

2002 Bordeaux wines

The overall standard for the 2002 Bordeaux at Mark Taylor's annual tasting in Atlanta was higher than I had expected, even going into the tasting with a fond personal recollection of doing the en primeurs campaign just prior to passing the MW tasting exam. The wines were certainly fresh and still decidedly youthful, but they were surprisingly hefty, and few showed the unripe "bell pepper" aromas caused by some pyrazine compounds that I had feared. In general it seemed that there was definitely at least a few more years before most of them opened, and several decades of pleasant drinking after that.

Pauillac 2002, Château Pichon-Lalande

Eminently pleasant, but a bit light, with bright, forward red berry fruit and a floral edge. The texture is silky and fresh, but the wine lacks a bit of substance. *** In Atlanta with friends, March 2017.

Pomerol 2002, Château l'Évangile

Impressive wine, with a rich, dark plum fruit character and plenty of impact. There is density and concentration on the palate but not a lot of tannin, with a supple mouthfeel and a lingering finish. This should last another 10 – 20 years in a proper cellar. Tasted blind, it was my favorite and the favorite of the group in this flight. ***** In Atlanta with friends, March 2017.

Pessac-Léognan 2002, Château Haut-Brion

Tannic and substantial, this is built to age, and it is still quite some distance from opening up. A bit closed on the initial attack, it shows classic blackcurrant and cedar aromas in time with a suggestion of bell pepper. **** In Atlanta with friends, March 2017.

Saint-Julien 2002, Château Ducru-Beaucaillou

Approachably toothsome, this shows lovely plummy fruit aromas and a silky soft texture. Drinking now. *** In Atlanta with friends, March 2017.

Saint-Estèphe 2002, Château Cos d'Estournel

A bit green initially on the nose, this opens nicely on the palate with some time. The fruit character is darker and richer than some and the texture is winningly smooth. Well done. **** In Atlanta with friends, March 2017.

Margaux 2002, Château Margaux

Rich, tannic, firmly structured but not lacking a subtle red and black berry fruit expression on the nose. This shows every bit of the elegance and finesse that one looks for from Margaux, and it should age well for another 10 – 20 years. **** In Atlanta with friends, March 2017.