

Liquid Investments

Nothing is sacred to the boys in the city. Now even the world of wine has become a bun-fight between investors keen to make dramatic returns over very short periods and claret lovers despairing as their favourite wines spiral out of their reach. At the very top end of French wine-making, the enormously collectable Petrus of Pomerol is now around £23,000 a case for the wonderful 2000 vintage. However, I have no doubt it will soon find a buyer as the market for fine wines refuses to slow down. Customers who bought into the celebrated 2000 vintage en primeur (ie buying while the wine is still in France at the Chateaux maturing) are now laughing into their checkbooks. A case of Mouton-Rothschild 2000 that went for around £1000 will now fetch somewhere in the region of £6000. That's 600% growth in just 7 years, no wonder the city boys are scrambling to get their hands on good wine!

This begs the question: who is actually drinking these wines? Contrary to common opinion the vast majority is still being bought to be drunk, what has changed is the nature of the buyers. Wine Merchants are seeing their customers change from older clients following a wine vintage to vintage to younger, cash rich buyers looking to establish a cellar but comforted by the fact the wine will appreciate. The Asian market has also grown enormously, with wine merchants in China and Japan doing record business.

So what does this mean for those of us who fancy a dabble in the world of fine Claret? Well there are two main points to bear in mind before you take the plunge. Most important is the quality of the vintage: 2000 and 2005 command such high prices because they were both superb vintages, demand for both will always be high. Secondly, the influence of the American wine critic Robert Parker is crucial in the modern market. His 100 point scoring system is massively influential in the value of a wine, many would say too influential! A wine with from a good Parker score from a good vintage is a sound investment, though obviously still at the whim of global markets. If you fancy buying into the top wines but find the prices a little on the heavy side, look to lesser but decent vintages like 2004 or 2006 or buy into the 2nd Wines of these Chateaux: these can represent terrific value.

About the Author

Simon Fisher is a Wine Advisor at Averys Wine Merchants. [Averys Wine Merchants](#) list a wide range of vintages of classed growth Bordeaux including all the first growth Chateaux. More information please visit us - www.averys.com

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