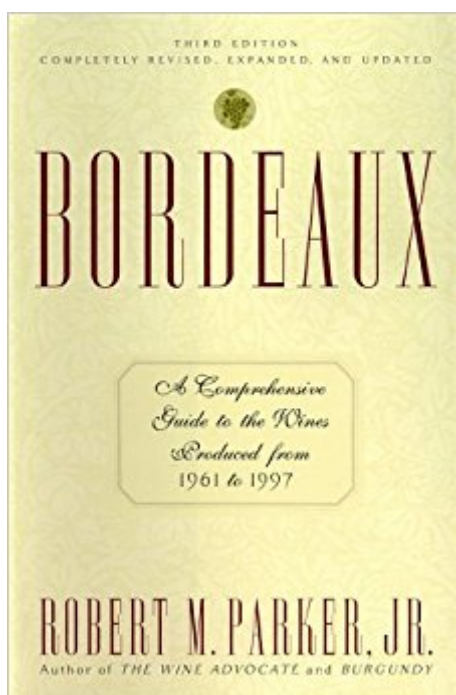


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Bordeaux: Revised Third Edition



Synopsis

When Robert M. Parker, Jr.'s "Bordeaux" was first published in 1985, it was greeted with tremendous enthusiasm by such legendary authorities as Hugh Johnson and Michael Broadbent. "Time, Newsweek, Business Week, Esquire, " and "People" magazines soon joined in the praise, and the book became a huge commercial and critical success. In England, it won the prestigious Glenfiddich award. Since that time, Parker has published eight other books for wine lovers, many of which have received critical awards -- "Burgundy, The Wines of the Rhone Valley and Provence, " four editions of the "Wine Buyer's Guide, The Wines of the Rhone Valley, " and an updated edition of "Bordeaux" in 1991 -- as well as his highly respected newsletter, "The Wine Advocate, " and bi-monthly columns in "Food & Wine" magazine. With each book, his audience has expanded to the point where not only American wine consumers but also those in France, England, Japan, Sweden, and Germany have quickly learned to trust his palate. In 1995, Parker became the first American in the wine field to receive La Croix du Chevalier de l'Ordre Nationale du Merite (The Cross of the Knight of the National Order of Merit), one of France's two highest honors, conferred on him directly by President Francois Mitterrand. In 1998, he won the James Beard Award for Outstanding Wine and Spirits Professional. Clearly, it can be said that Robert Parker is America's foremost wine professional. With this third edition of the classic that launched him, Parker strives to maintain his unprecedented independence, objectivity, clarity, and enthusiasm in reporting on the vintages of Bordeaux and provides the prodigious comprehensiveness for which he is known. Not only has he added tastings for the vintages in the intervening years between this and the last edition but he has also retasted and reevaluated many earlier vintages. His accessible and direct style welcomes both the seasoned wine collector and the eager beginner to the pleasures of fine wine and France's most illustrious chateaux. Organized by appellation, "Bordeaux" moves alphabetically from one producer to the next, providing essential information and an overview of the property and its owners, listing each vintage, and including numerical ratings and detailed tasting notes of most of that chateau's wines for the past thirty-seven years. At the end of each tasting note, Parker estimates the "anticipated maturity" -- the range of time when the wine should peak in flavor and balance -- and each entry concludes with a summary of the chateau's older vintages. Throughout these extensive commentaries and tasting notes, there is never a doubt that this is the most complete consumer's guide to the wines of Bordeaux ever written. Who is making Bordeaux's best and worst wines? What has a specific chateau's track record been over the last thirty or forty years? What chateaux are overrated and overpriced? Which are underrated or underpriced? Always with an eye toward the consumer, Parker distinguishes true value from perceived value. While the bulk of the book is given

over to these ratings, the opening and closing chapters of the book provide readers with a true sense of the changes in the region and its vintages. Such critical issues as: Who most influences winemaking styles?, What role does technology play in modern wine production?, and What impact do second labels have on the quality of the first? are tackled here. Parker also lovingly describes the growing conditions in the region year by year, spending considerable time discussing the 1995 vintage, which he terms "the most consistently top-notch vintage since 1990." In addition to this, Parker reassesses the Bordeaux Classifications, the effects of the soil on the grapes, and the different winemaking processes. He then rounds out this incredible volume with a User's Guide to Bordeaux Wines, practical travel and dining information for wine-touring trips, a complete glossary of terminology, and a quick reference index of the entire book. As the first book to discuss the 1995, 1996, and 1997 vintages in detail -- vintages that are being hailed as the Best of the Century -- the third edition of "Bordeaux" is the best tool to use in making both purchasing and consuming decisions. From the wine writer "The Sunday Times" (London) calls "the world's most experienced and trustworthy palate," "Bordeaux" provides all the information today's consumer needs in order to select the perfect bottle.

Book Information

Hardcover: 1584 pages

Publisher: Simon & Schuster; 3 Rev Sub edition (November 2, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0684800152

ISBN-13: 978-0684800158

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 2.3 x 9.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.7 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 12 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #846,785 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #18 in Books > Travel > Europe > France > Bordeaux #750 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Beverages & Wine > Wine & Spirits > Wine #922 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Beverages & Wine > Homebrewing, Distilling & Wine Making

Customer Reviews

When connoisseurs speak of wine as a long-term investment that can appreciate in gustatory (and monetary) value for decades, they usually refer to red Bordeaux, France's biggest and longest-lasting wine. But as the cachet of Bordeaux continues to attract legions of wine fanatics

across the globe, the 90s have seen Bordeaux prices skyrocket. The importance of informed buying has never been more acute, and Parker's guide is simply the best available. Updated from the original 1985 edition, the third edition of Bordeaux is organized along the same lines as the region's wine classifications. After introducing the style, history, and techniques specific to each principal appellation, Parker discusses the featured châteaux in detail--from the techniques of the vintners to the peculiarities of the all-important terroir. Parker's ratings for the tasted vintages, based on the 100-point scale he popularized through *The Wine Advocate*, are the real crux of each winery's listing. Performing all his tastings in "single blind" style--where each wine is judged without knowledge of the price or producer, and only in context with similar wines--assures a measure of independence in the tastings. Big-name wines are often deflated, and many "also-rans" from the landmark quality classification of 1855 finally win their deserved recognition. The third edition naturally highlights the series of (mostly good) vintages that Bordeaux has seen since the release of the second edition in 1991, but it also includes updated tasting notes on the vintners and vintages Parker has revisited since that time. His opinions command such worldwide attention that, given time, either your palate or your wallet is bound to benefit from keeping up with Parker's advice.

--Todd Gehman

The Washington Post An ombudsman for the wine consumer. -- Review

Comprehensive and generally trustworthy information. A critical analysis, from the standpoint of a wine buyer like myself should not dissuade anyone from getting this useful and professional guide. The way Parker evaluates wine is not fool proof- but he is right 95% of the time. That in itself makes him better than almost any peers considering the sheer volume of juice he tastes. For the initiated and value seeking with a professional slant, it would be nice if Mr. Parker would spend more time looking at Entre deux Mers for both red and white. Professionalism and competency has increased there and it is not the land of co-op's and swill that it once was. Also, I would like to see more attention paid to petit chx. But then again, the sheer fact that they are not in his book keeps the price down for some of my best petit estates. There are also some worthy Lalande de Pomerol and Castillon sites he has not caught onto or he omits for lack of consistency. I'd like him to thicken the book up with a bit of this and less on what we know is great (Classified Growth top stuff) One thing, Cru Classe wines are bad too sometimes and Parker pulls no punches when they ship out a real loser. He can find you relative bargains, like Chx Tayac in Bourg (had 82 in mag last week-fantastic). So get the book if you want to know anything about Bordeaux. Robert Parker has kind of

been black listed in Burgundy- this is too bad. He knows his stuff and some minor discrepancies should be overlooked. Cant wait for a Parker / Rovani Burgundy to be released.

As a recent student of Bordeaux wines, I have bought and read over 20 books on the region, the chateaux and its wines. After spending over \$1500 on books, for a mere \$50 more I bought Parker's new edition of Bordeaux: A Comprehensive Guide to the Wines Produced from 1961 to 1997. It was so rich in detail and so interesting to read, I read it almost cover-to-cover, and I read some parts several times. For the wines I knew, Parker's great scoring approach, and detailed and dated tasting notes were "spot on." I became so confident in his judgement that I used his book to build a spreadsheet of the chateaux and wines, with year-by-year scores. From this spreadsheet and the book, I researched eight excellent wines and held a professionally led wine-tasting party with outstanding results. There, Parker's tasting notes came screaming out of the book and jumped into my glass as I joyfully smelled, tasted and experienced them. Since then I have acted on his advice by buying and drinking many of his recommended wines--all with similarly terrific results. I have become a real Parker fan and intend to buy everything he ever publishes, sight unseen. If, like me, you are a lover of great wines, especially Bordeaux, or want to be, you will simply adore this book.

A thoroughly comprehensive work, seemingly the definitive current description of all Bordeaux's. More than just a frank rating by one of the world's wine experts, as Parker shares facts and opinions about the various chateaus and their progress, ups and downs, in producing fine wines. This is certainly an encyclopedic effort, and one truly feels that each and every chateau and its wine have been described in considerable detail. Someone not familiar with Parker might find it interesting that his ratings are often quoted in wine publications and at auctions to give readers somewhat of a guide as to the quality of an individual wine. This is not a book that rates all old wines. Parker tends to rate still drinkable old wines, and does go back, in many cases to the 60's, in a chronological order. He also has notes about "superb" ancient vintages, that goes beyond the chronological listings.

Now that's a product....This is a solid piece of steel... Much more than I expected.... my sister, just fine. very nice . the most professional service.

I consider this to be by far the best book on Bordeaux. While I do not agree with Parker or just about

anyone else regarding the rating of Italian wines, Parker is right on target in his ratings for Bordeaux. I find it interesting that Parker is a fan of the rich and opulent micro wines coming out of Pomerol and St. Emilion. There are strict Bordeaux traditionalists that don't care for these wines. I think they are great and agree with Parker. They simply add another dimension to the many styles of wine being made in the greatest wine producing area of the world. Parker is extremely consistent and the only other taster that comes close is Stephen Tanzer. The Wine Spectator and James Suckling are pretty good, although I think they overrate too many wines in subpar vintages. Ironically, Spectator is not a big fan of the decadent wines Parker likes from the right bank.

The 3rd edition of Robert Parker's "Bordeaux..." is disappointing compared to the first 2 editions, because much of the general text is exactly the same, and the text for many of the châteaux-profiles hasn't changed at all (except for the mentioning of the 1996 and 1995 vintages among the "great vintages"). However the tasting notes are more up-to-date including the 1997 vintage, but some of the older tasting notes - some which are now about 20 years old - should have been omitted. If you are a subscriber to Parker's newsletter "The Wine Advocate" there isn't much new in this book, but it is of course convenient to have all the tasting notes of Parker in one book, instead of in 5 years newsletters!

One reviewer noted that this really comes closer to a buying guide than anything else. I suppose that is true, but it is much more, also. It is easy enough to write histories of Bordeaux, and many are very entertaining, such as D. Markham's work on the 1855 Classification. But when most of us pick up a recent Bordeaux work, isn't it more helpful to hear more than "Chateau Lafite is a first growth and has produced good to excellent wine in x, y and z vintages, and many others." This is a book that takes a stand. And quite frankly, Parker's Bordeaux palate is as good as anyone's in the world. You don't have to agree with everything he says on every wine to recognize a master at work.

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