



CLARET,

The New Style
of Bordeaux
Red Wine



Photo credit : Emma Tournier

Summary

Bordeaux is a land of living traditions. For centuries, its vineyard has continually evolved, innovated, and reinvented itself without ever renouncing its history. In 2025, the Bordeaux Protected Designation of Origin, brings back to the forefront one of its most emblematic yet almost forgotten styles: **CLARET**.

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A light, pale red wine, CLARET shaped Bordeaux's international reputation several centuries ago. Today, it is officially reborn, faithful to its original identity yet firmly contemporary. Accessible and fruity, meant to be enjoyed chilled. Bordeaux CLARET embodies a new way of drinking red wine: freer, more convivial and in tune with today's expectations.

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CLARET: a historic style brought back to life

CLARET is making a major comeback on the Bordeaux wine scene! This light, fruity red wine, born as early as the 12th century and shipped abroad by boatload for several centuries, has been revived at the initiative of the Bordeaux Wine Council and its winegrowers. Faithful to its original style and enhanced by modern techniques, Bordeaux CLARET represents the meeting point between Bordeaux's history and renewal: **a pleasurable, accessible red wine.**

At a time when some consumers are looking for fruit-driven wines, without excessive tannins or an overly technical discourse, Bordeaux CLARET responds perfectly to these new expectations.

Also in a context where climate change is increasing the appeal of **fresh wines**, **Bordeaux CLARET stands out as an obvious choice.**

A light red wine to enjoy young and chilled

Bordeaux CLARET is best when served chilled: a supple palate, a fruit-driven structure, and a fluid texture. It is the fresh red wine par *excellence*.

Bordeaux CLARET should be served between 10 and 12°C (around 15 minutes after being taken out of the fridge) unlike other Bordeaux red wines, which are more structured and traditionally enjoyed at ambient temperature, between 16 and 18°C.

It is best enjoyed **young, ideally within two years** of production.

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It can be enjoyed at any moment, particularly as an aperitif. The perfect partner for an impromptu afterwork drink, an easy night in with friends or during a summer evening, Bordeaux CLARET is a perfect companion.

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Old CLARET and New CLARET

If **CLARET** exists, it is thanks to the **British**! They embraced it as early as the Middle Ages, importing it by the boatload. Even when disagreements arose over everything, from the French throne to rugby, the British continued to drink their CLARET.

Eventually more powerful red wines became fashionable and the name for French wine simply became “New French CLARET” in the 18th century.

Thanks to a few steadfast Bordeaux producers, the original recipe for light Bordeaux CLARET endured. In the shadows of Bordeaux cellars, a handful of cellar masters and determined winegrowers continued to produce this light red wine, often without labels, for their own consumption or for only a few insiders.

Today, **CLARET officially returns in 2025 in its original form** - a light red wine, counter to powerful reds, fully aligned with contemporary tastes and its historic roots.

A distinct position from Claret

Both **CLARET** and **CLAIRET** are **Bordeaux wines**, heirs to **Vinum Clarum**, the “clear wine” that marked the region’s wine history.

CLARET is a historic red wine, present as early as the 12th century. It played a major role in placing Bordeaux on the international map as one of the first exported and recognised wine styles.



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CLAIRET is a more recent style, emerging in the **20th century**, inspired by its cousin CLARET. Within the rosé family, CLAIRET is appreciated for its raspberry colour and its vinous, lively, fresh palate. It is found in the rosé section or on rosé wine lists.

CLARET, by contrast, has a profile closer to red wine, but in a lighter expression, and will be found in the red wine category.





A distinction marked by high standards and quality control

CLARET (like CLAIRET) is a traditional designation (mention) within the Bordeaux appellation. Since the 2025 vintage, the CLARET designation **has been governed by a formal set of specific regulations**, approved by the INAO. It is subject to specific production and marketing rules that guarantee the origin and quality of the Bordeaux PDO.

The mention was officially approved by the decree on 19th November 2025 and published in the official journal on 21st September 2025.

The **2025** vintage will be the first to comply with these **precise specifications** and a reinforced **quality control protocol**, including mandatory sample submission for a **tasting assessment** carried out by an **independent committee**.

Key points of the specifications include:

- All authorised Bordeaux red grape varieties
- Low tannin levels: 20 to 55 Total Polyphenol Index (TPI)
- Minimum alcohol level: 11% vol.
- Wide colour range authorised: colour Intensity (CI) from 3 to 15
- Possible presence of residual sugars, up to 7 g/L (depending on total acidity)
- Malolactic fermentation optional



As of early January, around forty winemakers have committed to producing Bordeaux Claret in 2026 (2025 vintage) representing just over 16 000 hectolitres. We estimate that slightly more than 1 million bottles will be marketed from the warmer months and 2 million by the end of the year.

Source : harvest declaration 2025



First feedback on the 2025 vintage

The 2025 vintage shows a fine expression of fruit and generosity, with attractive violet hues. Merlot is the main grape variety used. Good sanitary conditions and early ripeness allowed for the harvest of ripe grapes with strong aromatic expression. Pre-fermentation macerations, often cold, were relatively short due to the intensity of colour.

This vintage offers a broad palette in terms of colour, sweetness, and tannin levels (within the specifications), while consistently respecting the desired CLARET profile. Various technical approaches were used, including carbonic maceration, skin maceration, and the absence of malolactic fermentation.



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The first producers to embark on the Claret adventure

Eleven ambassadors have been selected to present their wines at Wine Paris and Prowein 2026:

- CHATEAU DES LEOTINS CLARET, Vignobles Lumeau
- CLARETTTT, Château Sainte-Barbe
- CLARET DE LUNE, Cave de Rauzan
- ESPRIT LEGER, Vignobles Gabard
- LE BLANC BEC, Château de Fontenille
- LES ROCHES BLANCHES CLARET, Château Roquefort
- PAPA ET TONTON, Vignobles Grandeau
- ROUGE FRAIS, Les Vignerons de Tutiac
- THANK YOU CHARLES, Château Saint-Ferdinand
- WINE NOT ?, Château Joumes Fillon
- ZEPHYR SIGNATURE, Bordeaux Families

Bordeaux, Bordeaux Supérieur and Crémant

Is a group of winemakers, cooperatives, and merchants closely connected to their vineyards: inventive, united, and convivial. Drawing on the diversity of terroirs between ocean, rivers, and hillsides, they produce wines in all four colours: reds, whites, rosés, and sparkling wines. The result: accessible wines that represent the very essence of Bordeaux.

Firmly rooted in tradition yet clearly focused on the future, these winegrowers continue to innovate, challenge



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Emma & Hervé Grandeau (daughter and father)



Hervé Grandeau,
Winemaker, Château Lauduc

Claret is a bit of a crazy bet that my daughter and I took: proving that it is possible to create a modern, light wine full of finesse. We brought it back to life to offer today's wine lovers a pure pleasure wine!

Stéphane Héraud,
President, Vignerons de TUTIAC

Bordeaux Claret ticks all the boxes of today: a wine with a clear identity, easy to understand and to drink. It's a modern Bordeaux that does not deny its history. For our members, it is also a way to showcase Bordeaux differently, drawing on history whilst looking toward the future.



established conventions and explore new approaches to both viticulture and winemaking, while committing to environmental responsibility. Together, they offer a genuine gateway to a vineyard that is at once historic, modern and in constant evolution.

Since 2007, the Bordeaux & Bordeaux Supérieur Wine Council has been recognised as the Organisation for Defence and Management (ODG) for the Bordeaux, Bordeaux Supérieur and Crémant de Bordeaux Protected Designations of Origin, and since 2014 for the Fine Bordeaux Geographical Indication. Its mission is to manage, defend and promote these designations.

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