

GOLD MEDAL WINE CLUB

Taste the Adventure!

Bordeaux, France



**FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS,
FRANCE'S FAMOUS BORDEAUX REGION
HAS PROVIDED MANY OF THE WORLD'S
GREATEST WINES, PRODUCED ON FAMILY
ESTATES WITH PERFECT GROWING CONDITIONS
AND CENTURIES OF WINEMAKING TRADITIONS.**



Most authorities agree that of France's two main wine regions, Bordeaux and Burgundy, it is the former that has achieved the most significant international acclaim throughout the last two centuries. This has occurred mostly because of the general makeup of the two regions.

Bordeaux still enjoys numerous châteaux and properties that have been held for generations by the same French families. Burgundy, on the other hand, is mostly individual vineyards that have multiple owners.

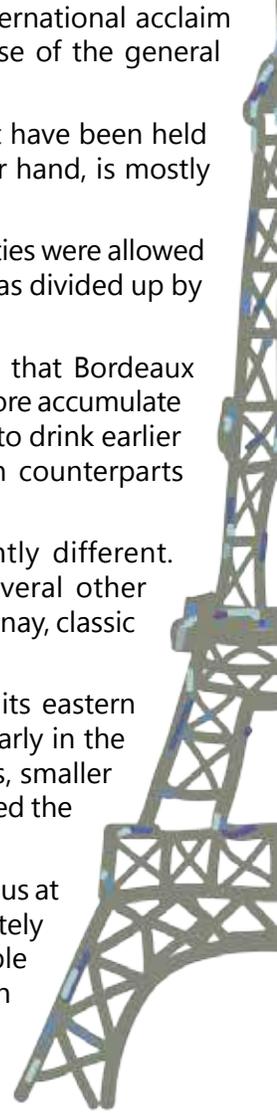
Because Bordeaux supported the French Revolution, its properties were allowed to remain intact while Burgundy, the home of kings and noblemen, was divided up by supporters of the revolution.

The greatness of its wines also comes from the fact that Bordeaux châteaux are designed and made to last a long time and therefore accumulate followings as the wines reach fruition. Burgundies are made to drink earlier and therefore seldom achieve the notoriety their western counterparts normally enjoy.

The grapes each region utilizes are also significantly different. Bordeaux is led by Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot and several other varietals, while Burgundy is the home to Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, classic varietals in their own right.

In size, Bordeaux is much larger in production than its eastern neighbor, and that fact affects the pricing of its wines, particularly in the middle and lower end of the spectrum. In the past four decades, smaller and somewhat obscure appellations have emerged that have fulfilled the need for more popular priced wines.

The number of châteaux in Bordeaux is amazing, some 8,500-plus at last count. The average number of acres in each vineyard is approximately 42 acres per planting, an amazing figure to consider. Equally remarkable is the fact that more than 10,000 different wines are produced each vintage and are exported to almost every wine-drinking country on the earth.



The British refer to red Bordeaux wines as 'claret' and have done so for many, many years. Also staggering is the number of different appellations, fifty-four to be exact. The Bordeaux wine growing region is France's largest with slightly under 300,000 acres under vine.

REGION SPOTLIGHT: BORDEAUX

Located on France's fertile southwestern coastline touching the Bay of Biscay and lying directly below the headwaters of the Gironde River, the Bordeaux wine region is France's most important growing area. Bordeaux is a collection of appellations (Appellation D'origine Contrôlée), AOC, French wine law designating specific locations) where the adage "smallest is best" usually points out quality as well as establishing the price of particular wines.

Wine was introduced in Bordeaux sometime during the 1st Century by the Romans and has thrived in the area's gravelly, sandy stone (mostly limestone) soils since that time. The maritime influence of the Atlantic Ocean and a relatively mild climate provide almost ideal growing conditions for the vines that account for around 700 million bottles of Bordeaux produced each year.

When the Gironde River divides itself into the Garonne and the Dordogne, that fact plays an important role in determining the status of individual appellations. Most of the great châteaux of Bordeaux are located on the southern (left) bank of the Gironde River, above the City of Bordeaux. While providing stature and prestige to the region, these great châteaux account for only a miniscule amount of the area's total production.

The Bordeaux region's production is predominately red and utilizes the magnificent Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot grape varieties as well as a number of other grapes that are always classified as Bordeaux. Practically all of Bordeaux's entire



vast array of wine is blended with Cabernet Sauvignon being the principal varietal throughout the region. Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon and Muscadelle are the predominant white grapes that are used in making dry (Graves) or sweet (Sauternes and Barsac) white wines.

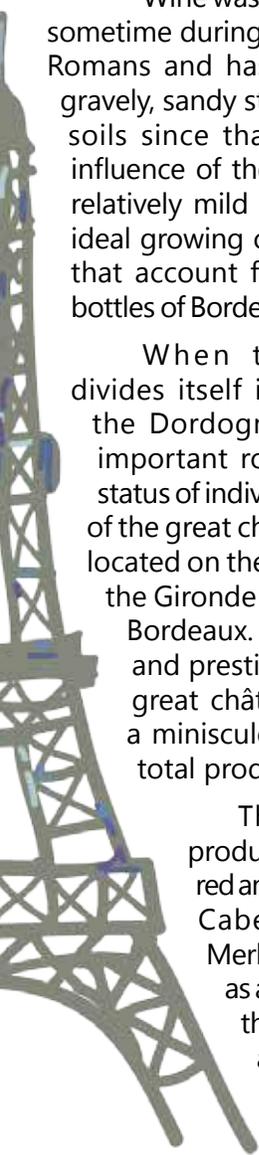
There is a strong movement in recent times toward the use of natural methods (organic farming) throughout the entire region. While only a small amount of vineyard land can be considered organic, the idea of crop rotation, compost and biological pest control is attracting more and more French growers each year.



WINE REGIONS OF FRANCE

France is one of the biggest wine producers in the world with several very important and famous wine producing regions. One of the factors that sets French wine apart is the fact that producers are incredibly focused on the idea of *terroir* (climate, weather, soil, elevation, etc.) and their wines are typically identified with the place that they are produced - or the *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée*. The numerous AOC's fall within the broader winemaking regions of France, for example, Saint Émilion within Bordeaux, and a wine from Saint Émilion would be labeled as 'Saint Émilion' rather than by the varietal(s). These laws and regulations help to preserve the quality and classifications of French wines. Every type of wine is produced in France and each winegrowing region is known for particular grape varieties as dictated by the area's indigenous *terroir*.

- Champagne
- Alsace
- Loire Valley
- Burgundy
- Jura
- Savoie
- Rhone Valley
- Bordeaux**
- Sud-Ouest
- Provence
- Languedoc-Roussillon
- Corse





France: Fun Facts!

- France is one of the largest wine producing countries in the world, on average producing more than 6 million bottles a year.
- French wine traces its history back to the 6th century with many regions dating their winemaking history to the Roman times.
- The world's greatest cycle race, the Tour de France, has been around for more than 100 years, with the first event held in July of 1903.
- France produces nearly a billion tons of cheese each year in around 1,200 different varieties.
- There are nearly 280 appellations in France, ranging from the huge Bordeaux appellation to the tiny, single vineyard appellations of Coulée de Serrant in the Loire and Romanée-Conti in Burgundy. There are regional appellations, district appellations, and there are appellations which cover only one commune.
- The word "sommelier" is an old French word meaning butler or an officer in charge of provisions, derived from the Old Provençal *saumalier*, or pack-animal driver.
- France is the most visited country in the world with over 80 million tourists each year.
- France started classifying and passing laws governing winemaking in 1935.
- The most widely planted red wine grape in France is Merlot.
- The construction of the Arc de Triomphe in Paris was ordered in 1806 by Napoleon, the French Emperor.



Photos, top to bottom, left to right:

- The picturesque and quaint Château Tour des Combes is nestled amongst hillside vineyards, east of the village of Saint Émilion in Bordeaux, France.
- Brothers Philippe and Fabrice Reynaud are fifth generation winemakers and today oversee their family winery, Château Pontet Reynaud, in the heart of Graves, Bordeaux. They are best known for their award-winning white wines, made up of Semillon, Sauvignon Blanc, and Muscadelle.
- Château Tour des Combes ages their red wines the classical way, with 3/4 of the wine in concrete tanks and 1/3 of the wine in French oak barrels, before blending together and bottling.
- A beautiful, thriving vineyard in the Graves district of Bordeaux. Graves is named for the region's naturally gravelly soils that offer rich, mineral concentration in its wines.

THE FLAG OF FRANCE



The French national flag is called 'The Tricolor,' which in French is 'Drapeau Tricolore,' and consists of three vertical stripes. The tricolor was created in July 1789 during the French Revolution from a rosette by Marquis de Lafayette.

The combination of red and blue (colors of Paris) and the royal color of white (symbolizing the return of the King) were chosen and thus became the cockade for the revolution. The tricolor was established as France's national flag in 1794.

In the early 1800's, Napoleon replaced the tricolor with the royal white standard with fleur-de-lis, but in 1830, Louis-Philippe restored the original tricolor as the national flag. Since then, no changes have been made to its colors or its pattern.



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FEATURED FRENCH WINERIES

Three family-owned estates follow generations of winemaking traditions to craft limited-production, award-winning wines from France's most esteemed wine growing region.

LE FLEURON DE LA TESSONNIÈRE

The Médoc region along the left bank of the Gironde River in the northern part of Bordeaux is the home of Le Fleuron de la Tessonnière that was founded by the Chevreux Family at the beginning of the 20th Century. The family's fourth generation, led by Cedric Colemyn, the great-grandson of founder Alphonse Chevreux, currently operates this rising star among small Bordeaux châteaux. It is located on parcels of calcareous clay that enjoy near perfect sun and also allow for long hang time for the fruit. In 1994, La Fleuron de la Tessonnière was recognized as a top quality small Medoc winery and became allowed to utilize the *Cru Artisan* designation on its label. Only 44 properties fit the established criteria for the *Cru Artisan* designation that involves quality and value as well as size of vineyards. The term *Cru Artisan* had existed for more than 150 years, but this new determination was the first that dealt with quality and value. Keep an eye out for this wonderful châteaux - it seems destined for additional merit.



Winemaker:
Cedric Colemyn

Owner/winemaker Cedric Colemyn is a fifth generation winemaker as well as great grandson of founder Alphonse Chevreux. Colemyn holds degrees in both

viticulture and oenology and has been at the helm of Le Fleuron de la Tessonnière since 1995. At 35, Colemyn is primarily responsible for the châteaux's 1997 ascension to *Cru Artisan* status by developing both the vineyards and production of its wines, a notable accomplishment for the young Medocian.

CHÂTEAU TOUR DES COMBES

Château Tour des Combes has a long history and dates back to 1849 when the Darribéhaude family first acquired the property from the owners of the much larger Château La Gaffelière. The property consists of almost thirty acres situated on hilly, limestone and silica soils that allow for great diversity in the finished wines. Like many other St. Émilion châteaux, the Château Tour des Combes' blend is primarily Merlot (80%) and the remainder Cabernet Sauvignon (10%) and Cabernet Franc (10%). It is located within the small historic town of Saint-Laurent-des-Combes and was recently declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO who acknowledged it a "cultural landscape." Wines are unfiltered and vinified in traditional stainless steel vats and French oak barrels for 18 months and then bottled at the châteaux. Brigitte Darribéhaude assumed management



of Château Tour des Combes in 1985 for Vignobles Darribéhaude and also serves as its winemaker. This wine has been classically made for decades and is an excellent example of St. Émilion wines.

Winemaker: *Brigitte Darribéhaude*

As a multi-generation owner and winemaker, Brigitte Darribéhaude is an old school artisan who sticks to classical winemaking with a passion. A 1982 oenology graduate of Bordeaux University, her prior experience includes a stint at Dry Creek Vineyard in Sonoma County as well as several other wineries in France. Darribéhaude ages her wine in underground vats and with a third in used (2 to 3 year-old) French Oak. Her wines are considered quite delicate with a focus on fruit that is showcased by excellent Merlot grapes from the Château Tour des Combes vineyards. Darribéhaude is also a proponent of responsible farming (growing grass in the middle of vineyard rows) that is a natural means of improving the vines. This St. Émilion is an excellent example of a classical wine from a definitive appellation.

CHÂTEAU PONTET REYNAUD

Early in the 20th Century, a cooper named Daniel Subervie began acquiring small parcels of land in the Graves District of Bordeaux. His subsequent family continued his work and today Vignobles Reynaud owns some 100 acres of vineyards both in Graves and also in the Bordeaux Superior AOC's. The family's fifth generation of vintners, in the persons of Fabrice and Philippe Reynaud, guide the company's portfolio of award-winning wines in international competitions. An ultramodern processing facility was completed in 2009 making Vignobles Reynaud a world class facility. Château Pontet Reynaud first saw light in the early 1960's and has become one of the leading wineries in the district. The winery makes both a red and white and has won much notoriety and numerous awards for each. White Graves have always been the flagship wines for the region and this marvelous white is a typical example of quality from a top producer.



Winemakers: *Fabrice & Philippe Reynaud*

Both Reynaud brothers carry the title of winemaker for their family's Château Pontet Reynaud, but it is Fabrice who has followed the modern approach to his craft. He holds a master certificate from the Institut des Sciences de la Vigne in Bordeaux as well as a summer stint at UC Berkeley where he learned English as a second language. Philippe Reynaud began working with his father Pierre in 1998 after "viti-vini" (loosely, *natural wine*) studies and shares the winemaking responsibilities with his brother. Aided by its state-of-the-art winemaking facility, Château Pontet Reynaud has ascended to the upper ranks of the Graves Region châteaux, a most noteworthy achievement.



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LE FLEURON DE LA TESSONNIÈRE 2014 MEDOC

Médoc, Bordeaux, France

Bordeaux's Médoc peninsula is home to some of the world's most prestigious châteaux, including Margaux, Mouton, Lafite and Latour. The region's distinctive mineral-rich soil is ideal for growing Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Cabernet Franc, which explains why these varietals are so popular here. The Le Fleuron de la Tessonnière 2014 Médoc is the top wine from this featured winery, comprised of 45% Merlot, 45% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Petit Verdot, and 2% Malbec from 25+ year old vines. Deep red in color, this 2014 Médoc opens with a bouquet of ripe red and black berries and hints of vanilla. The fruit notes continue on the palate, with added complexity from the soft tannins and toastiness from the aging in oak barrels. Aged 14 months in oak. Enjoy now until 2024.

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CHÂTEAU TOUR DES COMBES 2009 SAINT ÉMILION GRAND CRU

Saint Émilion, Bordeaux, France

Saint Émilion Grand Cru wines are produced under stricter production restrictions than regular Saint Émilion wines, with the intention being to improve the quality and to distinguish the area's finer wines from the more 'everyday' wines. The Château Tour des Combes 2009 Saint Émilion Grand Cru is a beautiful wine comprised of 80% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 10% Cabernet Franc. Intense garnet red in color, this red blend opens with fresh aromas of berries, mint, and cocoa. On the palate, the wine has a full body with rich, fruity flavors, soft tannins, and a nice long finish. Aged in oak. Enjoy now until 2019.

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2 & 3 Btl. Members:	\$33.00	\$31.33	\$30.50
4+ Btl. Members:	\$33.00	\$30.50	\$29.25

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CHÂTEAU PONTET REYNAUD 2016 GRAVES

Graves, Bordeaux, France

Graves is a wine district in Bordeaux, characterized by the gravel soils after which it is named. The gravelly soils are the result of many millennia of geological activity by glaciers and rivers that have transported vast quantities of gravel and mineral-rich silts down from their mountain sources. In the district of Graves, the wines convey this unique character of the soil. The Château Pontet Reynaud 2016 Graves is a blend of 50% Semillon, 40% Sauvignon Blanc, and 10% Muscadelle from 30 year old vines. Its powerful nose is characterized by notes of grapefruit, acacia flowers and broom while the palate is rich and smooth yet deliciously fresh with a long finish. Enjoy now until 2021.

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