

Your French Wine Collection

From the Bonner Private Wine Partnership



BONNER
PRIVATE WINE
PARTNERSHIP

An Adventure in Every Bottle

Searching the world for astonishing
wines from little-known winemakers

Our Online Store is Open!

Don't Run Out of Wine! Certain bottles are available for purchase at our online shop. Log into your profile on www.bonnerprivatewines.com to see what's in the cellar. You can also always give us a call at 844.733.5249.



Photo by Domaine les Ondines

Dear Member,

In 1911, the grape growers of Champagne rose up in revolt.

They hijacked trucks, burned warehouses, ransacked cellars and destroyed millions of francs worth of wine. An entire boulevard in the village of Ay became a smoking ruin. The Bolsheviks joined in. The Anarchists too. Their red flags, waving in harmony with refrains of *L'Internationale*, became a common sight atop the revolt's numerous street barricades. The army was deployed, then overrun, then redeployed.

The conflict arose out of disagreement over the name Champagne. The local négociants (merchants who bottled and sold the wine) wanted to sell wine with grapes imported from Spain and Algeria, much to the indignation of the grape growers. But the latter were divided among themselves, with those of the Marne (then as now Champagne's dominant region) seeking to exclude those of the Aube (Champagne's historical home but far less developed than its neighbor) from the Champagne name.

Things took a breather when an unsuspecting German army wandered into the fray, the Champagne region of the Marne representing the high water mark of its 1914 invasion of France. No sooner the armistice signed, however, than hostilities resumed, ending only in 1927 with the codification of Champagne's present boundaries.

When the French make a big stink about winemakers in, say, California making "champagne," this is why.

The fault lines have yet to completely heal. The Marne remains the guardian of Champagne's most prestigious brands, and all that comes with that. The Aube remains rural, artisanal, more committed to the art of winemaking than the business of it. If the Marne produces exactly what you'd expect of a fine bubbly, the Aube is the realm of the dark horse. You can taste one of those for yourself in this collection's bottle of Robert Grandpierre (the makers of which are direct descendants of Armand Robert, a leader on the Aube side of the 1911 conflict).

This collection is all about dark horses in some of France's biggest

names. You've had Bordeaux, of course; and Champagne, and Rhône, and perhaps even Languedoc-Roussillon. But these are large regions. And if you avoid the well-trod paths promoted by most wine critics, tour operators, and (let us be honest) your local fine wine shop, you'll find little pockets where terroir and winemaking combine to an extraordinary, unexpected effect.

In this box, you will find six bottles:

- ① Château Beau-Site Haut-Vignoble Saint-Estèphe 2015
- ② Château Lalande-Poitevin Graves 2018
- ③ Château les Pins Côtes du Roussillon Villages 2017
- ④ Domaine les Ondines Vacqueyras "Passion" 2016
- ⑤ Robert Grandpierre Champagne Brut Blanc de Blancs
- ⑥ Oz de Cailleteau Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2020

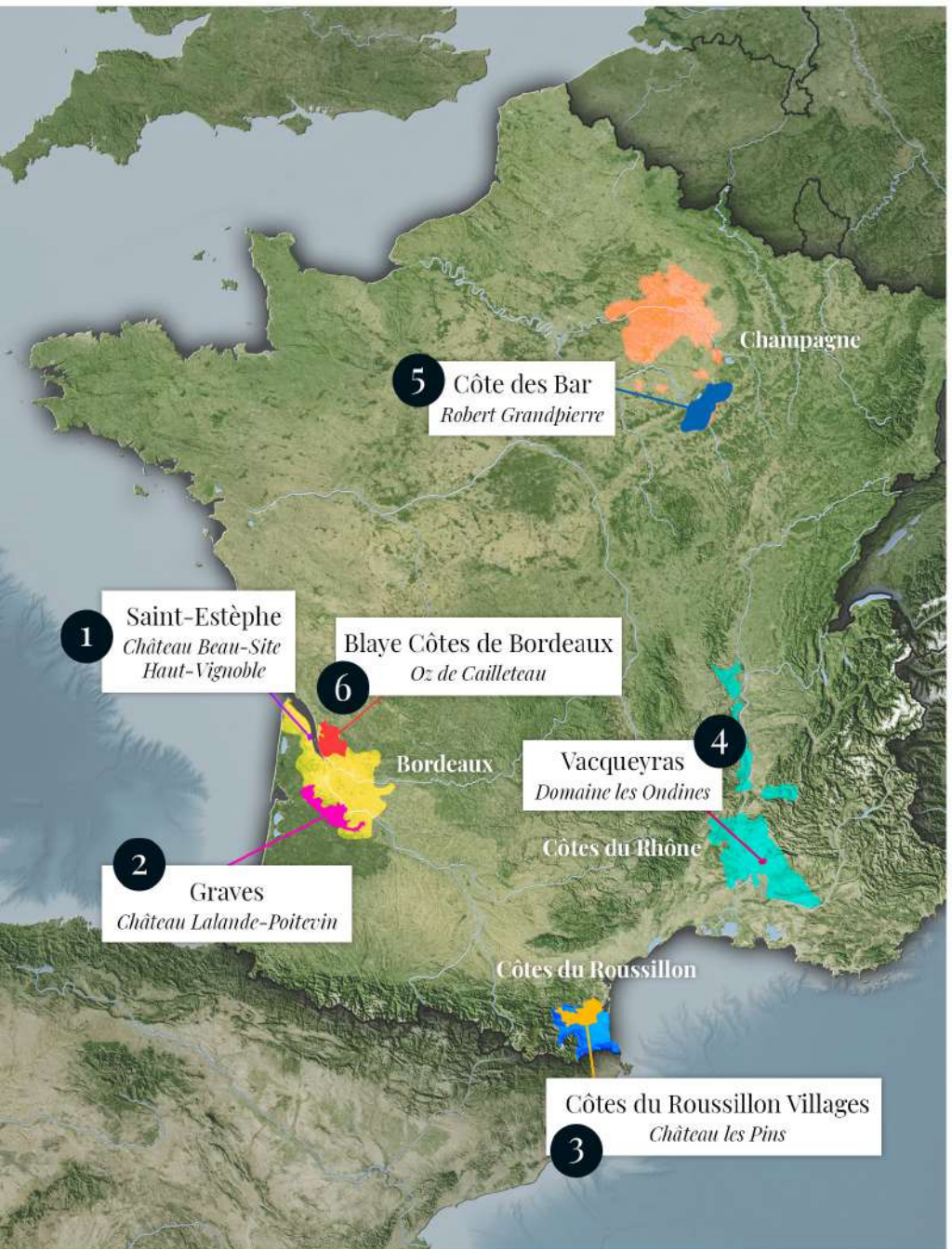
Together, these six represent a journey that took us from the quartz pebble terroirs of Graves, to the windswept plains of Vacqueyras, to the sea fossils of Côte des Bar, all in search of that intangible property of wine that stirs the hearts of men to such passionate heights that they will burn the whole world in its defense.

Santé,



Will Bonner
Founder, Bonner Private Wine Partnership

The Regions



A Quick Note on Wine Tasting

On the next few pages, we've included tasting notes. Here's a quick tip on how to approach them.

What makes a “wine expert” is not just depth of knowledge – which anyone can achieve – but sensitivity to taste and smell. A great wine expert will find a hundred little aromas that most ordinary noses will never be able to detect.

Now. If you don't pick up on the same flavors, does that mean you're doing it wrong?

No. Tasting is subjective. Pronounced flavors on my palate may present themselves as secondary or tertiary notes for you. Remember, wines are always evolving in the bottle. That hint of cherry from a few months ago might present itself differently now. So, if you detect a flavor or aroma you don't see on the tasting sheet, add it. See what your friends say. Better yet, if you have a tasting that differs markedly from what's written here, send us your notes. We'd love to compare them! Email us at feedback@bonnerprivatewines.com.

2023
French
Collection

Bonner Private Wine Partnership

Saint-Estèphe 2015

Château Beau-Site Haut-Vignoble

Cabernet Sauvignon,
Merlot, Petit Verdot
Saint-Estèphe (Bordeaux)



Saint-Estèphe sits slightly apart from the rest of Bordeaux in several ways. It's a good deal higher in altitude. The marine influence is strong, being situated where the Gironde meets the Atlantic. And a thick layer of clay in the soil makes for poor drainage resulting in slower maturation, and therefore higher acidity. Saint-Estèphes cellar extremely well (it'll be very interesting to see where this bottle lands two decades from now).

Unlike the velvet loafer wines from further down the river, Saint-Estèphe reds have a reputation for grit and austerity. Certainly, you'll find plenty of cigar smoke and leather in this bottle. But there's oak and vanilla, too, plus some blackberry and plum. Our resident expert on French wine, Julien Miquel, is a longtime fan of this vintage. Finally, we get to see what all the fuss is about.

Drink now to 2033 (2040 if you like to gamble).

Graves 2018 Château Lalande-Poitevin

Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot,
Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot
Graves (Bordeaux)



For your heavy Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner, this easy going red may just be the thing. It'll work starting at the aperitif right on through to dessert.

The Château de Castres dates back to the 16th century. Pre-phyloxera it was one of the largest wineries in the region. The Lalande-Poitevin family acquired it in 1996 and did a complete renovation, replanting every vine. They kept the wisdom of centuries – still preferring hand harvests and traditional methods in the winery. Tradition is sacred in Graves, with its gravelly soil formed by glaciers an eon ago. The region is home to some of Bordeaux's oldest vineyards (the most famous of which is Haut Brion – pronounced "O'Brian" FYI).

This 2018 is a lighter Graves, though the classic spice and plum are there. But this isn't one you age for decades.

Drink now to 2028.

Côtes du Roussillon Villages 2017 Château les Pins

Syrah, Grenache Noir, Mourvèdre
Languedoc-Roussillon



Longtime Partnership members will remember our bombshell finds in Faugères and Cabardès from years past.

This year we sample a new gem from Languedoc-Roussillon, specifically from the small Catalan village of Baixas in the Roussillon half of the appellation. (Yes, there is a French Catalonia.)

This red 2017 powerhouse will go toe-to-toe with even the mightiest, meatiest of holiday occasions. Plus, what could be more festive than notes of chestnut, vanilla, and spice?

Stick around to see the sweet notes take the fore during the long finish. And if you don't get around to it this season, fret not, it'll keep for a few more.

Drink now to 2028. With 91 points from James Suckling.

Vacqueyras Passion 2016

Domaine les Ondines

Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault
Vacqueyras (Southern Rhône)



In the scrubland plains of Sarrians, north of Avignon, the “mistral” winds regularly reach 60 miles per hour. They play such an integral role in the terroir that the vine rows at Domaine les Ondines are planted in the direction of the prevailing wind.

For weed and pest control, les Ondines deploys sixty ewes to graze the vineyards. What the ewes don't get, gets pulled by hand. Such is winemaker Jeremy Onde's dedication to the organic process that he refuses to use chemicals even in cleaning his machinery. Accordingly, this 2016 is organic, low sulfite, and sturdy like a heavy château door hewn

from a single piece of oak. A better value Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

With a gold medal from the Paris Concours Générale Agricole in 2018, be on the lookout for notes of blackcurrant, blueberry, and pepper.

Drink now to 2030.

Champagne Brut Blanc de Blancs Robert Grandpierre

Chardonnay
Côte des Bar
(Champagne, Aube)



Armand Robert fought to protect Champagne and the Aube alongside Gaston Cheq in the 1911 revolt. Today, his descendants continue the legacy from their 12th century Benedictine priory.

We were early on rustic Côte des Bar. It's now having a moment with Wine Folly declaring it "the hottest Champagne region right now." But don't expect Côte des Bar to go mainstream any time soon. This is a region where vineyards still share space with forest and farm, and clay "kimmeridgian" soil layered with ancient

marine fossils replaces the chalk found elsewhere in Champagne.

After three years aged in bottle, you'll pop this open to find a nose that smells like grandma's kitchen the day before Thanksgiving, plus a lush mouthfeel cut by a cool acidity that carries the whole experience through to a long finish. Drink it now but keep a case or two on hand for the winter ahead.

Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux 2020 Oz de Cailleteau

Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot
Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux



Côtes de Bordeaux doesn't give up its treasures easily. It's not even a single contiguous area, but rather a grouping of four disparate Bordeaux sub-zones. For us, however, it's the appellation that keeps on giving. Partnership members may fondly recall last year's *Vieille Tour* from the Cadillac sub-zone. This 2020 comes from Blaye, on the right bank of the Gironde estuary, and as far north from Cadillac as you can get without leaving the Bordeaux region. There, micro-producer Oz de Cailleteau, founded in 1933 and run by brother and sister Pierre-Charles and Marie-Pierre, coaxes rich, lavish wines from 50-year-old vines and a rather austere stony soil over clay and limestone.

You'll probably want to open your bottle at least an hour or two before drinking (or decant). Admire those black fruit and oak tones in the nose, followed by velvety eucalyptus and tobacco on the palate. Drink now to 2032.

Our Mission

At the Bonner Private Wine Partnership, our mission is to bring you unique bottles from all over the world. We seek wines that are bursting with life and character – wines with an adventure in every bottle.

Your Next Quarterly Shipment

As you read this, we are already selecting and arranging to import wines for next quarter's shipment. We will be in touch to share what we've found with you when we get closer to the shipping date. Until then, enjoy your wine! (And let us know what you think!)

Problem with Your Shipment?

Please call our customer service, 9-5 Monday through Friday at 1-844-733-5249. We want everyone to get the most out of this club and these wines. So if there's a problem, we'll do our best to make it right.