

# the innerCellar

Special Edition Newsletter

## Dear Customer,

This is without doubt an exciting time of year for those of us involved in the En-Primeur business. A far cry from the 2008 campaign, prices have increased, scores have increased and the overall view of the 2009 vintage upon barrel tasting in March is overwhelmingly positive. Three of our colleagues went to Bordeaux and tasted all of the wines that we are offering. They returned to Hong Kong with not only rave reviews and purple teeth, but also a curiosity towards how small the allocations would be and how high the prices would climb. Please note that all the first growths are on allocation and priority will be given to those customers who purchase a range of other wines. Do call or email us if you have any enquiries.

**The Altaya Team**

**Bordeaux En-Primeur 2009**

### Top Picks:

|                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Angelus           | Lafite                |
| Ausone            | Latour                |
| Cheval Blanc      | Margaux               |
| Cos d'Estournel   | La Mission Haut Brion |
| Ducru Beaucaillou | Mouton                |
| L'Evangile        | Palmer                |
| Haut Brion        | Petrus                |
| Hosanna           | Vieux Chateau Certan  |

### Value Buys:

|                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Branaire Ducru    | Leoville Barton    |
| Certan de May     | Lynch Bages        |
| Clos Fourtet      | Pavie Macquin      |
| Le Gay            | Pichon Baron       |
| Grand Puy Lacoste | Pichon Lalande     |
| Gruaud Larose     | Rauzan Segla       |
| Haut Bailly       | Smith Haut Lafitte |
| Larcis Ducasse    | Troplong Mondot    |

**Weather condition:** It may defy belief but Bordeaux has enjoyed a decade with no off vintages. 2009 joins 2000, 2003 and 2005 as a vintage which produced outstanding wines and the quality seems to be superior to all three. A cold winter with plenty of rain allowed water levels in the vineyard to build up in time for the budding and flowering to take place. As the year went on, the vineyards gradually dried out and the summer and autumn, crucial to the ripening of the grapes, were characterised by persistent but never excessive heat. Temperatures and hours of sunshine were above average and the vintage is already being compared to classics such as 1982 and 1947.

**Characteristics:** The 2009s are generally high in alcohol by Bordeaux standards but the levels of tannin and acidity have the effect of keeping the wines in balance. Advances in winemaking know-how and technology mean that the high sugar levels have fermented out, avoiding any excessive sweetness.

**Buying strategy:** This vintage sees no change to our usual policy of concentrating only on the top wines. This is a classic vintage with good tannins and very little green character, lovely fruit and good balance. These are well structured wines that will develop well in the long term. With the aggressive pricing we are seeing this year from the chateaux, there are some very good buys for claret lovers who are committed to the long term.

**Tasting notes:** All of the following wines were tasted by us in Bordeaux during the final week of March 2010. Our comments and ratings as well as those of Jancis Robinson (JR), Robert Parker / Wine Advocate (WA), and James Suckling / Wine Spectator (WS) are indicated on the following pages.

**Bottling:** Prices are for standard 750ml bottles. Wines can be bottled in half bottles, magnums or other formats for an additional charge. Please provide special bottling instructions before 31st August 2010.

**Storage:** There will be storage charge if we do not receive any shipping instruction before 30 Nov 2011 in the year following purchase. The charge will be HKD \$180 per annum per case or per large format bottle. Cellarage invoices will be raised on 1 January 2012. If you wish to collect your wine early, we will refund you with the remaining full month(s) storage fee on a pro-rata basis.

**Shipping Cost:** \$180 per case + Insurance (1.5% cost of wine). Please instruct us in advance for special shipping arrangements.

**Offer:** Please note that the following wines are offered ex-cellars Bordeaux. Minimum order is 1 case of 12 bottles (750ml) for each wine. If you need special bottling, please let us know at the time of order. They will be available for delivery in Spring/Summer 2012. Payment upon receive of invoice.

商界展關懷

caringcompany<sup>2008-10</sup>

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**ALTAYA WINES LIMITED**

2002 Bank of America Tower, 12 Harcourt Road, Central, Hong Kong

t 852.2523.1945 f 852.2523.1947 e info@altayawines.com u www.altayawines.com

## St Estephe

### *Calon Segur 2009 (JR 18) (WA 92-94+) (WS 93-96)*

**65 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Dark crimson. Wonderful electric vitality on the nose. Great vibrancy. Great integrity in the same way as Pontet-Canet is seamless right through the palate – great line. Pure and dense and polished. Really vibrant. Lovely minerality on the finish. Complete. **WA** It is a big, rich, tannic, structured, dense ruby/purple-tinged wine offering a sweet kiss of creme de cassis, loamy soil, and spice box. **WS** Delivers gorgeous aromas of blackberry, blueberry and licorice, with hints of tobacco and spice. Full-bodied, offering a lovely texture and refinement. Very long and beautiful, with tangy acidity and lively fruit. A rich, yet very balanced, Calon.

### *Cos d'Estournel 2009 (AWL 97-98) (JR 16.5+) (WA 98-100) (WS 97-100)* **240 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Asian spices, cedar wood and sweet minerals aromas. Full-bodied. Sexy, voluptuous and richly textured. Superbly ripe tannins. Very appealing. **JR** Obviously very ripe. Firmer than some of the more obvious Napa Valley-style wines in 2009 with the tannins much more obvious. Much more demanding than most 2009s and will need SO long. **WA** One of the greatest young wines I have ever tasted. Aromas of graphite, ink, creme de cassis, blackberries, cedar, and incense. Full-bodied and unctuously textured, a tour de force in winemaking. **WS** Supercharged in fruit, with intense aromas of tar, spice, cardamon, clove, blackberry and black pepper. Full-bodied, with masses of fruit, yet focused and in form. Chewy tannins, great length. Could be best ever from here?

## Pauillac

### *d'Armailhac 2009 (AWL 90-92) (JR 16.5+) (WA 90-93) (WS 91-94)*

**32 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Dark red. Ripe lively red fruit with good intensity and balance. Round tannins. Sweet and spicy finish. **JR** Fragrant with just a hint of farmyard. Black cherries. Less obviously ripe and supple than many 2009s on the nose but then on the palate there's a sweet start and a pretty chewy, slightly sinewy finish. **WA** This may be the finest d'Armailhac I have ever tasted. Deep ruby/purple hue along with floral, red and black currant, cedar, and spice characteristics. Deep, medium to full-bodied, and impressively pure as well as long. **WS** Love the minty, floral and dark berry aromas. Full-bodied, with super fine and polished tannins. Long and racy. Wonderful texture. Perhaps the best d'Armailhac ever.

### *Carruades de Lafite 2009 (AWL 90-91) (WA 92-94\*) (WS 89-92)*

**320 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Red berries, gentle spices in the nose. Medium bodied. Silky and ripe. Well-balanced. **WA** The best Carruades de Lafite I have ever tasted is the 2009. 55% of the crop was included in this second wine. It is an atypically powerful Carruades with slightly higher alcohol than usual as well as considerable structure. There are plenty of creme de cassis and crushed rock notes as well as a subtle wood component, and super intensity and lushness. **WS** Sweet berry and currant on the nose, with hints of cedar and sandalwood. Full-bodied, with wonderful milk chocolate and berry character.

### *Clerc Milon 2009 (AWL 92-94) (JR 17) (WA 90-92+) (WS 93-96)*

**46 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Dark purple. Lilies, minerals and sweet grapes in the bouquet. Fabulously juicy wine with plenty to offer. Caramel in the finish. Delightful. **JR** Pretty sumptuous and polished - super-ripe and flattering. Very sweet and rich, some slightly rugged tannins. No obvious alcohol but fairly ripe and plush, plus notable acidity. Fine boned with attractive sweetness. **WA** A tannic, structured, and backward which is atypical for this estate. It is a deep ruby/purple-hued, concentrated, impressively endowed effort. **WS** Blackberry galore, with fabulous floral and currant undertones. Complex on the nose. Full-bodied, offering chewy tannins and lots of black liquorice and currant character.

### *Duhart Milon 2009 (AWL 92-94) (JR 17.5) (WA 94-96) (WS 91-94)*

**100 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Opaque purple. Cedar, spices and liquorice aromas. Nice concentration. Best ever for Duhart Milon. Toasty oak and sweet minerals in the finish. **JR** Scented and satiny with lots of lush mulberry fruit in the middle. Very dry, Cabernet finish. Polished again and sleek. Fine tannins. Bone dry, light and lively on the finish. **WA** Appears to be the finest Duhart Milon yet made. Opaque purple color is followed by an extraordinary perfume of creme de cassis, violets, graphite, and subtle wood. Full-bodied, intense, voluptuously textured, pure, seductive. **WS** Intense aromas of currant and blackberry, with hints of toasted oak and flowers. Full-bodied, with thick and powerful tannins.

**Les Forts de Latour 2009 (AWL 93-94) (JR 18) (WA 93-95) (WS 92-95) 185 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep colour. Blackcurrant, spices, wood in the bouquet. Creme de cassis on the mouth. Medium to full bodied. Big muscular wine yet so juicy and ripe. **JR** Toasty and rich nose. Very plush and velvety - much more so than usual. Amazing texture yet with Les Fort's solidity. Very firm backbone. Very fine and deep. Wonderful texture. **WA** Perhaps the finest example ever made. Opaque purple color is followed by notes of black fruits, crushed rocks, spring flowers, and hints of blackberries and smoke. Prodigiously rich and thick with an amazingly long finish. **WS** Violet and mineral, with hints of blackberry and blueberry on the nose. Full-bodied, with superreserved and refined tannins, yet dense.

**Grand Puy Lacoste 2009 (AWL 92-94) (JR 17.5) (WA 93-95) (WS 91-93) 55 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Ripe. Beautiful wine. So fruity. A very appealing effort. **JR** Very firm and taut and Pauillac – less luscious than some 2009s. Very fresh and with real vigour and rigour. Lovely rich velvety stuff. **WA** Lovely nose of sweet currant and blueberry that follows through to a full body, with juicy, velvety tannins and a licorice, tar and dark chocolate finish. Like it. The new 1982? **WS** It boasts this estate's classic creme de cassis character as well as a soft, round, medium to full-bodied mouthfeel, pure fruit, and silky tannins, but not the weight, depth, or profound concentration of the top 2009 Pauillacs.

**Lafite 2009 (AWL 99-100) (JR 19) (WA 98-100) (WS 96-99) 1,550 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Black fruit, cedar, minerals, violets, vanilla and mint aromas. Full-bodied. Generous and voluptuous. Spicy palate with intense ripe fruit and syrupy characters. Well endowed. *In contention for one of the wines of the vintage.* **JR** Mineral, low-key nose, refined with great minerality. Very fine boned, with a bit more flesh than is usual for Lafite but no flashiness whatsoever. Very vibrant, very fine and a great undertow. Very complex and subtle indeed. Bone dry finish. Super refined. **WA** *A candidate for wine of the vintage.* Inky/purple-colored, notes of charcoal, incense, black currants, and licorice. In the mouth, it represents a liqueur of black fruits in a remarkably full-bodied, incredibly elegant, lush style. Expansive, savoury, staggeringly concentrated, and voluptuous as well as wonderfully precise with a hint of minerality. **WS** Currant and wild raspberry, with a lilac and exotic character on the nose, turning to sweet tobacco and cedar. Full-bodied, showing very racy tannins and a balance of pretty fruit. This is powerful yet elegant, almost delicate, with a wonderful polish. Then the tannins take off.

**Latour 2009 (AWL 99-100) (JR 19) (WA 98-100) (WS 97-100) 1,290 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Black centre. Seductive floral nose of creme de cassis, candied spices, liquorice, minerals, oak. Full-bodied. Lengthy. Like 2003 but with more acidity and refreshing characters. Phenomenal stuff. A legend in the making! **JR** Very rich and sweet ink on the nose. Wonderfully gorgeous and lush on the front palate. Then lots of heat and richness. Amazing power of fruit, extremely pronounced tannins. Violets. Latour backbone. Glossy ripe fruit. Candied violets. Enormous energy. Very impressive. **WA** Off the charts concentration in addition to the highest level of tannin ever measured at the estate. It boasts an inky/black/purple color as well as an extraordinary perfume of super-intense blue and black fruits, graphite, and a liqueur of rocks-like minerality. Enormously full-bodied yet at the same time incredibly fresh, vibrant, and precise, it coats the mouth, and builds incrementally to skyscraper-like texture, and a whopping finish that lasts over a minute. **WS** Incredibly floral on the nose, with violet and lilac as well as dark and ripe raspberry and blueberry. Full-bodied, with a dense and incredibly rich palate yet held back and in reserve. Such precision and beauty. It lasts for minutes on the palate. It is really the style of Latour, where the tannins grab you at the end. This will most likely be a perfect wine.

**Lynch Bages 2009 (AWL 95-96) (JR 17) (WA 94-96+) (WS 96-99) 103 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Black plums, creme de cassis, toasty oak and minerals nose. Powerful and expressive. Syrupy texture with very ripe tannins. Fabulous! **JR** Dense crimson. Rich and spicy and lifted. Really rather flirtatious. Not heavy or dense but very nicely balanced without aggressive notes of rough tannin or greenness. **WA** The black/purple-tinged 2009 exhibits a glorious perfume of graphite, black currants, and subtle smoke, powerful, thick, unctuously textured flavors, huge yet sweet tannins, fabulous purity. **WS** Amazing aromas of mint, spices and currant, with underlying licorice and tar. Full-bodied, with amazing fruit and a long, long finish. Blockbuster, but balanced. So structured. Lynch has not made a wine like this since perhaps 1989 or 1982.

**Mouton 2009 (AWL 97-99) (JR 18.5) (WA 96-98+) (WS 97-100) 800 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep purple ruby with black centre. Earth, cedar, spices, graphite, sweet tobacco and floral fruit in this refined bouquet. Remarkably rich and well-balanced palate with serious depth and breadth. The fresh minerally aftertaste goes on and on. Exceptional wine! **JR** Very exotic, minerals, spice and old ladies' handbags. Lovely topnotes. Real excitement on the nose here. Lovely palate entry and glossy texture. I think it may require just a bit more patience than some. **WA** Classic aromas of creme de cassis, violets, and hints of graphite and background oak. The overwhelming impression is one of layer upon layer of fruit, full-bodied opulence, and good structure. So incredibly promising. **WS** Mint, blackberry, currant and black licorice turn to flowers such as lilacs and roses. It fills your mouth with the same fruit, but with an intensity of superpolished tannins. Complex yet reserved coffee, toasted oak and ripe fruit Best Mouton since 1982 or 1986.

**Le Petit Mouton 2009 (AWL 88-89) (JR 16) (WA 90-92) (WS 90-93) 110 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep ruby colour. Red cherries and spices in the nose. Good firm structure. **JR** Very solid and rather arresting on the nose. Then just a little rustic on the palate. Chewy tannins, rather drying on the finish. **WA** The finest second wine they have ever made. Aromas of black currants, flowers, mocha, and earth jump from the glass of this fleshy, heady, full-bodied wine. **WS** Mint, mineral and black fruits follow through to a full body, with velvety tannins and persistent finish.

**Pichon Baron 2009 (AWL 94-96) (JR 18) (WA 93-95) (WS 92-95) 103 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Creme de cassis, sweet spices and hint of ripe bell peppers aromas. Lovely fruit. Concentrated. Great balance. Rich finish. **JR** Very mineral and grown up. Very fresh and fine tannins with density and lift on the finish. Very sophisticated. Very glossy and confident. Very sophisticated. **WA** Another great effort, the most powerful Branaire ever made. An inky/blue/purple color is followed by raspberry, boysenberry, crushed rock, graphite, and floral notes, and an opaque, broad, dense, substantial, impressively structured wine without any hardness. **WS** Loads of currant and blackberry, with mineral and dried flowers. Full-bodied, with ultrafine, very long tannins. A racy style, with excellent length.

**Pichon Lalande 2009 (AWL 94-96) (JR 17) (WA 96-98) (WS 95-98) 149 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Graphite, minerals, herbs, spices and cassis aromas. Ripe and silky texture on the rather feminine palate. Good weight and grip. Chewy tannins. Refreshing, with vanilla aftertaste. **JR** Heady, rich and spicy and lightly gamey. Very solid and dark and dense - almost brooding. Sweet, polished and fun. Just lacks a bit of bottom and density on the palate. Complete and savoury on the finish with very polished tannins. Appetizing and not at all forced. **WA** Exhibits an intoxicatingly intense nose of red and black fruits, subtle smoke, charcoal, forest floor, and a hint of flowers. Unusually full-bodied for a wine from this estate as well as unctuously textured, voluptuous, and incredibly pure and precise. **WS** Wow. This has an incredible complexity on the nose of currant, spice, mineral and flowers. Full-bodied, with a great density of fruit and tannins, yet polished and beautiful. Could be the new 1982 from here.

**Pontet Canet 2009 (AWL 94-96) (JR 18) (WA 97-100) (WS 95-98) 125 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Medium to dark purple colour. Plummy, minerally with cassis and hint of pepper in the bouquet. Plump, round, opulent and ripe wine. Sweet tannins. **JR** Very lively with real vibrant elderberry nose - there IS a bit of extra vitality in this wine! Intense richness that seems to come from the fruit rather than from winemaking. Something of Lafite's complexity and integrity. Plus Mouton's richness. Very well done. **WA** Outrageously concentrated, with silky tannin, opaque purple color, copious notes of graphite, cassis, licorice, and subtle smoke and forest floor. Full-bodied and unctuously textured with striking purity and definition, it is a wine of colossal weight as well as elegance. **WS** Aromas of blueberry skin, fresh flowers, liquorice and raspberry, with something exotic underneath it all. Full-bodied, with wonderful clarity and freshness. This keeps coming at you, with tannins and ripe fruit.

**Reserve de la Comtesse 2009 (AWL 88-89) (JR 16.5) (WA 91-93\*) (WS 88-91) 32 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Herbs, red elegant fruit nose. Grapey notes. More concentration for this wine. Very good year for this wine. **JR** Dark crimson. Very fragrant. Lifted, luscious and lively. Relatively light bodied and flirtatious. More transparent than most 2009s. Just a bit angular and sinewy. **WA** Flavorful and full-bodied with loads of texture and opulence, it offers up aromas of forest floor and black fruits. The surprisingly high tannin level is barely noticeable given the sweetness of the fruit and abundant glycerin. **WS** Currants and flowers on the nose. Dried spices as well. Full-bodied, with silky yet chewy tannins and a long finish. Dense and solid. **Second wine of Pichon-Lalande.**

**St Julien****Bechevelle 2009 (JR 16.5) (WA 92-94+) (WS 90-93) 56 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Good core of fruit and spices. Silky and well balanced. Good length. Fine indeed. **JR** Alluring graphite notes on the nose. Not dramatic but neat and pretty. Very sweet but with the tannins in check. Though it will take a little while for them to dissipate. Real juice and concentration though. **WA** This is the finest Bechevelle since 1982. Beautiful floral notes intermixed with notions of black raspberries and creme de cassis. The fruit hits the palate with a medium to full-bodied richness, and the wine possesses sweet, velvety tannins and stunning purity. **WS** Sweet berry and floral aromas, with a creamy undertone. Full-bodied, with a dense and polished palate, fine tannins and a long finish.

**Branaire Ducru 2009 (AWL 92-93+) (JR 16.5+) (WA 92-95) (WS 92-95) 49 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Very attractive nose of spices, grapes, black cherries. Medium bodied. Ripe. Plummy fruit. Pure. A pleasurable wine. **JR** Dark crimson with a pale rim. Very light nose with a rather unwelcome note of coconut. Just a little simple but lusciously so. The tannins on the finish are pretty rustic. Some real succulence. **WA** Another great effort. An inky/blue/purple color is followed by raspberry, boysenberry, crushed rock, graphite, and floral notes, and an opaque, broad, dense, substantial, impressively structured wine without any hardness. **WS** Aromas of blueberry, dried citrus fruit and currant. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and a long, long finish. Structured and tannic, but sweet fruit behind.

**Ducru Beaucaillou 2009 (AWL 96-98+) (JR 17)(WA 96-98+) (WS 96-99) 199 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep purple colour. Very lifted nose of creme de cassis, flowers, spices and vanilla oak. Full-bodied. Big structure. Deep and long. Sweet aftertaste. A very sensual wine with good complexity! **JR** Dense and peppery and quite mineral. Very polished. Lots of energy. Bone dry, spicy finish. Pretty drying tannins. Cool and slightly tarry. **WA** One of the all-time great Ducru Beaucaillous. Inky/purple-hued, unctuously textured, reveals layers and layers of blue, red, and black fruits, and hints of licorice and spice box. Despite its substantial, massive size, it retains an elegant style. **WS** This has an impressive powerful and hearty structure, with seductive floral, currant and licorice aromas and flavors. Structured and very, very powerful. The blockbuster tannins are sweet and fruit-coated. This is a classic, powerful style of Ducru. May be best yet.

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2002 Bank of America Tower, 12 Harcourt Road, Central, Hong Kong  
t 852.2523.1945 f 852.2523.1947 e info@altayawines.com u www.altayawines.com

**Gruaud Larose 2009 (AWL 93-94) (JR 16.5) (WA 92-94) (WS 94-97) 48 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Dark ruby. Sweet tobacco, earthy cherry fruit notes. Medium to full bodied. Good ripeness. Minerally and spicy finish. An improvement over recent vintages at Gruaud with better purity and precision. **JR** Dark crimson. Interesting leathery, almost Syrah-like notes. Very neat and satisfying. Savoury. Just a little austere on the finish. Drying tannins on the end. Very sweet. **WA** The finest Gruaud Larose since the 1990. Opaque purple color along with a big, sweet nose of creme de cassis, new saddle leather, spice box, and boysenberries. A rich, broad, savory, juicy style with lots of succulence, loaded with concentration and extract. **WS** Beautiful aromas of currant, black licorice and blueberry follow through to a full body, with chewy tannins and a long, juicy finish.

**Langoa Barton 2009 (AWL 92-93) (JR 16.5) (WA 90-92+) (WS 90-93) 45 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Lovely sweet berries and floral nose. Medium bodied. Very fresh and bright. Good intensity for this juicy wine. Beautiful spicy finish. **JR** Mid crimson with quite a pale rim. Pretty light - early picked? There's a nice freshness and neatness to this but it's overall a bit dry and grainy. 'Classic style'... Rather dry on the end. **WA** Painfully extracted, excruciatingly tannic, powerful. Anthony Barton has sure pushed the extraction, producing a wine for our children's children. **WS** Opulent blackberry aromas. Lovely jam, but fresh. Full-bodied and rich.

**Leoville Barton 2009 (AWL 95-97) (JR 17+) (WA 93-95+) (WS 92-95) 75 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Dark purple. Fabulous nose of black plums, spices and sweet minerals. Superb ripeness and great intensity. Long spicy finish with caramel aftertaste. Really impressive! **JR** An intense nose with some strange oak note? Sweet, light, polished start. Pretty sinewy. A bit austere. Needs a lot of time. But a very good complex undertow. A very slow burner. **WA** Massive extraction, an opaque purple color, huge density, extreme tannins, and a nearly endless finish. There is a lot to admire, and its good to taste a wine that will not be ready to drink for 30+ years. No compromise! **WS** Liquorice, berry, grape and currant on the nose. Full-bodied, with very fine tannins, pretty fruit, currant and mineral. A balanced and pretty wine. Not quite the intensity and blockbuster style of the 2005, but excellent.

**Leoville Las Cases 2009 (AWL 97-99) (JR 18) (WA 96-100) (WS 97-100) 245 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep purple ruby. Candied cherries, graphite, spices, oak and vanilla aromas. Succulent mouthful. Amazing structure, concentration and ripeness. Very well done! **JR** Subtle with great depth of fruit and a hint of tobacco. This seems much sweeter and lusher than Leoville Las Cases usually does even if there is a lot of tannin underneath. Really quite voluptuous, but lots of fancy tannin and a bit of alcohol on the finish. Very firm but a bit of a step change with all that sweetness on the top. **WA** One of the greatest Leoville Las Cases I have ever tasted, which is saying something. Inky/purple color, monumental concentration, and great clarity and purity of creme de cassis, black cherry, spice box, graphite, and wet rock characteristics. Extremely full-bodied with sweet tannin nearly concealed by the wine's power, glycerin, and awesome fruit concentration. **WS** What a nose. Black liquorice, raspberry, currant and dried flowers. Full-bodied and superpowerful, with masses of fruit and toasted oak, but a blockbuster finish of fruit, tannins and everything else. A more fruit-forward style for Las Cases.

**Leoville Poyferre 2009 (JR 17.5) (WA 97-100) (WS 93-96) 125 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Very dark crimson. Very grown-up and intense. Luscious fruit and top quality savoury oak. Very sweet start - really quite unusually sweet for a St-Julien. Very complete satisfying. Glamorous, polished. Long. Quite complex. **WA** One of the stars of the vintage. Filled with extraordinary opulence, voluptuous texture, and sweet tannin. It offers both intellectual and hedonistic pleasure with layer upon layer of ripe fruit. The high alcohol is not the least bit noticeable because of the extraordinary concentration and freshness. **WS** Wonderful aromas of currant and blackberry, with black olives. Full-bodied, with a mouth-coating palate of supersoft tannins that go on and on. Solid and polished.

**Saint Pierre 2009 (WA 94-98\*) 59 EUROS per bottle**

**WA** This has been a fabulous wine over recent vintages, but I do not think many consumers have caught on. Of course, there is far less of this classified-growth St-Julien than of any of the Leovilles, Beychevelle, Talbot, Gruaud Larose, or Branaire Ducru. Unbelievably powerful, rich, and impressive. An inky/purple color is followed by notes of creme de cassis, spring flowers, and forest floor, a layered, full-bodied, powerful mouthfeel, perfect balance, and extraordinary richness, purity.

**Talbot 2009 (JR 17) (WA 89-91) (WS 92-95) 40 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Light, graphite nose not without its attractions... Very sweet start but lifted and easy and utterly relaxed. Slightly dry tannins on the end. But very solid effort. Nice neat persistence. **WA** Reveals an opaque plum/garnet/purple color as well as knock-out aromas of black fruits, cedar, incense, licorice, and a Provencal garrigue-like character. Substantial, sexy, and seductive, it is almost slutty in its exuberance and ostentatiousness. It was a thrill to drink this. **WS** A red with a solid core of blueberry and currant aromas, with spices too. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and a balanced finish.

**Margaux****Alter Ego de Palmer 2009 (AWL 90-92) (JR 16.5) (WA 89-92) (WS 88-91) 39.5 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Beautiful nose with blackcurrant, cherries and minerals character. Well-balanced. Very attractive wine. **JR** 49% Cabernet Sauvignon. 51% Merlot. Very dark crimson. Very sweet and potent with masses of black fruits. Attractive scent but almost soupy! Big and bold and a sort of cross between New World style and Palmer sinewy influence. Very dramatic. Very round and a little bit inky on the end. Quite aggressive. Falls apart a bit on the finish. A little bit green on the finish. **WA** Equal parts blend of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon could have been drunk when I tasted it. A dense ruby/purple color is accompanied by smoky blackberry and black currant fruit notes, and a silky smooth, expansive, hedonistic, pleasure-filled wine that should drink well for a decade. **WS** Love the gorgeous red fruits in this wine. It seems a little Porty, with prune and blackberry character, but so soft, round and rich. Could use a little more in the center palate, but opulent and generous.

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**Giscours 2009 (JR 16) (WA 91-93) (WS 92-95)****42 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Odd herbal note. Very sweet start on the palate. Rather drying tannins but some Margaux polish and not too hot until the very end. A little drying and exaggerated on the finish. **WA** The finest Giscours I have tasted. Succulent and sexy with an inky/purple color, it offers sweet aromas of subtle barbecue smoke, graphite, blackberries, blueberries, and spring flowers. The tannins are remarkably sweet, substantial, and well-integrated. **WS** Subtle and pretty on the nose, with blueberry, blackberry and hints of flowers. Full and very fine, showing a beautiful texture of polished tannins. Wonderfully long and balanced.

**Malescot St Exupery 2009 (JR 17.5) (WA 95-97) (WS 97-100)****63 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Lovely sap on the nose here - really appetising. Round and gentle - could do with just a tad more freshness perhaps. But there is so much crammed in here for the future... **WA** Opaque ruby/purple, with a beautiful nose of charcoal, forest floor, and black fruits, the wine hits the palate with great intensity, a sumptuous texture, yet brilliant precision and purity. This is a superb wine that should drink well for 20-25 years. **WS** This is absolutely fabulous. I love the complex aromas of ripe fruit and fresh flowers that turn to mineral and raspberry, along with tannins on the finish. Full-bodied and dense, but so beautiful and long.

**Margaux 2009 (AWL 98-100) (JR 19+) (WA 98-100) (WS 96-99)****880 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Saturated purple/ruby. Spectacular nose of floral fruit, black plummy spices and sweet minerals. So silky yet it grows gently on the palate into a powerful wine and ends on a great high point. Stunning with amazing charm. Slightly toasty finish. Absolutely gorgeous! **JR** Sumptuous nose - just gorgeous. So fine, so ripe but with lovely freshness too. Will it ever be difficult to drink? Breadth across the palate. Just wonderfully relaxed and fresh and beautifully balanced. Soft tannins on the finish, very very long. **WA** Thirty-five percent of the crop went into the 2009 Chateau Margaux. The alcohol level of 13.3% is high, but not excessively so. A wine such as this is like the quintessence of terroir. A super, uber-concentrated perfume of creme de cassis and flowers cascades across the palate with a lightness of being despite massive concentration, a sumptuous personality, and an unctuous texture. It should be relatively drinkable at an early age, yet will last for 50-100 years. Oh my! **WS** The nose is so intensely fruity, but subtle and reserved at the same time. Fascinating. Full-bodied, yet superrefined, building on the palate. Fine and dense tannins.

**Palmer 2009 (AWL 97-98) (JR 18) (WA 94-96) (WS 95-98)****240 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Black purple/ruby. Fabulously ripe nose with candied black cherries and sweet stoney minerals. Full bodied. Voluptuous and seductive. Super silky and creamy texture. Long spicy finish with very velvety tannins. **JR** Very sweet and opulent on the nose. Very charming and glamorous. Much more of an expression of Merlot than many Medocs in 2009. **WA** The black/purple-colored 2009 Palmer exhibits a level of tannin that exceeds anything they have previously produced. Pure blackberry and black currant fruit notes intermixed with hints of incense, graphite, and wood are followed by an opulent, thick, juicy wine with plenty of structure, and enormous concentration, mass, and length. **WS** Loaded with exotic fruit, with masses of crushed blackberry and blueberry. Superclear and fruit forward. Full and velvety, with fresh acidity and a long, long finish. . Superseductive.

**Pavillon Rouge de Margaux 2009 (AWL 92-94) (JR 17) (WA 91-93) (WS 90-93) 130 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Most dense and complex Pavillon Rouge ever. Great improvement for this wine. Round with such elegance. Lovely delicious wine. Impressive! **JR** Bright crimson. Very fragrant, quite low key. Very sweet palate entry and light and just a little herbaceous on the palate. Some chew, deep throat warming finish though. Very pure. **WA** The dark ruby/purple-hued 2009 Pavillon Rouge de Chateau Margaux offers a big, sweet kiss of spring flowers intermixed with blueberries and blackberries, a silky texture, and a dense, concentrated, but seamless mouthfeel. **WS** Love the strawberry and ripe raspberry aromas. Full-bodied, with superrefined tannins, berry, flower and rose petal. Fresh finish. Harmonious.

**Rauzan Segla 2009 (AWL 93-94) (JR 17.5) (WA 92-95) (WS 93-96)****69 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep purple/ruby. Very appealing floral aromatics that leads to a palate with pure and luscious fruit. Ripe with gorgeously silky mouthfeel. Nice long finish. **JR** Dark crimson. Light and fragrant. Thick on the palate. Should give lots of pleasure - does not need food. Lots of care in tannin management, I would have thought. A wine with real intensity. **WA** Wine reveals extraordinary density, power, and richness as well as explosive fruit, and terrific acidity, intensity, and power. This outstanding 2009 should age nicely for 35-40+ years. **WS** Shows a lovely concentration of currant and blackberry. Hints of vanilla follow through to a full body, with layers of ripe fruit and fine, fruit-coated tannins. I love the ripe and pretty fruit to this. Very fruit-forward.

**Pessac Leognan****Domaine de Chevalier 2009 (AWL 92-94) (JR 17.5) (WA 92-95+) (WS 93-96) 53 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Dark ruby colour. Pure red fruit with hint of delicate earth and smoke on the nose. Creamy, round texture. Shows real terroir. Velvety tannins. A juicy, harmonious wine. This property continues to improve year after year. **JR** Strong Cabernet aromas. Unusual! Well balanced and zesty. This seems what Pessac-Leognan should be. Very dry but not drying on the finish. Complete and full of minerality. **WA** The finest wine I have tasted from this estate in my 30+ - year career. It reveals an extraordinary, intense, pure, including silky tannin, dense plum, black currant, black cherry, floral, and graphite notes, and a full-bodied mouthfeel with no weight, but admirable precision and freshness. **WS** Shows a super nose of crushed blueberry and blackberry, with hints of raspberry. Full-bodied, offering a fabulous core of fruit and ripe tannins that caress your palate for minutes. Love the chocolate and blueberry character. Wonderful texture.

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2002 Bank of America Tower, 12 Harcourt Road, Central, Hong Kong  
 t 852.2523.1945 f 852.2523.1947 e info@altayawines.com u www.altayawines.com

**Domaine de Chevalier BLANC 2009 (WA 90-92) (WS 95-98)****69 EUROS per bottle**

**WA** A very primal nose with touches of red apple, pear, a touch of beeswax and apple-blossom. The palate is well balanced and light on its feet, well-judged acidity, a slight creaminess on the entry, broadening out nicely on the palate and showing more complexity than might have been aromatically implied. Very pure on the finish. Excellent. **WS** This is fabulous, long and superintense, with dried pineapple and sliced apples. Dense and powerful, with a great backbone of acidity and a long, long finish. Wonderful structure in this baby white.

**Haut Bailly 2009 (AWL 94-96+) (JR 16) (WA 96-98+) (WS 95-98)****92 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep ruby/purple. Grapey, plummy characters in the rather sweet and exotic nose. Smoke, meat, floral fruit intermixed on this unctuous and ripe palate. Very lively wine. Fantastic! **JR** Lifted and gentle and a little muted and tart but certainly appetising. Just the merest hint of green? **WA** The greatest Haut-Bailly ever made? Dense purple to the rim, it exhibits a precise, nuanced nose of mulberries, black cherries, black currants, graphite, and a singular floral component. A wine of profound intensity and full-bodied power, yet stunningly elegant. The wine's extraordinary freshness, elegance, and precision are nearly surreal. **WS** Lovely sweet berry and plum aromas, with hints of sandalwood and cedar. Full-bodied, with milk chocolate, berry and vanilla bean character. Thick and dense tannins, but balanced and very pretty.

**Haut Brion 2009 (AWL 97-99) (JR 19) (WA 98-100) (WS 97-100)****800 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Saturated purple/ruby. Magical bouquet of Asian spices, jasmine tea, cedar wood, predominantly red and hint of black fruit. Syrupy texture. Perfect balance. Supple and ripe tannins. Super long. A real beauty! **JR** LOVELY supple exciting nervy nose with a great deal of integrity and complexity already. Real knockout stuff with lovely suppleness on the palate and real grace. **WA** This is the kind of wine to send chills even up my spine, and I have been tasting here for nearly 30 years. An extraordinary nose of plum, blueberry, raspberry, crushed rock, and that intriguing floral as well as unsmoked cigar tobacco note (a classic sign of this terroir) is followed by a wine of creamy unctuousity reminiscent of 1989, but there is a freshness, vibrancy and precision that is historic and possibly unprecedented. **WS** A dark and brooding wine, delivering blackberry, black licorice, mahogany, subtle grilled meat and raspberry jam. Full-bodied, with layers of ripe and chewy tannins. Loads of fruit yet subtle and reserved, long finish.

**La Mission Haut Brion 2009 (AWL 96-98) (JR 18) (WA 98-100) (WS 94-97) 620 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Sweet minerally nose with violets and exotic fruit. Super ripe. Smokey and spicy palate. Good masculine structure with very fine depth and length. Chewy tannins. Magnificent! **JR** Dark crimson. Scented, pretty, rather haunting aroma. Very rich and caressing - lovely texture. Still very firm and dry. Lovely glow, and quite a bit alcohol on the end, but definitely no sweetness... Almost inky finish. Seems very Cabernet to me. Fades just a little fast. **WA** Opaque purple in color, with an extraordinary nose of blueberry liqueur intermixed with camphor, charcoal, hints of burning embers and truffles, and loads of black berry and black currant fruit, the wine has sublime concentration and purity, a finish that goes well past 60 seconds. **WS** Shows juicy aromas of ripe Cabernet Sauvignon and currant, with hints of forest fruits and sandalwood. Full-bodied, offering chewy, mouthcoating tannins that are fruit-coated and velvety. Dense and powerful. A little subdued. Could be better than I think.

**La Mission Haut Brion BLANC 2009 (JR 17.5) (WA 90-92) (WS 93-96)****620 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Very perfumed and with lots of gras but strong grapefruit aromas. Then a little sudden on the finish. **WA** quite a tight nose of apple-blossom, pear skin and honeysuckle. Moderate definition, just lacking a little lift. The palate is taut on the entry, with touches of green apple, linden, a hint of gooseberry, good acidity towards the citric finish. **WS** Subtle yet intense aromas of lemon pie, apple crumble and Brazilian lime follow through to a full body, with a dense concentration of fruit but an excellent backbone of acidity that turns to peaches and dried lemons on the finish.

**Smith Haut Lafitte 2009 (JR 16+) (WA 96-98+) (WS 95-98)****73 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Moderate and rather cool and intriguing on the nose. Some sweetness at first and then slightly inky. The tannins are far from the most supple but they just about do the trick without being too drying on the finish. Just a little bit gawky, and there's some alcohol on the finish. **WA** An opaque purple color is followed by an explosive nose of graphite, black currants, licorice, incense, and a hint of black tea. Deep and full-bodied with sensational concentration as well as remarkable purity and precision, this brilliant wine possesses the high, but sweet tannins. **WS** Clean. Blackberry and lightly toasted oak with coffee and cedar. Full-bodied and a very, very powerful structure. Blockbuster. Massive and dense, yet remains agile. A triumph for this estate.

**St Emilion****Angelus 2009 (AWL 96-98) (JR 18) (WA 96-100) (WS 94-97)****240 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep garnet. Coffee, chocolate nose. Layers of black spicy and minerally fruit. Full-bodied. It seems more tone down and less artificial than previous years. Excellent effort! **JR** Very dark crimson. Rather animal on the nose. Thick and sweet but with generosity. Broad and jewel-like. Awfully sweet and concentrated, not relaxed, lots of dryness on the finish, revitalising. Hint of cocoa. **WA** This is a fabulous wine, with that tell-tale, dense, inky blue color that Angelus always seems to achieve. It displays an extraordinary nose of acacia flowers intermixed with blueberry liqueur, black raspberries, cassis, licorice, incense, and graphite. Full-bodied, viscous, with great intensity, vibrancy, and transparency. **WS** Concentrated aromas of boysenberry and raspberry jam. Full-bodied and powerful, with beautiful fruit-coated tannins and a long, spicy, rich aftertaste.

**Ausone 2009 (AWL 98-100) (JR 17.5+) (WA 95-97+) (WS 97-100)****1,290 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep saturated purple. Creme de cassis, black fruit, graphite in this rich spicy bouquet. Full-bodied. Great intensity. So fresh, pure and ripe. Amazing sensation on the palate. Super long. Another winner from this estate! **JR** Full and gamey and broad and expressive. Very distinctive wine. Very drying on the end. Quite demanding for now. Drying on the finish. Really quite painful – as though it had been concentrated, or certainly as though the grapes suffered quite a bit of drought stress. **WA** Dense purple in color, with an almost liqueur of limestone intermixed with acacia flowers, blueberry, raspberry, and boysenberry fruit, the use of 100% new oak is completely concealed by the wealth of fruit and the lavish richness this wine exhibits. Nevertheless, there is a striking precision, minerality, and purity to Ausone. **WS** Such a dreamy, perfumed aroma to this wine. Full-bodied, but wonderfully polished and integrated. It touches every millimeter of your palate and the texture makes you want to cry. It touches your soul. Goes on for minutes.

**Beausejour Duffau 2009 (AWL 92-94) (JR 16.5+) (WA 96-98+) (WS 93-96) 98 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Concentrated. Black sweet fruit. Hint of toasty oak in the finish. A step up from its normal offerings. **JR** Bright and crimson. Not much nose and a little tired. Succulent fruit on the palate. Then pretty dry, angular. A long way from knit! More interest than some of the simply sweet. Chewy juicy cherry juice. **WA** An inky/purple color is accompanied by a sumptuous bouquet of spring flowers, black truffles, wet rocks, blackberries, and black currants. The wine builds incrementally in the mouth with an ethereal lightness and precision that is unexpected in view of its massive concentration, power, and intensity. Bravo! **WS** Offers floral and licorice notes, with gorgeous fruit. Full-bodied, with supersilky tannins and a beautiful, very long finish. Very fine and racy. Really serious.

**Canon 2009 (AWL 92-94) (JR 17.5) (WA 93-95) (WS 95-98)****103 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Floral red fruit aromas. Medium to full bodied. Supple tannins. An attractive and very charming wine. **JR** A little paler than some. Lightish cherry red. Glossy, gamey, almost animal nose. Rich and sweet but with a certain dryness on the finish. There is some real life here. Very glamorous. Sumptuous and flattering, very polished, racy and sinewy and like a racehorse. Good enterprising energetic stuff! **WA** This is the best Canon since 1982, and it is possibly capable of eclipsing that legendary vintage. Dense ruby/purple and full-bodied, with terrific blueberry and raspberry fruit intermixed with spring flower garden scents, with extraordinary density, purity, and a multi-layered texture. **WS** What a gorgeous nose, with sweet and delicate fruits such as sliced plums that turn to milk chocolate and flowers. Full-bodied, with silky tannins and a long, long finish.

**Cheval Blanc 2009 (AWL 98-100) (JR 18) (WA 98-100) (WS 96-99)****890 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Intense colour. Complex bouquet of spices, apricot and dark sweet fruit. Perfect balance. So concentrated yet so velvety. Smooth tannins. Outstanding! A wine of grand elegance. **JR** Very rich and comfortable on the nose. Very juicy. Dry finish. Very serious wine. Lots of layers and a dry finish. Pretty long- opens out on the finish. But it's not a knocker-off-of-socks and has rather more classic Cheval character than some recent vintages. Rather contained and pretty. **WA** The wine exhibits sumptuous aromatics of subtle menthol intermixed with caramel, black raspberries, mulberries, kirsch, and cassis. With a stupendous opulence and a fleshy mouthfeel, but no heaviness or fatigue, this dense wine is staggeringly concentrated, very full-bodied, powerful, and silky smooth. Irresistible already, it is almost frightening to think how compelling this beauty should be in a few years. **WS** I have never smelled a Cheval like this, with red fruit and an undertone of seashell, lilac and sandalwood turning to chocolate. Full-bodied, but tight and precise with a laser-guided finish of ultrafine tannins. Superlong. Like the 1990 but superclean.

**Clos Fourtet 2009 (AWL 92-94) (JR 17.5) (WA 95-98) (WS 94-97)****83 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Dark ruby colour. Freshly crushed fruit. Super ripe. Intense. Great effort here. **JR** Very dark purple. Meaty, interesting nose with hints of treacle and liquorice. Thick and sweet at the start and then some real texture kicks in. Quite racy and sinewy. Though you need to wait quite a while for this one... Sweet and juicy and round. Very suave. Lots of glamour. **WA** Textured, full-bodied, enormously pure, and voluptuously textured, it is nearly too easy to drink because of the exquisite balance and seamless integration of all its component parts. **WS** Offers blueberry, currant, mineral and violet. Full-bodied, with big, juicy tannins and loads of fruit. Very concentrated and velvety, with a lovely texture.

**Figeac 2009 (AWL 92-94) (JR 17+) (WA 92-94) (WS 97-100)****180 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Sweet herbal and smokey notes. Earthy, mineral palate. Full-bodied. Well structured. Grippy finish. **JR** Paler than most. Luscious, opulent nose. Cool and fresh. Complete. Still a bit simple but there are no excesses here. Just slightly timid on the palate. Real juice though - not exaggerated. Sweet and juicy, dry end. As discreet and distinctive as usual. **WA** The nose is very well-defined and driven by the ripe Cabernet Sauvignon that has occasionally come across a little green in recent vintages. Not this time. A melange of red and black-berried fruits, cedar, a hint of freshly rolled tobacco and a tincture of vanilla. The palate is full-bodied with an admirable density, grippy tannins, very cohesive with good weight, leading to a masculine, structured finish that counterpoised the lush merlot. **WS** Really fabulous on the nose, with sweet milk chocolate, flowers, currant and plum. Full-bodied, with incredible length. The tannins are so silky, but they are warm and cuddly. Powerful but so attractive.

**Larcis Ducasse 2009 (AWL 96-98) (JR 17) (WA 91-94) (WS 92-95)****46 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep purple. Voluptuous. Round. Gobbles of fresh fruit. Very impressive. **JR** Some development at the rim. Rich and super-ripe black fruits. Sweet and rather fruit-juice like. Polished and made with great elan. Super smooth. **WA** This is another 2009 that does not live up to the extraordinary quality of the 2005, but it is a fascinating wine nevertheless. Composed of 81% Merlot and 19% Cabernet Franc, it tips the scales at 14.8% natural alcohol. The wunderkind team of Nicolas Thienpont and Stephane Deroncourt has produced a dense, rich, soft, relatively seamless, elegant example of Larcis Ducasse, without the concentration found in the 2005. **WS** Gorgeous, juicy fruit, with light wood, full and velvety tannins, and loads of Indian spices. Though there's lots going on, I was expecting a little more

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2002 Bank of America Tower, 12 Harcourt Road, Central, Hong Kong

t 852.2523.1945 f 852.2523.1947 e info@altayawines.com u www.altayawines.com

**Magdelaine 2009 (AWL 90-93) (JR 16+ ) (WA 92-94+) (WS 88-91)****49 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Opaque garnet ruby colour. One the the richest Magdelaine ever tasted. A full-bodied effort with nice length. **JR** Brilliant cherry red. Rather inexpressive on the nose. Very round and juicy with a slightly inky note on the finish. Fairly dry tannins and a hint of rusty nail. Flattering fruit, certainly. **WA** Exhibits a classic kirsch liqueur note, but the color is more saturated, the tactile impression more full, meaty, and rich, and the wine is more loaded and dense. Filled with elegance as well as power, this beauty should drink handsomely for 25+ years. **WS** Blueberry and floral aromas follow through to a full body, with racy tannins and a compacted berry and chocolate aftertaste. Expected a little more from this.

**Pavie 2009 (JR 18) (WA 96-100) (WS 94-97)****220 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Blackish purple. Very distinctive. Very appetising and succulent. All pleasure but with a promise of future development. So much more satisfying and succulent than its stablemates **WA** The result is a powerful, full-bodied, remarkably intense wine that is black/purple in color. It will require considerable patience, much like 2000 and 2005. It displays enormous creme de cassis and boysenberry fruit with some cherries, spice box, and crushed rock in the background. It is intense, with loads of minerality, huge extraction, massive power, yet again, the vintage character seems to have given it a freshness and vibrancy despite the wine's obvious viscosity. **WS** Blackberry, black cherry, licorice and mineral. Full-bodied, with a big core of velvety tannins and rich fruit. Full throttle, and all there. Really massive. Blockbuster and more. Could be a tad overdone.

**Pavie Macquin 2009 (AWL 95-97) (JR 16) (WA 94-96+) (WS 96-99)****65 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Black purple colour. Minerals, oak, black fruit and spices aromas. Very powerful wine. Ripe herbs. Chewy and firm tannins. **JR** Deep, bright crimson. Very ripe, alcoholic notes on the nose. Very sweet black cherry flavours. Round and juicy and very suave with carefully chosen dry oak. Sinewy and drying. Very cool. **WA** The wine is inky purple-colored, with loads of viscosity, an unctuous texture, and an enormous nose of charcoal, graphite, blackberry liqueur, and forest floor in a full-bodied, seamlessly constructed style. At the same time, the impression is one of a very unevolved, backward wine that has even more weight to put on and more nuances to reveal. **WS** Superfocused and beautiful. Full and refined, with gorgeous fruit and wonderful refinement. Silky tannins. Clearly the best ever.

**Tertre Roteboeuf 2009 (JR 17.5) (WA 92-95)****160 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Rich and burgundian nose. Still quite rich and sweet and generous and very different from most bordeaux 09s. Flattering and floral and fine. So sweet, but lively texture and not dry on the end. Very distinctive. **WA** This has a supremely pure, delineated bouquet that reminds me of a Grand Cru Burgundy! Blackberry leaf, a touch of raspberry, limestone and just a faint hint of orange-blossom. Very fine definition. The palate is well balanced, nice tension and purity, demonstrating a vibrant sense of minerality.

**Troplong Mondot 2009 (AWL 93-95) (JR 16.5) (WA 94-97) (WS 94-97)****103 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep purple colour. Sweet oak, black fruit nose. Oaky and spicy notes. Very concentrated. Dry and big tannins. An inky modern wine. **JR** Very dark blackish purple. Toasty oak on the nose. Toasty oak nose. Really rigid on the palate - so drying! Purple fruit flavours. Then a very fast fade. Super-flashy rather than really satisfying. **WA** The wine is inky purple in color, displaying beautiful creme de cassis, licorice, subtle smoke and graphite notes, enormous body, juicy, viscous texture, good vibrancy, a skyscraper-like, multi-dimensional mouthfeel, and a whopping long finish of 40+ seconds. This is a great wine, probably more hedonistic and voluptuous than the 2005, but ultimately a tiny notch below that virtually perfect Troplong Mondot, which still gets my nod as the best ever made. **WS** Intense aromas of blackberry and blueberry follow through to a full body, with well-integrated tannins and a fruity finish. Offers lots of liquorice and spice. There's lovely length to this. Reserved and pretty.

**Pomerol****Certan de May 2009 (AWL 95-96) (JR 17.5) (WA 93-95) (WS 90-93)****66 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep ruby/purple colour. Wonderful notes of blackcherries, spices and sweet oak aromas. Superb purity and intensity. Very fine sweet tannins. A remarkable effort! **JR** Dark purplish crimson. Heady, sweet, intense nose. Polished and very savoury. Well mannered. Rather old style but with the extra ripeness of the vintage. Chewy end. A bit austere at the moment. It grows towards the end. **WA** The most powerful, finest overall wine made at this estate since their 1982, the muscular 2009 reveals a dense ruby/purple color in addition to meaty, smoky notes of black cherries, iron, truffles, loamy soil, and spice. Dense, full-bodied, and virile with a boatload of tannin, patience will be a virtue. **WS** I love the dark fruit and underlying aromas of fresh herbs and dried flowers. Full-bodied, with a lovely silky texture and a clean, fresh, fruity and delicate finish.

**Certan Marzelle 2009 (AWL 92-94) (JR 16.5) (WA 91-93)****43 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** A step up for the estate this vintage. Freshly crushed berries aromas with ripe and spicy palate. Good density. Lingering palate with exotic characters. **JR** Lively crimson. Very ripe red cherry notes indeed. A bit soft and very sweet. Difficult to see the real core in this wine. Sinewy in a rather northern Rhone Syrah way. Very fine tannins indeed. **WA** Readers looking for an unabashedly exotic, seductive, sexy Pomerol should check out this 100% Merlot cuvee from Christian Moueix. Its dark ruby/plum color is accompanied by an unbridled display of sweet black and blue fruits and spring flowers. Full-bodied and opulent with silky tannins and juicy fruit.

**Clinet 2009 (AWL 93-95) (JR 17) (WA 97-100\*) (WS 96-98)****160 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Aromas of red and black fruit, earth, crushed rocks and oak. Great fruit intensity. Very round texture. A most wonderful Clinet and probably the best since 1990. **JR** Thick and sweet and almost a cliché of Pomerol with its great meaty richness and savour. Should calm down and become something quite exciting eventually, but quite tough. **WA** The wine boasts an opaque black/purple color in addition to a gorgeous bouquet of truffles, charcoal, asphalt, blackberries, blueberries, and meaty, smoky notes. This dense, unctuously-textured Pomerol is built like a skyscraper with multiple layers, sweet tannins, and enormous concentration as well as length. The good news is there will be 4,000 cases of this modern day legend in the making. **WS** Blackberry and mineral aromas, with flowers. Full-bodied, but reserved and supersilky and pretty. This is the bomb. Forget the 1989.

**La Conseillante 2009 (AWL 94-96) (JR 16) (WA 95-98) (WS 95-98)****169 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep ruby colour. Black fruit, spicy nose. Velvety texture. Medium to full bodied. Good density and length. **JR** Very dark. Not much nose. Very rich and intense. A bit overripe. Lacks acidity. Heavy with a bit of tarriness on the finish. **WA** This is never going to be a blockbuster wine, because the terroir just seems to produce silky, elegant wines, but in this case, the 2009 has an extra kick and level of concentration that is unprecedented. Inky bluish purple, with an extraordinary nose of framboise, black raspberries, spring flowers, spice box, and a hint of truffle, the wine has great depth, full-bodied opulence, silky tannins, enormous power and richness, but again, a vibrancy and uplift that are just freakish in this vintage. **WS** Such wonderful clarity to this wine, with violets, black and exotic fruits. Fabulous nose. Full-bodied, with superfine tannins and a silky, silky finish. Such beauty. Really stunning.

**L'Eglise Clinet 2009 (AWL 96-98) (JR 17.5) (WA 98-100) (WS 97-100)****398 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep center. Gorgeous grapey and spicy fruit aromas. Super rich. Chocolatey and oaky notes. Lingering finish. Not as forward or charming as other Pomerol properties now but there is great potential here. **JR** Scented nose. Very rich and thick and polished. Fresh and expressive - lots of nery fruit. Very lively and exciting and nervy. **WA** This dense purple-colored 2009 is extremely powerful, but that power is concealed beneath a mountain of glycerin, fruit, concentration, and body. The purity and richness are off the charts, and the silkiness of the tannins is ethereal. **WS** Already suggests a deep and contemplative wine with blackberry, dried flowers and sweet berries. Evolves to black olive and hints of asphalt. Full-bodied, with supersilky tannins and tangy, rich fruit.? Loads of ripe tannins too. Big and structured.

**L'Evangile 2009 (JR 18) (WA 96-100\*) (WS 96-99)****245 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Silky and subtle on the nose. Great richness and intensity. Firm line through it. Really up there. Great structure. Very firm and dry on the finish but not drying, Much more than just ripeness. Great density. Exotic and racy. Very long. **WA** The prodigious 2009 l'Evangile may be the greatest wine made at this estate during my 30+ years of tasting Bordeaux. Dense, full-bodied, and opaque purple-hued, it boasts an extraordinary bouquet of spring flowers, blueberries, blackberries, and boysenberries. The wine has all the characteristics of a hot vintage in terms of power, texture, and richness as well as elements of a cool vintage in its precision, elegance, freshness, and vibrancy. Frankly, I could have drunk the entire barrel sample if it hadn't been my first appointment of the day (at 8:15 a.m.)! **WS** I love the aromas of black olive and blueberry, with mineral and light mint. Full-bodied, with supervelvety tannins. Superlong. This is dense and very beautiful, with such a great core of fruit. Silky texture.

**La Fleur Petrus 2009 (JR 17+) (WA 96-98+) (WS 95-98)****169 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Bright, deep crimson. Polished, scented, quite concentrated. Just a little inky. Lots of substance and classic interest. Real density. Chewy finish. Solid quality that recalls older vintages. **WA** A mind-boggling effort, this is the finest La Fleur Petrus I have ever tasted. Layers and layers of black raspberry and black currant fruit intermixed with licorice, truffles, and earth are found in this dense ruby/purple-colored elixir. With extraordinary purity, decent acidity, melted tannins, and massive fruit along with elegance and precision, it should drink well for three decades or more. It is an amazing effort! **WS** Liquorice, blackberry, coffee bean and blueberry aromas; this gets more complex with every sniff. Full-bodied, yet balanced and fresh. Lots of tannins. But all in harmony. Hidden giant here.

**Le Gay 2009 (JR 17+) (WA 91-93) (WS 93-96)****82 EUROS per bottle**

**JR** Dark crimson. Very gamey and ambitious with amazingly soft tannins. Interesting chalky finish. Some freshness. Pretty damned good! But for early consumption. **WA** A dark ruby (but not opaque) color is followed by aromas of sweet raspberries and black currants with dusty, earthy, loamy soil notes in the background. **WS** Blueberry, sea shell and blackberry aromas. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins, yet polished and cool, with a long, racy finish. Dense, with a solid core of everything.

**Gazin 2009 (AWL 94-96) (JR 16) (WA 94-96) (WS 92-95)****55 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep colour. High tone aromatic bouquet with good flesh. Grippy ripe tannins. Lively. Excellent effort! **JR** Luscious and intense with the merest hint of animal fur. Thick and then rather tough and acid. Rather austere on the end. **WA** Ferocious extract, huge tannin, an opaque purple color, and enormous richness all make for a potentially brilliant wine from this vineyard, located on the plateau of Pomerol just adjacent to Petrus. Probably a late finisher of malolactic given its showing on three separate occasions, this wine, which is enormously endowed, very rich, and full-bodied, has a chance to be the best Gazin ever made. **WS** Blackberry and light tar aromas follow through to a full body, with soft and velvety tannins and a fruity finish. Delicate in a rich way

**Hosanna 2009 (AWL 94-96) (JR 17) (WA 98-100\*) (WS 93-96)****245 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Deep crimson colour. Syrupy mouthfeel and velvety-textured. An opulent offering with a sweet chocolate finish. Very rich and ripe tannins. **JR** Dumb nose without super freshness. Very ripe indeed. Lots of freshness on the palate. Rather a leathery texture on the finish. **WA** Great intensity, extraordinary balance, purity, and density, and a remarkable perfume of licorice, black fruits, spring flowers, incense, and Christmas spices. The wine hits the palate with full-bodied power, displaying silky texture, viscous, opulent mid-palate, high levels of glycerin, and considerable, but well-concealed tannins. In many ways, this is what some of the greatest 1982s tasted like. **WS** Ripe plum, peach, turning to violet and black olive on the nose. Full-bodied, featuring chewy tannins that turn polished and silky. Long and flavorful at the finish. Refined power

**Latour a Pomerol 2009 (AWL 92-95) (WA 92-94\*) (WS 93-96)****78 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** A great wine with minerally and smokey fruit nose. Gorgeous palate with good purity. Undoubtedly the greatest wine since 1982. Fine tannins. **WA** A dense purple color as well as a beautiful nose of black truffles, smoky meat, plums, black currants, sweet cherries, and loamy earth. A lush texture, full-bodied opulence, fabulous purity, and lots of power. Blueberry, with mineral and dried rose petal, lead to a full body, with chewy, yet polished tannins that go on for minutes. Solid and very pretty. Grows on the palate. Best in years. Very serious indeed.

**Petrus 2009 (WA 98-100) (JR 19) (WA 96-100) (WS 97-100)****2,900 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Black saturated ruby. Spices, creme de cassis, minerals nose. Dense, fully integrated and muscular wine. Great backbone with gobbles of exotic fruit on the palate to follow. Seamless finish that goes on for more than 1 minute. A worthy candidate for the one of best Petrus ever! **JR** Very dark crimson. Very subtle and exciting on the nose. Really rich and round and vibrant. Very sweet and exciting. So luscious. Great richness, a certain gentleness of texture. Exciting. The tannins very well hidden. **WA** Sweet tannins along with extraordinarily pure mulberry and black cherry fruit intermixed with hints of licorice and truffle are found in addition to a voluptuous mouthfeel. Stuffed, rich, and creamy-textured with a full-bodied, powerful, exuberant personality, **WS** What a nose this has. I close my eyes when I smell this, and I see perfectly ripe Merlot grapes crushed in the vats. Blackberry, mineral, black licorice, coffee bean and chocolate lead to a full body, with round yet firm tannins and beautiful fruit. The luxurious finish offers a cashmere texture and gorgeous fruit.

**Trotanoy 2009 (AWL 96-98+) (JR 18) (WA 97-100\*) (WS 97-100)****330 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** An attractive herbs, spices, blueberries and espresso bouquet. Seamless integration of acidity, tannins and new wood. Seriously delicious fruit in the mouth plus there is considerable length here. A top flight success! **JR** Very dark. Juicy, savoury, complete on the nose. Very ripe with some liquorice and treacle toffee. Extremely opulent and reverberant. Lots of black notes on the palate. Exotic and with savoury dry finish. Really interesting wine. Dense and almost tarry but without the drying tannins on the finish sometimes associated with that character. Well done! **WA** Boasts a dense plum/purple color as well as a meaty, earthy nose buttressed by enormous quantities of black fruits, cherries, and spice. Abundant glycerin, viscosity, purity, and elegance are all part of this massive, exuberant, powerful Trotanoy. **WS** A nose of dark chocolate and crushed raspberry evolves to blackberry and ripe raspberry. Full-bodied, with chewy and powerful tannins that leave a rich and mouthpuckering finish. This is a big and powerful Trot. Wow.

**Vieux Chateau Certan 2009 (AWL 98-100) (JR 18) (WA 96-99\*) (WS 97-100) 199 EUROS per bottle**

**AWL** Beautiful deep ruby robe. An excellent red berry nose with violet, earth and spices. On the palate, it evolves into a seductive and almost magical concoction with first class quality fruit. There is everything from balance to volume and texture to length here. Even tasted after visiting Le Pin, this wine did not shy away. A reference VCC for our generation. Very very well done! **JR** Very dark, very luscious - more like the nose you would expect of Le Pin! Very big and rich and full. Round and chewy and very very ripe but not heavy nor very hot. Splendid nose with great richness and savour but not excessive sweetness. **WA** exhibits an opaque purple color as well as a glorious bouquet of black currants, subtle smoke, charcoal, Christmas spices, and licorice. Massive, unctuously textured, and rich, but at the same time refreshing and vibrant, this extraordinary effort appears to be the finest Vieux Chateau Certan made in my lifetime. **WS** Chocolate and berries that turns to sweet tobacco and China tea leaves. Full-bodied, with a beautiful softness and silkiness. Goes on and on.

## Cotes de Bourg

### Roc de Cambes 2009 (JR 17)

42 EUROS per bottle

**JR** Very dark crimson. Thick and dense and super-juicy nose. Very sweet front palate but different from the usual souped-up right bank wines. Sweet but energetic too. Really lively berry flavours. Long and rich. Lovely wine and not over the top.

## Barsac

### Coutet 2009 (JR 16) (WA 96-98)

55 EUROS per bottle

**JR** Rather simple, floral, barley-sugar aromas. Sweet? Certainly. **WA** It has a fragrant nose of honey, vervain tea, pineapple, frangipane and apple-blossom, well defined if needing a little more vigour at the moment. The palate is vibrant on the entry, informed by touches of apricot and orange peel, very focused and tensile towards the long, sensuous, viscous finish. It has the same minerality exuded by Doisy-Daene and reminds me of a stellar '62 tasted just a few weeks previously. A magnificent Coutet.

## Sauternes

### Rieussec 2009 (JR 18) (WS 95-97) (WA 92-95)

59.5 EUROS per bottle

**JR** Heavy and rich and wonderfully sumptuous. Great richness. Density and breadth. Still very chewy but there is lots here. Very rewarding. **WS** Very well balanced with superb acidity, real tension, steely with great precision with notes of apricot, white peach and honey on the beautifully defined finish. Probably the best Rieussec since the astounding 2001. **WA** Lemon peel and pear tart on the nose. Full-bodied and medium sweet, with good acidity, lemon meringue flavors and a spicy finish.

### Yquem 2009 (AWL 97-100) (JR 19+) (WA 96-98) (WS 97-100)

595 EUROS per bottle

**AWL** Extremely ripe honey and orange aromas. Botrytis. Caramel. Very rich and saturated. Super long. **JR** Lively greenish gold. Very indulgent nose that sends a tingle down the spine. Great tang and life as well as richness. Not one of the sweetest but beautiful balance and refreshment. Quite exceptionally persistent. Hints of blossom and real lift. Orange peel and real zest - great energy. Not heavy at all, This takes 2009 Sauternes to a new level. Extremely bright fruit. Long and rich. Not a fat style of Yquem. **WA** Ethereal nose, beautifully defined with scents of honey, honeysuckle, pear, fresh apricot and a hint of quince. It blossoms in the glass, gaining intensity and expanding across the ether. Extraordinary persistency, lingering in the mouth long after the wine has disappeared. **WS** What a fabulous wine. It's an explosion of fruit, yet it's very refined. I absolutely love the nose on this, with apricot tart, apple crumble, caramel and creme brulee. Full-bodied, superripe and spicy, with mango, papaya, spices and sweet dried lemons.

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**WA** - Wine Advocate  
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#### ALTAYA WINES LIMITED

2002 Bank of America Tower, 12 Harcourt Road, Central, Hong Kong  
t 852.2523.1945 f 852.2523.1947 e [info@altayawines.com](mailto:info@altayawines.com) u [www.altayawines.com](http://www.altayawines.com)