

## Great Source For Buying Old Wine Vintages

By Karen Orlandi

Dated: May 11, 2009

*Tips for finding and buying old and rare vintages of premium wine.*

Petaluma, CA – Wine can add romance and nostalgia to any occasion, but finding high quality old vintages can be tricky. Dorothy Gaiter and John Brecher, columnists for the Wall Street Journal's (WSJ) Tastings section, discussed this very point in their article entitled "Rails, Romance and Really Good Wine" in the May 2, 2009 edition (<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124121256823978517.html>). AABALAT Fine & Rare Wines (<http://www.aabalat.com>), who was mentioned in the article as a reputable vendor for old and rare vintages, has some tips for finding the best bottle for your occasion.

The first tip is to set your expectations properly. The old adage "you get what you pay for" is absolutely relevant in this case. Remember that the world's most expensive wines, at the time the vintage is released, are usually made to age gracefully. The more affordable wines are made to be drunk within ten years (on average) of release. Of course there are exceptions, but you shouldn't expect to find a lot of choices for 50-year-old wine at a \$50 price point. You should expect to splurge.

The second tip is to be familiar with your basic wine options for older vintages. Red wine, due to the tannins, holds up better to age than white wines (except Sauternes and Champagne). French wineries (and some high-end Italian) focus their craft on making wines that age well, whereas most American wineries minimize the tannins to make the wines drinkable soon after release. Wines that have been stored for a long period of time often experience issues with the cork, label and capsule. The most important issue to ask about is the condition of the cork by either pressing lightly on the top of the cork or shining a flashlight to verify the cork is not floating in the wine. The retailer may be willing to cut the capsule to verify the authenticity of the bottle. Bottle fill level, sometimes an indicator of leakage, may decrease over time even without leakage, as the cork breathes naturally, and a low fill could have been the result of archaic bottling systems used fifty years ago.

The third tip is to buy from a reputable retailer, as they buy from reputable sources. You don't want to spend hundreds of dollars on a wine that is not authentic or was knowingly stored improperly. The cork, label and capsule should all appear authentic. Some bottles have been reconditioned by the chateaux, but you should ask about this process to verify the authenticity.

The fourth tip is to leverage the internet to help you search. Internet wine retailers, like AABALAT Fine & Rare Wines (<http://www.aabalat.com>), offer large selections of older vintages and can assist in finding the perfect bottle. Bob Orlandi, owner of Aabalat Fine & Rare Wines (<http://www.aabalat.com>), says "we frequently have customers call us and ask us to recommend the highest quality bottle within a certain budget. We will check our own inventory and several other sources to find the best bottle for that customer. It's a win-win scenario."

Whether you are celebrating an anniversary, a birthday, a retirement, or any other special occasion, wine is the perfect complement. Applying these simple tips can make your purchasing experience of older wine vintages much more pleasant.

About AABALAT Fine & Rare Wines:

AABALAT Fine & Rare Wines, founded in 1995, is a Petaluma, CA based internet wine retailer.

Specializing in Bordeaux, Burgundy, and CA wines, AABALAT maintains a temperature-controlled warehouse and a knowledgeable staff. For additional information on AABALAT or the contents of this article, contact Karen Orlandi or visit <http://www.aabalat.com>.

###

AABALAT Fine & Rare Wines, founded in 1995, is a Petaluma, CA based internet wine retailer. Specializing in Bordeaux and Burgundy wines, AABALAT maintains a temperature-controlled warehouse and a knowledgeable staff.

Category	Food, Retail, Hobbies
Tags	wine, chateau, bordeaux, vintage, lafite, ausone, petrus, latour, burgundy, italian
Email	<a href="#">Click to email author</a>
Phone	(707) 781-0619
Address	1360 Industrial Ave. Ste. A4
City/Town	Petaluma
State/Province	California
Zip	94952
Country	United States