

## Dry white bordeaux vintages

3 Sep 2008 by Jancis Robinson

2012 was far better for dry whites than their recent siblings – in fact, they are one of the notable successes of the vintage. Pissac-Cabignes and Graves are both good, with more 'biteback' than the average vintage.

**2011** As dour a vintage for dry whites as it was for reds, with pretty poor quality throughout.

**2010** Tremendous quality, combining the best weight of the 2009s with the lively freshness of the 2008s.

**2009** Warm conditions led to full and fleshy whites with high alcohol but sufficiently balanced acidity, in most cases. Yields for Sauvignon Blanc were a bit lower than for Semillon, compounded by severe hail in Entre-Deux-Mers and Graves, leading to some supply shortages.

**2008** A cool growing season with late autumn sunshine gave well balanced whites to Bordeaux in 2008, with pure aromatic qualities and a steely austerity. Volume was affected by some hail and frost.

**2007** The season's low temperatures benefited these dry whites, as in 2006. With white winemaking improving each year, dry whites were Bordeaux's real triumph in 2007.

**2006** The cool August preserved acid levels and fruit in these wines, which deserve serious attention.

**2005** Very concentrated successful wines in general. Some run slightly to fat.

**2004** A long growing season and cool September nights, along with increasing white winemaking skill, produced a good tally of wines with impressive acid levels – a relief after 2003.

**2003** Acid levels were dangerously low in the heatwave. For very early drinking except for the very finest.

**2002** Small crop of concentrated, fragrant wines.

**2001** The low temperatures of September helped maintain freshness and produced well-etched, fruity flavours with good acidity.

**2000** Summer was if anything too hot to produce nervy wines and most of these were best drunk young, although there are one or two great wines at the top of the tree.

**1999** Some attractive, aromatic Sauvignon Blanc was harvested but the Sémillon fruit was often dilute.

**1998** Attractive wines with no shortage of ripeness.

**1997** Rather lacklustre without much depth or personality.

**1996** Like most French 1996 whites, vivacious, crisp wines.

**1995** Lots of body and flavour and structure thanks to the warm summer wherever grapes were picked before the mid-September rains.

**1994** Potentially superb as fully ripe grapes were again gathered before the rains.

**1993** Avoided the rains: generally good, soft and full, sometimes outstanding.

**1992** Clearly better than the reds, the best are intense and well-structured.

**1991** A difficult year, rather light and most are just too dilute to be interesting.

**1990** Mostly richer, fuller and more complex than 1989, but drink now.

**1989** Picked too soon, generally light and not a patch on the reds except for Laville-Haut-Brion and Haut-Brion.