

Sweet Wines (52)
Today's Bordeaux is Affordable Bordeaux

95*

Château de Rayne Vigneau 2009 Sauternes Première Grand Cru Classé \$40

This wine bursts from the glass with its huge and cool nose of gingerbread and sugar cookie topped apple crumble. It is delicious and vibrant, made from 80% Sémillon and 20% Sauvignon Blanc vinified in new oak (50% new). Delish and vibrant. It has lightly pungent acidity that keeps the wine's feel dynamic and youthful. It also has a hint of apricot peel tannins. Still impressively young, this wine hasn't shown anywhere close to what it has yet.

95

Château Laville 2009 Sauternes \$40

This wine is dense and crazy decadent. It tastes of maple syrup, maple candy and golden raisins. It is so intense that a thimbleful is enough! The round, lush palate is medium-plus in body with extreme fruit concentration. Aged in barrels after its vinification in stainless steel, this blend of 90% Sémillon and 10% Sauvignon Blanc has both extreme concentration and terrific balance. The thing is, it is so intense it seems best served like Tokaji Aszú, from a small spoon rather than a glass!

95*

Château Doisy-Daëne 2010 Barsac \$50

This wine has an exuberant nose. Its supremely well-balanced palate of 89% Sémillon and 11% Sauvignon Blanc comes from vines that average 40 years of age. The vinification and aging in barriques then inox, allows the rich layers of apricot skin, smoky tobacco and ginger to meld seamlessly together. There's a lot of fun in this dynamic mouthful of flavors balanced between primary and tertiary notes.

94

Château Filhot 2009 Sauternes \$41

Made of 60% Sémillon, 36% Sauvignon Blanc and 4% Muscadelle, this wine smells like pancake syrup. The palate follows with dried orange peel, nectarine preserves and guava. It is exotic, sumptuous and multi-layered with massive density and turbo-charged acidic lift. Moreover, it is not even close to revealing all its potential though fantastic now. This wine's mouthwatering acidity is its thread to longevity and positive evolution.

94

Château Laribotte 2011 Sauternes \$35

Exotic on the nose with dried apricots and sweet, grainy biscuits, this is a classic style of Sauternes with a full body, gum-saturating viscosity, oodles of concentration hints of new oak (vanilla, toasted pie crust), roasted pineapple, burned orange peel. This blend of 90% Sémillon, 8% Sauvignon Blanc and 2% Muscadelle offers maximum deliciousness with terrific balance.

94*

Secret de Château Biac 2011 Cadillac \$43 (500 ml)

Château Biac may be petite with only 9.8 ha, but it is on one of the prettiest segments of the Garonne with its amphitheater of vineyards perched above a turn in the river. Made from 100% Sémillon with 140 g/L of residual sugar, this is the sweetest wine made since the Asseily family purchased the property in August 2006. It's a decadent affaire with honey-drizzled dried apricots and copious baking spices. Suave and brilliantly balanced, it's a sweet wine I could drink all day.

93*

Château Haut-Bergeron 2011 Sauternes \$39

This wine, made of 85% Sémillon, 12% Sauvignon Blanc and 8% Muscadelle hailing from near Château Climens in Barsac, smells of honeycomb, dried apricots and toasted marshmallows. It is full-bodied between its 13.5% abv and 154 g/L RS. A sexy hint of cigar box on the finish shows the first notes of beneficial development. Lush, custardy and turbo-charged with pure fruit concentration, this wine has an exceedingly long finish!

93

Château Manos 2009 Cadillac Réserve du Château \$NA

This château neighbors Château La Mothe de Haux, its 100+-year-old vines have been under a *fermage*, a type of land rental agreement, since 1991. The Réserve hasn't been made since the 2009 vintage. Aged two years in all new barriques (only three were made), the sweet oak character still made a big impression six years post-vintage. The wine tastes of toasted marshmallows, dried apricots and golden raisins. There's solid acidic relief offering very good balance and pulling everything into a medium finish. This will be a crowd-pleaser in most circles.

93

Lions de Suduiraud 2011 Sauternes \$33

Made from 90% Sémillon and 10% Sauvignon Blanc vinified and aged in French oak barrels, 10% of which are new. This smells of rosehip tea, verbena, chamomile, sweet spice and Turkish Delight. It is extravagantly sweet at 130 g/L RS with a honeyed, candied back palate and lingering, nuanced finish. It is mouth-filling, unctuous and sensuous with just enough brisk acidity for a hint of refreshment. This is definitely for those who love the hedonistic side of sauternes. There is a hint of warmth on the lingering finish.

92*

Château Lamothe Guignard 2013 Sauternes \$36

This is a wine that downright dazzles. Its densely concentrated nose is packed with caramelized sugar, maple syrup and dried apricots. It caresses the full-bodied, viscous palate then shoots in scintillating, high acidity to balance the blend of 90% Sémillon and 5% each Sauvignon Blanc and Muscadelle. Vanilla, toasted brioche and nougat from its élevage in oak barrels adds nuance, especially on the lingering finish. This is a brilliantly balanced and highly drinkable Sauternes with 118 g/L RS that bursts of youthful and pure flavors.

92

Château Roumieu 2012 Sauternes \$47

Gold in color with masses of flavor, this super sophisticated wine is layered and nuanced and shows the best of a really terrific vintage in Barsac. It tastes of honey-drizzled apricots nestled onto toasted brioche slices. Crazy freshness gives this wine impressive drinkability.

92*

Clos Haut-Peyraguey 2011 Sauternes Première Grand Cru Classé \$49

This is the quintessential Christmas pudding wine. It smells of iced tea, lavender sachets and donut peaches. This blend of 95% Sémillon and 5% Sauvignon Blanc that if fermented and aged in barriques (30% new) has no shortage of viscosity that helps drag the wine into a lingering finish of persimmon and nectarines. It has bewitching balance of hard-core sweetness at 153 g/L RS, racy acidity and a nicely crisp finish. It's beguilingly drinkable.

92

L'Ilot de Haut-Bergeron 2011 Sauternes \$45

Blended from 80% Sémillon and 20% Sauvignon Blanc, this wine's seductive nose boasts loads of field flowers, touches of honey and ripe peaches. It is also astonishingly pure. This sticky with 135 g/L RS has solid concentration, mouthwatering acidity and generous sucrosity yet astonishingly dry-ish finish. This is hitting on all cylinders now but has a long way to go in the bottle as well.

92

Maison Sichel 2012 Sauternes \$48

Yes! This wine has just what every wine needs, whether sweet, dry or in between. It is very simply balanced. It's suave and complex with a liqueur-like texture that gives it super suaveness and an enticing almond paste and toasted hazelnut character that give oodles of complexity and draw the sipper back in each time.

92

Mouton Cadet 2013 Sauternes Réserve \$25

Made of 90% Sémillon and 10% Sauvignon Blanc, this Sauternes has becoming freshness and pristine-clean fruit. It tastes of toasted brioche spread with orange marmalade and drizzled with honey and cinnamon.

91

Château Bastor-Lamontagne 2009 Sauternes \$40

Acquired by the Cathiard (Smith-Haut Lafitte) and Moulin (Galeries Lafayette) families in 2014, this Sauternes house has nowhere but up to go – especially with the Cathiards overseeing the production. This older vintage is far from shabby, however, with an intricate interlacing of honey, steeped white tea leaves and candied apricots. Despite the evident density of the 2009 vintage here, there's massive supporting acidity.

91

Château Haut-Mouleyre 2014 Cadillac \$18

Pronounced yellow in color with gold tinges, this varietal Sémillon presents a stunning nose with lovely fruit purity. Gingerbread spice, Christmas cake, candied ginger and mirabelle preserves dazzle in their intense complexity. This wine's liling acidity gives tremendous balance to this medium-bodied, beautifully integrated, barrique-fermented wine with 90 grams per liter of residual sugar. I wanted to sip this one. Doggy bag, please!

Drink: 2016-20

91

Château Lamourette 2010 Sauternes \$22

This wine is surprisingly quite developed with notes of pan-seared mushrooms. It also has lots of still lively dried fruits, particularly peaches, pears and apples. The juicy and round palate sports solid acidity that keeps everything fresh and draws on the lengthy finish. Though evolved, this has huge concentration and should continue to hold well for a while.

91

Château Lapinesse 2013 Sauternes Vieilles Vignes \$45

The Siozards aim for finesse in their sweet wines, eschewing "cough syrup styles" of Sauternes. That doesn't mean they don't have low yields though. This sixty-year-old parcel only yielded 12 hl/ha in this vintage! It tastes of orange zest, dried apricots, acacia honey and allspice. The medium body is generous but not overwhelming in viscosity thanks to the delightful, piercing acidity. There's no rush to get to this wine, though it is hard to resist.

91*

Château Sigalas Rabaud 2011 Sauternes Première Grand Cru Classé \$50

This wine was harvested at 20 hl/ha. It smells decadent on its explosive nose: honeysuckle, golden raisins and fuzzy peach skin. This composition of 85% Sémillon and 15% Sauvignon Blanc both tastes of and feels like honey. This is deeply concentrated but surprisingly only moderate in viscosity with bright acidity that makes its 127 g/L of RS very drinkable. Moreover, the long and complex finish has a pleasant dryness to it that give it terrific balance as well as a wide range of pair-ability at the table.

90

Château d'Armajan des Ormes 2011 Sauternes \$20 (375 ml)

This youthful wine has bright orange reflections. Its assemblage of 70% Sémillon, 25% Sauvignon Blanc and 5% Muscadelle smells of toasted brioche drizzled with honey. It tastes of apple cider and apple cider donuts sprinkled with cinnamon sugar. This is broad and lusty on the palate thanks to its generous sweetness as well as its 18 to 24 months of barrique élevage.

90

Château d'Uza 2014 Graves Supérieures Blanc \$NA

Bright and gleaming with gold reflections, this wine's nose was somewhat subdued, though underscores of honeysuckle, gingerbread, toasted marshmallow and sweet persimmon crept through as the wine sat in the glass. The palate opened into a massive array of flavors of sugar-and-cinnamon coated, baked yellow apples topped with toasted walnuts. This blend of 80% Sémillon and 20% Sauvignon Blanc is full-flavored yet light on its feet with a nervous acidic tension and a touch of pithiness that nicely cleans up the caressing palate feel. The medium finish adds a layer of marzipan.

90*

Château Les Guyonnets 2011 Sainte-Croix-du-Mont \$15

This pure Sémillon bottling has an impressively mineral nose with cinnamon stick, apple sauce and tarte tatin. The palate adds apricot skins and honey. There is enormous viscosity and very high, 150 g/L RS, but there is also precise, chiseled acidity for balance. There's so much sumptuous fruit, this is easy to love. This was aged in one-year-old French oak barriques.

90

Secret de Château Biac 2009 Cadillac \$43 (500 ml)

This is strikingly different from the 2011 expression of this wine. It smells of candle wax, chlorophyll, phyllo dough and candied orange peels. It's also thicker on the palate with a mouthcoating quality that makes it, even at a much lower 86 g/L residual sugar, more of a one-glass-at-a-time wine – though of course a very pleasant one!

89

Castelnau de Suduiraut 2009 Sauternes \$19 (375 ml)

This wine's reserved and minerally nose almost doesn't seem to match its big palate with a vast expansive of fruit flavors. There's marmalade, persimmon, baking spice and molasses. The blend of 90% Sémillon and 10% Sauvignon blanc shows masses of sucrosity, but it's very impressively balanced by roaring acidity. Still, those less inclined to like sweet wines may have a harder time getting through one glass. Fairly quick on the finish, it's drinking well now.

89

Château Bastor-Lamontagne 2010 Sauternes \$30

This wine composed of 95% Sémillon and 5% Sauvignon Blanc has a reserved and minerally nose. However, its viscous palate is drenched in the happy succulence of botrytis, as it should be at only 12 hl/ha. There is candied orange peel, marzipan and spice rack as well as wet cigar and crushed autumn leaves. The wine is definitely evolving and may well already be heading toward its peak. It's great to enjoy now and for the next few years. There is no obvious oak, though the wine is made entirely in once used barriques, where it is aged 18 months.

89

Château Lapinesse 2013 Sauternes \$32

This super drinkable Sauternes is made entirely of Sémillon. Its invigorating freshness is remarkable, especially for 90 g/L of residual sugar. It sees nothing but stainless steel, so its flavors of honey, tinned yellow peaches and apricot preserves are free of toastiness right through the medium finish. This was harvested at only 18 hl/ha.

89

Château Manos 2014 Cadillac \$20

Made with 80% botrytized grapes from 95-year-old vines, this varietal Sémillon is aged in older oak. It's not overly sweet, thanks in good part to its racy acidity. It tastes of honey-drizzled apricots and marzipan-filled croissants.

89

Thomas Barton Réserve 2013 Sauternes \$28

This wine has a potpourri of diverse aromas. There's fern and soft-stemmed herbs followed by toasted, whole grain baguette, pancake syrup and nougat. There is liting acidity that lends solid drinkability to this creamy, 100 g/L RS bottling with medium concentration and a lingering, if not long, finish. This was partially aged in barriques for 12 months.

88*

Château Cantegril 2013 Sauternes \$30

This bottling of 80% Sémillon and 20% Sauvignon Blanc has a dynamic nose of honey, aloe and fern. The generously weighty palate brings along dried apricots and allspice. This nicely concentrated wine coats the palate with light viscosity then refreshes it with lively acidity. Fermented and aged nine months in barriques (one-third each of new, second and third use) then another nine months in stainless steel before bottling, this has loads of balance, great juiciness and the possibility to improve some to benefit.

88

Château Dauphiné-Rondillon 2007 Loupiac Cuvée d'Or \$25 (375 ml)

This comes from the estate's oldest vines – 60 to 80 years-old – which are planted in clay and gravel soils. The blend of 80% Sémillon and 20% Sauvignon Blanc now has a lovely, pronounced gold color with topaz inflections. Its honeyed nose smells of flan and crème caramel. The palate is mouth-filling but the flavors of cinnamon spice and baked apricots are a touch watery. Not pristine clean in fruit character (there seem to be touches of grey rot), the wine also feels a bit heavy with lax acidity and massive sucrosity. Still, this is charmer, and it will meet many friends.

88

Château de Cérons 2007 Cérons \$35

This nicely aged wine is reserved on the nose, save its steeped tea leaves. It has a generous palate feel with its 87 g/L RS, but it impressively finishes dry. The flavors of this 80% Sémillon, 18% Sauvignon Blanc and 2% Muscadelle include honey and marmalade. Medium-plus in body and with solidly supporting acidity, this is highly drinkable. Though drinking well now, there's

plenty of flavor concentration and structure to allow this to hold for a while, even if it doesn't improve much more. This is a classic Bordelais sticky, fermented and aged in barrels.

88

Château Delmond 2012 Sauternes \$33

A combination of 90% Sémillon and 10% Sauvignon Blanc grown on deep gravel soils, this bewitching wine tastes of white currants, white peaches and marzipan. There is also a lovely floral quality on the nose. The mouthwatering palate has terrific balance thanks to its dynamic acidity. Its finish is only moderate, but this is pristine clean wine has lots of enticing succulence with its 110 g/L RS.

88

Château du Cros 2011 Loupiac \$30

Candied orange peel, sweet spices, nougat and toasted brioche come out on this blend's nose. It is 85% Sémillon, 10% Sauvignon Blanc and 5% Muscadelle vinified in stainless steel then aged in oak, 40% new. The mild acidity works hard to support the wine but does manage to draw the myriad flavors into a lingering finish. The 111 g/L of residual sugar give volume on the palate as well as a caressing texture. This is suave and classy.

88

Château Loupiac-Gaudiet 2012 Loupiac \$17 (500 ml)

This sticky has a welcoming nose of honey, ginger and clove-studded oranges. Lenient acidity meets slightly warm alcohol and considerable, 112 g/L of RS, making the wine slightly heavy. Still, it's balanced enough and has a moderately complex finish. Most sippers will love this. There's definitely something captivating here in this 90% Sémillon and 10% Sauvignon Blanc blend!

88

Château Manos 2013 Cadillac \$14 (375 ml)

Under the care of Château Lamothe de Haux, these old vines produced about 17 hl/ha for this wine that smells of white nectarines and peaches delicately laced with baking spices. Moderate on the finish with only 85 g/L residual sugar perkily balanced by nice the 98% Sauvignon Blanc (2% Sémillon), this is pleasantly refreshing.

88

Petit Guiraud 2013 Sauternes \$23 (375 ml)

Blended from 65% Sémillon and 35% Sauvignon Blanc vinified part in stainless steel and part in barriques, this wine smells like honey-drizzled apricots. Medium in body, this has so much spritely acidity and a rather dry, medium finish that it feels light enough for an apéritif. Terrifically pure, this wine tastes of peaches, used tea leaves and baked pie crust. The Château Guiraud vineyards have been under organic cultivation since 1996 and obtained certification in 2011.

88

Château St-Armand 2010 Sauternes \$35

What admirable concentration buffered by an intense and lightly pithy mouthfeel! This Sauternes tastes of honey drizzled butternut squash accompanied by plump golden raisins and touches of toasted brioche. It's not imposing, but it is a mouthful of yum.

87*

Château des Graves du Tich 2013 Sainte-Croix-du-Mont \$10

This wine has an exceedingly fresh nose! Singing with purity, this 100% Sémillon smells of orange peel and pith and chamomile honey. The palate brings on a deluge of flavors: ginger, dried peaches and apricots and tapioca. Vinified in barrels, this has a rounded palate, but there's also crackling acidity to give it terrific balance to the 102 g/L RS and extend the moderate finish. This is crazy good for the money!

87

Château Fayau 2010 Cadillac \$25

This is surprisingly clear for a five-year-old wine. Its nose is restrained and minerally with notes of clementine and gooseberry. It is easy-drinking between its moderate complexity and very good balance of fresh acidity and solid sweetness. Drinking well now, either with an aperitif, alone or as a cheese wine. This may improve yet to benefit as it is still quite young. Vinified and aged in Stainless steel tanks, this is a blend of 90% Sémillon, 5% Sauvignon Blanc and 5% Muscadelle.

87*

Château La Rame 2013 Sainte-Croix-du-Mont \$18

This pure Sémillon fermented in barrique has bright wine has delicious and exuberant flavors of tangerine and clementine. There's tarte tatin with anise sugar and vanilla bean on the palate. Medium plus in body thanks to its 125 g/L RS, it has very good concentration of pure pit fruits and balancing, zingy acidity. It's not super long, so don't hesitate to drink up while its fresh.

87

Château Manos 2013 Cadillac \$20

This 98% Sémillon, 1% Sauvignon Blanc and 1% Muscadelle wine has a somewhat reserved nose with minerally top notes accompanied by aloe, fern and pine. Its flavors encompass a wide range, including verbena and iced tea with delicate yellow cherries, mirabelles, white peaches and cracked white peppercorns. It has a moderate finish with a light, lingering sweetness. Its acidity is perky and well-integrated acidity. For those who fear sweet wines will be too sweet, this is the one to go for.

87

Symphonie de Haut-Peyraguey 2013 Sauternes \$30 13%

This wine has a fairly pale color with super bright reflections. On the nose, it shows crystalline purity. The palate feels surprisingly light and even airy, despite its 89 g/L RS and only 15 hl/ha yield, thanks to its refreshing acidity. This blend of 95% Sémillon and 5% Sauvignon Blanc tastes

of fresh peaches and apricot preserves accented by cinnamon sugar and wildflower honey. Very medium body with only 13% abv, this wine has a medium finish with lots of elegance. It may hold longer, the vibrant fruit beckons earlier drinking.

86

Château Berthenon 2012 Bordeaux Supérieur Blanc Moelleux \$18

Mid-depth yellow and crystal clear with a gleaming appearance, this wine exudes harmony from start to finish. Speaking of starts, it would be a great, lightly sweet apéritif. This is a unique wine, made entirely of Sauvignon Gris. It has a bright nose with tons of citrus zest: tangerine, lime, yellow grapefruit. There are hints of fresh herbs, too, along with grated ginger and spicy gingerbread. This wine has brilliant acidity lift that leaves the palate cleansed and ready for another sip.

86

Château Loupiac 2005 Loupiac \$17 (500 ml)

This blend of 90% Sémillon and 10% Sauvignon Blanc has dark gold color with topaz reflections. Its nose is hedonistically butterscotch-y. It is definitely showing its ten years of age with attractive, heady notes of steeped tea and sautéed mushrooms. On the palate, there's also nougat, toasted walnuts and caramel. It has aged attractively, but is possibly nearing its peak. Still, there's plenty of generous acidity to help this hang on a while. It's quite decadent, with 133 g/L RS.

86

Château Menota 2010 Graves Supérieures Cuvée du Portail \$12

This family-based property makes this pleasant sweetie from just 15 ha of vines. It has an impressive concentration of almond paste, sweet tea and white peach. While intense, it isn't overwhelming. It's just a bit of everything you need.

85

Château de Rolland 2011 Barsac \$35

This dense and weighty wine smells of wet tealeaves, moss and fresh-cut Champignons de Paris. Cranking in 119 g/L of RS, the very medium acidity makes this wine feel hugely sweet and heavy. Though aged for 12 months in oak, there aren't really barrel-driven tones in the wine. This wine composed of 80% Sémillon, 15% Sauvignon Blanc and 5% Muscadelle needs more lift to age to benefit.

85

Château Lapinasse 2014 Graves Supérieur \$22

This moderately dense wine with 40 g/L of residual sugar has such excellent acidic support, that I would have guessed it was half as sweet. Its grapey nose leads to a palate of candied nectarine peel and cotton candy. It's a nice sipper as an apéritif.

85

Château Pontac 2012 Loupiac \$30

This wine starts with its bright yellow color and star bright reflections. It smells of candied orange peel with a hint of caramel. The acidity feels surprisingly medium, making the palate feels rather flabby, especially with 95 g/L of RS. Nonetheless, Though sweet on the attack, the wine finishes dry on the moderate finish. Unfortunately, this is vaguely watery on the palate and somewhat warm, too, even at just 13.6% abv. This is 90% Sémillon and 10% Sauvignon Blanc

85

Château Ségur du Cros 2010 Loupiac \$18

Fairly pale with a gleaming yellow appearance, this wine is Star bright! The nose of this 85% Sémillon, 10% Sauvignon Blanc and 5% Muscadelle made in concrete and stainless steel brings on orange peel and crushed rocks. Though only moderately flavorful, there is pronounced mid-palate density even with only 76 g/L of RS. Touches of mushroom-y, tertiary character are beginning, so this is ready to drink. While it has refreshing acidity to help it hold, it likely wouldn't improve much to benefit given its modest array of flavors.

84

Château Dauphiné-Rondillon 2009 Loupiac \$28

This wine's moderately concentrated nose smells of persimmon and cantaloupe. The same follows on the palate along with baked nectarines. The adequate acidity gives the palate a touch of verve to carry the pure, if a bit dilute, flavors into a modest finish. I'd love some blue cheese with this blend of 70% Sémillon and 30% Sauvignon Blanc!

84

Château Haut-Roquefort 2012 Cadillac \$24

This nicely evolving varietal Sémillon wine looks medium gold in the glass and has topaz highlights. Unfortunately, this wine is a bit hot and off-kilter, as the medium-plus acidity works to keep up with the wine's 88 grams per liter of residual sugar. The wine has modest flavor complexity with lots of orange and persimmon notes as well as cinnamon stick. The moderate finish suggests there's some good material underneath. If only this weren't so warm on the finish.