

# WHITE BORDEAUX SHINES IN CHALLENGING 2021 VINTAGE

Walking through Château Malromé in Entre-Deux-Mers just before April frost struck the Bordeaux region for the second year in a row, director David Trancart explained how some 80% of the estate's production was lost to frost and mildew in 2021: "It was a challenging vintage", he stressed. This year's frost does not seem as devastating (as this article goes to press), because the vegetation cycle was not as advanced for it to have done as much damage, says Marine Chaligné, the estate's communications director. However, other sources report that many vineyards in Bordeaux will indeed suffer from frost damage this year.

The nights of April 7 and 8 2021 were marked by frosts "historic" in dimension, say Bordeaux University experts Laurence Geny and Axel Marchal in their recent report of last year's vintage. Readers may recall many dramatic Instagram photos of thousands of candles, lit next to the vines to minimise damage. 2021 posed other hurdles in addition to frost, including mildew, induced by rainfall in May and June, that further cut production overall.

Statistics released by the Bordeaux Wine Council (CIVB) in April this year show that the 2021 harvest counted some 3.77 million hectolitres – down nearly one million from an average production vintage (4.7m hectolitres). Overall production dipped below 4 million only two other years since 2010: 3.8m in 2013 and 3.49m in 2017.

But less wine does not mean lower quality. Tasting 2021 dry whites from the humble Bordeaux appellation, one can appreciate how Marchal and Geny describe the vintage as yielding "exceptional" dry white wines. They explain how cool summers – which are not so ideal for reds – are "generally conducive" to obtaining "great" dry white wines, as they "guarantee good acidity and preservation of aroma



precursors". And 2021 has proven to be no exception to that rule.

For Marchal and Geny, the Sauvignon Blancs in particular are "brilliant". Despite high levels of malic acid, they are ripe, with a "chiselled profile" and intense aromatic expression. On the other hand, Sémillons have "sometimes suffered", on light soils, from a form of dilution, but on the best terroirs, they are slender, sapid and fragrant.

2021 proves the point that a challenging vintage for red Bordeaux can be more interesting for white. Other such vintages, including 2007 and 2017, come to mind. A comparative tasting, for example, of the dry white of Château d'Arche 2020 (an excellent red wine vintage) and its 2021 counterpart, showed that the latter exuded more vivacity and grip. In short: a better wine. And consumers can find excellent price/quality ratios from Bordeaux AOC wines, including those outlined in the tasting notes featured here.

## ON BORDEAUX AOC WHITE

While white Bordeaux is produced in no less than 12 appellations, from the famous Pessac-Léognan to Entre-Deux-Mers, this article focused on Bordeaux AOC, for which most wines blend the

three main authorised grapes: Sauvignon Blanc (43% of plantings), Sémillon (45%) and Muscadelle (5%). Across the 12 appellations for white Bordeaux, 46 million bottles were produced in 2021: 15% less than in 2020. For the appellation of Bordeaux AOC, volumes dropped by 19% compared to 2020.

## INCREASING PRODUCTION OF BORDEAUX ROSÉ

For some readers, Bordeaux Rosé could beg the question: "Why"? But more vintners are taking the summer drink seriously, with a concern for locally-made wine. As Didier Galhaud of Château d'Arche in Sauternes remarked: "We like to diversify, and that includes home-grown rosés". Some which were tasted blind for this article revealed good to excellent quality, with attention paid to ripe fruit, freshness and mostly light-bodied fun, even if that did not always correspond with fun labels (don't judge a book by its cover). Some 1,200 vintners, cooperatives and négociants are making dry Bordeaux rosé these days, which makes up no less than four per cent of total Bordeaux wine production. A great discovery for your next summer visit to the region.

## BEST BUYS CRÉMANT DE BORDEAUX 2021

**Vignobles Borderie, Château Les Combes, AOC Crémant de Bordeaux 2021 88**

€14.40 Wine Box

The estate has been crafting traditional method sparkling for over 80 years, and the expertise shows. Generous, ocean spray creamy texture with finesse. Citrus fruits and white flower aspects with a lively attack leading to a soft yet lively palate. A hint of brioche. Second fermentation in bottle in Saint-Émilion cellars, where bottles are riddled by hand. Enjoy as a welcome drink or with carpaccio, sushi or a veggie terrine.

**Drink 2022-2023 Alcohol 12.5%**

**Vignobles Arnaud & Marcuzzi, Les Fines de Payre, AOC Crémant de Bordeaux 2021 88**

€11 Avenue des Vins

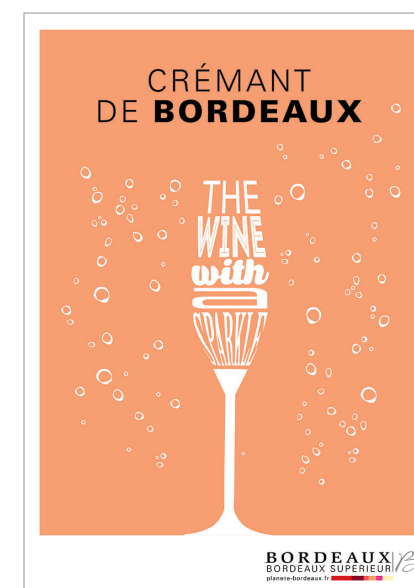
This traditional method sparkling rosé has won several awards in France, and it is easy to see why. Bright, smooth texture with strawberry and cassis aromas and lively acidity. Impress colleagues at an office --party or try with hors d'oeuvres like cured ham and smoked salmon.

**Drink 2022-2023 Alc 12.5%**

## BORDEAUX ROSÉ 2021

**Domaine Clarence Dillon, Château Clarendelle, AOC Bordeaux 2021 91**

£13.40 Vinatis



US\$18 Zachys

An excellent wine, starting with supple aromas of red berry fruit leading to a palate of verve and depth, with exciting iodine freshness and soft forest strawberry fruit on the smooth finish. Serve confidently on its own or pair with grilled salmon and roasted vegetables. The classiest of rosés.

**Drink 2022-2023 Alc 12.5%**

**Vignobles Baylet, La Vie en Rose du Château Landereau, AOC Bordeaux 2021 90**

€7.50 Vignobles Baylet

Lovely rosé with ripe fruit and mid palate succulence and body. The ageing on fine lees for two months no doubt contributes to the palate depth. The wine is so approachable and enjoyable. Pair with paella and summer barbecue. **Drink 2022-2023 Alc 13%**

**Château Lauduc, Lauduc Classic, AOC Bordeaux 2021 90**

£11 Cambridge Wine Merchants

Cantaloupe melon aromas precede a smooth and succulent medium-bodied palate, with iodine freshness. Night harvesting and cool fermentation temperatures ensure vibrancy and energy. Indeed, fun to drink on its own, but try with linguini and clams in a cream sauce with parsley. **Drink 2022-2023 Alc 12.5%**

**Château d'Arche, A de Château d'Arche, AOC Bordeaux 2021 89**

€11 La Vinothèque de Bordeaux

Only recently crafting rosé, this estate already shows marked improvement with the 2021 clearly superior to the 2020. Vivid red berry fruit, cassis and strawberry

enchant the taster, with plenty of freshness and a certain depth. **Drink 2022-2023 Alc 12.5%**

**Château de La Dauphine, Rosé de la Dauphine, AOC Bordeaux 2021 89**

€15 Château Dauphine

Fine gastronomic rosé from this excellent Fronsac estate, which combines subtle spearmint with ripe red berry fruit. The wine has density and weight, while being fresh and easy to drink. Perfect for a summer dinner, such as grilled salmon, seafood kebab or carpaccio. Vegetarians can enjoy with roasted squash risotto.

**Drink 2022-2023 Alc 13%**

**Château Renard Mondesir, Château Renard Rosé Rusé, AOC Bordeaux 2021 89**

Both smooth and subtle in its richness, this rosé exhibits the best aspects of the 2021 vintage in terms of brightness and vivacity.

**Drink 2022-2023 Alc 13%**

**SCEA les 7 Hectares, Château de Lisennes 7 Hectares, AOC Bordeaux 2021 88**

Grapefruit and raspberry notes. Fun, frank, and smooth. Juicy mid palate with verve from this certified organic wine. Enjoy with charcuterie or cheeses. **Drink 2022-2023 Alc 12.5%**

**Vignobles Boutinon, Château Hostin Le Roc Cuvée H, AOC Bordeaux 2021 88**

€6.20 Vignobles Boutinon

Iodine freshness with a sap-filled mid palate. This hearty rosé would pair well with sausage, charcuterie or margherita pizza. Or serve as a summer party wine.

**Drink 2022-2023 Alc 12%**

**Vignobles Jaubert, Château Landonnet, AOC Bordeaux 2021 88**

€8 Drinks & Co

Ripe fruit and juiciness with no hard edges or drying on the finish. Very pleasurable quaffer for your picnic, or serve with olive tapenade and bread or other hors d'oeuvres. Great value too. **Drink 2022-2023 Alc 11.5%**

**Château Sainte Barbe, Sainte Barbe rosé, AOC Bordeaux 2021 88**

Very good inaugural rosé from this estate, which is a member of the Grand Cercle of Bordeaux and is classified as an historic monument in Bordeaux. The mid palate charm and juiciness will easily draw you in. **Drink 2022-2023 Alc 12.5%**



BORDEAUX BLANC 2021

Vignobles Jade, Château La Loubière, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 91

Burgundian bottle with wet stone minerality, lime, lemon zest and Indian Tonic. Jean-Claude Berrouet, many years director at Château Pétrus, and son Jean-François are consultant winemakers. Both organic and biodynamic, the wine exudes impressive length and body with dry extract and structure to gain in complexity in bottle. But the wine is also drinking so beautifully now. One for readers to seek out! **Drink** 2022-2024 **Alc** 12.5%

Château de Camarsac, Blanc de Camarsac, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 90

US\$12 Woods Wholesale Wine  
Honeysuckle and lemon aromas enchant. Smooth palate with notes of herbal tea and linden. Soft, agreeable wine with impressive subtle density and a long finish. Touch of Muscadelle (5%) lends florality and lift. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12%

Producta Vignobles, Bordeaux Revolution, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 90

€9.35 Drinks & Co  
Lemongrass aromas presage a supple wine that can compete with expressive international counterparts. A refined and smooth palate exudes lime zest and iodine freshness on the finish. Try with watercress soup or frogs legs in an emulsion sauce. Good value. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12%

Château La Rame Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 89

Orange and honeysuckle. The palate has verve with a layered, contoured body and freshness. Seamless balance of structure, opulence and acidity leading on to the medium finish. A great value wine for the summer months. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 13%

Château Panchille, “Blanc de Fernand”, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 89

Saffron and lime note, followed by a smooth and pleasant palate and a bright, citrus finish. Try with snails in garlic or a creamy pumpkin soup with cracked pepper. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12%

Earl Todesco Patrick, Château Les Reuilles, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 89

US\$15.99 Yiannis Wine Shop

Herbal, verbena and fresh meadow aromas lined by lovely citrus notes. Fruit purity, palate density and finesse, with a medium long finish marked by Indian Tonic freshness. Enjoy with charcuterie and cheeses or, even better, whelk or clams in persillade. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Les 3 Châteaux, Château Roques Mauriac, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 89

US\$16.99 Total Wine  
Aromatic density with lemon peel but also tropical hints of pineapple, quince and honeysuckle. Robust palate with fine concentration and verve too. A standout wine, easy to match with mushroom risotto, fish in a cream sauce or seared veal with roasted vegetables. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Château Haut-Meyreau, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 89

€9.95 Vignobles Invidia  
A fresh bouquet with lemony zestiness and white flower notes. The light body has mid palate sap for concentration (lees stirring lends richness), but no barrel ageing. Pleasing tonicity on the finish. A solid and good value by-the-glass option for friendly Bordeaux. Enjoy with shrimp and cocktail sauce. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12%

Chateau de Seguin, Sauvignon de Seguin, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

€4.90 Clic Vin  
Juniper and herbal tea, with ripe fruit lifted by freshness on the medium-bodied palate. The bright orange clementine and fresh finish have such great appeal. Try with pork chops in a ginger sauce and or seared scallops. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%



Vignobles André Lurton, Château Bonnet, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

US\$13.99 Marketview Liquor  
Not to be confused with the Entre-Deux-Mers of the same name, this charming Bordeaux AOC white exudes lemon freshness. Not having gone through malolactic fermentation it shows a lively palate, both balanced and smoothly textured. Nice work from Jacques Lurton of the famous Château La Louvière in Léognan. Try with fish in a cream sauce or pasta with pesto. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Vignobles Geromin, Château l’Oiseau, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

Fragrant nose dominated by herbal tea with green apple and a hint of oak. Exuding freshness and smooth texture, the wine is rather subtle. Try with cream of pumkin soup or a fish terrine. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12%

Vignobles Dulon, Château Grand Jean, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

€7.49 Les Caves  
Subtle, enchanting aromatics of chamomile, pear and lime. The palate displays grip and body, with a vinous nature coming from the majority of Sémillon. Would pair well with grilled chicken or veal in a cream sauce. A great value option too. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Château Doyac, Le Pélican du Château Doyac, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

Orange clementine and iodine freshness. Alluring smooth texture, almost creamy, and even if it lacks the verve of a more serious wine, it is tasty and so enjoyable. Aged 50% in amphorae of grès (stone) and 50% in large oak casks. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.8%

Château Reignac, Reignac Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

€4.50 Boutique de Reignac  
Clean and crisp with integrated yet present oak notes that lend complexity. This is a fun and easy-going wine that may not have the same depth as the Bordeaux Supérieur more often found in the UK and in the US, but it has an excellent price/quality ratio. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 13%

Famille Ducourt, Château d’Haurets, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

€7.42 Vinatis  
White flower and bright fruit, this smooth and agreeable wine shows no hard edges



and exhibits iodine freshness on the finish. Great for a barbecue or with quiche. Like many other Bordeaux wines, close to organic winemaking with HVE certification. Has earned justifiable high marks in French competitions and offers excellent value. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Château Recougne, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

£11.99 Majestic  
US\$11.99 Martin Wine & Spirits  
A top seller in the UK, this “fun under the sun” wine is straightforward and bright, with grapefruit, green apple, honeysuckle and pear aromas and flavours. Ideal with cheeses on a summer picnic. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Vignobles Valpromy-Deffarge, Château Tour de Goupin, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

US\$12 ShopRite Liquors  
Exuding lemon-lime citrus along with bourtree and white flower, this light, unvarnished wine has a tangy finish ideal for opening your summer party or serve with hors d’oeuvres. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Vignobles Barthe, Château La Freynelle, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

US\$12.95 Shoppers Wines  
Creamy texture combines with bright acidity. While not showing the depth and subtlety of some of its counterparts, it shows elegance and a freshness. Would pair with cheese, risotto or butter and herb-baked oysters. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Château Suau, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

US\$11.99 Stirling Fine Wine  
This easily falls into the friendly everyday wine category, with soft notes of honeysuckle and citrus; refreshing and a good match for tapas or shrimp with lemon and olive oil. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 13%

Celliers de Bordeaux Benauge, Château Larroque, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 88

US\$15 Saratoga Wine Exchange  
Fascinating use of Colombard grape, which lends tart zest. Fine briskness and body, the wine displays marked varietal nature of the Sauvignon Blanc, akin to New Zealand. Great verve in a medium-bodied palate that can stand up to fish and seafood. Don’t confuse with the Saint-Émilion of the same name. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Vignobles Lobre, Château de l’Aubrade, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 87

Ripe apricot and Key lime Pie aromas. The palate combines verve with grip. Try with salmon filet and baked potatoes with sour cream and chives. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Vins Kressmann, Kressmann Monopole, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 87

€7.41 Vinatis  
Exuding green apple and lime aromas.

Straightforward in its expression of ripe fruit albeit quite herbal too. Try with raw oysters or shrimp. A great value option from one of the oldest Bordeaux brands, launched in 1892 in London, and officially registered in 1897. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12%

Vignobles Comin, Château La Commanderie du Queyret, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 87

Expressive aromas of green apple, pear and apricot prelude a juicy and fun-to-drink white: ideal for by-the-glass selections, as an apéritif or to open a party alongside canapés. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 13%

Château Haut-Rian, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 87

Almost Riesling-like gunflint notes, with fine texture, and appealing light body. Flavourful with fleshy citrus. A pleasant pre-dinner wine. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Vignobles Signe, Château Petit Moulin, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 87

Brisk with lime-lemon citrus notes, this has a quaffing aspect that pleases. Lovely lift and freshness for a great, uncomplicated everyday pour. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12%

Vignobles Medeville, Château Fayau, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 87

White stone fruit, pepper and lemon zest enchant, with a light palate that would work well with Thai food. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Vignobles Vincent, Château Lamothe-Vincent Heritage, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 87

£11.99 The Real Wine Company  
Ripe with fleshy grapefruit and candied lemon flavours. Smooth palate and fine texture make this a good match for roast chicken with orange or even pineapple. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12.5%

Denis Dubourdieu Domaines,Château Reynon, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2021 87

£11.50 The Wine Society  
A wine with crispy freshness and lemon rind notes. Also shows tropical aspects like quince and mango. Ideal for hors d’oeuvres. **Drink** 2022-2023 **Alc** 12%