

Bordeaux 2010 - a trader's conclusions

7 Jul 2011 by Jancis Robinson

It's always interesting to read how the UK's leading trader in fine wine has got on. Here is Farr Vintners' report just out on their Bordeaux 2010 campaign. See our [Bordeaux 2010 guide](#).

With Pétrus and Le Pin now out (and immediately sold out), we have reached the end of the 2010 Bordeaux en primeur campaign. It's certainly been a very successful campaign here at Farr Vintners with over £30 million worth of wine sold so far, which puts it already 20% above 2005 (but behind 2009) as our second biggest en primeur campaign ever.

Almost all the wines in 2010 are exceptionally good but some wines have been quite expensive in relation to the 2009s of the same property, or other commercially available great vintages. The wooden spoon this year goes to Lascombes (not a single case sold), whose management thought, wrongly, that consumers would pay more money for the 2010 than any other available vintage of this wine. However, there have been many châteaux who have pitched their 2010s at exactly the right price – which means at the same level (or a touch less) than customers can currently buy their 2009, 2005, 2003 or 2000.

We will have a brief look here at the wines in descending order of fame and price.

The First Growths – Prices for these have been high but fair. Lafite and Latour have sold at around 20% less than their current 2009 prices. Mouton, Haut-Brion and Margaux are at the same price or slightly less. Only Cheval Blanc bucked the trend with their (admittedly outstanding) wine selling at a higher price than their 2009, 2005 and 2000.

The Super Seconds – These wines are nearly as good as the First Growths but are far cheaper. The best sellers this year have been Montrose, Ducru Beaucaillou and Pichon Baron as their crucial 'Parker scores' have been higher than rivals Cos d'Estournel, Pichon Lalande and Léoville Lascases. The most popular of all is Montrose, whose score of 96/99+ suggests that this wine will rival or surpass the legendary 1989 and 1990 in time.

The Top Pomerols – These wines from the famous 'plateau' were all magnificent with, in our view, Certan de May offering the best value and Église Clinet making the best wine of all. Denis Durantou's little gem now out-performs Lafleur year after year and in blind tastings (and in ratings from the leading critics) is now the closest challenger to the mighty Pétrus.

The Top Saint-Émilions – These tend to be priced according to the Parker scores but his usual favourites Pavie and Angélus were out-trumped this year by Pavie Macquin, which received a higher rating and is less than half the price. Our favourite Saint-Émilion was Tertre Roteboeuf (not tasted by Mr Parker) and his was Beausejour Duffau. Two wines made in very contrasting styles.

The Pessac-Léognans – There was one clear winner for value for money here with Domaine de Chevalier being priced far lower than its rivals Pape Clément, Smith Haut Lafitte and Haut Bailly. We actually preferred the Chevalier anyway. It's certainly one of the 'must-buy' wines of the vintage.

The Top Médoc Classed Growths – There is no doubt that Pontet Canet and Lynch Bages were fighting it out for first place in the group of wines that are priced just below the traditional 'super-seconds' and these were our two biggest-selling wines of the vintage with 2,000 cases of each château sold by Farr Vintners. For the title of 'greatest wine at the most modest price' there was a clear winner for us, with the magnificent (and highly rated) Grand Puy Lacoste still available at £680 – a price that looked increasingly reasonable when the neighbouring châteaux released their wines later in the campaign.

The Best Values – If anyone tells you that great Bordeaux is too expensive then we would suggest that you point them in the direction of Haut Batailley in Pauillac – fabulous, classic claret at £320 per case and two modestly priced right bank wines from two brilliant wine-makers: Ausone's Alain Vauthier made a lovely, affordable Saint-Émilion at Fonbel for £160 per case and Église Clinet's Denis Durantou might have made his best ever La Chenade, which has been a huge seller at just £120 per case.

See our [Bordeaux 2010 guide](#)