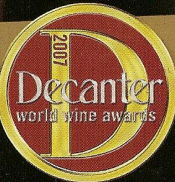


Decanter

WORLD WINE AWARDS 2007



THE
BEST
WINES
IN THE
WORLD



4,500 medal winners, PLUS where to find them

REGIONAL CHAIR'S REPORT: BORDEAUX



REGIONAL CHAIR'S REPORT



Bordeaux

JAMES LAWThER MW

TASTING WITH
JAMES
LAWThER MW

TONY ALLEN is a wine importer and retail consultant.

NICOLA ARCEDECKNE-BUTLER MW is a buyer for Private Cellar Ltd in Ely.

TONY ASPLER has written 13 books on food and wine.

RICHARD BAMPFIELD MW became an MW in 1990 and now runs his own wine PR company.

CLIVE BARLOW MW teaches about wine through Press Wine Services.

NICK DAGLEY is a buyer for Majestic Wine Warehouses.

ALLAN GRIFFITHS MW is wine director of Berry Bros & Rudd.

MARTIN HUDSON is deputy manager of Berry Bros & Rudd's factory outlet.

TIM MARSON is a buyer at Bibendum Wine Ltd.

PETER NIXSON is wine & beverage development manager at British Airways.

HUGO ROSE MW is a freelance consultant and wine writer.

DAMIAN TILLSON is a wine expert at Sotheby's Wine Department.

ALISTAIR VINER is a buyer in the wines & spirits department of Harrods.

For James Lawther's profile, see p26.

'Given the prices of Bordeaux's higher end wines, 2004 still looks good value for money. Where available, the 2001s provide good drinking now, as do selected 2002 wines'

We had mixed feelings about this year's Bordeaux entries. After the encouraging display in last year's Under £10 category, hopes were high for Bordeaux's petits châteaux, particularly with a healthy showing of 2005s, but generally the results were disappointing. Over £10 there was more to smile about.

The first day's judging of mainly generic red Bordeaux was, it has to be said, tough going. There was a higher incidence of faulty winemaking as well as dilution, green tannins, over-extraction and heavy handed use of oak. Peter Nixon (see list of judges, left) was probably the most complimentary when he said: 'I've found one or two wines I'd happily sip at home by the fire, but nothing really exciting.'

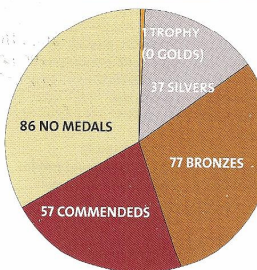
Bordeaux's often underrated dry whites fared much better. Representing 15% of 529 Bordeaux entries, the whites earned a Regional Trophy and eight Silvers – half of these, including the Trophy, in the Under £10 class. If the generic dry whites were deemed sound, there was decidedly better value and interest in appellations Graves, Pessac-Léognan and Entre-Deux-Mers from the highly successful 2006 and 2005 vintages.

Vintage variation in the reds was clearly apparent, especially over £10. The smattering of 2005s were rich, dark and concentrated; the 2004s elegant, long and linear; and the 2003s supple and round, some with jammy fruit and green tannins, the best with a riper, balanced aspect. In the main they are evolving quickly, so don't plan for the long term. Given the prices of Bordeaux's higher end wines, 2004 still looks good value. Where available the 2001s provide good drinking now, as do selected 2002s.

Highlights: The Haut Médoc gave evidence of being an interesting hunting ground, but you have to be willing to go to £10-15 a bottle. Margaux and St-Estèphe were outstanding. **Could do better:** The biggest problem is still the level of extraction and heavy-handed use of oak. Some seem to be trying too hard and if the fruit quality isn't there the wines are tough, dry and tiring. That said, dark, richly extracted wines where the oak complements the fruit have their place in Bordeaux today.

Happiness level at the end of the week: The general feeling: 'reasonable, but could do better.' Judges weren't downhearted but there wasn't quite the animation of last year.

OVER £10 WINES TASTED: 258



UNDER £10 WINES TASTED: 271



SILVER

Red

OVER £10 CHATEAU ROBIN, Côtes de Castillon 2004

Spicy oak and dark fruit. Modern and harmonious. Succulent fruit, chunky character but rounded tannins. Very good fruit.

UK: £10; Ear, J&B

US: USAIC, USIWS