

Vigneron Thoughts (November 2, 2007):

We are releasing the 2004 vintage of Lassègue and Chateau Vignot, while I am here at Chateau Lassègue finishing the fermentation of another great vintage. The 2004 Vintage was a classic year in Bordeaux, cooler than either 2003 or 2005, it presented the challenge of obtaining full ripeness and the opportunity of great structure in the wines produced. For Bordeaux vintages, first they are always compared to the vintage before (2003), then they are compared to the vintage after (2005), and if it is considered to be an exceptional vintage it is compared to the others in the decade or century. The challenge with the 2004 vintage is that it was better than 2003, but was then slightly ignored when the stellar 2005 was discovered to be better. The wines are opening beautifully right now; we recently had a dinner with the winery team, friends and local connoisseurs to celebrate the end of harvest. We enjoyed verticals of Lassègue and Chateau Vignot (2003-2006), and at the end of the dinner, the 2004 Lassègue was the favorite. The beautiful maturity of the Merlot, the finesse of the Cabernet Franc and the deep-rooted ripeness of the Cabernet Sauvignon combined create a great synergy in the glass. We used 9 micro crus to create Lassègue and 4 to create Château Vignot. The 2004 vintage is open and will continue to age well, while the 2005 is still closed and may take 8-10 years to fully open up.

Once again, the success of Château Lassègue is in the vineyard, in the diversity of terroir, of the message that 40-50 year old vines bring from their deep roots, and that the clays in the soil trap the moisture to nourish the vines just enough for them to be more stable vintage to vintage than younger vines in dry-sandy gravel. Close to 90% of Saint Emilion does not have “argilo-calcaire” clay-limestone soils, fortunately the Côte de Pavie was formed by a geological accident and exposed, allowing the area where Chateau Lassègue is to have these types of soil. More than half of the 2003 Bordeaux wines were too ripe with high alcohol and a cooked jam characteristic because of a lack of balance in maturity from the soil.

In 2004 I was able to work for the first time in the vineyard during the entire year, enabling us to better study and observe the micro-crus, while creating new maps for Lassègue and Château Vignot. In order to preserve the many components in the vineyard, we installed 31 small temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks in a new tank room. To continue the same quality to the bottle, we removed the old cement tanks and enlarged the chai (barrel room) with more new French oak barrels. The result is a wine that is beautifully blended to create a wonderful synergy in the glass.

If you would like to have a taste of Château Lassègue’s culture, my favorite pairings are; **Château Vignot** with Monkfish cooked with Vignot reduction sauce, where the delicate monkfish shows off the finesse of Vignot. Vignot is also good with fresh chèvre or Poitou cheeses.

Lassègue with wild game and truffles, the complexity of red meats helps accentuate the style of Lassègue and the signature of the micro-crus of the estate. Lassègue also pairs well with camembert, aged mimolette or a sheep cheese.

Enjoy with my best sentiments!

-Pierre Seillan, Vigneron