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2022 Bordeaux: A Remarkable Vintage that Exceeded our High Expectations

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Alexandre Thienpont, Vieux Chateau Certan

2022 Bordeaux: An Introduction

WOW, WOW, WOW is all I can say to describe the amazing Bordeaux 2022 wines.

This is my 37th campaign and I have never missed attending an En Primeur tasting in all those years.

I was accompanied by 9 members representing our 4 companies. **2022 is certainly the greatest overall vintage I have ever tasted.** Why is it so good especially given the extreme heat wave of the summer? Many have suggested that 2022 is similar to 2003, when there was also a summer heat wave but, there, I believe, the comparisons end.

To fully understand the growing season please see below an excerpt of the report from two renowned Professors of Vine & Wine Sciences for the University of Bordeaux Oenological Research Unit (available in full [here](#))

When it comes to assessing the 2022 vintage in the Bordeaux vineyards, it is important to distinguish the general climatic context from its impact on the quality of the wines. Extreme weather conditions, both in terms of high temperatures and low precipitation, as well as their consequences, unfortunately highlighted the reality of climate change and gave rise to serious concerns regarding the future of our planet. This report simply aims to shed light on the weather conditions and growing season over the course of the year, and the characteristics of the resulting wines, without hiding or minimising these concerns. However, after a 2021 vintage full of contrasts, we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of declaring that, even this early in the ageing process, the wines produced in 2022 already seem quite exceptional and remarkable!

Considering the unprecedented weather conditions last year, we shall skip the usual introduction to this vintage report, reviewing the five prerequisites for a great red wine vintage in Bordeaux. These prerequisites were met in 2022 and will be mentioned later on in this report. After a slightly drier winter than usual, several cool nights in March resulted in bud break occurring as expected for the time of year and later than in 2021. Thanks to the delayed growth cycle, frost in early April caused significantly less damage in the vineyards compared to 2021, although yields were impacted in localised areas. April was the only month of the year that recorded near-average temperatures, slowing down vine growth. However, summery conditions set in from May onwards with daytime temperatures already exceeding 30°C. Vine growth accelerated from its previously average pace, and took on the characteristics of an early vintage. Flowering, beginning in mid-May, was quick and even, with few signs of coulure (shot berries) or millerandage (abnormal fruit set). Winegrowers' nerves were once again put to the test during the second half of the month, due to violent storms. Hail damage, which was



quite severe in some cases, fortunately remained localised. June once again saw high temperatures, with the first heatwave of the year, and was the only month in 2022 to record above-average rainfall. Precipitation, mainly during storms in the second half of the month, the berries, which remained particularly small. These conditions were conducive to the ripening of the red wine grapes, particularly the accumulation of phenolic compounds. The first red wine grapes were picked in early September, and weather conditions during the harvest made it possible for winegrowers to pick each grape variety at optimum ripeness, without fear of dilution or rot. Hot, dry vintages are generally not ideal for white wine grapes. While the high summer temperatures actually resulted in low acidity and high sugar levels, the June rainfall nevertheless helped to preserve a certain freshness and above all, unexpected aromatic potential, especially on clay and clay-limestone soils with high water reserves. The white wine grapes were harvested historically early in perfect condition, thus avoiding the high temperatures in late August and early September, and their overall quality is good. Sweet white wine producers' nerves were once again put to the test in 2022. While the grapes were already ripe and perfectly healthy from mid-August onwards, drought conditions prevented the development of *Botrytis cinerea*. The first grapes, concentrated by raisining, were picked during the second half of September, but were considered unsuitable for the premium blends of sweet white wines. Long-awaited rainfall finally arrived at the end of the month, triggering the rapid development of *Botrytis cinerea*. Unfortunately, the fine weather, which had lasted so long, failed to return. It took the winegrowers a lot of nerve to wait for sufficient concentration, at the risk of losing their entire crop. The desired conditions were reached rather abruptly in mid-October, thanks to the return of warmer weather and a providential easterly wind. Estates that chose to wait patiently were rewarded and hurried to pick grapes with remarkable richness and purity, giving personality, balance, and depth to the 2022 fine sweet white wines.

Having reviewed the weather pattern you must see this really is a miracle vintage.

We have tasted most of the 2022s several times during the week of April 24th and cannot recommend any more strongly the red wines across the board. **This is honestly the first vintage I have tasted where I loved everything.** How do we compare from previous recent great vintages like 1982, 1989, 1990, 2000, 2005, 2009, 2010, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020? **One factor which stands out above all these vintages which have many outstanding wines, is a move over the last 3 years towards the older style of wines highlighting freshness, elegance and finesse whilst also maintaining middle palate richness.** These wines will truly become legendary; and some are comparing them to the legendary 1959 & 1961 vintages. The most eye-opening experience for me was the commune of Saint Emilion: normally you get such a huge difference in quality between the properties that go for elegance and finesse to those who take over extraction beyond its limits. Not this year, all of the producers have made beautiful, balanced, elegant wines. **Every commune has made brilliant wines.**

I am afraid that for the dry white wines it is not so clear. There are certainly some very good whites, but no comparison in quality to the reds.

The Sauternes & Barsacs are good to very-good, especially those who waited and waited to harvest and have the required botrytis to make elegant wines with plenty of rich, sweet, ripe fruit.

Rest assured that this is a vintage where you cannot go wrong whatever your budget. Our sales team is available to assist you in this process. For red 2022s this certainly is a must have vintage!

Andy Lench - Bordeaux Wine Locators / Chateau Carignan



Wines of the Vintage:

- Calon Segur
- Canon
- Cheval Blanc
- Figeac
- Lafite Rothschild
- Lafleur
- La Conseillante
- Latour
- Le Pin
- Le Carmes Haut Brion
- Montrose
- Mouton Rothschild
- Palmer
- Pavie
- Pichon Lalande
- Vieux Chateau Certan

Standout Mid-Range Wines:

- Alter Ego
- Armailhac
- Carillon De Angelus
- Clerc Milon
- Gruaud Larose
- Larcis Ducasse
- Laroque
- Lascombes
- Leoville Barton
- Leoville Poyferre
- Monbousquet
- Pavie Macquin
- Petit Village
- Rauzan Segla
- Saint Pierre
- Talbot
- Tour St Christophe



Chateau Cheval Blanc

Over-Achievers

- Alter Ego
- Berliquet
- Armailhac
- Beausejour Becot
- Calon Segur
- Carillon De Angelus
- Chauvin
- Canon
- Canon La Gaffelliere
- Cantenac Brown
- Clerc Milon
- Cote De Baleau
- Dame De Montrose
- Duhart Milon
- Figeac
- Feytit Clinet
- Grand Village
- Gruaud Larose
- Laroque
- Leoville Barton
- Leoville Poyferre
- Les Carmes Haut Brion
- Les Forts De Latour
- Les Griffons De Pichon Baron
- Les Ormes De Pez
- Les Pensees
- Le Petit Ducru
- Monbousquet
- Pavie Macquin
- Pichon Comtesse Reserve
- Pichon Comtesse de Lalande
- Pressac
- Tour St Christophe
- Valandraud Blanc
- Vrai Croix De Gay

Value Drinkers

- Armailhac
- Bellefont Belcier
- Berliquet
- Capbern
- Carignan
- Connetable De Talbot
- Cote De Baleau
- Domaine de Chevallier
- Echo De Lynch Bages
- Duhart Milon
- Feytit Clinet
- Gigault Cuvee Viva
- Gloria
- Grand Puy Lacoste
- Grand Village
- Valandraud Blanc
- Haut Bages Liberal
- Haut Bailly II
- Lacoste Borie
- Lascombes
- Le Petit Ducru
- Les Griffons De Pichon Baron
- Les Ormes De Pez
- Monbousquet
- Moulin De Duhart
- Pichon Comtesse Reserve
- Pressac
- Puygueraud
- Senejac
- Virginie De Valandraud Blanc
- Vrai Croix De Gay



Ron van Vlaardingen, GVWM Fine Wine Sales Director,
at Chateau Pichon Baron

WHY SHOULD YOU BUY BORDEAUX FUTURES FROM GRAND VIN WINE MERCHANTS?

- **Perfect provenance direct from Bordeaux to the USA** via refrigerated containers to ensure you are the first owner of Original Wooden Cases!
- **Our supplier, Bordeaux Wine Locators, has been one of the top importers in the USA,** specializing in Bordeaux Futures since 1987, has some of the best relationships, and has never failed to deliver.
- **Your opportunity to choose the size you require** from 375ml, 750ml, 1.5L, 3.0L, 5.0L, 6.0L, 9.0L, 12.0L, 15.0L, 18.0L
- **An opportunity to buy at the lowest release price** from the First Tranche offerings from the châteaux.
- **To secure that highly-allocated top property or the small property that sells out immediately.**
We can provide all the top wines and are heavily-allocated in hard-to-find wines.

Please visit our 2022 Bordeaux EP landing page for our full list of 2022 Bordeaux updated daily as wines are released: grandvinwinemERCHANTS.com/2022-bordeaux-futures/

Thank you for your interest in 2022 Futures, and we look forward to supporting your pursuit of the world's finest wines with this remarkable vintage of Bordeaux!

Santé

The GVWM Team