

# BORDEAUX BEYOND RED

The future looks bright for Bordeaux white, rosé and sparkling

Even before assessing scores of dry white Bordeaux AOC (Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée) wines from the record hot and dry 2022 vintage, producers reported having just enough stock to meet domestic and international demand. One reason is lower yields, as explained by Stéphanie Sinoquet, director of the Bordeaux and Bordeaux Supérieur AOC producers union. 'Lower volume in 2021 and 2022 (both averaged a production of 41 hectolitres per hectare, far lower than the 54 hl/ha in 2018) has restricted supply,' said Sinoquet.

Growing demand, however, is also an important factor. Dry whites account for 8% of Bordeaux et Bordeaux Supérieur total production (compared to over 80% for red wines), but statistics point to a brighter future and great interest from consumers. In French supermarkets alone, sales increased by 3% between 2019 and 2022. Indeed, many vintners – such as David Sarry of Vignobles Peroy (Château la Peyruche) – are replacing some red vine plots with white to meet demand. The interest of both professionals and consumers has been fueled by the quality delivered at very affordable prices, on the one hand, and by the recognition of how well the popular grape varieties (namely Sauvignon and Cabernet Sauvignon) perform in Bordeaux and Bordeaux Supérieur whites and rosés.

## The 2022 vintage

'Hot, dry vintages are generally not ideal for white wine grapes,' wrote Laurence Geny, Elodie Guittard, Dr. Valérie Lavigne and Professor Axel Marchal of Bordeaux University in their 2022 vintage report. High summer temperatures resulted in low acidity and high sugar levels. But they pointed out that June rainfall helped to preserve some freshness – 'and above all, unexpected aromatic potential, especially on clay and clay-limestone soils with high water reserves.' The quality and character

of the wines seems to reflect this perhaps surprising balance.

But the craftsmanship and expertise of Bordeaux growers and winemakers also played an important role. The best vintners managed canopies to better react to the dry heat, such as not de-leafing when they otherwise would and fermented at cooler temperatures to preserve freshness. Overall, the work in the vineyard has been carried out earlier – in the year and in the day – to balance the precocious vegetative cycles and, during harvest, bring the grapes to the cellar at lower temperatures. Today, more than ever, the proximity to the Atlantic is of utmost importance; the maritime breezes provide a cooling effect and bring in enough moisture to avoid the need for irrigation (minimal water consumption being a crucial sustainability factor moving forward).

## Pinks and bubbles

In addition to the whites, 2022 also yielded particularly good rosés, which have also seen significantly more

demand in recent years. With consumers seeking more diverse and expressive examples of the style, Bordeaux has been able to offer wines with structure and gastronomic appeal, without compromising on drinkability.

Finally, Bordeaux Crémant wines, which were also tasted and scored blind for this article, have been leapfrogging across markets. Vineyards devoted to crafting these traditional method sparkling wines quadrupled from 289 hectares in 2012 to 1,345 hectares in 2022. At Château de Lisennes, which has been making Bordeaux Crémant for over 30 years, owner Jean-Luc Soubie remarked: 'Buyers come to us', pointing out strong sales in Scandinavian countries and Germany. Back in 2013, he barely sold 50,000 bottles. Last year, the figure tripled to 150,000. Price competitiveness is certainly a factor but this is matched by unpretentious elegance and fine character across many of the examples of the category.

Yet another proof that there's well worth discovering (and tasting) the many colours of Bordeaux.



## BEST BUYS

### CRÉMANT DE BORDEAUX 2022

**Jaillance, Brut Blanc, AOC Crémant de Bordeaux** 90

[www.jaillance.com](http://www.jaillance.com)

The word 'easy-going' echoes in one's mind while tasting this fine Bordeaux Crémant, more elegant than most of its counterparts. It conveys freshness and drinkability. Serve at a summer party. It could also pair well with oysters or fish terrine. **Alc** 12%

**Château de Lisennes, Bulles de Lisennes Rosé, AOC Crémant de Bordeaux** 89

[www.lisennes.fr](http://www.lisennes.fr)

Appropriately listed among the '100 Bordeaux wines to discover' in a German competition, this rosé Crémant is indeed very pleasing, with creamy mousse and bright strawberry notes in a fresh and fun palate. **Alc** 12%

### BORDEAUX ROSÉ 2022

**7 hectares de Lisennes, Parcelles Rosé, AOC Bordeaux Rosé** 2022 91

[www.lisennes.fr](http://www.lisennes.fr)

This rosé exhibits fine ripe, sweet strawberry and rose petal aromatics that place it on a pedestal among its peers. It may seem ephemeral at first, due to its easy and fun drinkability, but it has sneaky persistence and tonicity. Organic certified. **Alc** 13%

**Château Chavignac, AOC Bordeaux Rosé** 2022 91

[www.chateau-chavignac.com](http://www.chateau-chavignac.com)

Another top wine, exuding the requisite refinement and finesse to stand toe-to-toe with fine Provence rosé. Gorgeous balance between exciting maritime freshness and subtle expressions of fruit. Long finish. Serve confidently with lobster or enjoy on its own. Certified organic and biodynamic. **Alc** 12.5%

**Château Caneville, Rosé, AOC Bordeaux Rosé** 2022 89

[www.chateau-caneville.com](http://www.chateau-caneville.com)

Vinous and even a touch heady, this is robust rosé with bright red fruit aromas. Flavourful and structured enough to match a wide variety of dishes, from chicken Pad Thai and grilled red mullet to pork terrines and tapas. HVE3 certified. **Alc** 13.5%



**Château d'Arsac, Cuvée Scooter, AOC Bordeaux Rosé** 2022 89

[www.chateau-arsac.com](http://www.chateau-arsac.com)

Crafted by the same team of Château d'Arsac in Margaux, this fun rosé bears an equally joyful label and name: Cuvée Scooter, showing a helmeted puppy on what resembles a Vespa. Fine palate brightness with slightly spicy and minty aspects, forest strawberry, orange and just ripe enough fig. HVE3 certified. **Alc** 13.2%

**Château de Fontenille, Belle Rosé de Fontenille, AOC Bordeaux Rosé** 2022 89

[www.chateau-fontenille.com](http://www.chateau-fontenille.com)

With its onion peel hue, this easy going, lightly fruit-driven rosé reveals pleasing hints of raspberry and red cherry. While not a deep-thinking wine, it serves the picnic purpose very nicely. And the attractive label adds to the pleasure. Try with couscous and/or stuffed red peppers. HVE certified. **Alc** 12.5%

**Château Panchille Rosé, AOC Bordeaux Rosé** 2022 89

[www.chateaupanchille.com](http://www.chateaupanchille.com)

A fruit-driven rosé with red berries and hints of tropical fruit. While slightly heady, this is fun to drink on its own, especially because of the juicy and sap-driven mid-palate. HVE3 certified. **Alc** 13%

**Château Hostin Le Roc, Cuvée H, AOC Bordeaux Rosé** 2022 89

[www.vignobles-boutinon.com](http://www.vignobles-boutinon.com)

The nose seems timid at first, but time in the glass reveals subtle notes of raspberry, blackberry and blackcurrant that come to the fore on the palate. The subtle aspects

of this wine – with pleasing iodine freshness – beckon grilled fish or mushroom and parmesan risotto. HVE certified. **Alc** 12%

**Domaine du Rouchet, Millésime, AOC Bordeaux Rosé** 2022 89

[www.domainedurouchet.fr](http://www.domainedurouchet.fr)

With pleasing and subtle expressions of raspberry and strawberry, and subtle floral touches, this rosé is more delicate than most of its counterparts. Serve on its own as a summer aperitif. **Alc** 12%

**Château Castagnac, Rosé de Castagnac, AOC Bordeaux Rosé** 2022 88

[vignobles-coudert.com](http://vignobles-coudert.com)

Made exclusively from Merlot grapes, and with unmistakable strawberry jam aromas, this rosé would please palates seeking a sweeter red fruit profile. Try with goat cheese or olive tapenade for the culinary contrast. HVE certified. **Alc** 12.5%

### BORDEAUX CLAIRET 2022

**Château de Lisennes, Clairet de Lisennes, AOC Bordeaux Clairet** 2022 90

[www.lisennes.fr](http://www.lisennes.fr)

The best Clairet tasted blind for this piece. And what a fun label when unveiled: a lady donning a pink beret, sipping rosé. Gorgeously expressive, like the label, with ripe cherry and black currant fruit and juicy freshness. Looking for a 'serious' wine for the summer grill? This is it. Bravo! HVE3 certified. **Alc** 13.5%

**Château Penin, Clairet, AOC Bordeaux Clairet** 2022 89

[www.chateaupenin.com](http://www.chateaupenin.com)

An excellent Clairet; tasty, balanced and extremely enjoyable. The wine exudes cherry and plum, with a bright and juicy palate. Try with meatballs, veggie or otherwise. HVE certified. **Alc** 13%

**Château La Bretonnière Clairet, AOC Bordeaux Clairet** 2022 89

[www.vignoblesheurlier.com](http://www.vignoblesheurlier.com)

Billed by the estate as 'convivial' and 'unique for Rosé connoisseurs', it succeeds in exuding ripe and savoury fruit – blackcurrant, blackberry and raspberry – with pleasing brightness on the finish. It has more structure than a rosé and can be paired with richer foods, from pizza to paella. HVE3 certified. **Alc** 13%

## BORDEAUX BLANC 2022

### Château Thieuley, Blanc Classique, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 92

[www.thieuley.com](http://www.thieuley.com)

A top wine among scores tasted for this article, punching above its weight, with vivid notes of juicy cantaloupe and wet stone, plus intriguing smokiness and lovely elderflower on the long finish. Impressive freshness and energy. Enjoy with smoked salmon and capers, olive tapenade or a cheeseboard. Bravo! HVE3 certified. **Alc** 12.9%

### Château Aurore, Les Fleurs Du Mal, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 92

[www.invidia.fr/domaine/chateau-aurore](http://www.invidia.fr/domaine/chateau-aurore)

Salinity and iodine freshness on the nose and palate make for a positively lovely, and organic, wine. The palate density reveal touches of salty lime that linger in the satisfying finish. Ideal for a high-end wine bar. Or serve with grilled fish. **Alc** 13.5%

### Château Tour De Goupin, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 91

[www.vignobles-deffarge.fr](http://www.vignobles-deffarge.fr)

Impressive, with honeysuckle, summer meadow, clementine orange and philodendron aromas leaping from the glass. The balanced palate has freshness and a thirst-quenching Indian Tonic bitterness. Crafted from grapes from vines on cool clay and limestone, the wine rather defies the vintage heat. HVE certified. **Alc** 12.5%

### Château La Verrière, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 91

[www.chateaulaverriere.com](http://www.chateaulaverriere.com)

Pine forest freshness, spearmint and lime aromas. Impressive palate density and a thirst-quenching finish. Several hours of maceration lend fruitiness and volume. A clear example where winemakers did their best job in a challenging vintage as it counts among the best price/quality ratios in 2022. HVE certified, in organic conversion. **Alc** 13.5%

### Le Blanc de Château de La Rivière, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 91

[www.chateau-de-la-riviere.com](http://www.chateau-de-la-riviere.com)

An excellent wine from a beautiful estate, justifiably rewarded for 'Best Of Wine Tourism' in the Architecture & Landscapes category. Smooth, with freshness for the vintage, the wine has depth and a long finish. Oak ageing lends complexity and depth. HVE certified. **Alc** 13%

### Château Fontbonne Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 91

Exuding quince, hawthorn, and pear fruit, all noble and pristine in expression, this one shows a fresh purity that is excellent for the vintage. Admirable palate concentration from a 95% Sauvignon Blanc wine. Enjoy with chicken or risotto. **Alc** 13.5%

### Producta Vignobles, Bdx Révolution Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 90

[www.producta.com](http://www.producta.com)

Orange rind and pink grapefruit zestiness balanced by wet stone freshness. Stands out among many others for its liveliness in a hot vintage. It has the density for tortellini and mushroom in cream sauce. Pleasing Indian Tonic bitterness on the finish. HV3 certified. **Alc** 11.5%

### Château d'Arsac, Cuvée Céline, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 90

[www.chateau-arsac.com](http://www.chateau-arsac.com)

Like rain on wet chalk, the mineral-driven palate reflects bright fruit (think grapefruit cocktail with Italian bitters and pomegranate). Superb energy. Try with oysters or fish terrine. HVE3 certified. **Alc** 14.5%

### Château Haut Rian, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 90

[www.chateauhautrian.com](http://www.chateauhautrian.com)

Fennel, apricot and lemon make for an appealing nose – and the medium-bodied palate has plenty of zip! 35-year-old vines contribute to palate depth. Enjoy on its own, with stuffed green and red peppers or with cheese. **Alc** 13%



### Château Franc Baudron, Verso, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 90

[www.chateau-franc-baudron.com](http://www.chateau-franc-baudron.com)

A wonderful expression of juicy white peach, citrus and white flowers. This estate has been making successful wines consistently – and the crisp, straightforward palate appeals especially from the challenging 2022 vintage. The elegant label is also fun and appealing. **Alc** 14%

### Château La Freynelle, Le Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 90

[www.vbarthe.com/chateau-la-freynelle](http://www.vbarthe.com/chateau-la-freynelle)

Château La Freynelle doesn't disappoint in 2022 with a wine that strikes a balance between vibrant freshness and ripe lemon and pear. Palate with verve, and acidity offset by good density. Medium finish. Try with roast chicken or fried squid. HVE3 certified. **Alc** 13.5%

### Château de la Vieille Tour Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 90

[www.boissonneau.fr](http://www.boissonneau.fr)

Pleasing aromas combining meadow grassiness, floral touches and the pineapple fruit typical to the vintage. Palate freshness and verve add energy and drive. Impressive mid-palate sap and a juicy finish. Certified organic and biodynamic. **Alc** 13%

### Château Le Gardera, Le Ruisseau, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 90

[www.vignobles-gonfrier.fr](http://www.vignobles-gonfrier.fr)

This wine is concentrated yet cool and fresh, needing time in the glass to show its quince, kiwi, and lime notes. Coming from but one ha on silty clay soil over limestone, this is both opulent and dry in 2022. Lovely. HVE3 certified. **Alc** 13%

### Château Lamothe-Vincent, L'Héritage Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 90

[www.lamothe-vincent.com](http://www.lamothe-vincent.com)

Complex aromas of pear, pineapple, lemon, hawthorn and dried almond. The slightly oily texture calls for smoked salmon. Juicy, sap-filled palate with balancing verve. Nuances of toast reflect oak ageing but never dominate. HVE certified. **Alc** 12.5%

### Château Toutigeac Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.toutigeac.com](http://www.toutigeac.com)

The care taken to preserve freshness lends a grassier – like rainfall on a meadow – profile compared to more 'tropical' wines from this vintage, albeit with a slightly viscous palate



and stewed peach aspects. The finish reveals charming and bright lime, lemon and gooseberry. HVE3 certified. **Alc** 13.5%

### Château Doyac, Le Pélican Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.chateaudoyac.fr](http://www.chateaudoyac.fr)

Candied lemon, clove and nutmeg lead to a rich palate. Manually harvested, pressed in whole clusters and aged in amphora, tonneau and barrels this makes for a very characterful Sauvignon Blanc – a nod to the Médoc history of quality white production, dating back to the 19th century. Try with spaghetti carbonara. Organic and biodynamic certified. **Alc** 14%

### Château Turcaud, Cuvée Majeure, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.chateau-turcaud.com](http://www.chateau-turcaud.com)

With high alcohol and aged in oak with lees stirring for complexity, this wine shows brioche and tropical aspects that mirror the vintage heat, but are balanced by freshness. A gastronomic wine; serve chilled and pair perfectly with marinated salmon, foie gras, shrimp with garlic, scallops in a cream sauce, and aged cheese. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

### Château Toulouse-Lautrec Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.chateautoulouselautrec.com](http://www.chateautoulouselautrec.com)

Chamomile and acacia aromas presage impressive palate density with needed freshness for balance. An approachable, pleasing wine, with mid-palate richness. Try with eggplant parmesan or roast chicken à l'orange. In organic conversion. **Alc** 14%

### Château Gabelot Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.medeville.com](http://www.medeville.com)

A racy dry white that shows off ripe fruit and verve. Another wine that has pleasing tonicity on the finish. Serve on its own, with greek mezze, summer salads or with canapés at a party. HVE and organic certified. **Alc** 12.5%

### Château La Loubière Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.vignoblesjade.com](http://www.vignoblesjade.com)

Only the third ever vintage of dry white from this estate, which is meticulous in viticulture and winemaking. A strong showing with white stone fruit and freshness and the same Burgundian poise of the previous vintages. Certified organic and biodynamic. **Alc** 14%

### Château La France, Cuvée Coq Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.chateaulafrance.com](http://www.chateaulafrance.com)

Sage and wet stone aromas are complemented by fresh, crunchy pineapple. The palate may seem slightly ethereal but in the context of the vintage, this cool approach appeals and stands out. HVE certified and in organic conversion. **Alc** 13%

### Château De Parenchère, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.parenchere.com](http://www.parenchere.com)

At once ripe and crisp, citrusy and fleshy on the palate, with subtle honeysuckle notes, the wine shows surprising balance and freshness for the vintage. Very gastronomic, would go well with a lentil salad or grilled fish. HVE3 certified and in organic conversion. **Alc** 13.5%

### Château Malagar, L'Élegant, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.chateau-malagar.com](http://www.chateau-malagar.com)

Nuanced white flower, peach and apricot aromas lead to a supple palate with pleasing salinity driving the medium finish. Made from 10-year-old vines grown on marls and sandy clays as well as silt. Try with goat cheese quiche. **Alc** 13.5%

### Château Dauzac, D De Dauzac, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.chateaudauzac.com](http://www.chateaudauzac.com)

This wine exhibits spearmint and white stone fruit aromas in a viscous palate, weighty but with character. Good width on the mid-palate. Enjoy with roast turkey, mushroom tart, or cow milk-based cheeses. HVE certified. **Alc** 13%

### Château Le Noble, Cuvée Héritage Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.chateaulenoble.com](http://www.chateaulenoble.com)

This light wine impresses with the purity of ripe pear and lemon topped by the tropical notes expected from this vintage. It conveys finesse and balance. Enjoy as an apéritif, with oysters or with shrimp in cocktail sauce. Organic certified. **Alc** 12%

### Cap Royal, Bordeaux Sauvignon Blanc, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.caproyal.com](http://www.caproyal.com)

A wine with both energy and refinement, for a nuanced expression of Sauvignon Blanc, crafted under the supervision of Pierre Montégut, director at Châteaux Suduiraut and Pichon Baron. It preserves freshness and fruit purity in this challenging vintage. **Alc** 12.5%

### Château Haut-Rieufayet, AOC Bordeaux Blanc 2022 89

[www.famillepelitvignobles.fr](http://www.famillepelitvignobles.fr)

Pleasing wet stone minerality, with typical gooseberry aromas from the 100% Sauvignon Blanc. This proves to be a refreshing drink – no mean feat in a vintage like 2022. Aged on lees, the wine also displays pleasing citrus and texture on the medium finish. Organic certified. **Alc** 13%

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