

Ch Vieux Manoir 2000 Bordeaux Supérieur et al

2 May 2006 by JR

Many of us are in a rather red bordeaux mood, aren't we? While being bombarded with offers of 2005s which should not be drunk for at least a decade, why not indulge in a fully mature red bordeaux, **Ch Vieux Manoir 2000 Bordeaux Supérieur**, at the other end of the price spectrum? This toothsome 2000 is currently on sale at Waitrose supermarkets in the UK for just £4.99 a bottle.

It's as soft as bordeaux ever gets and smells immediately as though it came from a super-ripe vintage (think 1990 sucked of 50 per cent of its subtlety). The fruit is gentle with a slightly dry, dusty finish. On no account drink this without food, folks. But it's great value.

The wine comes from a particularly pretty-looking château, re-equipped for the 2000 vintage, in the Entre-Deux-Mers, which produces most of the Bordeaux Supérieur made on this planet. Fashionable [Stéphane Derenoncourt](#) is the consultant who has softened this 12.5 per cent wine with micro-oxygenation. The blend is 40 per cent Merlot with 33 per cent Cabernet Franc and 27 per cent Cabernet Sauvignon.

I might well recommend it even if it were at its full price of £6.99 but it is part of Waitrose's current French Wine Showcase which sees substantial reductions on 28 of their pretty superior French wine range. Another great buy is an Alsace Riesling that has been bought in specially for the promotion, which runs until 21 May. **Cave de Turckheim, Vieilles Vignes Riesling 2004** Alsace may not come in the most exciting-looking bottle but it's a very dense, well-sculpted wine for its special price of £7.99 (and a very much better buy than the rather dilute Alsace Blanc de Blancs at £4.99). *Vieilles* in this case means more than 35 years old – which is old in French vine terms. (Some Australian and California great grandfather vines would be chuckling at these striplings of course.)

Other good buys that feature in Waitrose's French Wine Showcase (again, many apologies to non-British visitors – though do try www.winesearcher.com to locate these wines in your location) include a grower's champagne **Champagne Trudon Cuvée Tradition NV** reduced from £18.99 to a very fair £14.99. It's all Pinot Meunier made in the Vallée de la Marne, mainly from the superior 2002 vintage by Trudon *frs* who is also assistant cellar master at Louis Roederer. A clever purchase, even if the bottle lacks eye appeal. Get out that white napkin.

An archetypal spring wine is **La Grille Classic Loire Rosé 2005** from Bougrier. This is quintessentially light and lively, made mainly from Cabernet Franc and very pretty too. For such a sprightly wine, it has a surprisingly long, powerful finish for £4.99. And who could resist the name of the winemaker? Gwénaél Guihard. Another seasonal Loire bargain is **Saumur Blanc, Les Andides 2005** reduced from £4.99 to £3.99, quite a creditable amount of pure Chenin fruit for the money – though alas they are still on **2004** which is not nearly as toothsome and may not move on to 2005 until after the promotion is over.

I was also impressed by **Savigny-lès-Beaune 2002 Bouchard Père et Fils**, reduced from £12.99 to £10.39, a much more serious, correct red burgundy than one can usually find on a supermarket shelf – fruity but dry. If you prefer your red burgundy rich, spicy and definitely ready to drink, choose **Chorey-lès-Beaune 2002 Pascal Maillard** at the full price of £11.99 from a grower whom Waitrose has been following with some success.

If names and labels are important to you, you might be interested in the third wine of Ch Giscours, **Le Haut-Médoc de Giscours 2002**, reduced from £12.99 to £7.99 but it's pretty tough. Quite a bit of press wine, I should imagine, but it does look smart.