



BORDEAUX VINS SÉLECTION

## 2024, A VERY MODERN VINTAGE



A year where dangers came from all angles. A gruelling winegrowing season from start to finish: winegrowers had to contend with exceptional climatic conditions, perhaps even unprecedented in terms of rainfall and threat from disease. Fortunately, the immense progress made, applied without hesitation and intelligently in the vineyard and cellars, made it possible to overcome many obstacles and ultimately harvest good quality grapes. The challenge was to adapt to the conditions, a challenge that has now paid off, given the many attractive wines made. Ultimately, expressive, balanced, round, and fruity wines with delicate tannins—such are the characteristics of this 2024 vintage.

In the end and in summary, a very modern style.....

## A REMARKABLY MILD AND WET WINTER

The foundations of this vintage were laid in January: notable mildness with rare frosts (9 days of frost compared to the ten-year average of 15) and temperatures 1.5°C higher. Significant rainfall periods followed one another from October, reaching 390 mm, 80% more than the average recorded since 2000 and 70% more than the last six years (1095 mm cumulative compared to 750 mm). The result? Early budburst, about ten days early, with particularly generous shoots starting at the end of March.

The ten-day advance in the growing cycle was evident. However, from one property to another, and even from one plot to another, the behaviour of the vines varied depending on the specificity of the soils. An unchanged truth: clay geological composition responds better to excess water than sandy soils. Plant physiology is less weakened as a result.

## A HIGH-RISK SPRING

Mild weather and humidity is always a dangerous combination. These conditions led to intermittent and irregular growth depending on the terroir. To the detriment of the plant inflorescences, the vines thrived, while pests swarmed on the leaves and branches, and with concerning virulence. The contagion of powdery mildew and downy mildew was becoming extremely worrying. It was then necessary to mobilize the teams, calling on them at all hours of the day, often at a frenetic pace. All control methods, fortunately effective today, had to be deployed "between the raindrops," and this, an added difficulty, while respecting technical approaches and their environmental imperatives (sustainable, organic, biodynamic cultivation). These combined efforts, both human and technical, generally made it possible to maintain a good health status.

At the same time, the relatively cool temperatures (which rarely remained above seasonal norms) slowed vegetative growth. A few days before flowering, the earliness observed at the beginning of the season had vanished. Flowering was also inconsistent; the oldest vines suffered from competition between leaf development and fertilization. A high rate of millerandage and mildew, combined with insufficient sunshine, sometimes led to significant crop losses.

## A MIXED SUMMER

Despite below-normal rainfall beginning in July, veraison was slow and uneven, a week late. However, the rise in temperatures allowed the berries to develop; the first ripened bunches appeared in early August for the Merlots and mid-August for the Cabernet Sauvignons, three weeks later. The last week of August marked the end of veraison for the Merlots, while green berries remained in the Cabernet Sauvignon plots. A distinctly late vintage.

The end of August, with its warm, sunny days and cool nights, proved beneficial for initiating the ripening processes. Initial analyses showed that the technological maturation process began on the weekend of August 25th (about ten days later than in 2023), with average sugar levels of 178g/L for the Merlots and 154g/L for the Cabernet Sauvignons, comparable to those in 2023 at the same stage. Acidity levels remained very high, of course, and malic acid levels still reflected late vegetative growth.

Polyphenol synthesis took place in a mild summer climate (without the excessive heat we have become accustomed to in recent years). Cool nights favoured the synthesis of aromatic compounds, both in white and red wines.

# HARVESTING TO THE RHYTHM OF THE WHIMS OF THE WEATHER

In the first days of September, a succession of stormy events dumped more than 100mm of rain. The 2024 harvest thus began under unusual auspices: repeated rainy episodes sometimes forced harvesting under difficult conditions. Winegrowers expected a significant drop in yields. However, cool nights and windy, sunny days following stormy episodes helped maintain the vineyard in acceptable health.

The first Sauvignon Blancs—picked in early September before the first rainy periods—displayed intense aromas, with a potential alcohol content of around 12.5/13%. The Sémillons were harvested around September 9th, golden, at around 12-12.5%, often in a single selection. By drastically removing the leaves, many were able to maintain good health and benefit from the sunny window of the first two weeks of September.

The Merlot harvest began in mid-September, followed by the Cabernet harvest around October 2nd. The harvest was intermittent, depending on the development of the plots (the identity of the terroirs and micro-terroirs) and the weather conditions.

This year, in particular, the sorting allowed chateaux to meticulously select the ideal grapes and eliminate any greenness or vegetal notes. While some lacked some concentration, they nevertheless displayed beautiful ripeness.

The harvest loss was estimated at an average 14%.

# THE VINIFICATION CHALLENGE

The winemakers' expertise proved just as decisive. To control the dilution caused by the autumn rains, they were able to adjust the marc/juice ratios to give the wines a vibrant aroma. Another imperative was to work on the structure and mid-palate. As for the alcohol levels, they remained moderate.

For the whites, the selection of juices during pressing was a decisive step in the quest for quality. The final juices proved more aromatic, rich, and structured. Stirring the lees before the start of fermentation allowed for the release of a significant amount of aromatic compounds.

## CONCLUSION

Between climatic hazards and phytosanitary challenges, the winemakers' nerves were put to the test. The ripening of the vines was slowed by the mild winter and abundant rainfall, while the alternation of rainy periods and sunny spells delayed the combination of phenolic, aromatic, and technological ripeness.

However, Bordeaux is delivering a quality vintage thanks to the intelligence of the workforce, rigorous selection, the continued dedication of the teams, and the tenacity of the owners in their quest for the best. Hard work, patience, and composure have been rewarded: what we find in this wine was unexpected. Balance, elegance, and beautiful aromas will be appreciated in a few months. Enough to silence the pessimistic predictions of our press, always filled with desolation and doom and gloom. Given all the challenges set by the vintage, the 2024 should be considered as a human and technical success.



# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE

## Edouard Vauthier, co-owner of Château Ausone

CHATEAU AUSONE  
Premier Grand Cru Classé Saint-Émilion "A"



A complicated vintage from start to finish, starting with record rainfall in winter. We had to redouble our efforts and adapt our viticultural practices, notably "full grassing" of the plots to absorb excess water in the soil. A vintage that also gave us some scares due to strong cryptogamic pressure; fortunately, the expertise together with the responsiveness of our teams allowed us to eradicate the diseases. Ultimately, we harvested fruit of beautiful finesse. The wines, with supple tannins, possess a freshness that gives them a remarkable aromatic profile, dominated by red and pink fruits for the Cabernet Franc. The Merlots bring roundness and silkiness. Overall, a classic profile, typical of Bordeaux: fresh, fruity, and supple, with an alcohol content below 13%. Enough to spark customer enthusiasm! I remain optimistic because there is a lasting appeal for wines from great terroirs, and this appeal is all the greater given that the price will certainly be revised downward, as in 2013. Our policy is to allocate small quantities to satisfy as many of our long-standing customers as possible, mainly from North America and Europe. In recent years, we have been capturing new markets in Southeast Asia, Singapore, the new wine hub, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam.

# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE

**CHATEAU AUSONE**  
Premier Grand Cru Classé Saint-Émilion "A"



Admittedly, the volume is not there: yields are 15% to 20% lower, particularly in the early Merlot plots, battered by millerandage, coulure, and mildew. On the sandy soils, the foothills, and the Dordogne Valley, we have done the maximum. Our production, for a century, has remained essentially the same; This year, 82 barrels instead of 100, representing 20,000 bottles of Ausone and 7,000 of La Chapelle.

In conclusion, we must congratulate ourselves on the progress made. Each vintage is a learning experience and helps strengthen the resilience of our soils and vines. Our teams, increasingly trained and expert, know how to cope with the changing whims of a changing climate.

# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



CHATEAU LATOUR

## Hélène Genin, Technical Director Château Latour



Following the recent vintages, which were generally water-deficient, the 2023-2024 winter was the wettest in 23 years. February and March, with their mild weather, suggested a rapid recovery of vegetation, with a slight, ultimately unfounded, concern regarding the quality of budburst. The rains put our teams to the test throughout the season and hampered soil management work.

A massive and early maturation of mildew spores led to very early contamination of the first unfurled leaves. The cool, wet conditions hampered shoot growth and favoured a succession of waves of mildew contamination. The first flowers were observed around May 20 and the last around June 14, making it one of the longest flowering periods ever observed on the property (a consequence of the low temperatures in April and the lack of leaf area). The rare windows of good weather helped limit coulure problems in the younger, healthier plots. However, they did not spare the older and/or virus-affected plots, with a significant impact on future yields. Indeed, these milder conditions stimulated a resumption of vegetative growth, leading to competition with flowering.



# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



CHATEAU LATOUR



The prolonged humidity led to new outbreaks of mildew on the leaves, as well as a brown rot appearance on the Merlot grape clusters. The numerous mildew symptoms gradually dried on the grape clusters and leaves, along with the delayed onset of veraison. The first glassy berries were observed around July 29. August was relatively dry with 17 mm of rain, which initiated a water deficit favourable to quality and particularly to ripening of the pips. Mid-veraison was long and uneven, recorded on August 12 for the Merlots and August 17 for the Cabernet Sauvignons.

Consequently, yields were down. A big disappointment for us. But a pleasant surprise: the wines displayed a good level of tannic concentration and aromatic ripeness, with an alcohol-acid balance conducive to tension and freshness. Through aging, we will strengthen their complexity and structure and enhance the present substance.

As for economic instability, how can we not be concerned? All we have to do is do what we do best and hope for a great and generous 2025 vintage.

# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



*Château Montrose*

**Pierre Graffeuille, General Manager SCDM Domaines  
(Châteaux Montrose, Tronquoy-Lalande)**

I would describe this vintage as an Atlantic vintage due to the mild temperatures and exceptional rainfall, never before seen. Faced with this excess water, we had to make adjustments to our cultivation practices; controlled grassing was practised from March until the end of the cycle. We also optimized the leaf surface of our vineyards so that the vines could transpire as much as possible.

Our two Saint Estèphe vineyards, Château Montrose and Château Tronquoy, are managed organically. Vigilance was constant, and our teams had to be highly responsive. However, during the summer, we had lower cumulative rainfall in Saint Estèphe than in other regions of Bordeaux. Moreover, our soils regulate themselves and drain quickly. The result? Our harvest was consistent and healthy, with satisfactory yields because we were able to increase the number of sorting operations. We also set up a second sorting line in the winery to ensure optimal responsiveness. Then each hectare was vinified separately in a very gentle manner.



# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



*Château Montrose*



This approach, specific to each terroir's identity, was preserved to reveal the marked characteristics of the Cabernet Sauvignon. Château Montrose 2024 finds its ultimate expression on terrace 4, the heart of the original terroir. A precise vintage, chiselled, silky, with impressive breadth and elegant structure, featuring a long, lingering finish with a lacy tannin. The balance is remarkable, making it a wine for aging. Although it will probably be more approachable in its youth than other vintages, Château Montrose 2024 will hold up over time.

I remain optimistic in the current context: our customers will travel to Bordeaux to taste the wines and will certainly be surprised by their quality. Commercially, the demand for the biggest brands will be there. While we can't really talk about a recovery, we're already seeing a tremor in activity of physical wines. Everyone is waiting for Greater China to return. But certain markets, like Thailand, Brazil, and Australia, are showing growing interest in our wines.

# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



## **Nicolas Glumineau, General Manager Château Pichon Comtesse**

A vintage that required a tremendous amount of hard work. To protect the vines and obtain quality berries, we had to double the working hours in the vineyard. It's an undeniable fact: climate change manifests itself differently every year; whether it's excessive drought or precipitation, we have to face the ravages of challenging weather. But each year is also rich in lessons; thus, we are constantly making progress. In 2021, as we were preparing to begin converting our vineyards to organic farming, we increased our investments: purchasing new tractors, recruiting drivers and farm workers. The goal was to systematically cover the grassy plots to obtain ever more vibrant soils. A more balanced vineyard would allow our teams to be more responsive and flexible, particularly in administering treatments and curbing threats from diseases. The interplay of water and air currents, inherent in the proximity of the ocean and the river, creates an exceptional microclimate that is also conducive to the development of disease. Making our viticulture more resilient was a real challenge. We had to be bold and ambitious. In Bordeaux, we must applaud this growing awareness. In 2022, we experienced absolute drought from June to September, with the fear of harvesting shrivelled grapes. The question we asked ourselves then: what type of wine do we want to make? One of our responses was to adapt our practices in the winery to maintain the balance between power and refinement, typical of our wines.

# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



This year, we learned the lessons of recent vintages, questioning ourselves in the face of unprecedented weather conditions, perhaps never before seen, and worked with firm convictions. Quality, our obsession, always. In the winery, we wisely made the wine with maceration in mind rather than extraction.

Another fundamental aspect in the advent of the 2024 vintage: due to the fragile condition of the grapes, we walked a tightrope to achieve finesse.



In terms of yields, the considerable reduction is due to Merlots damaged by mildew and the coulure observed across all grape varieties. At the same time, because they weren't compacted by others, the spared berries were able to develop unhindered throughout the cycle. As harvest approached, in the absence of rot, we were able to expect better phenolic maturity. This was a risk worth taking if we wanted to rediscover the silkiness and smoothness of great Bordeaux wines.

I remain optimistic because the 2024 vintage has many virtues and will appeal to the markets.

# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



CHÂTEAU

LES CARMES HAUT-BRION

## Guillaume Pouthier, General Manager Château Les Carmes Haut-Brion

From the outset, we must dispel preconceived notions that 2024 is a vintage of poor quality. Far from it. First of all, because the vine is a resilient vine, and with our assistance, we optimized water constraints. Second, while it's true that rainfall was abundant this year (1.20 m cumulative), it must be remembered that it was concentrated from November 2023 to March 2024, with 850 mm during the dormant period, exceeding the ten-year average by 50%. However, from budbreak to harvest, we recorded 400 mm, as in 2020, considered one of Bordeaux's great vintages. It is crucial to distinguish between dormant period and plant activity; excess water does not have the same impact. July and August, meanwhile, were more parsimonious, with only 60mm, confirming the adage: "August makes the must."

The result is wines that possess superb balance and density, with plenty of freshness. Their precision and drinkability in no way alter the Bordeaux DNA of power, richness, and acidity. A vintage with more "oceanic" accents, with a moderate alcohol content of around 13%, which will appeal to today's consumers.





# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



If I had to summarize, I would describe this vintage as a "marathon": due to its early harvest, it took a long, hard effort to harvest grapes with beautiful tannic maturity. The only drawback: the inconsistency due to the climatic hazards and their effects (frost, hail, enormous mildew pressure, flowering with coulure). To achieve the level of quality that Bordeaux can offer, we had to be very selective, so much so that the average yield is closer to 33 hl/ha than 45 hl/ha.

Ultimately, the wines of this vintage will reveal pleasant surprises for the end consumer because, on the one hand, rainfall did not affect ripeness and, on the other, Bordeaux's avant-garde technical expertise made it possible to overcome these uncertainties. Today, we no longer produce poor wines, but rather vintages with different faces, all crafted with a high-quality objective. Bordeaux invests a lot of resources in its production.

Marketing, in a general context of uncertainty, will be complicated, but Bordeaux will know how to adapt to end consumer demand. Each estate will have to find the right balance between the cost of its production and the price-performance ratio of its brand. This will be on a case-by-case basis. The example of the futures campaign during the pandemic reminds us that Bordeaux, in the face of adversity, knows how to react and reinvent itself.

# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



CHÂTEAU  
PAPE CLÉMENT

GRAND CRU CLASSÉ DE GRAVES

**Bernard Magrez, Owner of Châteaux Pape Clément, Fombrauge, La Tour Carnet, Clos Haut-Peyraguey**

It's no secret: the wine-growing season was challenging throughout the seasons, with excessive rain, devastating mildew, and frost. This vintage, which will remain etched in winegrowers' memories, ultimately proved to be of excellent quality. Moreover, it meets consumers' new tastes: supple, fruity, light, fresh, accessible, ready to be enjoyed in its prime. This profile is sought after worldwide, as evidenced by the studies and investigations we conducted with the YouGov agency. Customers are now keen on wines whose tannins don't cling to the taste buds and whose alcohol levels are reasonable. These are less astringent but more digestible wines, particularly popular with women, which don't cause headaches or stomach aches. In short, a pleasurable and uninhibited way of drinking.

Undoubtedly, the rise of hygiene and health imperatives explains this trend. In my lifetime, I have never observed such a rapid shift in the evolution of consumption habits: wine lovers want to preserve their health.

# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



CHÂTEAU  
PAPE CLÉMENT

GRAND CRU CLASSÉ DE GRAVES

As for white wines, they will also seduce with their beautiful balance between aromas, freshness, and volume on the palate. Sémillon, a grape variety experiencing a resurgence, particularly stood out this year for its minerality, rich fruitiness, and creamy texture. These characteristics are increasingly appreciated by consumers who seek emotion above all and who demand to be pleasantly surprised.

The 2024 vintage reminds me of those of the 1970s, but without vegetal notes. This medium-aging wine will be an asset when it comes to marketing. Of course, we cannot ignore the uncertainties inherent in a threatening geopolitical situation: increasing wars, tensions on purchasing power, hoarding, increases in punitive taxes, heavy taxation, reduced consumption and the rise of hygiene. Certainly, the coming months are likely to be difficult but we will continue to protect access to our markets, develop them and find new ones. I notice that Southeast Asia is getting more and more interesting: in Vietnam, Indonesia and China, demand is intensifying due to rising wages. I believe in the recovery, but I prefer to act now rather than to wait for it!

# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



**Julien Viaud, Consulting Oenologist,  
Laboratoire Rolland & Associés**

“Blending will be essential in creating the vintages to produce vibrant and seductive 2024s. The maceration under the pomace of the reds allowed for the development of soft, accessible, and non-excessive wines. From this point on, the expression of the different terroirs is very clear and reflects the diverse behaviour of the soils.

In this context, the key to vinification was to work on the structure and mid-palate. Alcohol levels are moderate. For the whites, the selection of juices during pressing was a fundamental step in the pursuit of quality.

The first juices were diluted, while the last were more aromatic, richer, and more structured. Stirring the lees before the start of fermentation allowed us to reveal a significant amount of aromatic compounds.

We had to avoid producing dilute wine but at the same time trying to avoid extracting a power that the vintage lacked. Neither harshness on one side nor opulence on the other; it was a matter of finding that subtle balance that is so characteristic of Bordeaux.

# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



In terms of viticulture, the 2024 vintage was particularly gruelling: the winegrowers experienced neither respite nor peace, they were tired and particularly stressed by highly uncertain conditions, with a constant alternation of rain and good weather, without the latter settling in for long and calming periods. It was necessary to support the teams with composure and objectivity, while remaining positive and encouraging. And, in 2024, it was a real challenge for us, the consulting oenologists! If the notion of vintage is a fundamental component of Bordeaux wines, we must not forget that we are in 2024. Oenology underwent its revolution in the 2000s and the viticulture that we now call precision viticulture leaves no room for “failures” as there could have been 45 years ago and more...

# THEY SPEAK TO US ABOUT THE 2024 VINTAGE



## **Michel Rolland, Consulting Oenologist**

"What a year! Everything was problematic, from budbreak to the harvest. But determination, perseverance, and imagination mostly allowed us to overcome the obstacles. So, not everything was so bad, and with a few exceptions, there were no irreversible natural disasters.

Ultimately, the quality is there. Merlots at maturity; some will be able to find the crispness they so crave when it's lacking! Cabernets that were able to mature in good conditions.

The blends are elegant and rather refined. No blockbusters. Fresh, fruity, very pleasant wines. The past decade has given us all types of wines; that's also the image of Bordeaux. The unhappy souls want concentration when we have finesse, and finesse when we have concentration... we will survive!

Don't forget that this is a great year for white wines. As a result, the properties produced good wines, with yields that were certainly irregular, sometimes even very low."