Bordeaux 2009 - where to buy in the UK

16 Apr 2010 by Jancis Robinson

The following list may be useful for those of you currently considering making 2009 bordeaux primeur purchases in the UK when the serious prices eventually come out, probably next month or possibly even later - although see Bordeaux 2009 - don't part with a penny! for why you should not part with any money yet. Remember that the wine is well over two years away from being in the state depicted in this image.

Whether or not you are based in the UK, it is worth remembering that there is some very high quality wine storage in the UK, and that you can buy in bond so that if you eventually sell the wine, or ship it to where you wish to drink it, you don't have to get involved in paying UK wine duty or VAT. A substantial proportion of the world's fine wine rests undisturbed for years or even decades in damp cellars and warehouses around the UK, even though its ownership may have changed several times during its stint there. You might also think of storing your Bordeaux purchases in one of the new purpose-built warehouses around Bordeaux such as Bordeaux City Bond or Grand Cru Storage, but of course they tend to use a little more energy to keep the wine at the right temperature than is needed by an underground warehouse.

These are some of Britain's most prominent specialist fine wine traders with links to their websites if they exist (see the directory for their other contact details). I may well have overlooked someone blindingly obvious so please let me know via the Add a comment box at the bottom of the page if you think some other outfit deserves inclusion, but *be very wary of new companies, however plausible their names:*

- Albany Vintners of Cambridge
- Bordeaux Index of London EC1
- Farr Vintners of London SW8
- Fine & Rare Wines of London W10
- Magnum Fine Wines of London SW1
- Seckford Wines near Ipswich
- Turville Valley Wines near Henley-on-Thames
- Wilkinson Vintners of London NW1

Many of the more traditional UK wine merchants also have fine-wine trading and broking arms, often selling the wines they originally sold to one customer, and warehoused for them, to another. They operate in direct competition with the specialist fine-wine traders (who also broke, ie sell, wine on behalf of their customers). Most obvious examples include:

- Armit of London W11
- Averys of Bristol
- Berry Bros & Rudd of London SW1 and Basingstoke
- Bibendum Wine (wine merchants, not restaurant) of London NW1
- Corney & Barrow of London EC1
- Davy's of London SE10
- Genesis of London SW1
- Goedhuis (now including David Roberts, see here)
- Haynes Hanson & Clark of London SW1 and Stow-on-the-Wold
- Hicks & Don of Westbury
- Jeroboams of London
- Justerini & Brooks of London SW1 and Edinburgh
- Richard Kihl of Aldeburgh
- Lay & Wheeler of Colchester (now owned by Majestic)
- Lea & Sandeman of London SW10
- O W Loeb of London SE1
- James Nicholson of Northern Ireland
- Christopher Piper Wines of Devon
- Raeburn of Edinburgh
- Savage Selection of Northleach
- Stevens Garnier of Oxford (new entrant owned by Sograpе)

- Tanners of Shrewsbury
- Uncorked of London EC2
- The Wine Society of Stevenage

A look at any, or preferably several, of the printed lists and/or websites of these operators will give you a good feel for current market prices. In my experience some traders overprice some items and underprice others (a bit like antique dealers really). The more work you do, the better the deal you're likely to get. Good luck!

And, it hardly needs stating to anyone who knows me, this list is of course compiled completely independently. I know some of the people who work for many of these companies but have no commercial connections with any of them.