

Food + Drink 13

Best of the new bordeaux

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Preture the typical claret drinker and you might imagine some fusty old boy in a gentlemen's club, but red bordeaux is attracting a younger crowd who don't much care where a wine comes from, as long as it tastes good. The best red bordeaux's calling card is still its savoury, food-friendly flavours and glorious cedar and cigar-box scents, yet younger, more open-minded Bordelais are making what they term "smooth and fruity" reds. Most of these are made from merlot, with its softer tannins and lighter fruit, rather than the more austere, herbaceous cabernet sauvignon grape, with its noticeably grippier tannins. In the cellar, shorter and softer maceration of the grapes means that less tannin is extracted. Bordeaux's traditional 225-litre new oak barriques are also falling out of favour, with lots of new wave winemakers often ditching wood and opting to ferment their wine in inert tanks and modish amphorae. The aim is to make lighter, fresher reds that remain capable of ageing, yet still drink deliciously when young.

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It's a big ask, but as September's Hot 50 Bordeaux tasting in London demonstrated, the shift in styles is taking place, with the good news for today's drinkers that it's not all grand names and eye-watering prices. Unlike in Burgundy, where you have to spend upwards of £12 to get a halfway decent bourgogne rouge, in Bordeaux you can find an impressive petit chateau swig for under a tenner. Tesco's good, ordinary claret (see star buys) is just a fiver, and even its ripe, curranly stainless steel fermented 2019 Cap Royal, Bordeaux Supérieur is yours for a tenner.

Over at the Co-op there's a glut of new wave claret, with the merlot-led 2019 Château Joassin, a Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux charmer that's full of lovely redcurrant fruit, for just £9. Spend a tad more at Sainsbury's on the 2019 Château Barreyres, Haut-Médoc, which is £13 worth of fine, fragrant, earthy, modern mocha fruit with minimal new oak. Or splash out on another classy Castillon, from the late, great Denis Durantou, the gorgeous, glossy 2015 Château Montlandrie (justeris.com, £22), and you will find all the seductive rich, velvety, spice-box fruit you could want.



2019 Roc de Lussac St Emilion, Bordeaux, France, 13.5 per cent. Sainsbury's, £7.75 (down from £9). Richly fruited, ruffle and scented leather-spiced, merlot-led claret. It's a bargain.



2018 Château Les Trois Manoirs, Bordeaux, France, 13 per cent. Aldi, £8.49. Punching above its weight, this fruit-forward yet beefy cabernet sauvignon-dominant 2018 is a gem.



2020 Tesco Claret, Bordeaux, France, 13.5 per cent. Tesco, £5. Delightfully cheap, vegan-approved screw-cap claret, with lashings of juicy Victoria plum fruit.



2018 Château d'Arsac, Margaux, Bordeaux, France, 13.5 per cent. Co-op, £23. Delicious now, this stylish, silky, cedary claret comes from a famously fragrant commune, Margaux.

This week's supermarket star buys



2020 Morrisons the Best Marques de los Rios Blanco Reserva, Spain, 13 per cent. Morrisons, £13. Glorious, gilded, restrained yet sweet vanilla and toasty French oak-aged rioja. One of Morrisons' best.



2020 Mont Gras Reserva Chardonnay, Chile, 14 per cent. Waitrose, £5.99 (down from £9.49). An old friend with all the rich, smoky, buttered popcorn and zesty fruit you'd expect from a tip-top Chilean.



Herbert Beaufort, Carte Or Brut Champagne, France, 12 per cent. Marks & Spencer, £30. Stock up now on this heavenly, golden, pinot-noir-dominant, toasted walnut and digestive-biscuit-stashed bubbly.



2020 Winemaster's Lot Pouilly-Fumé, France, 13 per cent. Aldi, £10.99. Lively, leafy, big-name Loire sauvignon, with masses of gooseberry and nettle fruit, at a knock-down price.



ane mince pies

- nutty and toasty. When the butter is a golden brown, tip immediately into a Pyrex jug or bowl.
- Once butter is at room temperature, cover and chill in the fridge.
- Preheat the oven to 160C (fan). Add all the ingredients for the pastry into a food processor and pulse until the mix appears as damp breadcrumbs.
- Tip into a large bowl and bring together with your hands until it forms a ball. If you find it is too crumbly you can add the smallest splash of cold water. Wrap in clingfilm and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
- Add all the frangipane ingredients and the brown butter to the food processor. Whizz until you have a smooth paste. Scrape the frangipane into a bowl and refrigerate for an hour.
- Take the pastry out of the fridge and work it into a ball, then flatten the ball between two sheets of greaseproof paper. Roll out until 3mm thick, then cut out rounds with a sconer cutter. Bring the leftover pastry together and roll out again to cut more rounds.
- Place each disc of pastry in the tin and press down gently. Spoon 1 heaped teaspoon of mincemeat into each pie, then spread the frangipane on top with a small spatula or knife and scatter a few flaked almonds on top.
- Bake in the oven for about 25 min, or until nice and golden brown. Allow to cool, then dust with icing sugar.