

## Bordeaux 2003 Wine Dinner



Date : Thursday, November 11, 2021

Venue : Artyzen Club – Sheung Wan

No. of Attendees : 36

Wines Tasted : Bollinger PN VZ 16 (WK94)  
Comtesse de Cherisey Hameau de Blagny 2018  
Calon Segur 2003 (RP93)  
Leoville Barton 2003 (RP96)  
Pichon Lalande 2003 (RP95)

Montrose 2003 (RP99)  
 Margaux 2003 (RP98)  
 Haut Brion 2003 (RP95)  
 Lafite Rothschild 2003 (RP100)  
 Latour 2003 (RP100)  
 Klein Constantia, Vins de Constance 2016 (AM94)

## Our thoughts:

2003 may be one of the most atypical vintages of Bordeaux with extremely hot and drought conditions throughout the growing season, and some days even reaching temperatures over 40 degrees Celsius, resulting in overripe grapes that turn into raisins. Wines are in general marked by jammy notes with low acidity, some people may find it unbalanced, while some may enjoy the powerful, ripe style. As the 2003 vintage has reached 18 years of age, it is time to review again and see how the big names are evolving up to this point. Generally speaking, most wines are expressive, perhaps due to the low acidity and therefore quicker aging? It was interesting to compare eight Grand Cru wines in one night. All the guests enjoyed the atypical style of 2003, most wines have successfully found a good balance to compensate the shortcomings of the vintage, but there was one wine that definitely stood out as the best wine of the night, which we will reveal below. Food from Artyzen Club has successfully enhanced the whole experience, so it was an absolutely memorable night!



## **Bollinger PN VZ 16**

Our welcome drink is a Blanc de Noirs (100% pinot noir) from Bollinger, the second release of the new series (first one being the VZ 15), which we call it the “Baby VV Francaises”. The grapes are mainly coming from the village of Verzenay with 2016 as the base wine. This Champagne is showing rich notes of apple and quince, with toasty aromas, very delicate bubbles and a creamy texture. Attractive as an apéritif.



## **Comtesse de Cherisey, Puligny Montrachet "Hameau de Blagny" 1er Cru, 2018**

This is a leaner version of Puligny Montrachet, probably due to the location of the vineyard being at a higher elevation of the hillside. It gets a cooler condition during the growing season, resulting in a Puligny with a sense of elegance compared to other areas like Les Pucelles or Folataires. Buttery texture, with citrus fruits and medium acidity and body, a touch of herbal and spicy notes. The excellent quality of the 2018 vintage is expressed in the wine, showing the beautiful layers of ample fruits that needed a few more years to settle. The appetizers (Signature BBQ Iberico Pork - Marinated Cucumber with Grated Garlic - Jellyfish Marinated with Sesame Oil and Spring Onion - Crispy Marinated Bean Curd) were tricky to pair with many different elements. The wine worked nicely as it has enough body to balance the sauce, without being too powerful at the same time to mask the flavours.





## Chateau Calon Segur, Saint Estephe, 2003

### 3<sup>rd</sup> GROWTH GRAND CRU CLASSE

Ripe black fruits accompanied by red cherry notes, this wine is indeed quite ready to drink. While it remains drinkable for many years, it lacks a bit of structure at the end. Expect to start drinking now but it will not improve too much in the long run.



### Chateau Calon Segur 2003

*"This beautiful 2003 exhibits a dense ruby/purple color, a vigorous youthfulness, and plenty of mulberry, black currant and cherry fruit intermixed with notions of cedarwood, baking spices and roasted herbs. Ripe, medium to full-bodied, fresh and precise, this wine is just hitting full maturity where it should remain for another 10-15 years. Drink 2014-2029" 93points, Robert Parker, Wine Advocate*

### **Chateau Leoville Barton, Saint Julien, 2003**

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> GROWTH GRAND CRU CLASSE

Full-bodied plummy wines, still youthful but fairly approachable after double decanting for 2 hours. The nose is very expressive already. It has certainly got more structure than the Calon Segur, and majority of the people prefer the Barton more. Yet, I would rather suggest keeping another 3-5 years.



### Chateau Leoville Barton 2003

*"A spectacular success, the opaque plum-colored 2003 Leoville Barton is still on the young side of its plateau of maturity. It exhibits a striking bouquet of forest floor and black currants as well as a full-bodied, exuberant, youthful style, an opaque plum/ruby color, a lot of complexity, and striking depth and richness. This is a profound, stunning effort from Anthony Barton and his team. Bravo! It should continue to provide immense pleasure for 20-30 years. Drink 2014-2044." 96 points, Robert Parker, Wine Advocate*

## Chateau Pichon Lalande, Pauillac, 2003

### 2<sup>nd</sup> GROWTH GRAND CRU CLASSE

Attractive ripe black fruits with sweet spice and cedar aromas, but on palate it might seem a bit overripe and unbalanced. Moreover, we suspect there were some obvious bottle variations for this wine. This is only for people who enjoy jammy and super-ripe style, which may be a bit abnormal for a Bordeaux red.



### Chateau Pichon Lalande 2003

*"Made from a blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Merlot and 4% Petit Verdot, this spectacular 2003 hits all the sweet spots on the palate. A glorious bouquet of cedarwood, jammy black currants, cherries, licorice and truffle is followed by a dense, opulently textured, full-bodied wine with terrific purity and freshness as well as deep, velvety textured tannins. Enjoy this beauty over the next 10-12 years. Drink 2014-2026." 95 points, Robert Parker, Wine Advocate*

## Chateau Montrose, Saint Estephe, 2003

### 2<sup>nd</sup> GROWTH GRAND CRU CLASSE

Powerful with great complexity, superb both on the nose and palate, concentrated berries and herbal characters, long finish. Balance is not effected by the drought and extreme heat spikes in 2003. It can certainly can keep for many decades, still young, but you can easily feel the potential. Given the price, the quality is absoulutely the best since 1990. As Robert Partker also mentioned it is a candidate for 100 points (see below), this is a wine to stock up and age for many years to come. Nearly over half of the guests picked this wine as their favourite of the night.



### Chateau Montrose 2003

*"A candidate for a perfect score, the 2003 Montrose has been a superstar since the first time I tasted it in barrel. Showing no signs of weakening, it is an amazing wine from this fabulous terroir. It boasts a deep blue/purple color as well as a stunning perfume of blueberries, black currants, blackberries, licorice and camphor. Dense, full-bodied and rich with an unctuous texture, well-integrated, melted tannins, and a long, heady finish, this big, brawny, super-intense, gorgeous 2003 is just beginning to enter its plateau of full maturity. It should remain there for at least two decades. Drink: 2014-2034." 99 points, Robert Parker, Wine Advocate*



## **Chateau Margaux, Margaux, 2003**

### **1<sup>st</sup> GROWTH GRAND CRU CLASSE**

Attractive floral, blackcurrant and red cherry notes with earthy, mushroom styled aromas. Nice balance that do not show overripe conditions. Positive feedback from all the guests.



### **Chateau Margaux 2003**

*"This was the finest performance by this wine that I have seen since it was released. I did not expect the 2003 Chateau Margaux to show this well in a vintage where the southern part of the Medoc was clearly less impressive than the north. However, it is a beautiful, dark plum/purple-tinged effort with sensational aromatics, a full-bodied mouthfeel, and a youthfulness, precision and freshness that belie what one generally associates with this vintage. It can be drunk now and over the next 15-20 years. Kudos to Chateau Margaux. Drink 2014-2034." 98 points, Robert Parker, Wine Advocate*



## Chateau Haut Brion, Pessac-Leognan, 2003

### 1<sup>st</sup> GROWTH GRAND CRU CLASSE

Red fruit dominant with good balance of black fruits, touch of smokiness and cooked herbs. The wine seemed a bit constrained compared to other vintages. Got great potential but it may need a few more years to blossom. It paired nicely with the beef.



### Chateau Haut Brion 2003

*"Even better, and clearly the best wine made in the Haut-Brion stable in 2003 (the last vintage of the great Jean-Bernard Delmas as administrator), the 2003 Haut-Brion is a blend of 58% Merlot, 31% Cabernet Sauvignon and 11% Cabernet Franc that hit 13% natural alcohol, which*

*seemed high at the time, but given more recent vintages is modest. Dark ruby/plum in color, with no amber or orange at the edge, the wine exhibits an abundance of roasted herbs, hot rocks, black currants, plum, and balsamic notes. Quite rich, medium to full-bodied and more complete, with sweeter tannins than La Mission Haut-Brion, this full-bodied Haut-Brion has hit full maturity, where it should stay for at least a decade. Bravo!" 95 points, Robert Parker, Wine Advocate*

### **Chateau Lafite Rothschild, Pauillac, 2003**

#### 1<sup>st</sup> GROWTH GRAND CRU CLASSE

Youthful with classic notes of Lafite: cassis, cedarwood, pencil shaving, gigantic yet with sense of elegance. Great complexity. Ageworthy for at least 20 more years.



*"The 2003 Lafite Rothschild comes as close to perfection as any of the great Lafites made over the past three decades (1982, 1986, 1996, 2000, 2005, 2008, 2009 and 2010). This sensational effort came in at 12.7% natural alcohol, it is made in the style of one of this estate's great classics, the 1959. Composed of 86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot, it exhibits a dense ruby/purple color to the rim along with a luxurious bouquet of cedarwood, lead pencil shaving, white chocolate, cocoa and cassis. Fat, rich, opulent and full-bodied with low acidity and stunning seductiveness and complexity, this noble wine possesses a bountiful, generous, heady style. It is just coming into its plateau of maturity where it should hold for 20-25 years. This is one of the candidates for the wine of the vintage - make no mistake about that. Drink: 2014 – 2039" 100 points, Robert Parker, Wine Advocate*

## Chateau Latour, Pauillac, 2003

### 1<sup>st</sup> GROWTH GRAND CRU CLASSE

Atypical with low acidity and very ripe, intense blackcurrant notes, but keeping at a harmonious level. Definitely one of the stars of the vintage, however expect to age for way longer in order to express its full potential.



*"Administrator Frederic Engerer says the 2003 is ""the sexiest Latour ever made."" He also described it as ""the 1990 without any brettanomyces."" I loved this wine from the barrel and was fortunate enough to be able to purchase a small quantity, enjoying every bottle I have had. A profound example of Chateau Latour, the full-bodied, opulent 2003 is already performing well at age eleven, which is somewhat atypical. The pH is a relatively high 3.8, which also indicates low acidity. The wine is very ripe, but not over-ripe, offers great freshness, and lots of creme de cassis and camphor as well as hints of blackberries and chocolate. Dense, thick and unctuously textured, this staggering Latour is undeniably the most sumptuous, opulent wine made here since the 1982 or 1961. Drink it over the next two decades. Drink: 2014 – 2034" 100 points, Robert Parker, Wine Advocate*



### **Klein Constantia, Vins de Constance, 2016**

Floral, honey, apricot, quince and sweet spices notes, great acidity. Definitely the star of South Africa. Ageworthy. Perfect alternative to Sauternes and Tokaji.



*"The 2016 Vin de Constance is matured in 50% French acacia oak, Hungarian oak and regular French oak, and 50% in French foudres. This has more delineation and precision on the nose compared to the previous vintage, offering acacia honey, quince, saffron and touches of elderflower in the background. The palate is very well balanced with fine precision, a killer line of acidity and disarming purity toward a finish that lingers in the mouth. Stunning." 97 points, Neal Martin, vinous.com*





### **Conclusion**

Despite the atypical style of the 2003 Bordeaux vintage, guests in general enjoyed the wines, with Ch. Montrose (given the price) widely considered the star of the night. First growths definitely needed more time, and Ch. Latour was slightly more popular than Ch. Lafite. Great atmosphere in the evening with smooth service and high quality food provided by Artzyen Club.