



# CHÂTEAU GRAND-PUY-LACOSTE

GRAND CRU CLASSÉ EN 1855

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## Food + Drink 11

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Cool reds  
for a  
hot day



Chilling red wines in the summer is not daft, it's delicious. A 10-15 minute dip in the ice-bucket, or half an hour in the fridge door, is all it takes to turn your favourite light to medium red into a perky, thirst-quenching, summer quaffer. Experienced red-wine chillers enjoy lighter, softer reds on the hottest days, ones that have spent twice or three times that period in the chiller, so experiment to see what suits you best. There is something satisfying in turning a good, ordinary red into a vibrant, fresh, tantalisingly fruity mouthful served from a bottle that is cold to the touch, with mouthwatering beads of condensation. What chilling red wines down does is knock back the alcohol and enhance the perfume and fruit.

Make the mistake of serving red wines at room temperature on a hot day and you will have a surly, spirty, jammy glassful that is mawkish, and impossible to taste, let alone judge. Precisely the condition that the Soil Association's organic red wines were in by 9.30am when I turned up to judge the annual awards last week. Bringing the 30 or so reds down to the correct temperature was easy-peasy with a bowl of ice cubes; all the judges had to do was drop a couple of ice cubes into each glass and fish the remains out when the red wine was cool enough. Any of you served a horrid, warm, flabby, soupy glass of red wine can restore your sanity, and the wine's fresh fruit, by following suit, though I have yet to meet a sommelier who brings ice cubes at moments like this with a smile.

As the Soil Association judging showed, all bar heavy, oaky, tannin-laden reds taste that bit more refreshing chilled on hot days. The reds at this event that refused to be tamed by the big chill, so don't even try, included Argentinian malbec, plus Aussie and South African cabernet and shiraz. To that list I'd add top bordeaux and red Italians, like barolo.

The other great joy of serving a cool red is that there are lots of strongly flavoured summer menus that make mincemeat of white wines and steamroller rosés, so it's a relief to serve and enjoy a cool red instead. Lighter bodied, fruitier French reds made from the gamay grape, such as beaujolais, are ideal ice-bucket contenders so dive

into a chilled glass of the deliciously, fruity, plum-packed 2011 Waitrose Beaujolais for £6.99. Or try a juicy Loire red made from the cabernet franc grape from the appellations of Chinon, Bourgueil, Saumur-Champigny and Saumur. One of my favourites from the latter is the bargain, dusky violets and Victoria plum fruit of the 2011 Saumur Les Nivières, just £6.79 at Waitrose. Or opt for a beguiling Loire pinot noir, the ripe, leafy, verdant, summer pudding-stashed 2010 Sancerre Rouge, Maulin Bêle, from André Vatan (Yapp Bros, 01747 860423, £15.25). Tender Kiwi pinot noirs are also delicious chilled and Asda's 2011 Extra Special New Zealand Pinot Noir oozes brilliant, lively, leafy, gamey, strawberry fruit, £12. Time to freeze some more ice cubes.

### This week's best buys



2012 Finest Côtes du Rhône Villages, Plan de Dieu, France  
Tesco, down to £5.99 until August 13

Deeply impressive, romping Rhône red, with stacks of plump, curranty, brambly fruit; ideal with barbecued burgers and ribs.



2012 Finest Cabernet Sauvignon Carmenera, Kulapelli Vineyard, Malpo Valley, Chile  
Tesco, down to £5.99 until August 13

Brilliant value, with cabernet's more austere, blackcurrant flavours filled out with verdant, raspberry-rich carmenera.

### The keeper



2007 Lacoste Borie, Pauillac, Bordeaux, France  
Sainsbury's, £23.99

Don't just try the Taste the Difference range, check out the Classic selection too, which is strong on bordeaux, burgundy and the rhône. Lacoste-Borie is the second wine of classy Pauillac fifth growth, Château Grand Puy Lacoste, whose wines always impress. Even in an ordinary vintage, like 2007, this cabernet sauvignon-based claret, topped up with merlot and a dash of cabernet franc, is a charmer. Expect warm, seductive, deftly oaked cedarwood and perfumed leather complexity from this beefy claret that is beautiful now but still has the stamina for a few more years in the cellar, at least until 2016.



2012 Falabella Blanco, Terre di Chieti, Tenuta Ulisse, Italy  
Majestic Wine Warehouses, £3.99 or 2 for £7.99 each

Bravo the Ulisse brothers, at a top Terre di Chieti estate, for this zingy Italian white with lemon zest to the fore and a fine herby, softly spiced finish.



2011 Kuhlmann-Platz, Gewürztraminer Cuvée Prestige, France  
Majestic £9.99 or 2 for £8.99 each

Exotic Alsace white with oodles of rich, heady, lychee, ginger and rose-petal spice that, well-chilled, is tailor-made for smoked salmon.