


**CHÂTEAU
GRAND-PUY-LACOSTE**
GRAND CRU CLASSÉ EN 1855



By Tom Jenkins, Bordeaux Buyer – Justerini & Brooks – October, 24th 2014

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Bordeaux 2012: The Usual Suspects

Posted by Justerini & Brooks

The annual Bordeaux tasting at the Royal Opera House was rather less busy than normal, but those who did attend were in up-beat mood. Our friends from Aquitaine arrived fresh from an Indian summer that has lifted spirits and hopes for the 2014s. And it would appear that the worst of the 'Bordeaux Bashing' may be over. Clients are beginning to re-visit this once darling region and re-discover their love affair with Claret.



2012 was far from an ideal growing season and the harvest was particularly precarious. Initially we thought this favoured the early ripening Merlots from Pomerol and Pessac. The challenge on



the left bank was to wait for maturity and risk dilution and rot or cut one's losses and harvest before the rain. At the time of the primeur tastings our Chairman said that *'terroir, technique and timing were all key to success in 2012'*. How right he was. On the evidence of Thursday's tasting, it is the usual suspects who have risen to the top of the pile. Perennial successes such as Grand Puy Lacoste, Domaine de Chevalier, Malartic Lagraviere, Smith Haut Lafitte and the two Pichons have made beautiful wines with concentration, vitality and freshness. It is not a blockbuster vintage, that is for sure, however, there are wines that will give enormous drinking pleasure and are sensibly priced. Xavier Borie's GPL and Olivier Bernard's Domaine de Chevalier Rouge deserve special mention – these are both tremendous value.

At the time of release we were rather negative about Sauternes. We always try to be honest in our assessment and we discouraged clients from buying these wines. It is clearly not a good vintage for sweeties – the wines are at best simple and lack botrytis. When there are so many good Sauternes vintages to choose from, one can quite easily forget about the 2012s altogether.

Those pessimistic about the primeur system said at the time, *'these are not wines to buy en primeur'*, and they have largely been proved right. Many of the 2012s are still available at their opening prices (good news for consumers) – but given how well some of the reds tasted and their relative affordability, they may not be around at these prices for long...

- Tom Jenkins, Bordeaux Buyer

<http://justerinis.blogspot.fr/2014/10/bordeaux-2012-usual-suspects.html>