

## **Bordeaux 2017 En Primeur Report**



### **So what's the verdict?**

**Good in parts. Choose carefully: which is exactly what we have done on your behalf. Hence this is a smaller selection than in previous vintages but all are wines we have tasted and are happy with in terms of quality and price.**

### **Value buys for early drinking**

#### **1. Chateau Alcee, Castillon, Cotes de Bordeaux, case x 12 £135 / 155€**

Nicolas Thienpont bought this vineyard in 2011 and followed up with the purchase of a neighbouring property in 2014. Tiny production this year of only 875 cases as half the vineyard was hit by frost. The wine features great softness and a beautiful tannic structure. Black fruit character with a creamy mid palate and fresh, acidic finish. Great value. Drink 2020 – 2025. **JB 16**

#### **2. Chateau Fonplégade, Grand cru classe, St Emilion, case x 12 £275 / 315€**

“The 2017 Fonplégade has a very classy bouquet with very pure blackberry and raspberry fruit, hints of cassis developing with aeration. The fruit is very well knitted with the oak. The palate is well balanced with fine tannin, crisp acidity, superb structure and delivers a really detailed and convincing finish. Bravo. This is an outstanding Saint-Émilion.

**Neal Martin, Vinous.com, May 2018 92-94 points”**

“This shows a very pretty center palate with blueberries, blackberries and white pepper. Solid tannins and structure. Long and flavorful. **jamesuckling.com, April 2018 92-93 points”**

### 3. Chateau La Prade, Bordeaux, Cotes de Francs, case x 12 £110 / 125€

No frost at La Prade which lies at the summit of the plateau. A blend of 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. Whole bunch pressed and 12 – 16 months in barrique.

*“pretty scents of warm black plums, black forest cake and lilacs with touches of cigar box and cinnamon. The palate is medium to full bodied with great concentration and depth, supported by a firm frame of ripe, grainy tannins and seamless freshness, finishing long. Very impressive”*

**Lisa Perrotti-Brown MW, Wine Advocate 90 – 92+ points. Drink 2021-28.**

### 4. Chateau Puygueraud, Bordeaux, Cotes de Francs, case x 12bts £110 / 125€

The frost meant only the finest parcels of the plateau were selected and the vintage is characterised by a higher proportion of Cabernet franc and Malbec: 63% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc and 7% Malbec. Whole berry pressing and 12- 16 months in barrique.

*“Deepest crimson. Dark and savoury on the nose. Savoury, smooth and not in the least sweet -fruited but still with enough fruit. Firm and dry and lots of freshness.”* **Julia Harding, JancisRobinson.com, 16.5 points. Drink 2021 – 30**

### 5. Chateau Puygueraud Blanc, Bordeaux, Cotes de Francs, case x 12bts £120 / 135€

*“owned by the Thienpont family, the wine made by Nicolas Thienpont. Includes 15% Sauvignon Gris. Only a third of the vines survived the frost. Sauvignon Blanc clones from the Loire. Fresh herby citrus and some nice notes of orange peel. Almost peachy on the palate but excellent freshness and intensity, clean cut. Bright and lively and deliciously mouth-watering. Persistent too. Orange peel aftertaste. Lovely”* **Julia Harding for JancisRobinson.com 17 points . Drink 2020 – 23**



Photo: Chateau Fonplegade

## LEFT BANK

### 6. Chateau Margaux, 1er cru classe, Margaux case x 6bts £2,150 / 2,450€

89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot. **JB 18.5**

The grand vin represents 37% of the harvest Beautiful deep blue-purple colour, alluring perfume with remarkable purity of fresh blackcurrant fruit with that signature background vanilla note. On the palate the word “aerien” springs to mind. Very harmonious with well integrated new oak and intense black fruit. Very elegant. Drink 2025 – 40

### 7. Pavillon Rouge, 2<sup>nd</sup> wine of Chateau Margaux SOLD OUT

76% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot

A very severe selection means this is merely 22% of the total crop. Beautiful aromatic expression. Seamless on the palate gliding delicately to a fresh finish. Excellent balance. Drink 2023-35- **JB 17**

### 8. Chateau Lafite, 1er cru classe, Pauillac SOLD OUT

96% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3,5% Merlot, 0,5% Petit Verdot

Very pure blueberry fruit on the nose. Palate is structured yet not overextracted. Balanced new oak with notes of graphite, slate and cedar. Develops on the palate to give a long, delicate finish. Drink 2025 - 45–**JB 17.5**

### 9. Chateau Mouton Rothschild, 1er Cru Classe, Pauillac Case x 6bts £2,095 / £2,388

90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Merlot, 1% Petit Verdot and 100% New Oak, this is a very impressive Mouton. Delicate, yet intense it develops on the palate growing into a polished, refined wine with great persistence and immaculate fruit. It will take time to come round but will ultimately reward those who are patient. Drink 2028 – 45 **JB 18**

Deep, dark colour. Quite restrained on the nose and in style in general. Well structured palate with dense cassis fruit. Well balanced, polished and persistent. 100% new oak. Drink 2025 – 45

“Healthy, glowing deep crimson with soft cherry rim. Rocky/smoky cassis lift to the aroma. Fragrant with sober and non-exotic fruit. Serious. Super-fine texture, appears gentle but is very persistent, so fresh and effortless and yet intense and long. Refined and accessible but long term too.

Drink 2027-2047” **Score: 18** Julia Harding MW, JancisRobinson.com, April 2018

### 10. Chateau Calon Segur, 3<sup>me</sup> Cru Classe, St Estephe SOLD OUT

76% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot



No frost here. The nose shows savoury black fruit and graphite. On the palate the wine is very pure and precise. The tannins are firm yet silky giving the impression that the wine has significant structure yet is nonetheless accessible. Beautifully poised and precise. **JB 17**

The 2017 Calon-Ségur was cropped at 43.5hl/ha and underwent a 20-day cuvaision after which it is matured entirely in new oak for 20 months. It contains 13.2° alcohol. At the moment the aromatics convey the 100% new oak but there is sufficient fruit underneath. There is a palpable sense of “coolness” imbuing the aromatics and like other Saint-Estèphe barrel samples, it conveys a subtle estuary-like tincture. The palate is medium-bodied with saturated tannin, beautifully integrated new oak that lends this a silky texture. Perhaps this is the smoothest of all the 2017s I encountered within this appellation, a classy and sophisticated Calon-Ségur in the making and heightened by the thrilling tension towards the finish and the latent energy that lingers in the mouth. Excellent. Drink 92-94.

**Score: 92/94** Neal Martin, [vinous.com](http://vinous.com), May 2018

This is very delicate on the attack but it grows on the palate with firm and silky tannins that turn lightly chewy. Builds consistently. Compacted and tight. **Score: 94/95** James Suckling, [JamesSuckling.com](http://JamesSuckling.com), April 2018

#### **11. Chateau Leoville Barton, 2me cru classe, St Julien case x 12 bts £655 / 750€**

No frost at Langoa or Leoville happily. The Langoa has 60% new oak and is a well balanced wine. 54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 38% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc. Spicy, fresh fruit on the nose. Succulent, round and juicy palate with crisp tannins and a long, elegant finish. Drink 2025-35. **JB16.5**

#### **12. Chateau Leoville Poyferre, 2me cru classe, St Julien £655 / 750€**

“No frost here and this year’s wine is made from 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 27% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot and 3% Cabernet Franc. Typical cassis and cream on the nose. Tight structure and serious style with polished oak and good concentration of mid palate fruit. Needs time. Drink 2023 - 33

**JB 17**

“Very tight and energetic finish to this young, new red with currant and blackberry character. Hints of crushed stones. Dense and four-square with a chewy tannin structure and a long finish. Very muscular. Serious encore to the 2016. Same level? **Score: 95/96 James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com, April 2018**”

“The 2017 Léoville-Poyferré boasts serious depth and concentration within the context of the year. Bright and floral, with beautifully layered fruit, the 2017 is at once gracious and powerful. Raspberry jam, chocolate, new leather and spice all flesh out in this decidedly exuberant, fleshy Saint-Julien. Many 2017s are quite open, but Léoville-Poyferré is quite reticent. Some of that may be attributable to high percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon in a blend composed of 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 27% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot. Because of the late season rains, only 3 out of the 5 parcels that typically inform the Grand Vin were used. Tasted two times. **Score: 92/95 Antonio Galloni, vinous.com (236), May 2018**”





**Photo: Chateau Leoville Poyferre**

### **13. Chateau Montrose, 2me Cru Classe, St Estephe case x 12bts £1,090 / 1,245€**

This great property has a magnificent site overlooking the Gironde in the Southern section of St Estephe. Since their purchase of Montrose several years ago the Bouygues family, Montrose is on top form. Hervé Berland, formerly of Mouton Rothschild, is now in charge and large amounts of money have been spent on stunning new facilities.

76% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot.

“The 2017 Montrose represents 37% of the total production this year and it was cropped at around 45hl/ha. It has a little more volume and intensity compared to the Cos d’Estournel that was tasted immediately prior to my visit. Blackberry, raspberry, cedar and pressed flowers bloom in the glass, though there is a noticeable change with aeration after 20 minutes – hints of juniper and bay leaf, rendering a more nuanced and complex array of aromatics. The palate is medium-bodied with edgy tannin and it feels a little chalky in the mouth, yet also tensile and certainly extremely focused. There is already a palpable sense of energy in situ, well structured and vivid, though not as complex or as nuanced as the 2016 Montrose on the finish since the growing season forbade that. I appreciate the pastille-like purity on the aftertaste and the potent tang of cracked black pepper and graphite that hang around for 45 seconds after the wine has departed. It is a fine, very classic Montrose and I suspect more approachable than those of yesteryear. Tasted twice at the château. 2022 – 2045  
**Score: 94/96 Neal Martin, vinous.com, May 2018”**

“This is pure and tight with gorgeous cabernet sauvignon character of blackcurrants, blueberries and crushed stones. Full-bodied, yet compacted and polished. It shows a long and beautiful tannin texture at the end. Just rolls off the palate. **Score: 96/97 James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com, April 2018”**

**14. Chateau Lynch Bages, 5me Cru Classe, Pauillac 2017 Case x 12 bts £879 / 998€**

A blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 24% Merlot and 2% Petit Verdot. The wine is aged in 75% new oak. Complex nose of cassis, lead pencil and cedar. The palate has intense black fruit with a creamy core and a powerful tannic backbone which builds to an impressive finish. Drink 2025 – 40. **JB 17.5**

“The 2017 Lynch Bages was picked from 18 September with the young Merlot vines and finishing on 30 September. It was cropped at around 50hl/ha. It is aged in 75% new oak for 18 months. It offers good intensity on the nose, not as precise or as mineral-driven as the 2016 last year, with cedar and pencil shaving infusing the black fruit. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannin, very refined, a touch of white pepper and cedar with impressive depth on the finish. This will be an approachable Lynch Bages, probably pre-destined to be overshadowed by the magnificent (if nascent) 2016 but it will certainly give 20 to 25 years of drinking pleasure. Tasted four times with consistent notes. 2022 – 2042” **Score: 91/93 Neal Martin, vinous.com, May 2018**

**15. Echo de Lynch Bages, 2<sup>nd</sup> wine of Chateau Lynch Bages 2017 Case x 12 bts £298 / 339€**

Representing 30% of the total harvest, Echo is a blend of 74% Cabernet Sauvignon and 24% Merlot with 2% Petit Verdot. Refined, black fruit and spice on the nose. Harmonious and creamy palate with supple tannins. Earlier drinking style as one would expect. Drink 2022-28 **JB 16.5**

A layered and juicy red with blackberry and wet-earth character. Full-bodied, rich and juicy. Well done for second wine of Lynch.” **Score: 92/93 James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com, April 2018**

**16. Chateau Rauzan Segla, 2me cru classe, Margaux case x 12 £650 / 730€**

Very fine delicate alluring nose of violets and black fruit. Supremely elegant on the palate with polished oak and fine tannins lifting the creamy lively core. Long yet fresh. **JB17**

Composed of 62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36% Merlot and 2% Petit Verdot and sporting a deep garnet-purple color, the 2017 Rauzan-Segla has a profound nose of cassis, warm blackberries and black plums with touches of baking spices, violets, mocha and smoke plus a waft of garrigue. Medium to full-bodied with a great core of sustained, energetic black fruit, a frame of fine-grained tannins and a lively backbone, it finishes with great length. **Score: 94/96 Lisa Perrotti-Brown MW, Wine Advocate (236), April 2018**

**17. Domaine de Chevalier, cru classe, Pessac Leognon case x 12 £510 / 585€**

“perfumed black fruit with a savoury, yet juicy mid palate. Good structure with polished oak. Firm and toasty on the finish”. **Jane Boyce MW 17.5points**

“The 2017 Domaine de Chevalier Rouge was cropped at 34hl/ha between 11 and 29 September and is matured in 35% new oak for 18 months. It has a vivacious bouquet with quite generous black fruit, raspberry, brine and black olive that is well-defined and focused, if not possessing the complexity of the previous two vintages. The palate is medium-bodied with fine, slightly edgy tannin – layers of black fruit interlaced with melted tar and graphite, closing in a little towards the finish with a gentle grip. I appreciate the deft manner in which this fans out and leaves a mineral residue on the finish. A

Domaine de Chevalier of refinement rather than power, one with “buvabilité” or “drinkability”. Drink 2021 - 2045. **Score: 92/94**      **Neal Martin, vinous.com, May 2018”**

“Deep crimson. A little leafy, fragrant in a herbaceous style. Firm and chewy. Tongue-tied at the moment but there's finesse in the dark, dusty fruit and tender graphite notes. Smooth and polished yet compact tannins. Savoury, dry, subtle aftertaste.

Drink 2024-2037

**Score: 17+** *Julia Harding MW, JancisRobinson.com, April 2018”*



Photo: Domaine de Chevalier



## RIGHT BANK

### 18. Chateau Figeac, 1er Grand cru classe B, St Emilion – case x 6bts £737 / 840€ SOLD OUT

47% Cabernet Sauvignon, 43% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc. Production here is down by 50% with the Cabernet Franc particularly badly hit by the frost – hence the elevation of the Cabernet Sauvignon. With a yield of only 22 hl / ha this is very much a hand-made wine with Frederic Faye at the helm. He commented that this year's harvest was more like Sauternes as they had 5 different visits to the same vines to pick the grapes at their optimum. And what a great job they have done. The wine has very pure, precise black fruit on the nose. On the palate there is a fresh lively quality balancing the intensity of black fruit. It finishes long and bright. Drink 2025 – 40 **JB 18**

### 19. Le Pin, Pomerol (on allocation POA)

100% Merlot. Alluring, aromatic and exotic on the nose. The palate reveals a wonderful plushness balanced by a lifted freshness. The wine has a cashmere quality, yet is in no way over-extracted with fine tannins barely perceptible. A beautiful finish which just leaves a smile on your lips. **JB 18.5**



Photo: Tasting with Jacques Thienpoint at Le Pin



## 20. Vieux Chateau Certan, Pomerol case x 6 bts £1,025 / 1,168€

81% Merlot, 14% Cabernet Franc, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon. Described by Guillaume and Alexandre Thienpont as “academique et complexe”, it was intriguing to discover what exactly they meant! There is certainly plenty going on here with spicy black fruit on the nose and a slightly charred note from the new oak. Savoury and spicy yet juicy and fresh. Full, rich and mouthfilling, it has a long fresh finish. **JB 18**

The 2017 Vieux Château Certan was picked in three passages through the vineyard, 12 and 13 September, 18 and 19 September and finally 25 September to 2 October. The yields are 37hl/ha with 14.2° alcohol and a 3.75 pH. It is the first vintage to contain Cabernet Sauvignon for several years. It has a very pure, Merlot-driven bouquet with black cherries, redcurrant and wild strawberry scents, just a hint of iris and incense in the background. The 70% new oak is nicely integrated here. The palate is medium-bodied with edgy tannin, a deep well of black and red fruit interwoven with allspice, truffle, white pepper and a little sage. This Vieux Château Certan manifests more complexity and profundity as it aerates, delivering genuine, spine-tingling mineralité on the persistent finish. It gains even more precision when I return to the property to re-taste it again. Tasted twice, ten days apart at the property. **Drink 2023-2050. Score: 94/96 Neal Martin, vinous.com, May 2018**

Composed of 81% Merlot, 14% Cabernet Franc and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon, the deep garnet-purple colored 2017 Vieux Château Certan gives up gorgeous black raspberries, crushed black currants and warm black berries on the nose with chocolate-covered cherries, violets and star anise suggestions plus black truffles and wood smoke. The palate is medium to full-bodied with wonderful concentration in the mid-palate and firm, very finely pixelated tannins, with seamless freshness and fantastic length. **Score: 96/98 Lisa Perrotti-Brown MW, Wine Advocate (236), April 2018**

Deepest crimson with black core. Not much aroma at first because the sample is cool. Rich, firm, dark and more savoury than usual, darker-fruited. Great freshness. Has impressive depth without weight. Very fine shape, great refinement even now. Feels like it is coiled tightly for the future. Dark beauty with just a very slight char on the finish and a long graphite aftertaste. Cool nights kept the freshness. **Drink 2027-2047 Score: 18.5 Julia Harding MW, JancisRobinson.com, April 2018**

## 21. Petrus, 100% Merlot (on allocation only POA)

Petrus managed to avoid the frost through the use of big fans and little fires in the vineyard. Harvest lasted three weeks from the 8 – 28 September. 50% new oak. This gorgeous wine has an alluring perfume of violet, cassis and spice. On the palate it has the texture of silk and manages to be at the same time intense yet delicate. Beautifully poised with a very fine vein of acidity running through its length. **Drink 2022-2045 JB 18.5**

## 22. L'If (allocation only)

91% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc

Spicy ripe black fruit on the nose. Really creamy with a super-smooth texture balanced by a very fine tannic structure. **Drink 2020-30 JB 17**

**23. Chateau Tertre Roteboeuf, grand cru classe, St Emilion case x 6 bts £759 / 890€**

100% Merlot Sensuous, broody nose of mocca and dark berries. The palate is gentle yet generous and rich with a wild, juicy element present in the background. The wine was aged in 100% new Radoux blend oak barrels. Once again Francois Mitjavile has produced something unique and very special. Drink 2025 – 2040. **JB 18**

**24. Roc de Cambes, Cotes de Bourg case x 6bts £250 / 295€**

80% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Malbec. Charming, very pure bouquet of blueberry and spice. Very elegant, yet fresh with a slight note of the toasty oak. Long spicy finish. Drink 2022-2035 **JB17.5**

The 2017 Roc de Cambes exudes energy, tension and class. The presence of Cabernet Sauvignon is felt in the wine's aromatic and structural signatures. Black cherry, plum, savory herb, menthol, tobacco, graphite and licorice give the 2017 a rather somber personality. Even so, there is terrific freshness, verve and energy to the 2017, not to mention tons of sheer appeal. The blend is 80% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Cabernet Franc. **Score: 90/93 Antonio Galloni, vinous.com, May 2018**

The 2017 Roc de Cambes is deep garnet-purple in color with a slightly reticent nose of blackberries, cassis and tar with nuances of pencil shavings, damp soil and dried herbs. The palate is medium-bodied, firm and grainy with great freshness and a long, lively finish. **Score: 90/92 Lisa Perrotti-Brown MW, Wine Advocate (236), April 2018**

**25. Domaine de Cambes, Bordeaux case x 6bts £190 / 225€**

75% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc, 5% Malbec. Exotic spice and black fruit on the nose. Smooth with layers of creamy, ripe fruit and a fine juicy finish. Drink 2020 – 28 **JB 17**

The 2017 Domaine des Cambes has a fresh, lifted, energetic bouquet that is very Left Bank in style thanks to the expressive Cabernet Franc. I love the definition and drive of these aromatics. The palate is medium-bodied with pretty red berry fruit interlaced with dried orange peel, marmalade and brown spices. There is energy infused into this wine from start to finish and I strongly suspect that it will drink supremely well once in bottle. Drink 2020 - 2030. **Score: 89/91 Neal Martin, vinous.com, May 2018**

The 2017 Domaine de Cambes is medium to deep garnet-purple in color with very pretty notes of kirsch, warm plums and black raspberries with hints of roses, cinnamon stick and tobacco. The palate is medium to full-bodied, firm and chewy with plenty of juicy fruit and a long, savoury finish. **Score: 88/90 Lisa Perrotti-Brown MW, Wine Advocate (236), April 2018**

**26. Chateau Larcis Ducasse, grand cru classe, B, St Emilion case x 12 bts £585 / 665€**

92% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc. Nicolas Thienpont feels the 2017 perfectly showcases the unique terroir on the Cote Pavie slope of this exceptional Premier Grand Cru Classe St Emilion. The Spring and summer were cooler than normal but they were lucky enough to escape the late frost. The nose

reveals ripe black fruit and graphite. The palate has a creamy elegance with a fine tannic structure which develops gradually on the palate. Drink 2020-30 **JB 16.5**

The 2017 Larcis Ducasse is a rich, sensual wine, with softer contours and more plushness than is typically the case, part of which is attributable to the vintage and part of which is the result of gentler winemaking. Dark red cherry and plum fruit is nicely pushed forward in this succulent, racy Saint-Émilion. Mocha, licorice and menthol wrap around the juicy, pliant finish. The 2017 is an especially succulent, racy Larcis. It has been consistently brilliant on the four occasions I have tasted it so far. **Score: 92/95 Antonio Galloni, vinous.com, May 2018**

The 2017 Larcis Ducasse is deep garnet-purple colored with a bombastic, gregarious nose of preserved plums, baked blackberries and mocha with hints of sautéed herbs, pencil lead and char-grilled meats plus a waft of yeast extract. The palate is big, rich and full-bodied with a very firm frame of chewy tannins and lashings of oak joining with opulent fruit, finishing long.

**Score: 92/94 Lisa Perrotti-Brown MW, Wine Advocate (236), April 2018**

#### **27. Chateau Pavie Macquin, 1er grand cru classe, B, St Emilion case x 12 bts £625 / 715€**

80% Merlot, 18% Cabernet Franc, 2% Cabernet Sauvignon. Ripe, modern in style with perfumed oak and black fruit on the nose. Spicy and fresh with a firm tannic structure. Drink 2022-40. **JB 16.5**

The 2017 Pavie-Macquin was picked at 34hl/ha from 20 September to 9 October and is matured in 60% new oak. I am quite smitten by the nose here, perhaps more than Larcis-Ducasse at this early stage – very pure with scents of black cherries, cassis and violet, showing a little more opulence than the aforementioned Saint-Émilion. The palate is sweet and sensual on the entry with blackberry, raspberry, a pinch of white pepper and spice. The tannins here feel very fine and the final half is unapologetically silky smooth in texture, the new oak seamlessly integrated. This could turn out to be one of the picks on the Right Bank. 2022 – 2045.

**Score: 92/94 Neal Martin, vinous.com, May 2018**

Very solid center palate of fruit and firm, silky tannins. Linear and bright with a focused and pretty finish. Full-bodied, tight and precise. Very clear and bright.

**Score: 94/95 James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com, April 2018**

Sexy, racy wine, the 2017 Pavie Macquin is full of personality. A rush of sweet red cherry, plum, rose petal, mint and blood orange infuses this sumptuous, racy Saint-Émilion. A wine of striking purity and total class, Pavie Macquin dazzles. As always, Pavie Macquin is marked by stunning fruit purity, red fruit, soft contours and silky, voluptuous tannins. In 2017, the blend has a bit more Cabernet Franc than in the past, now that younger vineyards have come online.

**Score: 93/96 Antonio Galloni, vinous.com, May 2018**

#### **28. Chateau Canon, 1er grand cru classe B, St Emilion case x 12 bts £810 / 925€**

Exotic, perfumed, spicy on the nose. Deeply textured on the palate, seamless with excellent uplifted acidity and well integrated oak. Very long. **JB 17.5**



The 2017 Canon was picked 4 to 21 September and 22 to 27 September for the Merlot and Cabernet Franc at 42hl/ha and matured in 56% new oak. There is 14.0° alcohol this year and the pH comes in at 3.66. This takes a little time to open, eventually revealing blackberry, briary, crushed stone and light iris scents. The palate is medium-bodied with very fine tannins and good backbone. Strangely, it reminds me a little of modern-day Figeac, that Cabernet component smaller here but very expressive with touches of graphite and flint towards the linear but beguilingly fresh finish. I like the manner in which the limestone shines through the wine here, something noticeable in recent vintages. Whilst not the sensational 2015 or 2016, it is a damn fine Saint-Émilion that will settle at the top of my banded score. Drink 2022-2045.

**Score: 92/94 Neal Martin, vinous.com, May 2018**

### **29. Clos Fourtet, 1er Grand Cru Classe B, St Emilion case x 12bts £875 / 997€**

Always one of our favourites, Clos Fourtet does not disappoint in 2017. Stephane Dereroncourt and J.C Berrouet are consultants here so certainly not lacking in pedigree or class! The assemblage is 86% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Cabernet Franc. Very ripe, chocolate and dark fruit on the nose. The palate is generous but not over-extracted. The wine has an opulent, creamy texture and a persistent finish. Drink 2025 – 40 **JB16.5**

A very sexy young wine with a solid center palate and refined, integrated tannins. Medium body. Everything is in the right place. **Score: 94/95 James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com, April 2018**

The 2017 Clos Fourtet is very good, but also very tightly wound. Powerful and tannic, the 2017 is likely to require many years to come in its own. Today, the 2017 is certainly less charming than some recent vintages and other 2017 Saint-Émilions. There is certainly no lack of depth or concentration. The dark red/purplish berry fruit, rose petal and lavender flavors are very nicely delineated. Clos Fourtet is one of the wines that improved over the two weeks I followed it. I won't be surprised if it is even better from bottle. **Score: 92/95 Antonio Galloni, vinous.com, May 2018**

Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2017 Clos Fourtet is scented of crème de cassis, blueberry compote and plum preserves with touches of hoisin, truffles and dark chocolate plus a waft of anise. Medium to full-bodied, the generous fruit is plushly textured with great freshness, finishing long and spicy. **Score: 92/94 Lisa Perrotti-Brown MW, Wine Advocate (236), April 2018**



Photo: Chateau Lynch Bages