

CÔTES DE BORDEAUX

Unusual Côtes to enjoy

It makes sense for the Côtes de Bordeaux, the youngest appellation in the Bordeaux region, to also be **one of its true centres of innovation.**

This is a grouping of five sub-appellations - Blaye, Cadillac, Francs, Castillon and Sainte-Foy - that are all found on the Right Bank of either the Garonne or the Dordogne rivers and that were brought together under an umbrella name in 2009 to showcase wines that are full of flavour, prioritise authenticity and easy pleasure and that are more than 90% independently-owned, with the family owners invariably living on site and taking care of all parts of production themselves, often selling direct. There are high-profile names here - Thienpont, Valette, de Boüard among them - but **the wines remain among the best value in Bordeaux.**

Even with this advantage, it can be difficult for independent winemakers to stand out from the crowd in Bordeaux, which is why **this tasting was so fascinating.** We picked categories where the Côtes are leading the way in innovation - so in organic or biodynamic wine, or in using grapes selected from specific plots of the vineyard for a special bottling, or those using 100% of a single grape variety, or unusual fermentation or ageing techniques such as clay amphoras rather than the more typical oak barrels, or by minimizing the use of sulphur - an antibacterial agent often used in winemaking - to focus on vibrant fruit flavours. And in an area that is 97% red wine (against 90% red for Bordeaux as a whole), we tried also some of the amazing white wines that are being produced. **We found many powerful personalities and styles in these special bottlings;** numerous wines that are well worth searching out.

The Côtes all have their own character - from the limestone dominance of

Castillon and Francs to the pockets of high quality gravels in Blaye and Cadillac, to the stunning slopes of Sainte-Foy. And they are also one of the green centres of Bordeaux. A full 50% of wines in Francs Côtes de Bordeaux are farming in organics or biodynamics in 2019, and 25% in Castillon, way above the national average of 9%. The first water treatment plant in Bordeaux opened in Castillon appellation in 2002 and across all five areas winemakers are working together to plant hedgerows and other natural barriers, and to generally increase biodiversity.

And beyond highlighting their individual soils and microclimates, these estates are also focusing on the possibilities allowed within the winemaking rules of the Côtes. It is this that has seen the rise of single variety wines, taking grapes such as Cabernet Franc or Carménère, or even Cabernet Sauvignon, that are often used as part of a blend, and setting them centre stage. Malbec is also becoming increasingly important across all the Côtes, and did particularly well in this tasting, which mainly looked at wines from the 2016, 2017 and 2018 vintages.

We looked at around 150 wines, and the standard was extremely high throughout. Because of the overall strength of the entries, there were many more than I was not able to include, but the list here gives many brilliant wines to try. Overall an inspiring and fascinating tasting, showcasing just a fraction of the dynamic changes that are happening in the Côtes right now.

To find out more either visit the Côtes de Bordeaux website www.bordeaux-cotes.com

Review and tasting notes written by Jane Anson

AMPHORA

Château Couronneau, Volte Face, Sainte-Foy Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 90
chateau-couronneau@wanadoo.fr
Sinewy chewy, characterful, with a fruit character that grows over the palate. This is a well balanced and enjoyable wine that is easy to recommend.
Drink 2020-2030 **Alc** 15%

Château Pré la Lande, Terra Cotta, Sainte-Foy Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 90
michel@prelalande.com
Supple and frank and appealing. A great example of its kind - autumnal berry fruits, soft tannins, a fresh lift through the finish, feels like an early drinking wine with a lot of personality. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 13.5%



Photograph: Jean-Bernard Nadeau

"We want to make this area first of all a place of life and meeting. Producing a friendly wine from the land and what nature offers us is a great experience for our 4 children. Our credo? Return to the earth but head in the stars"

Anne and Jean-Rémi Larrat (Château Chatard)



Photograph: Corinne Couette

"I started to raise amphora wine to test a new experience. It is also up to us, winemakers, to propose new products to customers! Terracotta is a natural and neutral material that respects the purity of the fruit and the expression of the terroir. The wine becomes more complex and develops an incomparable silky tannin."

Isabelle and Olivier Chéty (Château Bellevue)

Château Chatard, Les Terres Mêlées, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 89
jr.larrat@chateau-chatard.com
Enjoyable and full of character - dark spices, brambly fruits with a violet floral edge. This estate was bought by Jean-Remi Larrat in 2008, with this wine entirely aged in amphoras for 12 months. A saline kick takes it up a notch on the finish. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 13%

Château Pey-Bonhomme-les-Tours, Energies, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 89
contact@vignobles-hubert.com
Amphora-aged in clay jars for 12 months, this feels gentle and softly fruited - in fact more like a natural wine, with its own energy than many of the no-added sulphur wines did. Raspberry and redcurrant fleshy fruits clear, open and ready to drink. Biodynamic certified. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 13%

Château Mons la Graveyre, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 88
monsgraveyre@gmail.com
Bright, fresh with sculpted fruit. Again this feels a little rustic but that is kind of the point of these - they feel unforced and unfussy and extremely appealing. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 14%

Château Bellevue, Amphorae, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 87
isabelle@chateau-mercier.fr
There are clear tannins here, and it feels like a good example of a Côtes wine - a little rustic but unfussy, firm structure, easy to approach. HVE-certified. Vinified in cement then aged for 13 months in 140l clay amphora made in the south of France. **Drink** 2020-2028 **Alc** 15%

WITHOUT SULPHITES

Château La Rose Bellevue, Monsieur et Madame Soufre Ont un Fils, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 91
service.commercial@chateau-larosebellevue.com
Love the depth of fruit on the attack, this is full of black pepper spice and fairly powerful overall. Feel the sinews of the wine and it is rippling with freshness, good quality, no need to wait to drink. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 14.5%

Château les Bertrands, Authentique, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 91
chateau.les.bertrands@wanadoo.fr
Light, unfussy and enjoyable, with flexible tannins, a lovely example of a no-added sulphur wine, with a focus on fruits and an appealing freshness. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 13.5%

Château Sainte Catherine, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 91
sceasaintecatherine@orange.fr
Deep, powerful, fresh and well defined aromatics and flavours, a clear success. This estate is owned by Jean Merlaut, better known for Guraud Larose in St Julien. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 14%

Château Bellevue, Sans Soufre Ajouté, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 90
isabelle@chateau-mercier.fr
Firm but generous fruit, silky texture; feels full of life and beating with heart, rustic but in the best way just not trying too hard to convince anyone. The high alcohol is not intrusive, although clearly it contributes to the roundness of the mouthfeel. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 15%

Château Montfollet, Intense, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 90
d.raimond@chateaux-solidaires.com
Strikingly precise aromatics, good quality wine with rich raspberry notes, smoky edges and fine tannins. Part of Châteaux Solidaires. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 13.5%

Les Vieux Moulins, Sans Sulfites Ajoutés Damien Lorteau, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 90
ludivine@vignoblesgabriel.com
Dark in colour, well worked tannins with blackberry and chocolate notes, attractive. Touch of reduction right ➤



Photograph: Corinne Couette

"I stop taking myself too seriously and I make wines that look like me: natural, spontaneous, nice, affordable and not complicated. My philosophy? Carpe diem"

Valérie Eymas (Château La Rose Bellevue)

now, clearly working hard in an anaerobic environment as no added sulphur here. It relaxes and softens in the glass, but definitely needs a little more time overall. Certainly feels full of promise, if pretty high acidity. **Drink 2021-2034 Alc 13%**

Vignobles Carreau Sélection, 100% Non-Sulfité, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 90

lauriewine@hotmail.com

There is a immediacy to the fruit that draws you in. Fresh blueberry and raspberry with a chewy, easy-going quality to the structure and texture of the wine. The tannins are still evident, even if the edges are not as polished as in some. But then that is the point - this takes a hands-off, low key approach and it shows. **Drink 2020-2030 Alc 14%**

Château Mayne Mazerolles, Only Blaye, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 88

mayne-guyon@wanadoo.fr

A little underpowered, this starts well, gathering up rose petals and brambly hedgerow character. Soft tannins and a juicy finish, doesn't quite hit its stride but very enjoyable. **Drink 2020-2030 Alc 12.5%**

Château Cailleteau Bergeron, Vin Sans Sulfite, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 87

info@cailleteau-bergeron.com

Damson puree with raspberry spice, this actually feels pretty polished, I would not pick this as no-added sulphur. Full fruit expression, good quality, a little short. **Drink 2020-2028 Alc 13%**

SINGLE VARIETAL

Château Ad Francos, Réserve Ad Aeternam, Francs Côtes de Bordeaux 2014 93

didier.kerbrat@chateau-adfrancos.com
100% Merlot. Full of personality and incredibly spicy, with veins of black pepper running right through the palate. Mouthwatering finish, impressive, full of personality. A wine that you want to plan ahead for, give it time in the bottle. An estate to watch, Michel Rolland consultant. **Drink 2020-2035 Alc 14%**

Château Cantinot, Malbec, Cuvée Collection, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 93

chateau.cantinot@wanadoo.fr
100% Malbec. Plot selection of Malbec. Really a rather lovely wine with deep spice and white pepper notes, juicy and high energy with a driving sense of freshness. One that makes you stop and think. Good stuff from Yann and Florence Bouscasse. **Drink 2020-2034 Alc 13.5%**

Charivari Wines, L'Aventure Nocturne, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 92

nea@carsin.com
100% Merlot. Lovely combination of well expressed, gently-brushed red and brambly fruits, and a gentle kick of acidity through the finish without being too intrusive. Good quality, easy to enjoy, soft flexible tannins, ready to go. From the excellent winemaker Nea Berglund at Château Carsin. **Drink 2020-2034 Alc 13.5%**

Château du Payre, L'Ancestrale, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 92

chateaudupayre@gmail.com
100% Merlot. Smoky, full of power and finesse, carefully worked tannins and it's hard not to see the pleasure in the sweet rich damson fruits. Confident, contemporary, good quality, if a little overdone. Heavy bottle. **Drink 2020-2034 Alc 13.5%**

Château Les Chaumes, Malbec, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 91

apartementier@hotmail.fr
98% Malbec, 2% Merlot. Pretty tight and not fully expressive on opening, but in the glass it reveals deep dark fruits and spice. Will soften over time in bottle, and it needs a few years, but there is

plenty in this wine to make it worth the wait. **Drink 2021-2034 Alc 13.5%**

Château Dubraud, Création, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 91

celine@chateaudubraud.com
100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Smooth and rich but restrained and knows when to pull it back. Young and still very much in primary mode, with perky dark fruits. One to watch, great to see this level of quality and interest coming out of Blaye. Owned by -Alain and Céline Vidal, HVE-certified. **Drink 2020-2032 Alc 13.5%**

Château Monconseil, Malbec 68, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 91

chateau@monconseilgazin.com
100% Malbec. Inky purple, with tannins that are to the fore, closing in on the finish and a little subdued right now, but clearly good quality. This needs time in the bottle, the cloves and tarry chocolate needs to soften and open up, and the cassis fruits have to unwind. But there is clear potential here, and it's a wine with personality. **Drink 2020-2030 Alc 13.5%**

Château La Bastane, Cuvée Malbec, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 90

labastane@gmail.com
100% Malbec. Extremely inky in colour, touch of reduction on the nose, not surprising as this seems both extremely young and packed full of anthocyanes. Has ambition and confidence, clearly, and pulls it off. Young though, don't rush in. **Drink 2020-2034 Alc 14%**

Château la Gamaye, Folie Rouge, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 90

wilfried@vignobles-bourceau.com
100% Malbec. Graceful and floating through the palate, with clear points of spice. The tannins are a little drying but there is intense fruit to balance them out. **Drink 2020-2030 Alc 13.5%**

Château les Chaumes, L'Exubérante, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 90

apartementier@hotmail.fr
98% Malbec, 2% Merlot. A blast of sweet damson, with chocolate and cassis notes. Same blend as the main Château les Chaumes but this is unoaked while the other is aged in barrel. The unoaked version emphasises the pure fruit purée when you take a breath, but it lacks some depth and richness. Interesting to compare the

two, a great insight into the experimentation going on in the Côtes. **Drink 2020-2032 Alc 13.5%**

Château Cap Saint Martin, Le Cabernet d'En Face, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 89

vignobles.ardoin@wanadoo.fr
100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Black fruits, clear spice, well defined but not overdone. Confident, acidity a little high but it is easy to admire the construction in this wine. **Drink 2020-2030 Alc 13%**

Château des Demoiselles, Réserve de Famille, Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2012 89

jonathan.ducourt@ducourt.com
100% Merlot. Clear in its intent, firm well drawn out tannins, silky smooth, although the high alcohol just slightly knocks off the balance, gives a touch of austerity on the finish. **Drink 2020-2030 Alc 14%**

Château Labrousse, Grande Cuvée, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 89

magali@corlianges.com
100% Merlot. Firm dark and deep flavours, good quality if a touch brutal right now, those tannins bite. Ambitious, spiced blackberry notes. **Drink 2020-2032 Alc 13.5%**

Vignerons de Tutiac, Origines Six Chemins, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 89

contact@tutiac.com
100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Plum and



Photograph: Château Mazerolles

damson, inky colour with chocolate notes, poised and modern with personality, if a little short. Vignerons de Tutiac is a name to increasingly watch in Bordeaux, making good value bottles across a number of appellations. **Drink 2020-2025 Alc 13.5%**

Château Bel-Air La Royère, Justin Malbec, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 88

chateau.belair.la.royere@wanadoo.fr
100% Malbec. Cedar dominates on the nose, this is a little sweet but it has charm and is easy to drink. Warm in feel, rich texture, with spice and tannins that are present but not overly intrusive. **Drink 2020-2030 Alc 14.5%**

Château de l'Anglais, Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 88

francois.brissot@numericable.fr
100% Merlot. Rich and sweet ripe red fruits, strawberry emphasis gives a soft but unfussy wine, clear freshness, easy to drink. **Drink 2020-2030 Alc 13.5%**

Château Pilet, Alt 120 Metres, Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 88

scvjqueyrens@orange.fr
100% Cabernet Sauvignon. The Cabernet comes through in its rich black fruits, but there is clear sweetness alongside, and overall things are powerful and knitted together. Needs time, has potential although not perfect balance. **Drink 2020-2034 Alc 14%**

Page, Page Noir, Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 88

aodwine@yahoo.fr
100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Clean and well expressed black fruits, lacks a little light and shade but there are some attractive sinewy and savoury fruits on display. Subdued right now but opens over time in the glass. Awaiting organic certification. **Drink 2020-2030 Alc 13.5%**

Vignobles Carreau Sélection, 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 88

lauriewine@hotmail.com
100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Touch of green pepper on the edge of the dark fruits, this feels both classic Bordeaux and yet slightly wild. Savory, firm tannins, ripe but not overly so. Fresh blast of menthol on finish. Interesting wine, will soften over next few years. **Drink 2020-2032 Alc 14%** ➤

ATYPICAL GRAPE VARIETY

Château Haut Grelot, L'As de Grelot, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 93
jbonneau@wanadoo.fr
60% Merlot, 40% Malbec. Clear deposit on the side of the glass and lovely rich dark colour. A real clear sweetness through the palate, damson and black cherry, excellent quality. Powerful but takes its foot off the pedal just at the very last minute so you get a flood of juice to finish things off. Dark chocolate and smokey tar; but also tons of fruit and firm pliable tannins. Great quality, from four generations of the Bonneau family. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 14%

Château Puygueraud, Cuvée George, Francs Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 93
secretariat@puygueraud.com
50% Malbec, 30% Cabernet Franc, 20% Merlot. Full of poise and drama, a tightrope of power and finesse, really impressive with complexity and depth, and a really interesting blend of grapes. HVE-certified. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 14.5%

Vignobles Arbo, Arbo Malbec, Francs Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 92
earl.arbo@orange.fr
90% Malbec, 10% Merlot. Well-handled, where high alcohol notes seem enrobed by the power of the black cherry and damson fruit. This will take its time to come around but is good quality and worth the wait. HVE-certified, ISO 14001. Aged in stainless steel but still manages to feel seductively textured. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 14.5%

Château Carsin, Cuvée Noire, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 91
nea@carsin.com
69% Merlot, 13% Cabernet Franc, 5% Malbec, 5% Petit Verdot, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Carménère. This has personality and zip and is doing its best to express a purpose and a sense of direction. No overly worked or polished, it feels vibrant and fun with fresh recurrant and raspberry fruits and a twist of grilled rosemary. A blend of all six red grape varieties allowed in Bordeaux. 5% Petit Verdot, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Carménère complete the mix. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 13.5%

Château Montfollet, Icône, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 91
d.raimond@chateaux-solidaires.com

60% Merlot, 10% Malbec, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Cabernet Franc, 10% Petit Verdot. Powerful and deep in colour as this entire flight is from Blaye, and clear deeply spiced herbal notes on the palate. Clear ageing potential, enjoyable and atypical. 10% Cabernet Franc completes the blend. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 15%

Château Reynon, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 90
aline@denisdubourdieu.fr
75% Merlot, 17% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Petit Verdot. This is deep rich sweet fruit plenty of tannins but fairly soft and plush. Liquorice is clear here, and this is good - but not an unusual blend. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 14%

Château Terre Blanche, Les Cailloux, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 91
odile@terreblanche.com
80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot. Confident and carefully extracted. Unusual to have this amount of Cabernet Sauvignon in a Blaye blend for sure and these wines challenge what the Côtes can do. Black cherry, spiced damson, olive paste, enjoyable lift on finish. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 13.5%

Château Magdeleine Bouhou, Grand Vin, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 90
info@magdeleine-bouhou.com
90% Merlot, 10% Malbec. Savoury swirl of black cherry and cut herbs; clear spice with a powerful punch through the attack, good length and tannins that are smooth and elongated, lots to enjoy, feels alive and enjoyable. Getting far less unusual to have 10% Malbec in wines from the Côtes, but we'll allow it. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 14%

Château Peyredouille, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 89
mdesaintjan@lgcf.fr
73% Merlot, 20% Petit Verdot, 7% Malbec. Gentle white spice, rich texture that is sinewy and muscular, adding interest through the palate. Good quality. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 14%

Vignerons de Tutiac, L'Un dans l'Autre, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 89
contact@tutiac.com
40% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Petit Verdot. Juicy but savoury, streak of leathery taste underneath the fruit, makes it enjoyable and with personality. But not unusual varieties. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 13.5%



PARCEL SELECTION

Château du Grand Barrail, La Révélation, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 91

vignobles@denislafor.com
Powerful and concentrated on the nose, a touch of reduction but more smoking gun than burnt tyre, and it adds a whiff of smoke that I really enjoy. This has personality and poise, and it's a good wine. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 13.5%

Château les Guyonnets, Lion D'or, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 91
didiertordeur@aol.com

One of the pure inky deep colour ones some liquorice on the nose and attack, tar and smoke following up, and heat on the tongue. Once you acclimatise to all of that this is a juicy rich and concentrated wine, with notes of olive paste an really rather lovely. Will take its time to fully soften. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 13.5%

Château Petit Boyer, Unique Terroir Premium, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 91

bideau.jv@petit-boyer.com
A ton of personality here, touches of sweet cola flavour, with spice and rich sweet damson. Powerful kick, hardly typical flavours of Bordeaux but smooth tannins, sexy feel with swagger and good freshness. Enjoyable. Terra Vitis, HVE-certified. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 14.5%

Château Cantinot, Collection, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 90
chateau.cantinot@wanadoo.fr
Carefully extracted with power and

freshness, this 100% Cabernet Sauvignon has a good sense of personality and forward motion, hard to argue with its intent. Unusual squat bottle shape as with the 100% Malbec Cantinot. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 13.5%

Domaine des Graves d'Ardonneau, Grand Vin, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 90

gravesdardonneau@wanadoo.fr
Powerful dark ruby colour, not quite inky but getting there. Really like this, silky sooth with clear chocolate notes. Enjoyable, there is heat from the alcohol but it is sweet kirsch cherry and it works. Enjoyable and with personality. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 14%

Château du Cros, Coteaux de Lou, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 90

catherine.boyer@chateauducros.com
Well held together if a little more subdued than some, classic and well presented. Packed full of tannins but with a softness to them that is really enjoyable and nicely integrated with the brambly black fruits. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 13%

Château Haut-Rian, Selection Parcelle Saint-Seurin, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 89

chateauhautrian@gmail.com
Tight tannic structure, deep fruit flavours with well constructed tannins and attractive spice notes. The colour is not as deep as the flavours suggest and will improve further with a few more years. **Drink** 2021-2032 **Alc** 13.5%

Château les Conseillans, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 89
alexandre@bordeauxlink.wine

Enjoyable berry fruits here, soft on the finish but with attractive olive paste notes and a juicy twist. Gentle frame but with plenty of pleasure. 10% Cabernet Franc completes the blend. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 14.5%

Château les Conseillans, Réserve du Pré Carré, Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 89
alexandre@bordeauxlink.wine

Real spice and attitude although the alcohol is a little out of balance and gives heat on the finish. Plenty to enjoy, and a reminder that Cadillac can be dark and powerful, and far closer to Blaye in character than Castillon or Francs. 2% Cabernet Franc finishes the blend. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 14.5%

Château de Ricaud, Grand Vin, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 88
contact@ourthe.com

Cedar on the nose with a smoky finish, powerful flashy style with a silky texture. A little overpowering but with impact. Good stuff from Vignobles Ourthe. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 14.5%

Château La Rame, Grand Vin, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 88
dgm@wanadoo.fr

Tight, tart, tannins are bristling and bright, and absolutely close in on the end of play. The black cherry is enjoyable and builds up through the mid palate. Will soften over the next few years in bottle - you might want to carafe it for now. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 13.5%

Château le Camplat, Prestige, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 88
marion.recullet@orange.fr

Dark ruby in colour, not hugely expressive on the nose and this is struggling to come through on the palate right now also. In the glass it relaxes and opens up, and what you get are cut herbs, white pepper spice, savoury and more on the mineral notes than the fruit, acidity a touch high on the finish. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 14%

Château Peneau, La Dame de Haute-Sage, Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 88
emilie.douce@chateaupeneau.com

Well expressed, nicely extracted, rich and spicy and silky, and full of life. A touch high acidity makes the finish a little abrupt but it's good quality along

the way, from this 30ha estate on clay-limestone and gravel soils worked by Dany and Emilie Douence. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 13%

Les Truffards du Domaine d'Argilius, Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 88
ludovic-battistin@orange.fr

Touch of reduction, extremely tight dark fruit, tannins really closing in. Really grows on me and this is extremely young right now, but clearly needs time in bottle and then in glass. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 14.5%

ORGANIC/BIODYNAMIC

Château Cru Godard, Francs Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 92

cru.godard@wanadoo.fr
There is some resistance to the tannins, feels like you have to work for it, wait a little for things to open up. Damson and black cherry fruits, clear spice notes, good precision, ambitious without being swaggering, with a juicy finish. 5% Malbec completes the blend from this 10ha estate owned by Franck and Carine Richard. Organic since 2010. **Drink** 2021-2036 **Alc** 14%

Château les Mangons, Chant Secret, Sainte-Foy Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 92
info@chateulesmangons.com

Deep ruby in colour, evident extraction, ambitious, a little overly swaggering but with cocoa powder, liquorice and black chocolate to fill out the brambly fruits. Potential for ageing. Biodynamic estate since 2000. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 13.5%

Château Moulin des Blais, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 92

ludivine@vignoblesgabriel.com
Good depth to the brambly fruits here in both colour and on the palate. A lovely clarity of purpose and real juice though the palate, one of my favourites of the tasting, great quality with layers, spice, minerality, soft well-ripened fruit and a mouthwatering finish. A 12ha estate from winemaker Guillaume Guérin who spent time working in New Zealand before taking over from his parents at this property in 2013. **Drink** 2021-2034 **Alc** 13% ➤

Clos Puy Arnaud, Les Acacias, Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 92
contact.cpa@orange.fr
Inky deep damson colour and on the nose plenty of ambition. The fruit is held together with high acidity and firm tannins, a touch of rusticity but brambles and rich blackberry bring a sense of pleasure. Lovely to see a 100% Cabernet Franc wine also, showcasing what this variety can bring. Expect the aromatics to deepen even further with a few more years in bottle. **Drink** 2020-2035 **Alc** 13.5%

Clos Puy Arnaud, Cuvée Bistrot, Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 91
contact.cpa@orange.fr
You are immediately taken to Castillon with this wine, with that distinctive cheery quality that is so enjoyable in the appellation. Bright, uplifting, good quality, easy to enjoy. It has vibrancy and is bursting out of the glass with ruby violet colours and redcurrant and cherry flavours. Medium bodied, unfussy and enjoyable, extremely impressive in a challenging vintage. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 13%

Château Brethous, Cuvée Prestige, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 91
chateaubrethous@gmail.com
Right from the first nose you get a blast of menthol that holds through the palate. Ambitious with tar and black fruits elbowing the fruits a little out of the way at this stage, suggesting a touch of reduction that will settle. The whole thing is confident drawn out along the palate, great quality. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 14.5%

Château de Claribès, Marpeau, Sainte-Foy Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 91
helen.kelly@claribes.com
Juicy, with a sense of forward motion but also of restraint. Very nicely balanced, slightly chewy tannins balanced by acidity and dark fruits, ambitious but not trying too hard, this is good. 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Carménère completes the blend. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 14%

Château Fontbaude, M de Fontbaude, Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 91
chateau.fontbaude@wanadoo.fr
Extremely deep in colour with an inky damson hue. Pretty subdued on the nose at first, although opens up to pepper, black cherry and bilberry. Overall this

works, because although the flavour are closed right now they are deep and concentrated and open up slowly but surely. Take your time, and enjoy this unusual 100% Malbec from the Sabaté family, who have been at the helm of this property for over 50 years. Organic since 2012. **Drink** 2019-2034 **Alc** 13%

Château les Aubiers, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 91
ludivine@vignoblesgabriel.com
Dark purple in colour, appealing nose of polished black fruits, touches of cedar. The tannins are evident and there is even a touch of heat through the alcohol, although not intrusively so. A good wine, with impact and poise, walls and floors, ambitious without being overpowering. 5% Cabernet Franc finishes the blend. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 13%

Prélude No 16 du Grand Moulin, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 91
ludivine@vignoblesgabriel.com
Jean-François Réaut is winemaker at this excellent property, making a wine that is full of personality. Dark in colour, aromatics of black cherry, bilberries and blackberry, bramble edges giving juice and the right kind of rusticity, enjoyable and packs a punch. Organic. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 13%

Château Haut-Colombier, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 90
contact@chateauhautcolombier.com
Dark ruby red, medium bodied with cherry overtones, sweet fruit and plenty of freshness and ripeness. This is a wine for early and easy consumption,

enjoyable with soft tannins. Run by Olivier and Emmanuel Chéty, brothers who first converted to organics in 2011. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 14.5%

Château Les Tours de Peyrat Vieilles Vignes 2016, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 90
d.raimond@chateaux-solidaires.com
Medium bodied and packed with dark fruit, with a notable tannic weight and chewy structure that suggests it will take a while to soften up. Clear potential here, a good wine from a 15ha estate that is part of the Chateaux Solidaires informal grouping of estates across Bourg and Blaye. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 14.5%

Château Brethous, Cuvée Classique, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 89
chateaubrethous@gmail.com
Despite being unoaked, this is a well structured wine with powerful fruits and a tannic bite on the finish that closes in around you, a physical wine that needs some time in bottle to soften. Good potential. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 14%

Château Haut Bigord, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 89
ludivine@vignoblesgabriel.com
Dark loganberry in colour, deep spice and rich black good fruit on the palate. Brooding and wound up with big tannins and concentrated fruits, it needs time to relax. Touch of heat through the mid palate, this is an ambitious wine. No added sulphur, organic since 2013. **Drink** 2021-2034 **Alc** 13%

Château Haut-Rian, Les Vignes de Coulous, Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 89
chateauhautrian@gmail.com
Clear sweetness to the raspberry and black cherry fruits, with warmth and easy appeal. Soft tannins, well brushed with gently expressed spice, menthol blush on finish. Good stuff from the Dietrich family for this unoaked wine aged in stainless steel. Organic. **Drink** 2020-2034 **Alc** 13.5%

Château La Levrette, CIL, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2014 89
lmauriac@chateau-la-levrette.com
This is the first vintage where Château La Levrette was fully organic, but is not yet on sale as the estate keeps its wines back until ready to drink (they are about

to release the 2010, also tasted and enjoyed although not organic at that point). This 2014 has dark berry fruits and is medium bodied, packed with firm tannins that will easily take another few years in bottle. Aged in 400l barrels, 50% new, for 16 months before being kept in bottle at the estate to develop further complexity. An interesting initiative that you see rarely in Bordeaux, and speaks of the care that brother and sister Laetitia and Arthur Mauriac take over their wine. **Drink** 2022-2034 **Alc** 14.5%

Château Rochers de Joanin, Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 89
f-despaigne@grand-corbin-despaigne.com
Medium bodied, soft red fruits, fairly high acidity but nicely balanced by a dancing minerality through the palate. Plenty of character and distinction, light and perky, enjoyable, no need to wait. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 14%

Le Prévot du Château Grand Place, Francs Côtes de Bordeaux 2015 89
les-vins-claude-delmas@wanadoo.fr
Blackberry and black cherry here, has a sense of vibrancy and clarity of delivery. A good wine with polish from a clearly warm year. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 13.5%

Château Beynat, Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 88
atourenne@gmail.com
Dark cherry red colour, good depth to the fruit although the tannins are pretty tight and this needs a little more time to open up and soften. Owned by Alain Tourenne, certified organic since 2011 and now converting to biodynamics. **Drink** 2021-2032 **Alc** 14%

Château Fontbaude, Selection Vieilles Vignes, Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 88
chateau.fontbaude@wanadoo.fr
Medium bodied, sweet summery fruits, cedar and strawberry, unfussy and easy to drink. **Drink** 2020-2032 **Alc** 14%

Château Pré la lande, Cuvée Diane, Sainte-Foy Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 88
michel@prelalande.com
A juicy expression, with a rustic unfussy charm and some well defined blackberry fruits with brambles, coffee bean and rose overtones. 80% new oak ageing in 300l barrels. **Drink** 2021-2032 **Alc** 13.5%

Château Tour d'Horable, Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 88
ludivine@vignoblesgabriel.com
Winemaker Pierre Faytout has made a perky, enjoyable wine with fairly high acidity but manages to translate that into a mouthwatering finish with well defined red fruits. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 13%

Château la Braulterie de Peyraud, Cuvée Prestige, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2017 87
braulterie@wanadoo.fr
A sweet almost powdery edge to the fruit here. From clay-gravel soils, well rounded tannins, notes of roses, unfussy rusticity alongside rich autumnal fruits and a dark spice that slowly steals up on you through the palate. **Drink** 2020-2030 **Alc** 13.5%

WHITES

Château Puyanché, Francs Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 92
earl.arbo@orange.fr
This is an excellent wine, full of pleasure and rich white fleshy fruit with an utterly mouthwatering finish. HVE, ISO 14001. **Drink** 2020-2025 **Alc** 13.5%

Château Haut-Canteloup, Prestige, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 92
chateau-hautcanteloup@wanadoo.fr
Juicy and mouthwatering, lots of green apple and cut grass Sauvignon signature without being overdone. Slate texture adds minerality through the finish and clear grip. **Drink** 2020-2025 **Alc** 14%

Château de Claribès, Sainte-Foy Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 91
helen.kelly@claribes.com
Beautifully bright and fresh aromatics, clear floral and crisp green notes, pear and juicy grapefruit, heading high in acidity but this is star bright and full of flavour. **Drink** 2020-2025 **Alc** 14.5%

Château Le Camplat, Prestige, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 91
marion.recullet@orange.fr

Absolutely bursting with flavour, green citrus, rosemary, lemon, great quality. **Drink** 2020-2025 **Alc** 13%

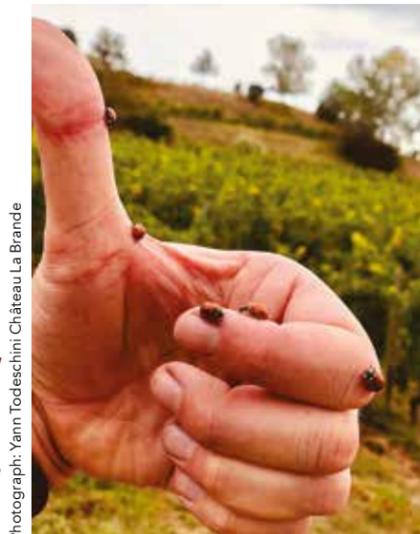
Château Les Charmes Godard, Francs Côtes de Bordeaux 2016 91
contact@charmes-godard.com
More muscular and carefully constructed than the other whites in the line up, this has impact and needs time to unfurl. Attractive white flower and rosemary spices comes through after five minutes in the glass. AREA-certified. **Drink** 2020-2027 **Alc** 13%

Château Haut Colombier, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 89
contact@chateauhautcolombier.com
Deep and rich flavours, grabs you and keeps you interested, Still fresh, with acidity that reaches through the glass but keeps things mouthwatering rather than tart. Organic. **Drink** 2020-2025 **Alc** 14.5%

Château Lacaussade Saint-Martin, Trois Moulins, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 89
magali@corlianges.com
Unusual to have such a high amount of Semillon and it is clearly richer and rounder than the others in the white lineup. Works well, herbal kick that lifts the rich citrus notes, and enjoyable slate texture through the finish to give minerality. **Drink** 2020-2025 **Alc** 13%

Château les Aubiers, Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 89
ludivine@vignoblesgabriel.com
Enjoyable, balanced and direct, with fresh white flower quality. Juicy white pear flesh though the mid palate. **Drink** 2020-2025 **Alc** 12%

Château La Tour de Chollet, Sainte-Foy Côtes de Bordeaux 2018 89
paul@latourdechollet.com
Starts out extremely fresh and full of bright summery pear and apricot fruits on the nose, not quite as full fruited on the palate, but this is a savoury white wine with appeal. **Drink** 2020-2025 **Alc** 13%



Photograph: Yann Todeschini Château La Brande

CÔTES DE BORDEAUX

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