Bordeaux mania - or not?

4 May 2011 by Jancis Robinson

With the latest issue of Robert Parker's *Wine Advocate* with its first set of scores on Bordeaux 2010s and revised (downwards) scores on Bordeaux 2008 just out (see The venerable Mr Parker thread in our Members' forum), interest in Bordeaux primeurs is bubbling up again. Indeed 'bubble' is a particularly pertinent word, as the thread So - when is the bubble going to burst? with its 50 posts and 4,100+ views, indicates.

Today in London, several of the top Bordeaux proprietors are in town showing their last few vintages to the press, and Bibendum Wine are holding their annual Bordeaux primeurs tasting for their customers, which, I understand, is a sell-out. Montrachet held a similar tasting yesterday.

So, the quality of the 2010 vintage will, I'm sure, now be clear to all. But, what should one buy, if at all? The top layer of Bordeaux wines has now become so ludicrously expensive that they have entered into the luxury-goods / investment-only sphere. The good news with 2010, I reiterate, is that there are so many less expensive wines that are brilliantly made, beautifully balanced and should have quite a long life thanks to 2010's bountiful tannins. See my extensive Bordeaux coverage to date and in particular my tasting notes on the Médocs and Haut-Médocs.

Last night at a wine dinner I helped host in the beautiful new dining room at the top of Oxford's Ashmolean, the oldest museum in Britain, I caught up with Edmund Penning-Rowsell, son of my late mentor of the same name, who could hardly be a more traditional claret drinker. We shook our heads over today's price levels and he told me how much he had enjoyed a **Ch Chasse-Spleen 1982** (a lovely wine, as I recall) from his cellar last weekend. Successful small names from great vintages can be a winning combination!

I would also urge you to remember that if, like most of us, you have a limited budget to spend on each vintage, producers the length of the **Rhône Valley** are extremely thrilled by their 2010s…