

## **Bordeaux's left bank known for robust red blends, crisp whites**

In this the second instalment of the Bordeaux wine region, we will review the 'Left Bank' and the white wine producing areas in this region that are extremely popular.

The left bank of the Bordeaux region is the best known of the two right and left bank regions for its robust red blends that are recognized for their aging and cellaring potential. These red Bordeaux blends come from such names as St-Estephe, Pauillac, St-Julien and Margaux, to name a few. These wines are generally cabernet sauvignon-based with cabernet franc, merlot or even on the rare occasion, the malbec, carmenere or petit verdot grape added for complexity.

Typically, reds from this area are wines that are food friendly yet if opened young may need some decanting to let the air open up the flavours. In outstanding years of production when the climate, soil condition and weather all work together, the resulting wines from that year can be the best. As seen in 2005 the ideal conditions made some say the best Bordeaux wines ever seen.

NB Liquor carries some of the 2005 vintages, which are referred to as "futures" or "Bordeaux futures". Chateau Listran Medoc is a great example of a left bank Bordeaux full body red that can be enjoyed with a marbled steak or a roast beef.

The next region of Bordeaux is the Entre Deux Mers that lies south of the right and left banks, and is known for its dry white wines, consisting of sauvignon blanc and semillon grapes. These grape varieties make wines with good acidity and citrus flavours, crisp and dry.

Great for enjoying before a meal or even with and seafood dish like bacon-wrapped scallops. A good example of an Entre Deux Mers is Chateau de l'Orangerie Entre Deux Mers. This wine is a blend of sauvignon blanc, semillon and muscadelle grapes.

Sweet and delectable best describes the sauternes, a style of wine as well as a sub-region south of Bordeaux. Here the sauvignon blanc, Semillon and Muscadelle grape are grown and left on the vines for an extended amount of time so that Botrytis also known as Noble Rot can make the grapes almost raisin-like. This process allows the sugar content in the grapes to elevate much higher which in turn makes a fairly sweet wine, with flavours of apricots, peaches and honey almost a dried fruit taste.

Blue cheese is the best pairing for this wine as well as a dessert wine. The process in order to make sauternes is much more costly to produce and the yields are much lower so the wines are of higher value.

A perfect example is the Chateau Raymond-Lafon sauternes. This wine demonstrates the fruit and complex flavours that sauternes are renowned for.

Whatever your preference - red, white, sparkling or sweet - Bordeaux offers a style of wine to suite every taste. I recommend the following Bordeaux wines, available at most NB Liquor stores.

\* Chateau Listran Medoc, 750 ml \$26.79

\* Chateau de l'Orangerie Entre Deux Mers, 750 ml \$14.79

\* Chateau Raymond-Lafon Sauternes 375ml \$61.79

Written by Trevor Ingraham, NB Liquor product advisor at the Fredericton Prospect Street store