the core of plum, blackberry and fig flavors is still rather reticent. The long finish is liberally laced with a racy graphite note, while the perfumy accent pervades. This will be a suave head-turner when it rounds into form. Best from 2018 through 2030.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU FIGEAC

St.-Emilion 2009

96 points | \$250 | NA cases made | Red

Distinctive, with atypical (for St.-Emilion) force and drive to the black currant, roasted cedar and maduro tobacco flavors, which are supported by a dense, loam-tinged structure. Terrific roasted espresso, ganache and fig paste notes wait in reserve. Very muscular, but with the cut for balance. Best from 2017 through 2035.—*J.M.*

LA MONDOTTE

St.-Emilion 2009

96 points | \$375 | 690 cases made | Red

This is grace and power, delivering stunning Lapsang souchong tea and pain d'épices aromatics, followed by incredibly lush, yet refined blackberry, steeped black currant and dark plum sauce flavors. The long, velvety finish hangs perfectly, with buried minerality giving just the crease for definition. Best from 2015 through 2030.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU PEBY FAUGÈRES

St.-Emilion 2009

96 points | \$95 | 1,000 cases made | Red

This is gorgeous, featuring a torrent of raspberry and blackberry fruit that blazes along, thanks to riveting acidity that just won't quit. Loads of spice, black tea and perfectly integrated toast notes hold sway on the very sleek finish for now, but this is really stunning for its beam of pure fruit. Wow. Best from 2015 through 2030.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU BEAUSÉJOUR DUFFAU-LAGAROSSE

St.-Emilion 2009

95 points | \$170 | 1,540 cases made | Red

Focused power. This muscular red shows drive, yet remains graceful, with fresh plum and currant flavors, backed by mineral, tar and floral notes. The dense texture stays fresh through the sweet, spicy finish. Best from 2014 through 2030.—*T.M.*

CHÂTEAU LAFLEUR

Pomerol 2009

95 points | \$1,600 | 950 cases made | Red

This gushes with mouthwatering blueberry, boysenberry and blackberry fruit, leading to a long black tea- and incense-filled finish. Darkens up considerably as it airs, with layers of extra flesh, Kenya AA coffee and charcoal notes striding through the finish. Shows an exotic side, and gorgeous mouthfeel. Best from 2015 through 2030.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU PAVIE MACQUIN

St.-Emilion 2009

95 points | \$95 | 3,750 cases made | Red

Hyperlush, with very creamy fig, blackberry and boysenberry flavors that stay well-defined, as charred apple wood, black tea and singed vanilla bean notes stride in behind. The long, authoritative finish drips with fruit and toasted spice, offering grip for balance. Very impressive. Best from 2014 through 2030.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU CLINET

Pomerol 2009

94 points | \$225 | 3,750 cases made | Red

Very lush and exotic, boasting plum sauce, crushed fig, warm raspberry confiture and steeped black currant fruit all dripping over a racy but buried graphite spine. The long, dark finish has plenty of stuffing for the long haul. Really beautifully rendered. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2015 through 2034.—*J.M.*

CLOS DE L'ORATOIRE

St.-Emilion 2009

94 points | \$40 | 2,250 cases made | Red

This is very suave, with mocha and smoldering tobacco flavors laced with fig, plum and blackberry notes. A flash of sweet tapenade and iron helps extend the finish, which has lovely latent minerality. This shows great restraint, considering its power of fruit. Best from 2015 through 2027.—*J.M.*

CLOS L'ÉGLISE

Pomerol 2009

94 points | \$200 | 1,000 cases made | Red

This rich, toasty, showy style boasts lots of flashy anise and espresso notes up front, but ample layers of crushed fig, steeped plum and dark mixed berry fruit behind it. Nice grip strides in on the finish, with a graphite spine adding serious length and definition. This has plenty of steak to match its sizzle. Best from 2015 through 2030.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU LE GAY

Pomerol 2009

94 points | \$120 | 1,500 cases made | Red

Very fresh and pure, this displays a lovely tobacco streak cutting through the enticing core of crushed plum, mulled raspberry and dark fig fruit. Long and racy on the finish, with singed cedar nicely embedded. Has opulence but stays focused. Best from 2013 through 2029.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU MONBOUSQUET

St.-Emilion 2009

94 points | \$50 | 7,500 cases made | Red

This very structured, but polished, style shows a solid coat of coffee for the large core of crushed fig, plum sauce and steeped black currant fruit. Stays dense, but has a strong graphite and iron edge buried deeply on the finish, which should let this assimilate in the cellar. Lovely mineral, sanguine edge. Beautifully built. Best from 2014 through 2030.—*J.M.*

PROVIDENCE

Pomerol 2009

94 points | \$135 | 1,400 cases made | Red

Captivating, with Lapsang souchong tea and incense flavors up front, followed by creamy-textured plum and fig sauce, blackberry preserve and ganache notes, which sail through the long, smoky and creamy finish. Best from 2013 through 2030.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU VALANDRAUD

St.-Emilion 2009

94 points | \$330 | 1,080 cases made | Red

Racy and beautifully defined, with a sleek graphite frame to the mouthwatering loganberry, blackberry and linzer torte flavors. Shows lots of toasted spice on the finish, but is well-integrated, with a gorgeous mouthfeel. This has ample fruit, but remains very suave. Best from 2013 through 2025.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU BARDE-HAUT

St.-Emilion 2009

93 points | \$40 | 3,330 cases made | Red

This shows a lightly roasted edge, leading to coffee and warm blackberry confiture flavors followed by slightly jammy plum and black cherry cobbler notes. The lush finish picks up definition, though, with a nice singed apple wood note and solid drive. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2013 through 2025.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU CANON

St.-Emilion 2009

93 points | \$145 | 4,415 cases made | Red

This is a creamy, lush hedonist's wine, with suave, textured layers of fig sauce, pureed plum and cassis woven with hints of mocha and pain d'épices. Picks up grip though, joined by a roasted mesquite hint on the finish for added length. Best from 2014 through 2025.—*J.M.*

CLOS FOURTET

St.-Emilion 2009

93 points | \$105 | 3,750 cases made | Red

Rather ripe, but nicely framed by singed apple wood, which keeps the core of damson plum, black currant and black cherry flavors at bay for now. Licorice root and black tea notes undercut the finish, which is on the grippy side. This opens steadily in the glass, too. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2014 through 2027.—*J.M.*



CLOS L'ÉGLISE

Pomerol Esprit de L'Église 2009

93 points | \$45 | 330 cases made | Red

Very open and inviting at first, this features steeped black currant, anise and smoldering tobacco flavors leading the way, followed by equally rich notes of fig paste and ganache on the finish. Turns dense and almost loamy through the finish, with lots in reserve. Merlot. Best from 2014 through 2030.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU LA DOMINIQUE

St.-Emilion 2009

93 points | \$45 | 8,330 cases made | Red

This sports a dark, roasted feel, as espresso and charcoal notes flank the core of tobacco and dark fig flavors. Has a burly edge now, but shows ample flesh through the finish. Should settle down in the cellar. Lots here. Best from 2014 through 2027.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU FAUGÈRES

St.-Emilion 2009

93 points | \$40 | 5,000 cases made | Red

Dense in its layers of blackberry, linzer torte and plum sauce, but caressing in feel, with silky structure and a long finish that has a well-buried, chalky minerality. Almost approachable now, but the precision and balance are there for the cellar. Best from 2013 through 2025.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU FLEUR CARDINALE

St.-Emilion 2009

93 points | \$40 | 6,500 cases made | Red

This delivers the textbook panoply of blueberry, plum and blackberry fruit of the appellation, with a lush, creamy mouthfeel and a long licorice- and sweet toast-filled finish. Along with the suave fruit, there's latent grip that should mellow nicely with midterm cellaring. Best from 2013 through 2023.—*J.M.*

LA FLEUR DE BOÛARD

Lalande-de-Pomerol Le Plus 2009

93 points | \$145 | 250 cases made | Red

This full-throttle red bets on power, with a thick, syrupy texture and muscular, body armor tannins. The flavor range is dominated by sanguine, mineral and espresso notes, but there's a core of blackberry and currant flavors. Thanks to fresh acidity, this remains balanced and alluring. Best from 2014 through 2028.—*T.M.*

CHÂTEAU FONPLÉGADE

St.-Emilion 2009

93 points | \$40 | 2,750 cases made | Red

This expressive red delivers plum, blackberry, espresso and mineral flavors that drive through the palate, supported by firm, well-integrated tannins. Savory and toasty, with a dark, racy finish. Drink now through 2020.—*T.M.*

CHÂTEAU GAZIN

Pomerol 2009

93 points | \$95 | 5,541 cases made | Red

This has it all in place—dark, smoldering tobacco and cocoa notes, rich plum sauce, braised fig and steeped black currant fruit, joined by lengthy, mouthcoating, tar-tinged grip. Still youthfully raw, though, so cellar for maximum effect. Best from 2014 through 2028.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU HOSANNA

Pomerol 2009

93 points | \$330 | 1,100 cases made | Red

There is a lovely plush feel here, with roasted tobacco and fig notes carried by velvety tannins. Deceptively dense, with darker currant and anise notes blossoming through the finish, which still manages to stay supple and rounded. This steadily opens in the glass. Best from 2013 through 2028.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU LATOUR À POMEROL

Pomerol 2009

93 points | \$100 | 2,200 cases made | Red

A nice, old-school style, with roasted mesquite, tobacco leaf and espresso flavors up front, following through to bittersweet ganache and mulled dark currant notes on the still-slightly taut, but well-framed, finish. Should flesh out a bit more with cellaring. Best from 2014 through 2030.—*J.M.*

LYNSOLENCE

St.-Emilion 2009

93 points | \$30 | 750 cases made | Red

Quite lush, with deftly toasted blackberry, plum and fig fruit carried by enticing Christmas pudding and Valrhona chocolate notes. Has hefty grip on the finish, which really pumps out the dark fruit. Very solid, but will surely need some time to stretch out. Best from 2014 through 2027.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU NENIN

Pomerol 2009

93 points | \$60 | 4,580 cases made | Red

This is a noticeably grippier style, showing a chunky edge to the bittersweet cocoa and charcoal notes which support the core of dark fig and blackberry fruit. This has good, racy structure though, so it should settle down with cellaring. Best from 2014 through 2027.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU PETIT-VILLAGE

Pomerol 2009

93 points | \$60 | 1,900 cases made | Red

This darker, toastier style delivers plush cocoa and plum sauce aromas and flavors to lead the way, liberally laced with notes of pain d'épices, fig and blackberry confiture. Fleshy edges build through the finish, with impressive grip. A property steadily on the rise. Best from 2014 through 2027.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU ROL VALENTIN

St.-Emilion 2009

93 points | \$45 | 2,330 cases made | Red

A fleshy, inviting style, with lots of crushed fig and steeped blackberry fruit woven with warmed cocoa and pain d'épices, all backed by a distinctly racy graphite note. Stays fleshy through the finish without being heavy. Best from 2013 through 2028.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU TEYSSIER

St.-Emilion Le Carré 2009

93 points | \$143 | 300 cases made | Red

This is densely layered, displaying a creamy edge that makes the plum sauce, roasted fig and blackberry paste flavors seem accessible now, but the dense bittersweet cocoa and blueberry reduction notes add grip on the finish, and will require cellaring to meld fully. Best from 2014 through 2026.—*J.M.*

HOT WINES

These are the most exciting discoveries from our editors' most recent tastings, published exclusively in *Wine Spectator Insider*. They are high-scoring, low-production wines from around the world that may be difficult to find, but are worth seeking out.

CHÂTEAU PÉTRUS

Pomerol 2009

99 points | \$4,000 | 2,915 cases made | Red

This offers a beautiful balance between its two sides: dark fig, roasted plum and toast flavors versus racy raspberry, cassis and perfumy black tea notes. Silky overall, but with terrific latent grip and a mouthwatering minerality that drives through the finish, pulling out extra fruit paste and charred spice hints. Very, very impressive range. Best from 2018 through 2035. *From France.—J.M.*

CHÂTEAU CHEVAL-BLANC

St.-Emilion 2009

98 points | \$1,300 | 7,330 cases made | Red

Dense, brooding and richly coated, with a well of steeped black currant, fig paste and roasted plum fruit to draw on while the layers of charcoal, Kenya AA coffee and loam resolve themselves. This displays both breadth and depth, offering a great undercurrent of acidity to match its heft. Should be among the most long-lived wines of the vintage. Best from 2017 through 2035. *From France.—J.M.*

CHÂTEAU LE PIN

Pomerol 2009

98 points | \$3,500 | 400 cases made | Red

Delivering pure, unadulterated essence of raspberry throughout, this also features silky-textured tannins that build and build as the wine courses along. Lifting black tea and toasty vanilla bean aromas weave in and out. Primal and complex. Fantastic mouthfeel and length. Best from 2015 through 2035. *From France.—J.M.*

CHÂTEAU TROTANOY

Pomerol 2009

98 points | \$550 | 2,250 cases made | Red

This sports a dark, chewy side for now, with overt charcoal and roasted apple wood notes, along with plenty of smoldering tobacco flavors. The core is still a bit chunky as well, with roasted fig, blackberry paste and steeped black currant fruit. But the underlying structure is refined, despite its density, and the finish is very long and purely rendered. Best from 2018 through 2035. *From France.—J.M.*

CHÂTEAU L'EVANGILE

Pomerol 2009

97 points | \$350 | NA cases made | Red

This takes a broader approach, with almost stolid tobacco and charcoal structure guarding the core of black currant, roasted fig and blackberry confiture flavors. Long and very fleshy, offering ample toast and searing singed iron notes, but terrific integration. Merlot in Cabernet clothing, with a long life ahead. Best from 2018 through 2035. *From France.—J.M.*

CHÂTEAU LA FLEUR-PÉTRUS

Pomerol 2009

97 points | \$315 | 4,300 cases made | Red

Densely packed and rather backward, displaying charcoal and apple wood notes in front of the core of dense roasted fig, macerated plum and steeped cherry fruit. The long finish is well-studded with toasted spice and tobacco hints. Terrific underlying grip for the cellar. Best from 2014 through 2030. *From France.—J.M.*

WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

The Most Experienced Team of Wine Journalists in the World

Wine Spectator's tasting staff includes 12 people in two offices. They work together to review more than 18,000 wines each year, more than any other publication. Together, our six senior tasters count more than 140 years of tasting experience.

We always taste wine blind in our offices in Napa and New York. This is your guarantee that our reviews are fair and objective, and that a wine's reputation or price does not influence its score. Each editor specializes in the wines of specific regions; their initials identify the taster of each wine reviewed. We score wines using the 100-point scale, explained below.

James Laube Senior editor, Napa

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat: California

Kim Marcus Managing editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: Austria, Greece, Port, Portugal, Southern France

Wine Spectator's 100-Point Scale

95-100	Classic
90-94	Outstanding
85-89	Very good
80-84	Good
75-79	Mediocre
50-74	Not recommended

Thomas Matthews Executive editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: New York, Spain

James Molesworth Senior editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1997. Tasting beat: Bordeaux, Chile, Finger Lakes, Loire Valley, Rhône Valley, South Africa

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