



Jane Anson, December 2023

TOP 5 WINES

VINTAGE	WINE NAME	SCORE
1959	Château Ducru-Beaucaillou St Julien 1855 2ième Cru 1959	100
2010	Château Haut-Bailly Pessac Léognan Cru Classé de Graves 2010	100
1961	Château Mouton Rothschild Pauillac 1855 2ième Cru 1961	99
2005	Clos Fourtet St Emilion Grand Cru Premier Grand Cru Classé 2005	98
2009	Château Figeac St Emilion Grand Cru Premier Grand Cru Classé 2009	98

Welcome to the annual roundup of the wines of the year – always a fun article to write, bringing back memories of great moments and bottles throughout 2023.

As with last year, I have selected 50 particularly memorable wines that have made it onto my WOTY list, but this year I have split them slightly differently, giving Top 10 Left Bank, Top 10 Right Bank, **Top 10 Value this week**, followed by Top 10 Non Bordeaux and Top 10 Whites next week. On the final week before the holidays (Thursday December 21), I will announce my overall Wine of the Year 2023.

I wanted to increase the whites and the values to reflect your feedback, and as there are so many more non Bordeaux wines going through the Place, it seemed crazy to limit to just five particularly memorable wines from outside the region.

The second full year of janeanson.com, and I can't thank you all enough for your support. This time last year I was awarded the IWSC 2023 Wine Communicator Trophy, and I hope I have lived up to expectations! Many congratulations to Anne Krebiehl MW who I am handing over to for the 2024 Trophy.

My own news this month is that I have been admitted into the Académie Internationale du Vin (International Wine Academy), a group of mainly winemakers but also writers, historians and scientists with the stated aim of defending 'noble' wine and wine culture. Founded in 1971, it has members from 20 countries around the world.

Beyond that, it's been a big year for travel, as I have hosted tastings and visited wine estates in Edinburgh, Washington DC, Virginia, London, Belfast, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, New York, Pittsburgh and several in Bordeaux. Hosting the Heart's Delight charity event and Bordeaux masterclass in DC was a real highlight, and an honour as ever to support this incredibly important charity. Similarly, working with 1% for the Planet has also been a privilege, with the choice of charity for the second year Wings of the Ocean. Don't forget that as subscribers I welcome suggestions of other environmental charities that you think we should be supporting.

The second editions of both the Connoisseur Week and the Mentor Week were hugely successful – and have provided a few of the wines that you are going to find in this list (look out for the next round of applications for the mentor week in March 2024, and thank you once again to our sponsors the Gerard Basset Foundation and the IWSC Foundation).

Many of the wines that are listed here were tasted during these various events, with others shared by generous friends, or from my cellar at home. The vast majority of notes have not been written up on the site before, with just a couple of standouts from verticals or horizontals that I published over the past 12 months. In each case I wanted to select wines that will make brilliant choices for drinking over the holiday season, selected over a range of vintages that are ready – or almost ready, with a little coaxing – to be drunk now. This seems to be the most helpful approach to selecting wines of the year, as opposed to simply the most impressive bottles from all tastings – and is possible because I am able to so regularly access and taste wines that span several decades each year.

I have made one exception with a particularly interesting En Primeur wine, meaning that the youngest vintage that I have picked here is 2022, and the oldest 1945. I gave 12 100 point wines in 2023 out of the many thousands of wines that I tasted through the year, but only selected a few for this week's roundup – not because they weren't outstanding, of course, but because I am really looking to give you brilliant choices to share with family without feeling any pressure to perform. And don't forget it is easy to search for wines by points on the site, if you would like to – choose the 'By Wine' option within 'Tastings', and just write in the score you are interested in. We have worked on speeding up our search facility also over the last few weeks, and hope it makes things even easier to find.

You'll find a couple of 2017 vintages on the list, and I definitely suggest having a look at wines from this lighter-styled but great quality vintage, as they are definitely having a particularly charming moment – and if you want to drink like royalty (of the music or hereditary kind), having a Smith Haut Lafitte on your table seems like a good choice this year. But whichever of my Top 50 Wines of the Year you choose to open, please do let me know if the drinking advice was useful – specifically how long the wines should remain in a carafe before they are fully opened.

One of the key aims of my site is to ensure you are able to make the right choices in when, and what to drink, so I'm totally happy to help with your own personal buying or drinking decisions. If you have any particular vintages in your cellars that you are interested in

knowing if they are ready to open, let me know, and I will do my best to answer, or to ask the relevant people at the châteaux in question.

Top 10 Value

VINTAGE ▾	WINE NAME ▾	COLOUR ▾	SCORE ▾
2022	Clos Manou	Red	94
2010	Château Fourcas Hostens	Red	94
2016	Clos Rene	Red	94
2019	Domaine de l'Aurage	Red	94
2014	La Dame de Montrose	Red	94
2018	Château Latour-Martillac	Red	94
2020	Château Bonalgue	Red	94
2020	Château le Crock	Red	94
2020	Closerie des Moussis	Red	93
2016	Château d'Escurac	Red	93