



2004 Bordeaux, Left Bank

Tuesday, September 16, 2014

Reception Wine: 6:00 PM, Formal Tasting: 6:20 PM

Faculty Club, Univ of Toronto, 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto

Members' Fee: \$81; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$111

Bordeaux is naturally divided by the Gironde River in France into a Left Bank area which includes the Médoc and the villages of St-Estèphe, Pauillac, St.-Julien, and Margaux which make some of the world's best Cabernet Sauvignon wine, and a Right Bank area which includes the sub-regions of Saint-Émilion, Pomerol, Bourg and Blaye. The Left Bank also includes the Grave region and a sub-region of Grave called Pessac-Leognan. Never head of Pessac-Leognan? Well, châteaux with highly priced such as Château Haut-Brion (the 1er cru from Graves) broke off from Graves to form Pessac-Leognan in 1987. Permitted grapes for Bordeaux are Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Petit Verdot, Malbec and Carménère. While wine making styles do vary, the Left Bank is predominately more Cabernet Sauvignon-based with the Right Bank more Merlot-based.

2004 was a cool, late vintage in Bordeaux but Cabernet grapes flourished. They were relatively high in tannins but the tannins were ripe and easy to extract, resulting in some very fine wines. When British wine critic and writer, Jancis Robinson tasted the 2004 vintage in April of 2005, she declared, "it was the tannin that was their most obvious characteristic. The tannins are now gently receding leaving well balanced wines with clearly defined fruit flavours and refreshing acidity." "On the basis of this tasting, most of these 2004 red Bordeaux should be at their best from about 2011 or 2012 for 10 years or more, although some of the Margaux, Graves and Pomerol could be broached sooner." The consensus is that **2004 is definitely a classic vintage.**

In September, TVC presents a tasting of 8 Left Bank Wines from 2004. Four are from **Saint-Julien**, two from **Pauillac**, one from **Margaux** and one is from **Pessac-Leognan**. They include 1 Grand Cru Classe, 3 second growths (2e cru), 3 third (3e cru) growths and 1 fourth (4e cru) growth. St. Julien wines distinguish themselves for their natural finesse and successful balance. St-Julien is very famous for its distinctive "cedar" flavor and the amazing agreeability of their wine. Their style creates a splendid link between the finesse of Margaux wines and the power of the Pauillacs. Margaux wines offer a lighter, more silky alternative to Pauillac-produced wines. Margaux has many 2ers crus that also deliver the magic, unlike the more exclusive Pauillac. The dense, deep wines of Pauillac are the best and most expensive of the Médoc. In fact, three of the top five 1ers Crus are Pauillacs, a considerable achievement for such a small village in area. With few exceptions, these wines are a tad above the other villages in power, and can often last 20-40 years or more. Pessac-Leognan makes several of the best reds in France. Using a higher percentage of Merlot than the Médoc, Pessac-Leognan wines are structured and concentrated but less closed-off in their youth than Médoc wines. See the tasting notes on page 2. The prices shown are the prices (futures) paid at the time of purchase.

Overall this vintage should be drinking well from the opinions of experts and as usual, our 'annual' Bordeaux event is not one to be missed. Our events include a reception wine and light appetizers and bread with our wines. Please refrain from wearing scented colognes to a tasting. New members and guests are encouraged to sign up for our Newcomers' Table to be guided and introduced by an experienced club member. Please check off Newcomers' Table on the registration form. We look forward to seeing you!

[REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS](#)

Click [here](#) to register/buy tickets. You must register online and then can pay by credit card or by cheque. **NOTE: ALL ticket sales/reservations are final.** Cheques must be received by Friday, September 12th. The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight Tuesday, September 9th after which only credit card sales will be accepted. You will be sent an email confirmation after completing your registration. If you tried to register but did not receive your confirmation, please contact chris@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.

Tasting Notes and Information – 2004 Vintage, Left Bank Bordeaux

2004 Ch. Malescot St. Exupéry, Margaux 3e cru \$49

Medium bodied, soft and supple, as it approaches its 10th birthday, this is starting to drink well. Espresso, black cherry, tobacco, truffle and anise round out the finish.

90/100 - tasted May 19, 2013.

<http://www.thewinecellarinsider.com/bordeaux-wine-producer-profiles/bordeaux/margaux/malescot-st-exupery/>

Ch. Pichon Longueville, Baron, Pauillac 2e cru \$99

"An undeniable star of the vintage, Pichon-Baron's 2004 boasts an inky/ruby/purple color to the rim as well as a big, sweet nose of melted licorice, chocolate, black currant jam, truffles, and charcoal embers. Soft tannin, full body, and abundant opulence and flesh are atypical for the vintage character, but this wine is loaded. Pure, ripe, and evolved, it should be at its finest between 2009-2022." Robert Parker, *Wine Advocate*, 93/100 points. "An intensely powerful, smooth wine in a style that has an instant, sexy appeal. But it's not just surface glamour; there is a solid texture, layering the dusty tannins with rich black plums, red berries and vanilla." *Wine Enthusiast* 94/100

Ch. Duhart Milon Rothschild, Pauillac 2e cru \$54

"Full bodied, with firm tannins. The early tastings show signs of a wine with fine spicy and very ripe black fruit aromas. The mouth is structured with elegant tannins and great length. Blend: 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot. Winemaker's notes. "Good core of fruit, with silky tannins and a medium to long finish of licorice, smoke and berry. Very good red. Best after 2007." 91/100 *The Wine Advocate*

Ch. Leoville Barton, St. Julien 2e cru \$73

This is an impressively endowed vin de garde that should age effortlessly for 20-30 years. How Anthony Barton continues to fashion uncompromisingly primordial Bordeaux that are always among the biggest and densest of all the St.-Juliens is beyond me, but he does it year in and year out. Moreover, when it's time to set the price, he appears to have the consumer foremost in his mind. The 2004 is a classic Leoville-Barton meant for long aging. Concentrated, with loads of smoke, creme de cassis, forest floor, and earthy notes emerge from this impressive, but oh, so backward wine. Anticipated maturity: 2015-2030+. Score: 92/100 Robert Parker, *Wine Advocate* (171), June 2007. "Complex nose of perfumed dark fruit along with a meaty note. Reasonably firm and young on the palate, not giving much away even now but very well balanced and already showing its elegance. Rich and a little chewy at the end and good length. Drink 2011-2019. Date tasted 17th Feb 09. Score: 17+/20 Julia Harding MW, JancisRobinson.com, February 2009

Ch. Lagrange, St. Julien 3e cru \$45

"This backward, tannic, strikingly oaky St.-Julien reveals a big structure as well as copious power and muscle, and a modern-styled combination of ripe fruit and new oak. While it requires a few years of bottle age to shed its cloak of tannin, and develop more Bordelais character, it possesses plenty of stuffing, and may turn out to be outstanding with additional time in bottle. Patience is warranted. Anticipated maturity: 2011-2025" Robert Parker 89/100 June 2007. "Slightly pale rim. Correct, good balance. Rather simple, slightly raw Cabernet aromas. Sweet palate attack quickly followed by some pretty green tannins. Suffers from being not fully ripe. A bit simple and aggressive." Drink 2013-2018 16/20 Jancis Robinson April 2005

Château Langoa Barton, St. Julien 3e cru \$60

Grape varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc. "Another sleeper of the vintage from this somewhat under the radar step-child of Anthony Barton's more famous Leoville Barton, the 2004 Langoa Barton exhibits deep, concentrated, chunky, black currant and cherry fruit intermixed with notions of forest floor and aged beef blood. This impressive, full-bodied, powerful, age-worthy St.-Julien is atypically backward and brooding. Anticipated maturity: 2013-2025+." 90/100 Robert Parker, June 2007

Ch. Branaire Ducru, St. Julien 4e cru \$49

Grape varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc. Proprietor Patrick Maroteaux's 2004 exhibits grip in a linear style, and a structured, 1999-type personality with elegance, crisp acidity, and notes of minerals, raspberries, cocoa, and subtle oak. It possesses moderate tannin, medium body, and outstanding depth and equilibrium. Anticipated maturity: 2008-2020." 90-92/100 pts. (Robert Parker - *Wine Advocate* - Jun-2006)

Ch. Smith Haut Lafitte, Pessac-Leognan Grand Cru Classé \$67

55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot; 18-20 months in oak. Loads of vanilla and wood, gigantic nose. Lovely soft, harmonious fruit, super mid-palate, very complex, waves of flavour on the finish. Drink 2008-11. Decanter. www.decanter.com/wine/reviews. Tasted 08/12/2006. "Another strong effort from the impeccably run Pessac Léognan state, the dense ruby/purple colored 2004 exhibits a classy nose of crushed rocks, black currants, vanilla and graphite. Medium-bodied with good weight, a multilayered texture, fine purity, and excellent harmony, it should evolve gracefully for 15+ years." Robert Parker's, *The Wine Advocate* - 91-93/100.