

	Welcome: Week 7 2022/2023 to Bordeaux and Beyond!	Grape Varieties	Cost £/Where from
Rose	<p>BDX Revolution – A.C. Bordeaux 2021 Here is something completely left field! When we think of Bordeaux wines, we generally tend to think Red – there are a few whites – but you don’t generally come across many Rose wines from that region! We have here a collaboration with a seriously good and famous Australian winemaker, Dave Hohnen. The name may not be familiar but with his brother Mark’s backing he established none other than the world famous, top notch “Cloudy Bay” in New Zealand, one of the world’s best wines and probably top NZ Sauvignon Blanc - before the world had really caught on to NZ Sauvignon Blanc!!</p> <p>He was also one of the founding winemakers of Margaret River (at famous top vineyard Cape Mentelle) in Western Australia, having studied winemaking at Fresno University in California – since his student days he has had a focus on biological farming. His daughter Freya grew up in amongst the vineyards at Cape Mentelle and studied Oenology at Adelaide University, has worked on top wineries in France and at Yalumba in Australia and is an expert blender of wines.</p> <p>Having sold out Cloudy Bay to LVMH, the Hohnens’ became very friendly with Rupert Clevely, the European Marketing manager of LVMH who oversaw the purchase and the result is a new venture between all three of them, Crackerjack Wines, benefiting from Rupert’s experience in marketing and selling wine and Dave and Freya’s winemaking skills.</p> <p>Crackerjack works with the winemakers at a co operative called Suaveterre de Guyenne in the Entre deux Mers (translating more accurately as “the region between two rivers” rather than the literal translation of seas!) region of Bordeaux (which falls under Producta Vignobles) to produce contemporary Bordeaux for today’s consumers – including this Cabernet Franc based Rose! (They also have a similar collaboration with a family owned winery in Rioja, Spain).</p> <p>The Cabernet Franc grape variety is particularly associated with Loire Valley reds like Chinon but is also found blended in Bordeaux wines, particularly those made principally with Merlot on the right bank of the Gironde where it is added to bring firmness to what can be flabby wines!</p> <p>With the Dave Hohnen connection this should be an exciting new take on Bordeaux, crafted for the style of wines we enjoy today – he realised NZ Sauvignon Blanc would become a thing and built a top brand – who knows, perhaps the next big thing is Bordeaux Rose! Certainly, this is quite a funky looking bottle for a Bordeaux wine (normally it is Chateau this or that and pictures of the Chateau or family coat of arms!) – and perhaps to emphasise just how revolutionary this wine is, note that bottle shape! – Bordeaux wines always come in tall straight bottles with rounded shoulders be they red or white – and never in the Burgundy shape –this is certainly the first I have seen – I am amazed the “powers that be” in Bordeaux have allowed them to get away with this and still call it a Bordeaux!</p>	Cabernet Franc	Co Op normally £9.00 but we achieved a 20% discount with a special members’ discount day of 10% and staff discount of 10% so £7.20 net
White	<p>Cune (CVNE) White Rioja – Spain 2020 We tend to associate Rioja with oaky red wines made principally from Tempranillo grapes but white Rioja is also produced made from the grape Viura which also is behind many Cava sparkling wines (where it is known as Macabeo). The Compania Vinicola del Norte de Espana (known as “Coo – nee”) is one of the great names of Rioja.</p>	Viura	Co Op normally £10.00 but on offer at £8.50 and less a further 20% as a result of a

	<p>The growers of Rioja were heavily influenced by Bordeaux winemakers who emigrated there when the Bordeaux vineyards were devastated by the phylloxera bug and they brought with them the concept of ageing wines in oak barrels and Rioja remains very much influenced by oak ageing - its red wines are graded in accordance largely with how long they have spent in a barrel!</p> <p>This enthusiasm for oak has clearly also influenced Rioja's white wines so we have a barrel fermented wine which spends 4 months in new American oak barrels on its lees (yeasts and deposits in the wine to impart extra flavour). Although this may sound a bit old fashioned, it is by no means an old fashioned wine with creaminess and fresh, lemony fruit flavours and nicely balanced.</p> <p>I have seen this wine on offer in the past and perhaps resisted bringing it along as white wines with oak influences can be a bit of an acquired taste these days as we have become very used to fruity, fresh whites, be they NZ Sauvignon Blanc or crisp minerally unoaked Chablis. An oaked Chablis for example is a very different style of wine if you are used to the mineral style - you may even think it has somehow gone off or isn't Chablis at all! – or it may well remind you of some of those honeyed, buttery rich Australian Chardonnay's of the late 1980's that tended to taste great for the first glass - However, an oaked Chablis tends to go fantastically well with a rich creamy lobster thermidor so it is probably horses for courses!</p> <p>This is certainly a bargain price compared to a Chablis and given it was on offer with further discounts we have the opportunity to try a quality wine for a minimum outlay. Why the name Rioja? Rioja is the region of Spain through which the Rio (river) Oja flows so it is as simple as that!</p>		<p>special members' discount day and staff discount on top so £6.80 a bottle net</p>
White	<p>Limoux AOP – Chardonnay Cuvee IIB Auromon by Jean Claude Mas 2021 – Limoux, Languedoc, France Limoux is well known and respected for its sparkling Cremant wines. This is an oak aged style of Chardonnay (which is obligatory for white wines in this Appellation if the wine is to be labelled a Limoux AOP) and this will be evident from the nose of brioche (toasty oak barrels/lees ageing) and the bright gold colour. With the prices of white Burgundy now ranging from expensive to very expensive any French, elegant well made and well priced alternative is welcome - Chardonnay being the grape of white Burgundy, of course!</p> <p>Again, it is by the highly regarded and award winning Jean Claude Mas, who brought us that outstanding Clairette and also Viognier Sauvignon recently, which everyone thought were great – this will be a very different animal to those, a much richer white, more in the style of, I hope, a quality oaked white Burgundy – and has great ageing potential (a “Vin de Garde exceptionnel”), so you could tuck a bottle or two away and see if those vanilla, honey and brioche notes can be developed further!</p> <p>The Jean Claude Mas story is an interesting one – he grew up on a wine “farm” as he calls it – at that time Languedoc wine was produced in bulk and blended with even cheaper Algerian wine to produce ultra cheap plonk sold in litre bottles aimed at French workers to drink everyday – almost as an alternative to tap water! – he was ultimately one of those instrumental in changing the image and perception of the Languedoc - having gained an MBA and worked in various industries he found himself involved in the wine business and realised his early knowledge of working with his father in the vineyards had given him a good knowledge of viticulture without realising it!</p>	Chardonnay (Oak aged)	<p>Waitrose £11.91 but £8.93 on 25% off all wines offer (four bottles) and one bottle at £11.31</p>

	<p>His mantra is “old world wine – new world attitude” and he believes you have to be in control of every step in the wine process – viticulture, wine making, ageing, bottling and the marketing – he owns 850 hectares and gets grapes from another 1500 – he regards each of his estates as having its very own identity and is very keen to see Languedoc wines selling based on the individual terroirs involved, rather than emphasis on grape variety and wants to promote wines being sold based on their individual terroirs (more in line with the rest of France).</p> <p>It was Jean Claude Mas that made Picpoul well known by taking an indistinct grape variety and carefully vinifying it – he worries that mass producers could kill this “brand” by producing poorly made versions which turn consumers off a grape variety.</p> <p>Limoux gives stylish still whites and this is no bargain basement wine at its normal shelf price.</p>		
Red	<p>Montepulciano D’Abruzzo D.O.C. 2019 – Abruzzo, Eastern Italy This wine comes from the Co-Op’s premium “Irresistible” range so is normally a pound or two more than their basic offering and is well worth that extra but it happened to be on a terrific offer – especially factoring in a further 20% discount which gives us a great red to wash down a midweek Pizza, Spag Bol or Lasagne to complete that Italian experience at a staggeringly low £5.40 a bottle!</p> <p>The wines from this region are getting better and better as a new generation of winemakers take over. This wine has been recommended by Fiona Beckett, the wine columnist at the Guardian who selected it as one of 5 wines to try from the Abruzzo (and the only Montepulciano red!) – satisfyingly smooth, rich and plummy. Matthew Jukes, Wine Critic has previously said this deliciously soft and mocha laden red is “a terrific Italian Stallion”! It is of course always great to order this in a restaurant as you can put on your best Italian accent and impress everyone!</p> <p>It has garnered awards from the International Wine Challenge in the past. The wine is made by the MGM Mondo del vino Group which also makes Montepulciano d’Abruzzo (under other labels) for Waitrose amongst others at its impressive state of the art winery in Priocca in Piemonte which even has interactive experiences and uber cool Bottega for visitors to the winery – the company is very people focused with attention to detail and produces some top end Italian wines so the pedigree behind it is very good for this fairly humble bottle from the Co Op!</p> <p>It can be well worth looking out for wines in the Co Op’s Irresistible Own Brand /Fairtrade ranges– quite often the labels are uninspiring but delving into the information on the back label, you find it is by a respected winemaker who make wines under their own brands – Jean Claude Mas is one example who makes a well-priced French white Marsanne for them.</p> <p>Montepulciano is the grape variety and Abruzzo the region it comes from – this is quite often how wines are titled in Italy – Barbera d’Asti, for example, is made from Barbera grapes from the Asti region. In general terms, if an Italian wine is only known by the region it comes from, then it will be one of Italy’s top wines – for example “Barolo”.</p> <p>There is, confusingly, another wine called Vino Nobile de Montepulciano which comes from the town of Montepulciano in Tuscany and has nothing to do with Montepulciano grapes – it is made from Sangiovese!</p>	Montepulciano	Co Op – normally £8.75 but on offer at £6.75 and less a further 20% as a result of special members’ discount day and staff discount so £5.40 a bottle to the Group!
Red	<p>19 Crimes “The Uprising” part aged in Rum Barrels 2021 South Eastern Australia Those of you who have been part of the Wine Discovery Group for some time may remember we tried a wine called “19 Crimes” soon after it first appeared on the</p>	Non Varietal	Normally £11.00 but on offer at £9.50

	<p>shelves at the Co Op. This is a new offering! (“The Uprising” refers to a rebellion in 1808 in Australia when the Government hindered the rum trade which led to the overthrow of the Government at that time).</p> <p>The name “19 Crimes” alludes to those 19 crimes which supposedly were punishable by Transportation to Australia – the list of “crimes” is quite bizarre – “Impersonating an Egyptian”!! for example – in reality, this probably means Vagrancy as Vagrants were commonly referred to as “Egyptians” – possibly this gives us the derivation of the word Gypsy? - or perhaps Egyptian was a corrupted form of the word Gypsy? In any event, having no fixed abode was enough to get you transported!</p> <p>“Stealing a shroud from a Grave” was another – the rest cover many more “everyday” crimes, such as Theft, including specifically “stealing fish from a pond”! – but in any event, the punishment in each case seems very severe and completely disproportionate considering the often petty nature of the offence involved – although it could be “reduced” to Whipping or Hard Labour! – Transportation to Australia was only second in severity to the Death Penalty and many died at sea in terrible conditions in the holds of convict ships and faced harsh conditions in the penal colonies.</p> <p>19 Crimes produce a range of wines including a Chardonnay, Cab Sauvignon, Rose and Sparkling and all feature on their label someone who was Transported and their personal story is on line.</p> <p>The unfortunate fellow on the front of our bottle is Cornelius Dwyer Kane (or more likely Keane) who had been a law clerk in County Cork, Ireland and was ultimately pardoned in 1871 but forbidden to return to Ireland so never reunited with his wife and children but did settle in Queensland and became a civil servant. A number of those transported seem to have been connected with Irish Independence movements or were sympathisers and presumably it was thought that when transported many thousands of miles from home they couldn’t cause trouble! – and it would act as a strong disincentive to anyone else who might be minded to follow a similar course!</p> <p>Frustratingly, the wine is described as non varietal – that is to say it is simply a red blend with no clue, even on line, as to what grape varieties go into it but my hunch would be Cabernet Sauvignon will feature as they do a Cab Sauvignon varietal wine.</p> <p>The wine is no bargain at its normal price of £11 but with an offer and special discounts bringing it in at £7.60 it is definitely worth satisfying our curiosity and sampling a glass! - the use of old rum barrels to age the wine definitely perked my interest and it should have a bit of a smoky finish – there is also plenty to talk about if you want a bottle to be a bit of a talking point!</p> <p>Barrels are often toasted on the inside with a flaming torch before being used to age wines to give the wine a certain ‘toasty’ edge and the use of old whisky / bourbon barrels to age wines is not unheard of so this is not entirely a “gimmick”.</p>		and less 20% as a result of special members discount weekend and staff discount so £7.60 a bottle net.
Red	<p>AC Haut Medoc “Cru Bourgeois Superieur” Chateau Beaumont 2019 If anyone has been reading Richard Allisette’s column in the Guernsey Press over the last few weeks, he has given a comprehensive summary of the classification of the premium wines of Bordeaux and I thought it would be great to pass on the key points from his columns as part of a Wine Discovery event and illustrate it in practical terms with a visit to a quality Haut Medoc Chateau for our final wine choice this week!</p>	Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot	Co Op – normally £17 but less 20% staff and members

<p>To begin, we need to think of Bordeaux as two distinct regions – the area on the Left Bank of the Gironde River/Estuary where the wines are dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon grapes and referred to generally as “the Medoc” and that on the Right Bank where Merlot forms the basis of most of the wines although often there will be other grape varieties blended with them such as Cabernet Franc or blends using an element of Cab Sauvignon and Merlot on both sides of the Gironde. The two areas also have different methods of quality classification as you will see below!</p> <p>Dealing firstly with the Left Bank (the Medoc) we have amongst others, the great wines of Pauillac and St Julien – such as Chateau Latour, Chateau Mouton Rothschild etc. In 1855 Louis Napoleon III arranged for the very best Chateaux of Bordeaux at that time (all in “the Medoc”) to be effectively classified into League tables with the result that the very best Chateaux were known as “First Growth” followed by those categorised as Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Growths respectively – it is important to remember only the very best Chateaux (at that time) were classified – there would have been (and still are) many, many more Chateaux of the Medoc (and Bordeaux in general) which would not make it into these top 5 leagues or “Classed Growths” – so inclusion in these leagues remains very prestigious to this day and those Chateaux remain very much top quality producers and able to charge a substantial premium for their wines.</p> <p>The categorisation has remained largely unchanged since 1855 - in truth it is unlikely a wine estate such as Chateau Mouton Rothschild is going to dramatically fall from grace! You may well see a wine described as being say “Third Growth” – all will all be very expensive (in the £’000’s a bottle for the First and Second Growths). A realistic option to get a feel for a top Medoc wine is to go for a so called second or cadet wine from one of these classed growths – these would be wines made by one of the top Chateaux from say its young vines which would not quite make the grade for the top wine and will go under a label name that contains a veiled reference to the Chateau such as “La Chapelle des Bages” rather than “Chateau Haut Bages” which would be reserved for its top wine, for example – but these are still likely to be a seriously expensive option if it is from one of the First / Second Growths – in the £100s of pounds a bottle.</p> <p>In 1932 an additional Classification was introduced in the Medoc to complement the 1855 “Classed Growth” Classifications to recognise that, in the ensuing years since 1855, other quality wines from the Left Bank were worthy of recognition and a distinction on the label to enable the consumer to be able to more easily distinguish other top quality wines in a crowded field! - This additional Classification is the “Cru Bourgeois” – there are now three tiers within that classification – “plain” Cru Bourgeois, then “Cru Bourgeois Superieur” and ultimately “Cru Bourgeois Exceptionnel”. There are about 250 wines at Cru Bourgeois level and the list is revised annually so this is a good indicator of quality as a wine cannot simply rest on its laurels and remain a Cru Bourgeois wine based on its quality back in 1932!!</p> <p>I happened to find this Cru Bourgeois Superieur wine from the Haut Medoc Appellation (on the Left Bank) at the Co Op on the special members’ discount day so the Group got a total of 20% off including staff discount– As a quality fine wine, it is priced accordingly and at £17 it is really well outside our normal budget but we had a surplus in hand from recent events, the benefit of 20% off and we had some bargains this week to average things out, so a great opportunity to illustrate (or should that be lubricate!?) our discussion about the complex Medoc quality classifications with a Cru Bourgeois Superieur wine from a Chateau which is itself a sister Chateau to Fourth Growth “Chateau Beychevelle”in St Julien – so touching on two of these Medoc quality indicators!</p>		special discount so £13.60 net
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<p>Hugh Johnson of World Atlas of Wine fame rates Chateau Beaumont well with early maturing and easily enjoyable wines – the former is good news as some of the quality Bordeaux wines from the Left Bank need at least 10 years under their belt to make them approachable!</p> <p>Now dealing very briefly with the Right Bank of the Gironde, here we find St Emilion, Pomerol (legendary Chateau Petrus) and here there is no 1855 First/second/third/fourth/fifth growth classification or Cru Bourgeois for that matter. However, in St Emilion there is Premier Grand Cru Classe A, then B and then Grand Cru Classe followed by “Grand Cru” (200 wines from St Emilion can put this on their label, so, although a general indicator of quality, it is by no means a totally exclusive club at the Grand Cru level!).</p> <p>The classification in St Emilion is updated every 10 years or so. Those in the Premier Grand Cru league will again sell for huge sums like their counterparts in the First and Second Growth categories across the river.</p> <p>So, if you see wines from Bordeaux with Cru Bourgeois or Grand Cru on the label or being described as Second Growth for example hopefully it will now make a bit more sense! And keep a look out for “Cru Bourgeois” on any Left Bank Bordeaux wines you come across! The top Cru Bourgeois are much cheaper than the “classed growths” but still serious wines.</p> <p>There are 8,500 Chateaux in Bordeaux and 54 different Appellations so it is helpful to have some indicator on the bottle of the ones we should be looking out for! - but the wines at Cru Bourgeois and Grand Cru levels are likely to be nudging £20 or more for the top appellations like Margaux reflecting this step up in quality and the prices continue skyward for any of the higher classifications we have discussed.</p> <p>(Thank you, Richard Allisette for your very informative articles inspiring this week’s final premium wine choice and providing the basis of this note!)</p>		
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