

## Off to Bordeaux...

31 Mar 2006 by JR

So, Julia and I are just off to Bordeaux, armed with milk thistle, Recaldent and a truly terrifying schedule because it seems that this year it should be worth tasting very widely indeed – not just geographically (it doesn't sound as though it's a specifically 'right bank' or 'left bank' year) but also qualitatively. We must assume that the top wines will be fiendishly priced and the first tranches of them minuscule so that many of you will be particularly interested in the best performers lower down the ladder of price.

I see that James Suckling of the [Wine Spectator](#) has already published many of his tasting notes and rave ratings, prompting Ch Petit Bocq of St Estèphe to release their wine on Wednesday at £95 a case in bond from Bibendum Wine on the strength of a score of 89-91. There should with any luck be a wealth of interesting offers at this relatively low price.

We will certainly do our best to taste as much as is humanly possible – although I'm afraid we are both female and of smaller rather than bigger capacity – though at least our fingers are nimble on the keyboard. You can imagine us seeking out those sockets... Because we feel you will probably want guidance on as many wines as possible, we may have to rely on a single tasting in many cases, though in most important cases we will both be tasting, separately, and can compare notes. (To be reminded of what these spring tastings are like, you might like to revisit [The Bordeaux primeurs circus](#).)

As usual, whenever possible we will taste blind. Thus we'll taste most of the well-known crus classés blind within appellation – always very illuminating and often surprising. And we have also made arrangements to taste the vast majority of right bank wines and also the non-classified wines of Pessac Léognan blind, hoping that these groups may yield some good-value surprises. The exceptions to this are those properties which consider themselves too grand to participate in the Union des Grands Crus Classés tastings, or are not UGC members, such as all the first growths and the likes of Pichon Lalande, Léoville Las Cases, Montrose, Cos, Ducru Beaucaillou, Grand Puy Lacoste, and many of the most famous right bank wines.

But quite apart from all the core wines to be tasted, there seem to be even more off-piste tastings than ever this year. We will, I can assure you, do our best to give you as much high quality advice as possible, and will post tasting notes as soon as we can. My general overviews will be published on 15 and 22 apr.

I come back to London from Bordeaux to scrub my teeth and tongue and celebrate Nick's birthday and then we go off with all three children to Venice to celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. I shall be leaving Julia largely in charge of the site then and hope to return refreshed by Easter 16 apr.