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# CORNEY & BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS - 1780



**TERTRE ROTEBŒUF,  
ROC DE CAMBES & L'AURAGE**  
THE MITJAVILE FAMILY, 2016 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR

EXCLUSIVE TO CORNEY & BARROW IN THE UK, HONG KONG AND SINGAPORE

ROC DE CAMBES



2016

CÔTES DE BOURG

François et Emilie Mitjavile

*“Fruits confits... a vintage of sunny, beautiful maturation. There is something rather extravagant in the density of the flavours this year.”*

FRANÇOIS MITJAVILE

April 2017

# 2016 VINTAGE NOTES

The usually loquacious François Mitjaville introduced his 2016s with rare economy: “here we have a very fine vintage, about which the comments will be straightforward, and so much the better for that!”

Winter 2015-16 was warm, marked by the strongest El Niño phenomenon ever. A 100-year heat record was set in December, which saw 120 millimetres (mm) less rain than average. January was the wettest since 1920, with 233mm of rain. Buds appeared as early as March, prompting fears of frost. The waterlogged ground kept temperatures down however, staving off what would have been a dangerously early budburst.

April saw chaotic weather, fluctuating between cold and warm, with frequent rain. Vine growth slowed, bringing the previously advanced growing season back to average. Ominous comparisons were drawn with the 2013 vintage at this point. Happily, this proved unwarranted as the abundant water reserves had loaded the soil with a surplus of nitrogen.

4 The frost which ravaged other regions of France mercifully spared Bordeaux. There were only seven instances of sub-zero temperatures during the growing season.

May was warmer than April and more extreme, with several storms buffeting Saint-Émilion and its environs. Flowering started in late May, continuing through to mid-June. The unsettled weather conditions cause some *coulure* (aborted fruit set) and *millerandage* (unevenly sized berries), but overall, flowers formed remarkably consistently, especially the Merlot. Overall, spring ended slightly cooler than the 30-year average.

Summer started with a bang on the 20<sup>th</sup> June. This coincided with a swing in the Pacific from the El Niño weather system to La Niña (and a seismic shift of a different sort in the UK...) This was also the beginning of four months of drought. July was warm and dry, but not excessive. Temperatures were marginally above normal but there were just four days over 30° C, with around a fifth less rain than

average. Throughout the month, the skins grew thicker, the water pressure built...

August was very warm and dry, stopping just short of the point of danger. Two extended heatwaves hit Bordeaux, with sun hours 26% above average. Faced with the inevitable hydric stress, the Mitjaville vines drew on what François called the “big humid sponge of limestone” beneath Tertre Roteboeuf. They held tight to their leaves and photosynthesis continued. Although the days were hot, the nights, crucially, were cool. *Véraison* (colour change) took place at this point, aided by just enough rainfall to ease its passage and draw the vines’ focus away from the important business of staying alive.

September ushered in autumn. Finally, there was some respite from the heat. On the 13<sup>th</sup> September, the temperature dropped from the low-to-mid 30s to the low-to-mid 20s Celsius. Significant rainfall on the same night allowed the moisture to be sponged up by grateful soils, which had seen a tenth of their usual rainfall over the past 12 weeks. The grapes swelled thanks to the water, buoying ripeness and softening the tannins. The thick grape skins held drum-tight without splitting.

Harvest took place under clear skies, from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> October, amid rapidly cooling temperatures, with a sudden increase in humidity towards the end. Thus the season that had started so precociously ended later than average. François believes this extended vegetal cycle was a key to the quality of the 2016 vintage. The yield was 30-35 hectolitres per hectare, lower than in 2015. Whilst this is partially due to certain plots being replanted, François, with characteristic frankness, admitted, “the crop was a small one (I know not why)”.



GUY SEDDON  
May 2017



# THE WINES

## TERTRE ROTEOEUF SAINT-ÉMILION GRAND CRU

The best vantage point from which to survey Tertre Roteboeuf is the wall at the bottom of François and Miloute's garden, which is directly above this hallowed plot. One of Saint-Émilion's greatest vineyards, Tertre Roteboeuf is a sweeping six hectare amphitheatre of vines planted on clay-limestone soils. The limestone, from which the subterranean cellars are hewn, is one of the keys to Tertre Roteboeuf. François' and his winemaker daughter Nina's trademark late picking finds a counterbalance in the naturally cool soil. This safeguards the wines' characteristic upbeat freshness alongside François' beloved "degraded" structure. Only one wine is made at the property; the blend reflects the vineyard plantings of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc. The average vine age is over 40 years. The yield in 2016 was 35 hectolitres per hectare.

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## ROC DE CAMBES CÔTES DE BOURG

Roc de Cambes, in the Côtes de Bourg appellation, lies some 45 minutes to the north-west of Saint-Émilion,

on the banks of the Dordogne. It is over twice the size of its 'big brother' Tertre Roteboeuf, comprising 14 hectares of old vines, with an average age of over 40 years. Here too, the vines are planted in a natural amphitheatre, overlooking the river. Roc de Cambes lies on the 'Les Croutes' slope, where the heat of the sun is tempered by the adjacent water. Cool clay-limestone soils take time to warm up in the spring, so that late ripening is the norm. As at Tertre Roteboeuf, François makes just one wine here. The plantings are 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Sauvignon.

## L'AURAGE CASTILLON-CÔTES DE BORDEAUX

Louis Mitjavile is the owner and winemaker of L'Aurage, which lies due east of Saint-Émilion. Louis, known as Loulou, is François and Miloute Mitjavile's son. The vineyards of Castillon-Côtes de Bordeaux lie on an outcrop of the Saint-Émilion limestone ridge and represent some of the best value in Bordeaux. This is a beautiful enclave, whose wooded hillsides make it feel like less of a vine-dominated monoculture. The plantings at L'Aurage are 95% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Franc. The oldest vines here are now 15 years old. Corney & Barrow is delighted to represent L'Aurage exclusively in the United Kingdom and Hong Kong.

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WATCH VIDEO >



Watch François discussing his 2016s with Adam during our recent visit to Bordeaux, in which he speaks of the "opulent freshness" that he believes characterises the vintage.

WATCH VIDEO >



Watch our recent interview with Louis, in which he tells how he is thrilled with his 2016 vintage, while admitting that "at one point, it was such a difficult vintage to understand".



*"Even on the first day of the harvest, we knew it was good but didn't know it would be great... a really, really amazing vintage."*

LOUIS MITJAVILE

April 2017



# 2016

## TASTING NOTES

### TASTING GUIDE

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection. For the benefit of simplicity, wines are scored out of 20. We will often use a range of scores (e.g. 16.5 to 17) to indicate the potential to achieve a higher mark. When a '+' is shown it adds further to that potential. Wines from lesser vintages will, inevitably, show a lower overall score.

Wines are judged, in a very broad sense, against their peers. Why? Well, you cannot easily compare a Ford with an Aston Martin, other than they are both cars and have wheels. It is not that different with wine. A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes and, as always, speak to our sales team.

### TERTRE ROTEMBOEUF GRAND CRU SAINT-ÉMILION

This is a blend of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc, reflecting the vineyard plantings. A beautifully pure nose, poised on the cusp of red- and black-fruited. Ripe, but by no means overripe, François having astutely picked everything by 19<sup>th</sup> October, before some others. There is an intense perfumed lift and a seam of fine rocky minerality – every time you come back to smell it, there is something new – a sweetness of fruit, a hint of tobacco, a flash of pithy decadence... The palate is finely textured and darker-fruited at first, with a core of fine earthy minerality, the fine-boned tannins coated with an effusive layer of raspberry fruit. Buoyant acidity sustains the flavours through to a long finish, which leaves crushed rose petals lingering in its wake. Fine, sustained grip speaks of the years of ageing potential here, without impeding this profoundly exciting wine's driving vitality.

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5+

Recommended drinking from 2025 - 2045

£750/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

£760/case of 3 magnums in bond UK

£525/case of 1 double magnum in bond UK

### ROC DE CAMBES CÔTES DE BOURG

The blend here is 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Sauvignon. Intense, ripe red berries soar from the glass: a sensual and exotically spiced nose. The palate is silky-smooth on the attack, the liquid sliding luxuriously over the tongue, with a firm but wholly integrated sense of alcohol supporting the full body, which is lifted by fresh, rather juicy acidity. Sweet raspberry, bitter cherry and a little mulberry contribute to a palate which somehow marries striking immediacy with decadent loveliness. A substantial tannic presence frames the fruit without curtailing it, even at this incipient stage. Will Hargrove pronounced this "glorious" and I shan't disagree.

Corney & Barrow Score 18 to 18.5

Recommended drinking from 2020 - 2035

£250/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

£260/case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

£190/case of 1 double magnum in bond UK

### L'AURAGE CASTILLON-CÔTES DE BORDEAUX

A blend of 95% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Franc, this has lovely ripe red cherry on the nose, with crystalline purity and an inviting verve. The palate bristles with energy, firm but supple tannins channelling the lush red berry fruit through to a powerful, focussed finish. Louis has captured L'Aurage's trademark freshness, picking on 16<sup>th</sup> October. Whilst the tannins here are at their highest level since 2007, contributing to the tightly-packed vigour of this wine, the overall impression is of balance and harmony. Once again, L'Aurage justifies its place in the company of the Mitjavile giants.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5+

Recommended drinking from 2020 - 2026

£275/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

£295/case of 6 magnums, in bond UK



TO ORDER

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or

01875 321 921 (Edinburgh)

Please email

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Please Note: These wines are released *en primeur*. Delivery dates to be confirmed. All prices are quoted in bond UK.

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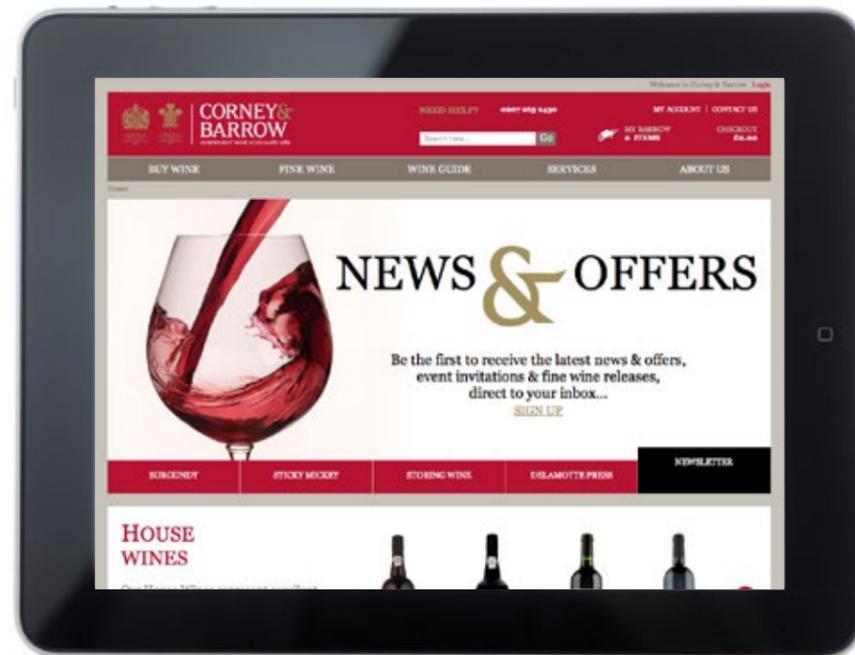
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