



YOUR NEXT LESSON: VALUE BORDEAUX

Check Out Small Producers

FOR OUR NEXT TOPIC, let's return to what may now be familiar ground, Bordeaux.

Previously, we've looked at two very different appellations within Bordeaux, Haut-Médoc and Pomerol. This time, the topic will be defined by value rather than place.

The dominant image of Bordeaux is one of imposing chateaus, patrician proprietors and stratospheric prices. As far as the most famous properties go, in the best-known regions, that image holds a lot of truth, though most of the patricians are now corporate executives.

Yet that is only part of the Bordeaux story. The greater Bordeaux region is made up of many small family estates. Their wines are not classified, their residences are rarely imposing, and their wines (relatively speaking) are not that expensive.

That's where the notion of value comes in. With these wines, you are not paying a premium for famous names or for the high status of their appellations. Nonetheless, they are not cheap. You could easily find dozens of bottles from Bordeaux that are less expensive than these three.

So why these wines? Because value is not strictly a synonym for inexpensive. It means you are getting inordinate quality for the price, which I hope will be the case with these bottles. They are:



TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Château le Puy
Emilien Francs
Côte de Bordeaux
2013 (Rosenthal Wine
Merchant) \$42

Château Aney
Haut-Médoc 2013
(Kermit Lynch Wine
Merchant, Berkeley,
Calif.) \$25

Château Moulin de Tricot
Haut-Médoc 2013
(Rosenthal Wine
Merchant, New York) \$28



These wines are produced in relatively small quantities, as is so often the case with good-value Bordeaux. If you cannot find them, you could select any recent Bordeaux in this price range. Other names to look for include Peybonhomme les Tours, Auney, Moulin Pey-Labrie, Lanessan, Jean Faux, La Peyre, Milon and Peyredon, just to name a few.

I should say that the 2013 vintage is not considered among the best, though I generally think that we pay too much attention to vintages. Yes, vintage conditions affect the character of the wine, and occasionally the price, though not much for wines as relatively inexpensive as these. But it's always more interesting to see what a good producer does with a mediocre vintage than it is to prioritize the vintage.

That said, if you see wines from these producers in other recent vintages, by all means snap them up.

These wines are best with simple meals. Lamb and beef are classic matches; chicken and duck are fine as well. Serve the wines cool.

ERIC ASIMOV

Characteristics to Consider

Freshness

Are the wines alive and vibrant?

Drinkability

Do they refresh?

Food

Taste them before you eat. Are they different with food?