

Château de L'Abbaye 2009

Bordeaux Supérieur AOC, France

THE WINE "2009 is the best vintage Bordeaux has ever produced." (*Decanter*) 'Supérieur' on the label means an even bigger step up in quality — the ripest grapes from select vineyards. That step up becomes giant leap in the hands of top wine consultants Stefano Chioccioli and Paul Bordes. A serious expression of this incredible vintage, Château de L'Abbaye was aged 6 months in fine French oak. Merlot-rich with sweet black cherry and chocolate.



THE ESTATE Château de L'Abbaye is a beautiful 11th century abbey owned by Arnaud de Raignac and his wife, Valerie. Arnaud's family have lived here since the 15th century. The vineyards are

planted at the highest point in the Entre-Deux-Mers around the Butte de Launay, and overlook some of the prettiest landscape in France.



THE REGION Bordeaux makes around one in eight bottles of French wine. Some of it is considered the world's finest and is highly sought-after by connoisseurs and collectors. The word 'Bordeaux' is a derivative of 'au bord de l'eau' meaning 'along the waters' — and it's no coincidence that the highest quality vineyards are those nearest to either the Dordogne or Garonne rivers.



Entre-Deux-Mers

THE FOOD To bring out the wine's flavors, decant an hour before serving. Then, pair with classic French cuisine: *pot au feu* (French beef stew), pan-fried breast of duck or flame-grilled steak and *haricots verts* (green beans). You can even enjoy it at lunchtime with a baguette and some hearty cheeses.



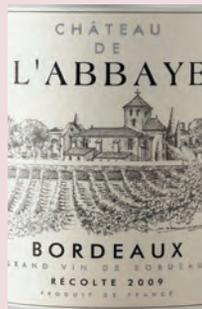
Winemaker's Notes

Appearance Mid ruby-red color.

Aroma Plum, black currant and licorice.

Taste Smooth and rounded with ripe plum and notes of cassis. Six months in oak adds classic cigar box notes.

Enjoy to 2015.



YOUR NOTES

To order more, please call 1-800-649-4637
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Wine

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08423LT

Duca di Cardino 2009

Chianti DOCG, Italy

THE WINE In the Middle Ages, Orazio Barbanera defeated the Florentines in a skirmish that took place in a field of artichokes, earning him the title “Duca di Cardino” (“The Duke of Artichokes”). Centuries later, the Barbanera family is still winning acclaim — this time, for their wines. Chianti is Italy’s best-known red, and the Sangiovese grapes in this classic come from a few of the region’s premium vineyards. Enjoy textbook cherry flavors.



THE ESTATE

The Barbanera family have been crafting delicious wines since 1938. Today, they’re still going strong, with seventh-generation winemaker Simona Barbanera in charge in the cellar. Their winemaking recently left forward in quality with new, state-of-the-art temperature-control equipment, ideal for fermenting their top reds.

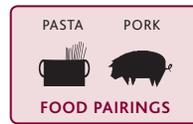


THE REGION Ah, Tuscany ... land of rolling hills, villas and (for many wine lovers) confusion. Here’s the breakdown: Sangiovese is Tuscany’s king red grape, used in Chianti and sought-after reds like Brunello di Montalcino. Chianti, a subregion of Tuscany, holds premium DOCG status (Italy’s highest quality indicator). Only fruit grown in these top vineyards are permitted in wines labeled ‘Chianti.’



Tuscany

WITH FOOD Thanks to a string of great vintages, Chianti quality is sky-high — now is *the* time to try it. At home in Tuscany, winemaker Simona enjoys Duca di Cardino with the local salami and wild boar ragù. At home with your family, pair it with a heaping bowl of *penne arrabbiata* or a hearty sausage lasagne.



Winemaker's Notes

Appearance Bright scarlet in the glass.

Aroma Ripe cherry with subtle violet and spice notes.

Taste Layers of classic black cherry and chocolate. Pleasing, food-friendly tannins.

Enjoy to 2015.



YOUR NOTES

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J Opi Reserve Malbec 2009

'The Magician,' Mendoza, Argentina

THE WINE Prized for its deep, black fruit flavor and velvety, ripe tannins, Malbec is the talk of red wine and steak lovers everywhere. This 100% prime Reserve is from the talented Opi Sadler (whose peers call him The Magician). Aged 15 months in French and U.S. oak and released to silver-medal acclaim at the 2011 *Wines of Argentina Awards*. Opi's on a trophy streak: his regular Malbec also won silver at last year's *Decanter* awards.



THE GRAPE Malbec was once more common in France's Médoc than Cabernet Sauvignon. Today, at home in southwest France, it makes dark and very tannic reds. But Argentina's bright sunshine and altitude (the higher the better) ripen those tannins to perfection and help make Argentinean Malbec the ultimate steak wine (and one of the most sought-after reds of the moment).

THE REGION Argentina's vineyards follow the Andes Mountains north to south. This is essential, as rain is scarce and growers rely on melting snow for irrigation. While the country is still only the world's fifth-biggest producer of wine, it's considered a sleeping giant that is just waking up ... as is the world, to the quality and value now on tap. Mendoza, the epicenter of the country's wine industry, is home to some of the finest Malbec of all.



WITH FOOD Malbec's mass of dense, dark (but fresh) fruit cloaked in mocha spice make it a great choice for a juicy filet or prime rib, hearty stews or mature cheeses. If it's not quite dinner time, its velvety smooth mouthfeel mean it's delicious served in a big glass on its own.



Winemaker's Notes

Appearance Intense purple red.

Aroma Inviting blackberry, cherry and rich coconut spice.

Taste Velvety, concentrated black fruit and spicy plum with a hint of vanilla and smoky oak. *Enjoy to 2016.*



YOUR NOTES

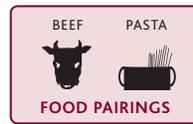
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WITH FOOD Cabernet Sauvignon loves to be paired up with a rich, meaty dish. Bill's favorites include roasted beef tenderloin, grilled *steak au poivre* or a robust tomato sauce over linguini. For something lighter, a hunk of aged cheese (think Parmesan or Gouda) with a bit of crusty bread would also be delicious.



Winemaker's Notes

Appearance Deep ruby.

Aroma Red and black fruit, with delicate hints of vanilla toast.

Taste Great structure — balanced notes of raspberry, cherry and black currant with a smooth, easy-drinking finish. *Enjoy to 2014.*



YOUR NOTES

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Wine

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Villa Masetti Pinot Grigio 2010

Veronese IGT, Italy

THE WINE Pinot Grigio has long been one of Italy's most important white grapes. And in a short period of time, it has become one of the most popular grapes here in the United States, thanks in part to its instantly appealing characteristics. Here's your delicious example from Italy's mountainous northeast — *the* place to craft cool-climate-loving wines. Full of lively stone fruit and citrus flavor, this is a perfect *aperitivo*.



THE ESTATE Villa Masetti, near the shores of Lake Garda, was founded in the late 1700s and has been owned by the Biscardo family since 1837. It may be steeped in tradition, but it's also at the forefront of modern winemaking. Current boss Maurizio Biscardo (enjoying a chilled glass of Villa Masetti above) loves working with other growers to promote the region's wines.

THE REGION Italy's top Pinot Grigios are now acknowledged as world-class wines — and for the very best, you head northeast to cool-climate havens like the Veronese wine zone, near the city of Verona. "Air-conditioned" is how the locals describe their pristine, mountain-ringed vineyards, where the Alps and the Adriatic create ideal conditions for crisp, zingy whites.



Villa Masetti

WITH FOOD This classic Pinot Grigio has a really fresh character, owing to its fruit being handpicked in the cool Verona morning and then cold-fermented to retain all its naturally racy flavors. With subtle notes of almonds, melon and enticing spice, it's delicious with crudités, linguine (with cream and Parmesan), or seafood risotto.



Winemaker's Notes

Appearance Bright, pale lemon.

Aroma Delicate notes of almond, fresh melon and sweet spice.

Taste Elegant citrus and green apple flavors with hints of aromatic herbs.
Enjoy to 2013.



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Sunday Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2010

Marlborough, New Zealand

THE WINE Intensely aromatic Sauvignon Blanc is one of the world's most refreshing wines. France's Loire Valley may be its spiritual home, but it's at its most thrilling in Marlborough, where you'll find a mouthwatering, hugely aromatic style — "one of the world's great flavor-for-money whites," says *Wine Spectator*. Sunday Bay is your classic example. Get ready for an invigorating blast of tropical fruit and fresh-cut grassiness. Serve chilled.

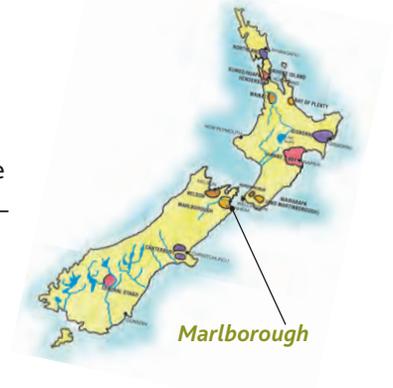


THE LABEL The Pohutukawa tree is one of New Zealand's most recognizable indigenous plants. It's affectionately known as "The New Zealand Christmas Tree," thanks to the brilliant scarlet blooms that blanket

its branches in December. Like grapevines, it thrives in quick-draining, mineral-rich soil, so you may see them dotting the landscape at local vineyards.



THE REGION Along the banks of the Wairau River, on the tip of New Zealand's South Island, Marlborough's warm days, cool nights and alluvial (stony) soils produce the perfect balance of pure fruit flavor and crisp, refreshing acidity — so beloved by Sauvignon lovers, many refuse to drink anything else!



THE FOOD Easy to sip on its own, Sunday Bay also tastes fantastic with simple white fish, chicken and pasta dishes (go for pasta with a light cream or olive oil-based sauce). Make sure the wine's nicely chilled — 45 minutes in the fridge should do it — to really draw out its zingy citrus character.



Winemaker's Notes

Appearance Clear, pale yellow.

Aroma Brimming with stone fruit and guava, plus classic lime and gooseberry notes.

Taste Green nettle underpinned by black currant and passion fruit. The finish is clean, with hints of wet stone. *Enjoy to 2013.*



YOUR NOTES

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Laithwaites Wine

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Raymond Chardonnay 2009

Napa Valley, California

THE WINE From one of Napa's oldest wineries and one of California's biggest winemaking talents, this rich, barrel-aged Chardonnay celebrates the old and the new: it's the delicious follow-up to Raymond Estate's special 2008 Reserve (commemorating the 75th anniversary of the repeal of Prohibition). It's also one of the first wines to kick off this top estate's exciting new chapter with a legendary new owner at the helm. Read on ...



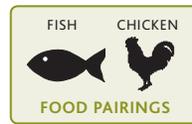
THE ESTATE The recipe for great Chardonnay: start with Raymond, one of Napa's most historic estates. Spice things up with visionary new owner Jean-Charles Boisset, head of a top house in Burgundy (home to the world's most famous Chardonnay). Steal California expert Stephanie Putnam (inset) and head for premium Napa vineyards. The result: this rich, ripe white.



THE REGION Some of the world's best Chardonnay comes from Napa, where it's made in a variety of styles — from crisp and refreshing to rich and oaky. At the valley's southern end, the Raymonds' vineyards are exposed to cool winds and fog from the Pacific and San Francisco Bay — ideal for producing rich, yet elegant wines.



WITH FOOD This is a fantastic dinner party white — when we last visited Raymond owner Jean-Charles, he put this gem up against some of his family's finest white Burgundy (and it more than held its own). Serve with creamy pastas, simple roast chicken or poached salmon with caper butter sauce.



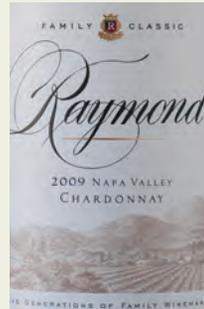
Winemaker's Notes

Appearance Bright gold in the glass.

Aroma Billowing honeysuckle and orange, with notes of stone fruit.

Taste Crisp pear, apple and lemon flavors with a smooth vanilla finish.

Enjoy to 2014.



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Palacio de Menade 2010

Rueda DO, Spain

THE WINE Rueda is really fashionable right now. Made from Spain's electrifying Verdejo grape, winemaker Ricardo Sanz also chose Viura and a dash of Sauvignon Blanc to add even more flavor intensity. Past vintages of Ricardo's Palacio de Menade have been rated "excellent value" by Robert Parker. Rate the 2010 for yourself: light citrus and herbal notes make it a perfect apéritif (a refreshing alternative to Sauvignon).



THE FAMILY Speaking of ratings, Ricardo Sanz's wines have also appeared on the list at El Bulli, the restaurant ranked No. 1 in the world three years in a row by *Restaurant* magazine. But Ricardo isn't on his own ... the Sanz family have made wine in Rueda since 1870. Sixth-generation Ricardo is known for his use of cool fermentation, a technique used to preserve aroma and flavor.

THE REGION Grapes have grown in hot, dry Rueda since the 10th century, but it's only recently that the northwestern region has realized its potential to make world-class dry whites. Modern techniques have been used to preserve the refreshing citrus character of Rueda's signature grape Verdejo, a quick-oxidizing variety that produces sherry-like aromas when left alone.



WITH FOOD You may have a hard time deciding how to enjoy Palacio de Menade! Aside from being a delicious apéritif, it also makes for an excellent dinner party wine — especially when serving raw oysters, grilled white fish or authentic seafood paella (a Sanz family favorite).



Winemaker's Notes

Appearance Light straw with green glints

Aroma Grapefruit and gooseberry with hints of grass and pineapple.

Taste Light-bodied and juicy, with citrus and herbal flavors.

Very clean and crisp. *Enjoy to 2013*



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