

# Bordeaux AOC and Bordeaux Supérieur AOC

## The red wines telling the tale of very different vintages

That vintage variation plays a key role in the world of wine is a well-worn statement; it reflects both an inherent facet of an annual crop-based product and also the poetic aura with which wine from famous regions is received following each harvest. But the extreme viticultural challenges and unpredictability faced by producers in recent years, particularly in Bordeaux, has transformed winegrowing into an exercise in risk management built on intuition and determination.

While assessing the last four vintages (2019 to 2022) of the reds of Bordeaux AOC and Bordeaux Supérieur AOC, the efforts and capability of producers to navigate the stormy waters of climate change was apparent. Integral to this is the palette of grape varieties at their disposal – Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Malbec, Carménère – which, with their different maturation cycles and response to disease pressure, represent one of Bordeaux's greatest assets to build climate resilience.

Considering that the two appellations jointly represent 39% of the region's production in volume and yield some of the most affordable quality wines, the responsibility of producers as they face the challenges ahead is twofold: to keep Bordeaux as a competitive region, defined by the strong, balanced character of its wines; to make sure that they remain accessible to a wide audience of wine lovers, as they themselves face the pressure of rising inflation.

### Different vintages, different stories

Most of the wines tasted were 2020s – a 'super vintage' according to Antoine Carteyron of Château Penin, part of a golden trio alongside 2019 and 2017. The year was largely shaped by the logistical and operational challenges of Covid-19. From a viticultural point of view, on the other hand, there was balance and ideal maturity, reflected in the poise, gastronomic appeal and enduring freshness of the wines. The best examples show very good alcohol and



wood integration and will age well in the next five to 10 years.

The 2022 line-up, in contrast, showed significant intra-vintage variation. 'There were different things happening in each vineyard,' said Alain Bessette of Château La Verrière. 'It's impossible to try and define the 2022 vintage overall; each site tells a different story. There was so much work to do.' The year reflects the increasing importance of vineyard geography and the capacity to constantly tailor vineyard practices to the specific qualities of each site. Fruit character, ranging from ripe red to deep black, is defined and intense with good acidity and, in the best cases, food-friendly persistence.

The challenging, low-yielding 2021 vintage sits proudly between the latter two as an unlikely example of classic perfection. Frosts, millerandage and mildew affected bud break, following a warm winter. A cold spring spell slowed down development while preserving acidity and keeping alcohol levels in check. Heavy storms in late spring and early summer, however, disturbed flower set, which, in tandem with mildew, affected yields once again. Production levels were therefore significantly smaller than in both the previous and subsequent vintages – as reflected in the number of references tasted for this piece – but the wines that were

indeed produced show an elegance and classicism that truly justify the producers' sleepless nights. Careful fruit selection and a light hand in the cellar allowed for the purity of red fruit to come forward, driven by a vibrant acidity and very well presented tannins (especially at Supérieur level). This is a vintage that will appeal both to lovers of old-school Bordeaux (2021 alcohol levels are comparable to those of the 1980s) and also to a younger audience seeking lighter, more filigreed wines.

### Resilience and character

The common denominator across all wines tasted is the obvious resilience of producers and their increasing ability to place site and vintage at the forefront, without attempting to correct in the cellar the character shaped by the events in the vineyard. Both Carteyron and Bessette highlighted how, today, the focus of growers is to promote the inner balance of the vines through practices such as soft pruning, a view echoed by Francine Decazes, of the eponymous estate. One thing is certain: the years of relaxed early August days are over. 'We won't be heading to the beach any time soon,' remarked Quentin Cardarelli of Vignobles Cardarelli, 'we are constantly on call.'

Discover more: [www.planete-bordeaux.fr](http://www.planete-bordeaux.fr)

### BORDEAUX AOC 2022

**Château Dauzac, D de Dauzac 2022** 89  
[www.chateau-dauzac.com](http://www.chateau-dauzac.com)

Crunchy cherry, plum and cranberry fruit; surprisingly fresh on the palate, with linear precision and pleasing, lingering spiciness. Excellent drive on the attack, with a touch of pomegranate. A great companion to beef tartare or grilled artichokes. **Alc** 13.5%

**Château de Lisennes, Cuvée "Nature" 2022** 89

[www.lisennes.fr](http://www.lisennes.fr)  
Intriguing earthiness beneath the crunchy black fruit; depth and angular complexity, with the tannins sitting elegantly on the mid-palate. Gastronomic and with good persistence: will pair well with roast chicken or lamb chops. Organic certified. **Alc** 13.5%

**Château Mazeris Bellevue, Mazz & Co 2022** 89

[www.chateau-mazeris-bellevue.com](http://www.chateau-mazeris-bellevue.com)  
Alluring orchard fruit appeal with the lifted, pleasant sourness of rhubarb compote and crunchy pomegranate, while lingering spice adds nuance and appeal – one for garden parties. Organic certified. **Alc** 13%

### BORDEAUX AOC 2021

**Maison Ginestet, Citran Rouge 2021** 89  
[www.maison-ginestet.fr](http://www.maison-ginestet.fr)

Elegant black fruit, with refreshing touches of red plum and sour cherry, before hints of dried oregano and thyme, lined by fine tannins. A perfect companion to tuna tartare, devilled eggs or beef carpaccio. **Alc** 13.5%

### BORDEAUX AOC 2020

**Kressmann, Kressmann Monopole rouge 2020** 92

[www.kressmann.com](http://www.kressmann.com)  
Crunchy, fleshy flavours of red apple, plum, blood orange and pomegranate. Fine tannic structure, with softness on the mid-palate, combines with gentle but vibrant acidity for a subtle yet powerful wine. This will pair well with miso cod or honey-glazed salmon. **Alc** 13.5%

**Château de Bel, Capitane 2020** 91

[www.chateau-debel.com](http://www.chateau-debel.com)  
Alluring nose, with earthy touches of forest floor and tobacco. This shows development while retaining fruit intensity and mid-palate weight, unfolding in the glass for added complexity; very elegant and well presented. Enjoy with tuna tartare. Organic certified. **Alc** 13.5%

**Despaigne, Château Bel Air Perponcher Reserve Rouge 2020** 90

[www.despaigne.fr](http://www.despaigne.fr)  
Beautiful fruit definition and intensity, with black plum and blackberry supported by fine tannins. Touches of pink grapefruit and asian pear add refreshing juiciness, which lingers on the palate – good complexity and nuanced structure. HVE certified. **Alc** 13.5%

**Queyrens et Fils, Château Pilet 2020** 90

[www.chateau-pilet-vins-queyrens.fr](http://www.chateau-pilet-vins-queyrens.fr)  
Crunchy plum, cranberry, red apple and pear mingle on the palate. The softness of the mid-palate is followed by a firm grip: tannins are well presented, with an almost mineral quality and an elegant herbal lining. Will pair well with an artichoke and foie gras salad. HVE certified. **Alc** 13%

**Domaine du Carrelet 2020** 90

[www.domaineducarrelet.com](http://www.domaineducarrelet.com)  
Earthy nose with deep black fruit and gentle herbal overtones; robust yet fresh on the palate, with good persistence and definition of fruit: plum, red apple peel, pear and a touch of sour cherry for added freshness. Classy, with lingering notes of Mediterranean herbs. **Alc** 14.5%

**Château Thieuley 2020** 89

[www.thieuley.com](http://www.thieuley.com)  
Pomegranate, plum, cranberry and red apple, underscored by a refreshing pink grapefruit streak – there's a nice drive to the fruit with a pleasant zesty pithiness. Fresh tannins, with good grip, mean this would make a great companion to roast beef or a gourmet burger. Terra Vitis and HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Domaine du Buisson, L'Ecole Buissonnière 2020** 89

[www.domainedubuisson.fr](http://www.domainedubuisson.fr)  
This is perfect for summer barbecues, with meaty fleshiness, zesty freshness and savoury



nuances: pomegranate, plum and blackberry at the core, with a citrus kick to the mid-palate, before lingering pink grapefruit, plum and red apple notes. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Vignobles Decazes, Château Compassant 2020** 89

[www.vignoblesdecazes.com](http://www.vignoblesdecazes.com)  
A perfect food wine, with persistence and vibrancy on the mid-palate: blackberry, blackcurrant and fleshy orchard fruit structure the palate's core, supported by firm, herbal tannins. Lingering plum and dried sage on the finish. Ideal with spicy pasta. Organic and HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

### BORDEAUX AOC 2019

**Les 3 Châteaux, Damnation Château Roques Mauriac 2019** 90

[www.levieux-vignerons.com](http://www.levieux-vignerons.com)  
Interestingly brooding nose, showing development but also depth and complexity. The dark fruit and dried herbs are offset by vibrant acidity and a zesty streak – good cellaring potential. Perfect with seared tuna or lamb chops. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Domaine de Valmengaix, Valmengaix en Jarre 2019** 88

[www.vlmgx.com](http://www.vlmgx.com)  
Despite some slightly confected fruit, there's a savoury layer that balances the ripeness. Structural elegance – with tannins well presented and supporting the mid-palate very well – makes this a good everyday drinker, perfect for a casual midweek dinner. Organic certified. **Alc** 14.5%

### BORDEAUX SUPÉRIEUR AOC 2022

**Famille D'Amécourt, Château Bellevue 2022** 89

[www.famille-damecourt.com](http://www.famille-damecourt.com)  
The soft palate has vibrant flavours of dark and sour cherries, pomegranate, cranberry and red apple peel, while velvety tannins add poise to the mid-palate. Pair with poached salmon, Sunday brunch or beef tartare. HVE certified. **Alc** 13.5%

**Vignobles Coudert, Château Cleyrac 2022** 88

[www.vignobles-coudert.com](http://www.vignobles-coudert.com)  
Fresh and subtly minty, with pleasant weight on the mid-palate. Good length, with lingering plum, red apple and blackcurrant fruit, and an appealing savoury aspect with tobacco leaf nuances. Enjoy with pea soup with pork or asparagus with beef. HVE certified. **Alc** 14% ▶

## BORDEAUX SUPÉRIEUR AOC 2021

**Les 2 Frérôts, Tout Est Cyclique 2021** 91  
www.les2frerots.fr

A very interesting - and fresh - interpretation of this AOC and vintage. Vinified in amphorae, it has mineral depth and distinctly juicy tannins. The fruit is soft with fleshy plum, cherry jam and blueberry pie lifted by a streak of wet stone coolness. Delicious - especially when lightly chilled. Organic certified. **Alc** 12%

**Château Recougne 2021** 91

www.chateau-recougne.fr

Surprising intensity and complexity from a challenging vintage; the depth of flavour is very accomplished, with poached red cherries, fleshy plums, strawberry jam and blackcurrant pie lingering on the palate, topped by spicy and herbal notes. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Château La Verrière 2021** 91

www.chateaulaverriere.com

There's a zesty, crunchy quality to the plum, red apple and red cherry flavours, and a really pleasant grip to the mid-palate, making this a pleasant, food-friendly wine. Its lovely juiciness is balanced by precision: the tannins are well presented and have a savoury quality with hints of oregano, tarragon and thyme. HVE certified and in conversion to organic farming. **Alc** 13.5%

**Château de Camarsac, Vieilles Vignes 2021** 91

www.camarsac.com

A smokey, quasi-reductive quality contributes to the depth and freshness of this wine, which has a good acid backbone and a youthful spring in its step. The pomegranate, cranberry and red apple fruit is juicy and focused, with lovely precision and poise driving the medium, refreshing finish. HVE certified. **Alc** 13%

**Château Haut Claribès 2021** 90

www.domainesfontana.fr

The fruit is intense and deep, with good weight on the mid-palate. There's a subtle savoury layer of dried oregano, mint and cherries poached in Earl Grey and bergamot syrup, while the filigreed tannins, with their firm grip, add freshness and drive. Good concentration is offset by focused acid. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Château Clou du Pin 2021** 90

www.domainesfontana.fr

Appealingly savoury nose: there's depth but also vibrancy to the dark fruit, with red nuances adding a refreshing crunch. The firm

tannins give it drive, focus and definition, especially on the back palate, following a soft, shy attack. A good companion to barbecued meat and vegetables. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Château Les Rambauds, Cuvée Crème de Fûts BIO 2021** 89

www.bernard-cazade.com

The nose has a certain ethereal quality, with a touch of dark flowers and macerated herbs, underscored by a gentle earthiness. Fresh and focused on the palate with well-defined, chiseled dark fruit and good, juicy persistence. Enjoy with winter salads, a charcuterie platter or lamb chops. Organic certified. **Alc** 13%

**JMVB - Jean Maury Vins de Bordeaux, Château Lamothe Castéra, 2021** 89

www.jmvp-france.com

There's an intriguing savoury quality to the nose, with notes of dried leaves and Mediterranean herbs. Flavours of pomegranate, cranberry and pink grapefruit make for a juicy and fresh palate, with zesty focus - one to pair with tuna steak or to serve lightly chilled at barbecues and garden parties. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Château La France, Cuvée Gallus 2021** 89

www.chateaulafrance.com

A really forward and fresh quality to the fruit: pomegranate, cranberry, raspberry and wild strawberry mingle on the palate, lifted by good acidity and a zesty juiciness, and underpinned by firm yet lifted tannins. Delicious - a perfect pairing for a spicy pasta dish or lamb shakshuka. HVE certified. **Alc** 12.5%

**Vignobles Latorse, Château L'Ombrière 2021** 89

www.latorse.fr

Juicy, with a sweet touch of cherry jam offset by crunchy pomegranate and raspberries. The tannins are gravelly but fine, reflecting the freshness of the vintage, and there's alluring



depth on the mid-palate. A really pleasant drink, ideal for midweek dinners (think carbonara, pizza or meatballs). HVE certified. **Alc** 13%

**Maison Raymond, La Joly 2021** 89

www.maison-raymond.vin

Fragrant, seductive nose of violets, lavender and ripe plum, before intense tannic and acid grip on the front palate followed by juicy plum, cranberry and wild strawberry flavours. The delicious acid kick and lingering zestiness add further freshness: one to drink chilled at summer barbecues. Organic certified. **Alc** 13.5%

## BORDEAUX SUPÉRIEUR AOC 2020

**Vignobles Hermouet, Château Roc Meynard 2020** 92

www.vignobleshermouet.com

An alluring nose, with scented notes of mediterranean herbs and fragrant orchard fruit; on the palate, vibrant and crunchy red apple flavour acts as counterpoint to deep plum and black cherry. The tannins have minerality and freshness, and promise good cellaring potential. HVE certified. **Alc** 15%

**Château Grand Français, Grande Cuvée 2020** 92

www.grand-francais.com

Juicy and lifted, with beautiful purity of fruit, driven by assertive yet soft acidity. There's an interplay between sweet and savoury flavours, with mineral freshness to the finish and lingering vegetal notes of tomato leaf and gooseberry. Enjoy with beetroot salad or quiche. **Alc** 12.5%

**Vignobles Baylet, Château Landereau Cuvée Prestige 2020** 91

www.vignoblesbaylet.com

Crunchy plum, red apple and pomegranate, with a hint of Earl Grey and bergamot before tapenade adds a savoury dimension. The palate is driven and focused but also has width on the mid-palate, while the acidity is unapologetically firm but softened by the generous fruit. HVE certified. **Alc** 15%

**Les Capucins, Château Brondeau du Tertre 2020** 91

www.lescapucins-bordeaux.com

The juiciness of blood orange is followed by rhubarb, dried thyme and oregano, for a lifted and nuanced palate. The tannins are firm and hold a subtle grip on the mid-palate. Enjoy with summer salads, lamb chops or Toulouse sausages. HVE certified. **Alc** 13.5%

**Château Mongiron, La Fleur de Château**

**Mongiron 2020** 91

Nuanced, with deep fruit offset by good acidic verve. There's gentle yet perceptible oakiness, with thyme and oregano at the forefront and a lingering zesty aspect. The oak tannins are well presented and integrated, as is the alcohol. Drinking well now but with good ageing potential. Terra Vitis certified. **Alc** 14.5%

**Château Fleur Haut Gaussens 2020** 90

www.chateau-fleurhautgaussens.com

Such characterful savouriness here, with vibrant (black and green) olive tapenade. The fresh palate has good acidic verve and firm tannins, shaping good and persistent structure; in the mouth the savoury appeal gives way to crunchy fruit freshness. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Vignobles Lafoi, Château Lamothe Gaillard 2020** 90

www.vignoble-lafoi.fr

An expressive nose, balancing fruit depth with fragrant touches of tapenade and crushed roses; savoury tannins are grainy but appealing, as the mid-palate juiciness contributes balance and drive. Would pair well with sardines, mackerels or smoked eel. Organic certified. **Alc** 14.5%

**Château Tayet Cuvée Prestige 2020** 90

www.de-mour.com

Good concentration of dark cherry and poached plum fruit, while the tannins are fresh and spicy, adding focus and drive; good persistence with lingering back pepper and Earl Grey-poached plums. One for roast chicken or parmentier. HVE certified. **Alc** 14.5%

**Château Maréchaux 2020** 90

www.chateau-marechaux.com

Expressive and subtly complex, with aromas of oregano, tapenade and thyme alongside subdued black fruit, plum and blackberry. Softness from the black fruit on the front and mid-palate is followed by crunchy red apple and pear. A very food-friendly wine, especially as the acidity is so vibrant and refreshing. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Denis Barraud, Château de La Cour d'Argent 2020** 89

www.denis-barraud.com

Intense plum, lined with touches of red apple, black cherry and subtle herbal aspects. There's a sour tang to the mid-palate, lifting the riper fruit, with firm yet juicy tannins and good persistence. This would pair well with grilled meat seasoned with herbs and/or barbecued vegetables. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%



**Château Laronde Desormes, Cuvée 2020** 89

Deep, perfumed nose with herbal and floral nuances; the palate is lifted and chiseled, with flavours of poached plum, cherry, pomegranate and blood orange, while gravelly tannins contribute textural character. Good food pairing potential. Undergoing HVE3 certification. **Alc** 14.5%

**Clos La Providence 2020** 89

www.closlaprovidence.fr

Expressive, deep nose with black fruit topped by Mediterranean herbs, for an alluring savoury aspect. The tannins are well worked, with firm presence on the mid-palate: the firm structure and deep fruit promise good cellaring potential. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Château Haut Nadeau, Réserve du Propriétaire 2020** 89

www.chateauhautnadeau.fr

Daringly fruit-forward in character, but balanced by firm, refreshing tannins. Deep nose of red fruit, with pomegranate and red apple at the forefront; the palate is wide and elegant, supported by vibrant acidity. Enjoy with beetroot and goat's cheese salad. HVE certified. **Alc** 14.5%

**Château de Crain 2020** 89

www.chateau-decrain.com

The juiciness of ripe cranberries offsets the savouriness of oregano, thyme, black pepper

and charred oak. Good poise and drive, with assertive tannins - dry but not drying. Medium finish with persistent notes of dried mint and sage. Ideal with roasted meats. HVE certified. **Alc** 13.5%

## BORDEAUX SUPÉRIEUR AOC 2019

**Château Siran, Saint-Jacques de Siran 2019** 90

www.chateausiran.com

Lovely depth and definition to the fruit, with an interplay of red and black flavours: plum, sour cherry, strawberry and plum. Spicy and herbal notes add complexity, with lingering vanilla, white pepper and thyme, while grippy, acid-driven tannins contribute freshness and allow the fruit to remain at the forefront. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Les Notables de Maucaillou, Le B par Maucaillou 2019** 90

www.maucaillou.com

Holding its freshness and juiciness very well, this wine has a vibrant lift, lively fruit and an elegant mineral character. The fresh tannins support the plum, pomegranate, mulberry and asian pear flavours, and give lovely poise and structure. HVE certified. **Alc** 14%

**Château Saincrit, Utopie 2019** 89

www.chateau-saincrit.com

Elegant and fresh, as plums, blackberries and red cherries mingle and linger on the palate, and the soft tannins carry the juicy fruit with ease. Alcohol is well integrated, for a subtle but persistent finish. Enjoy with creamy pasta and tapas. Already HVE certified, the estate is in conversion to organic farming. **Alc** 14.5%

**Château Jean Faux, Sainte-Radegonde 2019** 89

www.chateaujeanfaux.com

Great purity of fruit in this organic and Demeter-certified wine. The fresh drive is complemented by good width and depth. Plum, red apple peel, ripe cranberry and pomegranate flavours shape a very drinkable wine, with subtle complexity. The perfect midweek companion for pasta al ragu. **Alc** 14%

**BORDEAUX** | **B**  
BORDEAUX SUPÉRIEUR  
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