Official tips on buying en primeur

29 Apr 2010 by Jancis Robinson

Now that the 2009 bordeaux investment scene is hotting up (see Parker's out and they're off published yesterday), you may like to see the advice offered to would-be buyers by the UK trade body, the Wine & Spirit Trade Association:

The WSTA is issuing fresh advice to consumers over the checks they should make before investing in wine. The checklist is designed to protect buyers from the risk of wine fraud.

The advice from the WSTA comes as wine merchants release their 2009 en primeur offers. En primeur wines are wines released for sale before they are bottled or ready for delivery.

There are fears that demand for the high quality 2009 Bordeaux vintage may lead to potential investors being targeted by fraudsters who take money for wine that is either not delivered or not the wine it is claimed to be. The fears have been fuelled by recent police investigations and arrests in connection with alleged wine investment frauds.

The WSTA urges consumers to make a series of checks on merchants offering wine as an investment vehicle including:

" Consider the size and reputation of the merchant - large, established businesses are less likely to collapse or be engaged in dubious trading and are more likely to be registered with Companies House enabling basic checks about company ownership and accounts to be made

" Ask the merchant whether they provide guarantees or carry insurance

" Check whether prices are competitive and whether they include delivery

" Ensure that you ask for and receive invoices and statements clearly establishing your entitlement to the wine you have paid for

The full list of guidelines is available **here**

WSTA Chief Executive Jeremy Beadles said:

'Fine wine can be a very good investment but consumers should make some basic checks before they part with their money. Bonafide merchants and brokers won't have any problem proving their credentials but consumers who ask the right questions will ensure they are not caught out by dubious dealers.'

For a full guide to our extensive coverage of 2009 bordeaux, including a list of established merchants and traders, see here