

Bordeaux bonanza

From approachable, everyday blends to sought-after reds, Costco offers a range of the region's wines

by SCOTT JONES



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COSTCO CONNECTION

A variety of Bordeaux wines are available in Costco warehouses. Groceries are available for delivery through Grocery Delivery at Costco.co.uk.



Bordeaux might be the most recognisable wine region in the world, and for good reason. Located a stone's throw from the cool Atlantic in Southwest France, two rivers, the Dordogne and the Garonne, divide the area into three key sections—the Left Bank, the Right Bank and Entre-Deux-Mers (“between the two seas”). All possess a unique soil and climate combination ideal for world-class grape growing.

According to Costco buyer Daniel Smith, Bordeaux wines make up the most significant portion of Costco's imported wine program. However, if you're new to wine, Smith stresses there's no need to be intimidated. “While you'll see expensive, age-worthy Bordeaux reds in warehouses year-round, most of our program showcases approachable, everyday blends using grapes you probably already know, like cabernet sauvignon and merlot. These are terrific wines offering super value,” he explains.

Each April, Costco wine buyers visit the individual chateau representatives to sample their wines at an annual gathering called En Primeur, or “the first”. During this special trade event, Bordeaux wines are sold as futures in advance to buyers worldwide. For example, in 2022, the Costco team selected the 2020 Bordeaux vintage to sell in 2024.

Weather factors like temperature, rainfall and sunlight play a critical role in shaping each year's wine vintage, and 2020 was no different. “The winter was mild, then developed into a wet spring followed by a hot summer,” Smith says. “Harvest time was dry and warm, allowing the berries to hit perfect ripeness, albeit smaller in size, but highly qualitative, guaranteeing an outstanding 2020 vintage.”

As for the wines, the 2020 vintage boasts excellent tannic structure that promises top aging potential. These wines have a stellar concentration of fruit and well-balanced freshness, making them approachable early on. “The great thing about the 2020 vintage,” says Smith, “is these wines are ready to drink now but can also be enjoyed over the next few years.” ■

BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

For those wanting a tasty tour of Bordeaux, Costco's selection includes all the top Cru Classé iconic estates, such as Château Léoville Barton, Château Giscours, Château Pontet-Canet, and of course, the first growth estates. The widest selection can be found at Costco.co.uk. Costco buyers' picks for the 2020 vintage—with exceptional Costco value—include: Château Léoville Barton (Item 382555), Château Malescot (Item 382570) and Château d'Armailhac (Item 382538). “These wines are such a great introduction to the region because of their high quality and affordable prices,” says Costco buyer Daniel Smith.—SJ