



# Handford

WINES



## **Handford Wines Bordeaux En Primeur 2020 Offer**

**“No Furlough for the Merlot”**

## **Introduction**

Timing is the key. Conditions were perfect for flowering and fruit set of the earlier Merlot. Rains in mid June did not favour the Cabernets. Ideal weather for harvesting the Merlot was followed by a very dry week prior to picking Cabs. The result of that is concentration and ripeness but with reduced yields of Cabernets. We tasted from samples posted from Bordeaux and were torn between left bank wines with plenty of Merlot (there are many, with Chateau Clarke an outstanding wine at the lower end), and those of the right bank that favour Merlot by tradition.

This is a very good vintage in the mould of 2000, 2008 and 2018. Perhaps the closest comparison is 2008, another year to favour Merlot, and a year that was largely forgotten due to the economic woes of the world. We found 2008s ungainly from barrel but improved to the point of competing with the best within half a decade. 2020s are easier on the eye and the third in a trio of excellent 'lockdown' years, sandwiched between the tricky, but very good earlier drinking 2017 and the heavily frost damaged 2021.

## **The Market**

We like to consider the fundamentals of quality, volume, price, and exchange rate in justifying en Primeur. While quality is not quite as homogenous as in some great years, the overall quality of the wines we are offering is exceptional and worthy of the 'trilogy of three great vintages 2018-2020'. This is the smallest vintage of the last two decades with the exception of the much reduced 2013 and 2017. Prices are generally higher but, in many cases, balanced by exchange rate. We prefer to offer smaller wines that have held prices (or close to). These offer a clear discount on future retail and are becoming better and better wines to collect; for all the shortcomings of en Primeur it remains the only way to be sure of owning the wines you want! The well known Chateaux are bullish but they know their market and can afford to hold stock. We recommend the wines and the value is fair, but we caution against 'investment'.

So we will concentrate our efforts on our very favourite petit chateaux picks, the unsung heroes of Bordeaux. Critics are positive and scores are impressively high, with some of our picks coming ridiculously close to wines of four times the price. Claret is on a roll in quality terms. Every other vintage in the past two decades has been very good, if not exceptional. Vintages like 2018 and 2020 are more approachable in youth than say 2000 and 2008. Though it may seem counterintuitive, this is a function of quality. As winemakers continue their quest for perfect harmony and expression, the balance tends to shift in favour of things elemental and that is fruit and balance. Conditions are right to restock your cellar with our favourites below and a handful of the Grands Vins that you know and love.



**Jean-Michel Garcion, Chateaux Haut Breton Larigaudiere**

## James and Greg's Favourite Petits Chateaux

### **Chateau de Pez 2020 Saint Estephe      £135.00 per 6 IB**

Perfumed, ripe, orange peel and clove. There's a gorgeous soft spice about this. The pervasive acidity is slightly edgy and crystalline now but that will soften nicely to balance this fresh, currant fruited beauty. It's a match for many of the best St Estephes (the commune looks good in 2020), certainly for the price. And it's consistently scoring well with the critics too. A smart buy and 91-93 in Wine Advocate is a big score for a little wine! 2025 to 2035



### **Chateau Haut Breton Larigaudiere 2020 Margaux      £105.00 per 6 IB**

Mostly Cabernet Sauvignon with a splash of Merlot, the bouquet is tightly wound at first, and then gently unfolds to reveal perfumed notes of briary, dried violets and light lilac flower aromas underpinned by a certain broody, mineral graphite influence. Medium-bodied with firm mineral tannins but balanced by fleshy dark broody blackberry and smoky crème de cassis fruit notes. It is surprisingly taut and linear with a structured frame suggesting this is one for further cellaring. Like all great Margaux reds, the elegance and sheer precision and finesse allows it to be drunk on release although it will clearly grow in stature as it loosens its shoulders and becomes a little more gregarious and flamboyant with time in bottle. 2023 to 2038

### **Chateau Angludet 2020 Margaux      £145.00 per 6 IB**

Smooth, silky with a sweet ripeness bursting from the glass. Full of fruit with pert acidity and beautifully ripe tannins. Benjamin Sichel has moved to a shorter maturation in wood and with a portion of the wine aged in amphora. This gives the wine a more natural, pure and welcoming feel with fewer hard edges. 42% Merlot, 46% of Cabernet Sauvignon and a good slug of 12% of Petit Verdot, which gives depth and structure to compliment the fine fruits of their Merlot and especially Cabernet. Both 2019 and 2020 are a big success. 2027 to 2038

### **Chateau Clarke 2020 Lustrac-Medoc      £95.00 per 6 IB**

This is the hide-away home of the Rothschilds in Bordeaux and this season brings a rich and opaque ruby red wine and one of those that you can almost feel the density in the glass. From the lower and damper soils it is rich in Merlot, a style that has done very well in 2020. There is mouth filling, ripe plum, strawberry and crisp red apple fruit with a crystalline, almost sweet acidity. Very good indeed and will drink well in its youth. 2024 to 2035



### **Chateau Tournefeuille 2020 Lalande de Pomerol      £95.00 per 6 IB**

This was not expected but is the stand out of the petits chateaux we tried in 2020. Opaque and weighty by the feel alone, this is heady stuff with a creamy, lactic nose of blueberry crumble, crushed red currants and black plum coulee. There is a lovely generosity of pure, black spice, anise, salty liquorice and lashings of velvety chocolate, fine powdery tannins and a weightless concentration. Tournefeuille, or 'turn leaf', refers to the breeze that energizes these vineyards in the valley of la Barbanne that forms the boundary between here, Pomerol and Saint Emilion. A classy vintage that will seduce many drinkers and with a heady 92 points from James Suckling ... massive for a wine of this price. 2023 to 2033

## Chateau L'Ecuyer 2020 Pomerol

£175.00 per 6 IB

The fabulous Chateau L'Ecuyer from Emeric Petit is located just a stones throw from Petrus. The delicious 2020 has an expressive bouquet with lashings of opulent blackberry fruit, blueberry crumble fresh from the oven, as well as pithy citric notes of blood oranges, milk chocolate and vanilla pod spice. The palate is medium to full bodied with ripe, sweet chocolaty tannins and a broad, plush mouthfeel. The 2020 shows all the building blocks for yet another impressive Pomerol that will benefit from a couple of years in your cellar on release. Emeric has excelled in 2020. Ecuyer, Tournefeuille and Reverance are extremely well crafted and some of the most interesting right bankers. They are exceptionally well priced too! 2022 to 2039



## Domaine de Cambes 2020 St Emilion

£185.00 per 6 IB

Roc de Cambes is Mitjaville owned and run Cotes de Bourg property not so far from Saint Emilion. It has similar terroir to their famous Tertre Roteboeuf which may well turn out to be the wine of the vintage in 2020. Domaine de Cambes is from contiguous vineyards but lying outside the Bourg appellation. Understated but almost always the first petit chateau on our shopping list. Ripe spiced plum, blackberry and blueberry pie, super soft vanilla and with a velvet and silk feel on the tongue. Calming, ripe red fruits with a dash of dark chocolate. A gentle giant having that nimble touch of mineral acid and with fruits that are mysteriously ripe, yet still frisky fresh. Wonderful. 2023 to 2033



**Francois Mitjaville, the owner of the iconic Bordeaux estates of Tertre Roteboeuf and Roc de Cambes**

## **Bordeaux 2020 – Our Selection**

Prices are quoted per case of 6 (unless stated) in bond. NYR is price 'not yet released'. We will send follow ups!

**IMPORTANT** – there are many more 'top' wines not yet released. These are allocated to us and allocated in turn to Handford clients. Please do e-mail to register interest in first growths or other Grands Vins. james@handford.net and greg@handford.net

<b>Wine</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Btls/Case</b>	<b>£Case in Bond</b>
Chateau de Pez 2020	Saint Estephe	6	£135.00
Chateau Haut Breton Larigaudiere 2020	Margaux	6	£105.00
Chateau Angludet 2020	Margaux	6	£145.00
Chateau Clarke 2020	Listrac Medoc	6	£95.00
Chateau Tournefeuille 2020	Lalande Pomerol	6	£95.00
Chateau L'Ecuyer 2020	Pomerol	6	£175.00
Domaine de Cambes 2020	Bordeaux	6	£185.00
Chateau Beaumont 2020	Haut Medoc	6	£60.00
Chateau Potensac 2020	Haut Medoc	6	£105.00
Chateau Capbern 2020 (Calon Segur)	Saint Estephe	6	£105.00
Chateau le Boscq 2020	Saint Estephe	6	£99.00
Pagodes de Cos 2020 (2nd Wine)	Saint Estephe	6	£195.00
Chateau Cos d'Estournel 2020	Saint Estephe	6	£895.00
Chateau Lafon Rochet 2020	Saint Estephe	6	£175.00
Chateau Montrose 2020	Saint Estephe	6	£775.00
la Dame de Montrose 2020	Saint Estephe	6	£180.00
Pichon Comtesse Reserve 2020 (2nd Wine)	Pauillac	6	£199.00
Chateau Pichon Baron 2020	Pauillac	6	SOLD
Chateau Pichon Lalande 2020	Pauillac	6	£815.00
Chateau Lynch Bages 2020	Pauillac	6	£540.00
Echo de Lynch Bages 2020	Pauillac	6	£175.00
Chateau Langoa Barton 2020	Saint Julien	6	£185.00
Chateau Leoville Barton 2020	Saint Julien	6	£365.00
Chateau Beychevelle 2020	Saint Julien	6	£365.00
Chateau Leoville Poyferre	Saint Julien	6	£445.00

Wine	Region	Btls/Case	£Case in Bond
Chateau Leoville Las Cases	Saint Julien	6	£1195.00
Chateau Talbot 2020	Saint Julien	6	£245.00
Blason d'Issan 2020 (2nd Wine)	Margaux	6	£105.00
Chateau d'Issan 2020	Margaux	6	£260.00
Chateau Rauzan Segla	Margaux	6	£415.00
Alter Ego de Palmer 2020	Margaux	6	£299.00
Chateau Palmer 2020	Margaux	6	£1495.00
Domaine de Chevalier 2020	Pessac-Leognan	6	£295.00
Château Grand Village 2020	Fronsac	6	£85.00
Roc de Cambes 2020	Cotes de Bourg	6	£260.00
Chateau Larcis Ducasse 2020	Saint Emilion GC	6	£345.00
Clos Fourtet	Saint Emilion GC	6	£475.00
Chateau Tour Baladoz 2020	Saint Emilion GC	6	£95.00
Chateau la Reverence 2020	Saint Emilion GC	6	£99.00
Chateau Berliquet 2020	Saint Emilion GC	6	£215.00
Chateau Soutard 2020	Saint Emilion GC	6	£225.00
Chateau la Croizille 2020	Saint Emilion GC	6	£245.00
Chateau Tertre Roteboeuf 2020	Saint Emilion GC	6	£790.00
Chateau Valandraud 2020	Saint Emilion GC	6	£650.00
Chateau Rouget 2020	Pomerol	6	£195.00



## **How the Offer Works**

Prices are quoted per case of 6 (unless stated) in bond (i.e. duty free) at London City Bond. Wines may be stored by us or transferred in bond. Most wines will be shipped in the spring or autumn of 2023 for onward delivery. When you choose to receive wines the duty (currently £13.39 per case of 6 bottles) and V.A.T. on the total value (including duty) must be paid prior to delivery.

Transfer under bond and delivery to the UK mainland are free for deliveries over £500 (in bond value). Otherwise delivery charged at £20.00 per delivery/address. Wines may be collected from 105 Old Brompton Road. Storage with us at LCB is £0.90 (per 12 bottles) and £0.45 (per 6 bottles) per month plus VAT.

Drinking dates give an idea of when the wines will be ready. There are never fixed rules and wines should be enjoyed at as many stages of their life as possible. Orders will be invoiced for payment by return.

*All wines offered subject to availability and subject to Handford Wines standard En-Primeur terms & conditions of sale. Many wines are subject to allocation.*

*Wines will be shipped to arrive Under Bond UK Spring/Autumn 2023.*

*Free onward delivery or transfer in bond for deliveries over £500.*

*Contact James Handford MW or Greg Sherwood MW*

*to discuss your portfolio requirements –*

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