



2005 Bordeaux - Best Vintage of the Century (so far)

Tuesday, September 17, 2019

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

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

Members' Fee: \$95; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$115

If It's September This Must Be Bordeaux! What better way to kick off the fall than with a tasting of an excellent selection of Bordeaux wines? We will be tasting Classed Growth wines from both the Left Bank and Right Bank of the Gironde River from the **2005 vintage** - which is considered **exceptional**. When the 2005's were first revealed they received excellent reviews. How will they taste now after 14 years of aging? This is a great opportunity to find out.

To many, Bordeaux is considered the "best" or "most important" wine region in the world - and not without good reason. By classifying their wines for over 300 years, the producers in Bordeaux have established consistency of quality - particularly in their top wines. The Bordeaux region is naturally divided by the Gironde River into a Left Bank area which includes the Médoc and the sub-regions of St-Estèphe, Pauillac, St-Julien, and Margaux and a Right Bank area which includes the subregions of Saint-Émilion, Pomerol, Bourg and Blaye. Over the centuries, wine growers in the Bordeaux area observed that certain sites systematically produce wines of exceptional quality with specific characteristics. The reason for this is the influence of "terroir", the subtle interaction of soils, subsoils, exposure to sun, altitude and the natural environment. They represent a confluence of Mother Nature providing ideal growing conditions, and a new generation of extraordinarily committed Bordelais that understand their legacy, realizing that they are the world's reference point for wines of richness, longevity, and complexity.

Bordeaux is virtually synonymous with blends and the success of Bordeaux wines has inspired producers from other regions to produce their own "Bordeaux-Style Blend". The grape varieties used in Bordeaux are Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Malbec and Carmenere. The Left Bank wines are Cabernet Sauvignon dominant whereas the Right Bank wines are Merlot dominant - with the remaining varieties used in varying proportions to establish each producer's own blend. The flavour profiles range from blackcurrant to chocolate to mulberry and the wines can be quite rich or intense.

When the 2005 vintage was released, the reviews were excellent. James Suckling of Wine Spectator summed it up "My conclusion: **The 2005 vintage is clearly exceptional...**it's the reds that impress me the most. They have classic Bordeaux freshness, yet they also have a touch of flamboyance, imparted by the hot, sunny and very dry growing season." **"This is surely Bordeaux 's best vintage of the century so far."** ~ Jancis Robinson. Many of the producers knew from the outset that they had an outstanding vintage as the growing season was considered ideal. A healthy flowering and good berry set followed by a summer of sunny days and cool nights. As warm, sunny days ripened the fruit, cool evenings ensured the acidity remained at good levels. August and September remained dry and clear - which allowed the producers to take their time to pick the grapes. The result being they could pick them at the perfect time.

Our tasting will feature Classed Growth wines from the Left Bank - Margaux, Haut-Medoc, Pauillac, Passac-Leognan, St. Julien and from the Right Bank - Pomerol and St. Emillion. All of these wines received excellent ratings from 93 to 96 points when they were most recently reviewed.

The event price includes a reception wine, bread, appetizers and of course, our main wines! Please refrain from wearing scented products. Dress is business casual. Our guest speaker will be **Michelle Paris**, Master of Wine Candidate, DipWSET and Certified Sommelier.

REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS

Register/buy tickets online at https://form.jotform.com/tvc_wine/05-bordeaux. You must register online and then can pay by credit card or by cheque. **ALL ticket sales/reservations are final**. Cheques must be received by **Friday, September 13th**. You will be sent an email confirmation after completing your registration. If you tried to register but did not receive your confirmation, please contact winetastings@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.



Tasting Notes and Information – 2005 Bordeaux

(Prices are as of date of purchase)

Château La Lagune (Haut Medoc) \$68

A final blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 10% Petit Verdot from the Frey family, the 2005 is a gorgeous La Lagune, and one of the first great ones under the Frey administration. This wine has a dense ruby/purple color, a beautiful nose of sandalwood, black raspberries, and cassis, silky sweet tannin, medium to full body, and a textured, long, pure mouthfeel and finish. This wine is probably 3-4 years away from prime-time drinking, but it should evolve gorgeously for another 20-25 years. Robert M. Parker, Jr. 94 points.

Château Malescot St. Exupery (Margaux) \$95

A beautiful wine, once again, from this property that has been on a superb qualitative roll for several decades. Dense ruby/purple with notes of graphite, background oak, youthful crème de cassis and blackberry fruit as well as a floral underpinning, it is medium to full-bodied, textured, rich and impressive. Still in a somewhat adolescent stage, it should hit full maturity in another 2-3 years and last at least two decades. Robert M. Parker, Jr. 96 points.

Château Branaire Ducru (St. Julien) \$90

Floral nuances combined with lots of mulberry, raspberry and sweet blackcurrant fruit are followed by a medium to full-bodied, beautifully pure, textured, complex wine with soft tannin. It should drink well relatively early on (2-3 years) and last 15 or more. Robert M. Parker, Jr. 94 points.

Château Clerc Milon (Pauillac) \$69

The nose is straight-down-the-line classic Clerc-Milon with intense graphite and cigar box aromas infusing the black fruit that could only come from Pauillac. The palate is medium-bodied with powerful black and red fruit, hints of tobacco suffusing the multi-layered black fruit that gently grip the mouth. It has opened slightly since I last tasted this wine, though I would still afford it another 3 to 4 years in bottle. This is a great Clerc-Milon, probably the best ever made. Tasted August 2016. Robert M. Parker, Jr. 93 points.

Château Malartic-Lagraviere (Pessac-Leognan) \$65

Gorgeously pure blueberry and blackberry fruit along with some notes of cassis, charcoal and licorice jump from the glass of this inky purple wine. An absolutely fabulous success for Malartic Lagravière, this full-bodied wine has sweet tannin, and is complex and long. Drink it over the next 25 years. Bravo! Robert M. Parker, Jr. 95 points.

Château Gazin (Pomerol) \$82

The 2005 Gazin is a big, masculine, full-throttle Pomerol that comes closer to the style of a Pauillac than some of the other Pomerols. Nevertheless, this wine is locked and loaded, with an inky plum/purple color, stunning concentration, a boatload of tannin, and unlimited upside potential. Sweet cassis, plum, vanilla and truffle notes are followed by a dense, deep, profound wine with blackcurrant and black cherry fruit, high extraction, and a multi-layered texture. This is a long distance runner, even for a 2005, and probably won't even be close to full maturity for another decade. It should easily last 30 or more years. Robert M. Parker, Jr. 95 points.

Château Clos de L'Oratoire (St. Emilion) \$62

From the Comte von Neipperg, his wines from this over-achieving estate always deliver an aromatic fireworks display of cedar wood, Christmas fruitcake, roasted herbs, black olive, cassis and sweet kirsch. The 2005 has all that as well as ripe, well-integrated, velvety tannin, and full body in a sexy, luscious, heady style to drink now and over the next 10-15 years. Robert M. Parker, Jr. 94 points.

Château Grand Mayne (St. Emilion) \$67

Grand Mayne's 2005 (a blend of 75% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon) is a sexy, fleshy St.-Emilion with a dense ruby/purple color and loads of blueberry, cassis and black raspberry fruit. It is medium to full-bodied, luscious, and already drinkable, although capable of lasting another 10-15 years. Robert M. Parker, Jr. 94 points.