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**Carnets de dégustations**  
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**The independent buyer's guide to  
 the wines of Bordeaux**



► **Pomerol 2009 (Part two. and final part)**

*Sifth Report (April 9th, 2010)*

**Times are changing for wine-tasting.**

The colour intensity is no longer a reliable indication of the quality for red wine, as it used to be.

Four or five years ago, the colour intensity of the wines assessed en primeur often meant a full body and a lively, deep nose with well-over-average distinctive presence.

Today, it is not the case anymore. We can no longer make a systematic link between the colour of a wine and the quality and quantity of its tannins.

I have tasted 2009 samples of great colour intensity which turned out to be hollow in mid-palate, and, in Pomerol, I have come across colourful yet tasteless wines.

So, beware when tasting!

As for those who, to gain time and quickly sort out 150 samples during a tasting, decide to pre-select them according to their colour, it is high time they updated their old tools and fading notes. "The times they are a-changing", and so is wine tasting.

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**Climatology**

Compared with other world-famous appellations, Saint-Emilion and Pomerol are the areas in Bordeaux where the heaviest rainfalls were recorded between July and the end of September 2009.

In September, records show an average of 95 mm for the right bank - but 60 mm for Saint-Estèphe, 45mm for Léognan, 25 mm for Pauillac and 21mm for Margaux.

The difference is essentially due to the rainstorm that hit the right bank on 19th September and the rain that followed on 20th September.

The vines half way up the hill, or those on sandy soil at the bottom, were the most affected- the grapes were diluted and the berries skin cracked. Even if the sun that followed dried up the damage and concentrated the grapes, some quite understandably took a chance and, at the end, may well have harvested too late.

Here is what I wrote in my Harvest Report on Monday 21st September:

About 80 to 100 mm, the heaviest rainfall for the day/the week end in the Bordeaux area, fell in the Pomerol area ( **La Conseillante, Clos l'Eglise** ), which is more than in 2005. That is quite a lot even if much water went straight into the ditches because/as it cannot make its way through the layer of clay. The vineyards which have been sown with grass could be better off than the ones which have been weeded

- In Saint-Emilion the situation depends on location. The valley received less rainfall than the plateau - 50 to 70 mm were/are said to have fallen onto the plateau, which is more than in 2005. **Troplong Mondot** mentioned 56 mm. In 3 to 4 days' time the vineyards growing on sandy soil at the bottom of the hills are bound to suffer from that rainfall. Around Branne, in the valley, a mere 10 mm was recorded.
- In Léognan, a mere 35 mm. ( **Malartic Lagravière** )
- In Margaux: 18 mm( **Issan** )
- In Saint-Julien: 20 mm ( **Léoville Poyferré** )
- In Pauillac, records range from 20mm at **Grand Puy Lacoste** to 30 at **Pichon Baron** . (27 mm at **Lynch Bages** )
- In saint-Estephe: 18mm at **Le Crock** and **Clauzet** .

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**BEAUREGARD Pomerol 15 // 86**

Showing an intense dark color along with a fruity and toasted nose of ripe type, this wine performs tender and

sweet on the palate, over a medium body and with soft tannins.

**BEL AIR Pomerol 14,75 - 15 // 85 - 86**

This is a good Pomerol that offers a rather light body yet with an enjoyable softness, some taste and lightly extracted tannins. It finishes over a medium length. Very pleasant.

**BLASON DE L'EVANGILE Pomerol 15 // 86**

Showing a lovely dark color with a fresh, fruity and discreet nose, this wine is bouncy and offers a juicy and tasty expression on the palate. It delivers melted tannins and body before finishing aromatic. This is a very enjoyable wine with ageing potential.

*A blend of 65 % merlot and 24 % cabernet franc. Alcohol content: 14%, pH 3.72.*

**CERTAN DE MAY DE CERTAN Pomerol 16,5 // 90**

Showing a lovely, intense, dark color; this wine offers a very fruity nose of ripe type. It performs fat and pulpy on entry, and then develops very fruity, quite tannic with taste. The finish is long and aromatic, of medium body presence.

**CERTAN MARZELLE Pomerol 14,75 - 15 // 85 - 86**

This wine shows an intense color. It offers a fruity and creamy nose. First juicy on the palate, it then evolves tannic in its persistence before finishing over a medium length.

**CLINET Pomerol 15 // 86**

Tasted three times with variable results. This wine sometimes performed balanced (rated 16.5//90), sometimes with aromatic indications of overripe harvest and a less vibrant character (rated 15//86). During the last tasting, which took place at the estate, this wine appeared dull (rated 15//86) and lacked vividness (too high pH?)

**Domaine de L'ÉGLISE Pomerol 15,5 - 15,75 // 87 - 88**

*Please see my latest comment, as the previous one was attributed to Domaine de L'Eglise by mistake. My apologies.*

Showing a dark color of fine intensity, this wine offers a creamy and fruity nose. It performs fat and flavorful on the palate and offers a juicy body, with taste and fine tannins. Very good finish.

**FAYAT Pomerol 15 // 86**

Château La Commanderie de Mazeyres in Pomerol has been renamed château Fayat. Showing a deep red color with a really lovely, fruity, ripe and pure nose, the 2009 Fayat offers an aromatic expression on the palate. It unveils a melting rather flavorful tender body. This wine finishes a touch woody, yet enjoyable, over a medium length.

**GAZIN Pomerol 15,75 - 16 // 88**

Showing a lovely, intense and dark color, the 2009 Gazin offers a fruity and ripe nose that could appear fresher. This wine develops aromatic and rounded on the palate, with medium vibrancy of taste as well as a bit firm grain of tannins which both contribute to provide a slightly raw character. This firmness has been noted since 2005 and could be eliminated. The wine would gain in class and therefore rise closer to its prestigious neighbors. I have tasted this wine three times, and twice found firm tannins. On the last tasting, which took place at the estate, the wine showed a better balance. My preference goes to the 2008 vintage.

*It is a blend of 90 merlot, 7% cabernet franc and 3% cabernet franc. Alcohol content 14.35%. IPT 90 (which is high).*

**GOMBAUDE GUILLOT Pomerol 15,75 // 88**

Showing a beautiful, vivid, dark color with a fine, fruity, pure and ripe nose of violet character, this wine performs wide and extremely fruity on entry. It then develops with volume over a surprisingly tannic backbone for a wine from Pomerol. It finishes over a very good and slightly austere length that barrel aging will probably melt.

**GUILLOT Pomerol 15,75 // 88**

Showing a lovely, intense, dark color with a fine, pure, noble and creamy nose, this wine performs caressing on the palate, developing very fruity, with taste and a fine touch. It finishes with a very fine expression of vibrant fruits and fine tannins. Obviously reflecting some terroir character.

**HOSANNA Pomerol 16,5 - 16,75 // 90 - 91**

The 2009 Hosanna boasts a beautiful deep black color and an aromatic nose of very ripe type that evokes an

unusual taste of plum. From entry, this wine performs both fat and vivid at the same time. It develops aromatic, mellow and flavorful; with taste, a medium body as well as a finish that appears vivid and creamy.

**L'ÉVANGILE Pomerol 17 // 92**

Lovely intense dark color and fruity, fresh and very ripe nose that evokes black berries. This wine delivers a lovely fat and silky expression on the palate. It then develops fleshy with taste as well as a melting and delicate character. It finishes over a good length, with subtle tannins. This is a seductive wine made from 95% merlot and less than 5% cabernet franc. It is important to know that the estate has uprooted its old cabernet franc vines, which were unproductive, and has planted new vines of cabernet franc on more suitable soils; but they are still too young to be used in production and therefore cannot complement this great wine on finish. Alcohol content: 14.5%, pH 3.72. IPT 80.

**LA CROIX DE GAY Pomerol 15,5 - 15,75 // 87 - 88**

Showing an intense dark color with a fruity and aromatic nose, this wine offers a pulpy and velvety expression on the palate. La Croix de Gay delivers a lovely aromatic vibrancy which is induced by the useful presence of cabernet franc. The wine is very flavorful and melts on finish. It boasts taste, body presence as well as fine tannins and bears the subtly exotic overall touch which is so characteristic of a wine from Pomerol. A success.

**LA CROIX DU CASSE Pomerol 15 // 86**

Showing a beautiful dark color with a nice, pure, fruity and fresh nose. This wine performs juicy on entry, then develops aromatic, with taste and fat over a medium body. A touch austere on finish but barrel-aging will no doubt round off its character.

**LA FLEUR GAZIN Pomerol 14,75 - 15 // 85 - 86**

The nose could be richer and riper. It is enjoyable on the palate, yet remains a little too simple.

**LA FLEUR PETRUS Pomerol 16,75 // 91**

Showing a lovely dark color along with a fine, fruity, ripe and complex nose, this wine performs wide and tasty on entry. It develops aromatic and very well structured, with vibrant taste and ripe tannins. The 2009 La Fleur Petrus finishes over a very good length, both quite fat and aromatic. A beautiful wine.

**LA GRAVE Pomerol 15 // 86**

Showing a dark color of good intensity, along with an intense nose of merlot character, this wine offers a rounded and sweet expression on the palate and a medium body. It is enjoyable, yet remains a little too simple on finish.

**LA POINTE Pomerol 15 // 86**

Showing a lovely, intense, dark color with a fruity, ripe and pure nose, this wine performs soft and aromatic on the palate. It offers a medium yet tasty body and finishes over a good length and the taste of red berries.

**LA PROVIDENCE Pomerol 16,5 - 16,75 // 90 - 91**

La Providence shows a lovely, intense, dark color and a discreet nose of ripe fruit character. Wide and mellow on entry while still vivid, this wine develops a good body presence full of aromas. It offers apparent yet coated tannins and finishes over a tasty long length.

**LAFLEUR Pomerol 18 // 95**

The 2009 Lafleur shows a beautifully intense and deep color. Its nose is of medium aromatic intensity, yet performing particularly fruity. It is also deep, smelling of violet, licorice and ink, firmly becoming one of the most subtle nose expressions witnessed at that age. Entering sweet on the palate, this wine develops very aromatic and spicy, very gracefully melting on the palate despite its density. It boasts a mellow and general noble sensation. An austere touch, which could be prevented, lingers on finish. This wine is very tasty, long and quite delicious on finish.

*It is a blend of 53% cabernet franc and 47% merlot. Alcohol content: 14%; pH 3.7. This wine is aged in 40% new wood.*

**LATOUR Pomerol 16,5 // 90**

The 2009 Latour à Pomerol offers a beautifully intense deep red color. This is among the most intense colors that I have ever seen in wines from this estate. The nose is also intense, smelling of fine and ripe fruit. Performing both soft and sweet on the palate, this wine delivers flavor and good volume. It finishes coated and long, over soft tannins and a fine fruity background. Delightful.

**LE GAY Pomerol 15,75 // 88**

Showing a beautiful deep red color and a pure and fruity nose of licorice, this wine performs sweet, silky and aromatic on the palate. Quite typical of Pomerol in its soft profile. The problem is that this wine finishes too woody, thus hiding its lovely taste of red fruits. This excess of wood can be found in any bottled vintages from the estate- a real pity for the wine amateurs' pleasure. I am not quite sure I understand why the team insist on such taste, which is a waste of time for the glory of the estate.

**LE PIN Pomerol 18,25 - 18,5 // 95 - 96**

*Jacques Thienpont has just set up a new cellar in Pomerol for Le Pin.*

Showing a lovely intense dark color, this 2009 Le Pin delivers a very aromatic and truly fruity nose that offers cherry and ripe fruit flavors. It expresses a deep, subtle and creamy character, more Pomerol than ever before. On the palate, this wine is amazing. It is the most velvety and widest Le Pin that I have ever tasted at that age; it develops wide and reveals its unique flavors while melting on the palate in spite of its powerful character. This wine oozes class, which is confirmed by a beautifully elaborate finish. This is a great fine wine, which proves that merlot harvested before it got overripe can deliver a superb result in Bordeaux. This 2009 is better than the 2005. Bravo!

**PETIT VILLAGE Pomerol 14,75 // 85 - 86**

Tasted three times, this wine showed a consistent lack of presence on the mid-palate.

**PLINCE Pomerol 15 // 86**

This wine performs sweet and aromatic on the palate, offering a tasty expression along with silky tannins. It is enjoyable and difficult not to swallow!

**TROTANOY Pomerol 17 // 92**

The 2009 Trotanoy boasts a beautiful, intense dark color along with a clean nose of moderate aromatic intensity. It is a fine, fruity, ripe, creamy and complex nose with hints of tar. Performing velvety on the palate, this wine delivers a superb taste and finishes complex, fresh and ripe over fine and aromatic tannins. This wine is impossible not to swallow, yet I was expecting more body presence and a touch of magic.

**VRAY CROIX DE GAY Pomerol 16,5 - 16,75 // 90 - 91**

*My best rating ever given to this wine during futures campaigns.*

*Last year, I singled out its 2008 vintage as a true "Coup de Coeur". And I am absolutely delighted to say that it does even better this year!*

Showing a lovely, intense, dark red color, this wine offers a truly lovely, fine, fruity, ripe, aromatic and finely toasted nose. It delivers some fine hints of ink and licorice. Velvety on entry, the wine develops wide, juicy and melting yet full and with a great taste. It is superb! It finishes long and very tasty over fine tannins, with such class that it is impossible not to swallow. Vray Croix de Gay performs with a fantastic balance. Bravo!

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**Erratum**

I have flagged **Vieux Château Certan** as my special "Coup de Coeur", which was not previously mentioned in the English version

**Pavie** : Details which did not appear in the previous English version are now available.

*Our next report will be put on line on April 12th.*

*Jean-Marc Quarin.*

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