



2009 Bordeaux Left Bank vs Right Bank

Tuesday, January 16, 2024

Registration: 6:00 PM, Tasting: 6:30 PM

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

Members' Fee: \$130; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$160

Happy Holidays! What better way to kick off 2024 than with a tasting of Bordeaux from a great vintage?

Our January tasting will be comparing wines from the left bank of the Gironde River with wines from the right bank. Bordeaux 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. 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.

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" which is the subtle interaction of soils, subsoils, exposure to sun, altitude and the natural environment. With Mother Nature providing ideal growing conditions, and a new generation of extraordinarily committed Bordelais that understand their legacy, Bordeaux is the world's reference point for wines of richness, longevity, and complexity.

Pauillac wines are deeply coloured, powerful, and well-structured. Cabernet Sauvignon is dominant in most of the top wines. This means that they last perhaps the longest of all Bordeaux wines, developing an extremely complex aromatic palate as they age. **Saint-Julien** is one of the most balanced of all the Medoc commune appellations, with character and finesse. It is Cabernet Sauvignon dominant, so expect black-fruit notes, tobacco, liquorice, and truffle as it ages. **Pessac-Leognan** wines are close to an equal blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Typically oak aged, their balanced, rich and polished feel makes them quite drinkable when young, yet they have enough structure to age beautifully. **St. Estèphe** wines are known for their robust and full bodied character. Cabernet Sauvignon dominant, St. Estèphe wines are powerful with structured tannins and pronounced acidity. Aromas of black currant followed by notes of mocha and vanilla follow on the palate. Merlot dominant **St. Emilion** wines are complex and elegant with flavours of plums, strawberries, and cherries. **Pomerol** wines tend to be full-bodied with soft tannins. The flavours tend toward dark fruit as well as notes of chocolate and truffle.

The 2009 vintage has been widely acclaimed by critics. Here is just one quote from Vinous: "*Left Bank Bordeaux - 2009 is a year of almost exaggeratedly (for Bordeaux) flamboyant, opulent wines with elevated ripeness and low acidity. The tannins are unusually ripe, while the wines are quite voluptuous in style. 97 pts. Right Bank Bordeaux - Opulent, rich, velvety wines characterized by ultra-ripe Merlot and refined Cabernet Franc. Pomerol one of the top stars of the vintage, with Saint-Emilion just a notch below. Wines seem almost too ready to drink and soft, but will age effortlessly. One of the greatest all time Bordeaux vintages. 97 pts*"

The event price includes reception wine, bread, appetizers and, of course, our main wines! Newcomers and those who would like more tutoring are encouraged to sign up for our Newcomers' Table on our registration page. We look forward to seeing you!

REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS online at [2009 Bordeaux Jan 16, 2024](#) and then pay by e-transfer, credit card (via PayPal) or by cheque. E-transfer & credit card payments must be received within 48 hours of signing up to secure your reservation. Cheques must be received by Tuesday, January 9. You will be sent an automated email confirmation from our online reservation system, Jotform, after submitting your registration. All ticket sales/reservations are final. 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 – 2009 Bordeaux

(Prices are as of date of purchase)

Grand Puy Lacoste, Pauillac 5e \$125

"The 2009 Grand Puy Lacoste is one of the great vintages from this estate in the modern era. It storms from the glass with scents of blackberry, undergrowth, cedar and mint, retaining the classicism of GPL. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannin, a fine bead of acidity. Very harmonious with a gorgeous, lithe, graphite infused finish that lingers in the mouth. 95 pts" - Neal Martin, Vinous

Larrivet Haut Brion, Pessac-Leognan \$53

"Red-ruby. Liqueur-like aromas of black cherry, strawberry, mocha and smoky roasted herbs; a southern style of Bordeaux. Supple, sweet and elegant, with ripe, expressive flavors of red fruits, mocha and herbs complicated by leather and underbrush. Harmonious ripe acidity gives lift to this sexy wine. Finishes with a saline quality and lovely length. Drink over the next 12 to 15 years. One of my sentimental favorites in 2009. 91 pts" - Neal Martin, Vinous

Tour De Pez, St. Estephe \$47

"Surprisingly lightweight wine, its freshness the dominant character. It shows bright black fruits and some toast, the tannins a sweet element. 90 pts" - Wine Enthusiast

Talbot, St. Julien 4e \$99

"Extremely sexy, soft, supple and opulent, with notes of cedar, herbs, incense and black currant fruit, this is a full-bodied, generously endowed but silky Talbot to drink now and over the next 20+ years. By any standard of measurement, this is irresistible. 91 pts" - Robert Parker

La Croix De Gay, Pomerol \$52

"The 2009 La Croix de Gay has a slightly bretty bouquet, though not so much that it obscures the fruit profile. It just seems a little feral. The palate is medium-bodied with sappy red fruit, savory in style with dried blood and sage towards the pretty and quite precise finish. Drink now and over the next decade. Tasted blind at Farr Vintners' 2009 Bordeaux tasting. 90 pts" - Neal Martin, Vinous

La Dominique, St. Emilion GCC \$80

"Bright medium ruby. Smoky, sexy aromas of roasted blackberry, kirsch and toffee; I might have picked this blind as a Pomerol. Rich, concentrated, dense and sweet but not heavy, with chewy flavors of black raspberry, blackberry and roast coffee. The broad finish features sweet, building tannins and excellent length. There's an almost exotic quality to the blackberry fruit and yet the wine also maintains a primary character. The best La Dominique in many years. 91 pts" Stephen Tanzer, Vinous

Clos De L'Oratoire, St. Emilion GCC \$69

"A flamboyant St.-Emilion, this largely-Merlot blend displays notes of Christmas fruitcake, cedar wood, tobacco leaf, and loads of black currant and blackberry fruit. A showy, extravagantly concentrated, hedonistic style of St.-Emilion, with some wood smoke and roasted herbs adding nuance to the full-throttle aromatics and long, lush, silky flavors, this wine can be drunk now or cellared for up to 15+ years. 93 pts" - Robert Parker

La Couspaude, St. Emilion GCC \$89

"The best La Couspaude I have ever tasted, the opaque purple 2009 exhibits nicely integrated toasty oak/pain grille in addition to cassis, kirsch, raspberries and earthy undertones. Full-bodied, with beautiful integration of acidity, alcohol and tannin, this is a robust, exuberant, somewhat flamboyant style of St.-Emilion that is clearly modern, but quite frankly, delicious. Drink it over the next 12-15 years. 93 pts" - Robert Parker