



Château Lagrange Master Class at Barrière Frères

(October 2007)

This was our fabulous occasion to finally do an extensive vertical tasting of Château Lagrange, Grand Cru Classé, Saint-Julien. Lagrange is our "cousin" estate, as it belongs 100% to the Japanese firm Suntory Ltd. and their shares within Barrière are 40%.



We had the honour to welcome **Mr. Keiichi SHIINA**, Vice President of Lagrange, and **Mr. Bruno EYNARD**, General Manager, who succeeded this past spring the very affable but retiring Marcel Ducasse who was determinate in orchestrating Lagrange's qualitative turnaround since Suntory's acquisition in 1983.

Bruno Eynard guided us through a spectacular **11 vintage** vertical tasting from the **1995 to the 2006 vintage** (only the 1997 vintage was omitted).

2006: (barrel sample) brilliant fruit (cassis), muscular with wonderful freshness. Outstanding potential here !

2005: seductive vanillin and liquorice nose. Great density and amplitude, lusciously ripe tannins and exceptional finish.

2004: deep colour, aromatic, medium bodied, classic 2004 firmness and grip.

2003: somewhat atypical with very ripe, warm nose of spices, caramel, mocha... To the pallet, the wine is enveloping, fleshy and warm.



Mr. Keiichi SHIINA (VP Lagrange)

2002: nose of tobacco, coffee and a zest of citrus fruits... excellent mid-pallet (avoiding the trappings of this vintage). very nice finish.

2001: more mineral, leathery and cigar nose. Powerful, fleshy wine. One of the estate's highest percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon (62%) with also a high percentage of Petit Verdot (11%) in the final blend. Savoury tannins. Great value.



2000: fruit and torrefaction/coffee nose. Classically "beefy". Tight wine, finish is particularly long with notes of cherries, prunes ...

1999: arguably the weakest of the series. Menthols, animal notes (brett ?), light but austere tannins with an alcoholic finish.

1998: interestingly, this was the 1st vintage where the estate started doing selective vineyard-parcel management (maximizing ripeness) plus malolactic fermentations in barrels. Full-bodied wine, rich, wonderful depth, firm but ripe tannins (see 2001).

1996: simply superb ! already open and perfect for current drinking. Versus the 1995, this has more Cabernet (57%). Great freshness of fruit.

1995: logically evolved (like the '96), a nose exuding cedar, pencil box, prunes, ... and historically, one of the estate's highest percentages of Merlot (43%) and Petit Verdot (13%) in the final blend.

Technical notes (planted):

65% Cabernet Sauvignon
28% Merlot
7% Petit Verdot (8 hectares)

Important to note :

- 1) 115 hectares meaning the largest Classified Growth estate in Bordeaux
- 2) The relatively high percentage of Petit Verdot (similar to Léoville Poyferré).



The overall stylistic approach of Lagrange is to seek power and structure while privileging freshness of fruit. Indeed, a very impressive series of wines. Lastly, the natural ageing of the vineyards (in light of the significant plantings in the mid-1980's) will only naturally give Lagrange an additional advantage.

Not to forget the two other wines of the estate:

Les Fiefs de Lagrange (2nd wine)

Les Arums de Lagrange (dry white coming from the 4 hectares of Sauvignon & Sémillon).



Laurent Ehrmann
Managing Director

