



HIGH flyers

While it may seem that not much has changed since last year, look closely and the 2019 Liv-ex Power 100 shows some interesting developments, with new entrants, the rise of Italy, and old favourites falling by the wayside.

By Rupert Millar

Liv-ex Power 100: the top 20 fine wine brands

Source: Liv-ex

Brand	Overall		Score	Value		Value		Volume		Avg. Trade		Price		Unique Wines		
	ranking			#	& Volume		Traded		Traded		Price		Performance		Traded	
	2019	2018			Rank	Share	Rank	Share	Rank	Price	Rank	Change	Rank	Number	Rank	
Armand Rousseau	1	7	90.5	45	2.50%	9	0.30%	86	£ 13,185	7	20.8%	15	146	1		
DRC	2	3	160	56	5.53%	3	0.21%	117	£ 42,437	2	9.5%	72	94	2		
Leroy	3	1	173	12	1.57%	16	1.76%	11	£1,423	115	14.0%	34	64	6		
Krug	4	30	229.5	33	0.82%	29	0.54%	54	£2,423	56	9.3%	75	24	49		
Louis Roederer	5	20	250	4	2.67%	8	2.45%	4	£1,740	83	7.2%	97	21	64		
Prieuré Roch	6	#N/A	251.5	129	0.32%	65	0.07%	214	£7,223	12	51.0%	2	27	44		
Sassicaia	7	29	254.5	3	2.39%	10	2.75%	1	£1,382	118	10.6%	62	20	70		
Comte Vogüé	8	24	261.5	73	0.73%	35	0.20%	118	£5,718	17	5.4%	124	58	11		
Moët & Chandon	9	12	268.5	5	2.09%	12	2.34%	5	£1,427	114	5.2%	128	42	19		
Joseph Drouhin	10	67	271.5	41	0.62%	42	0.59%	50	£1,658	90	5.9%	113	61	7		
Latour	10	10	271.5	9	3.46%	5	1.22%	18	£4,516	27	0.1%	213	44	18		
Margaux	12	5	284.5	7	3.78%	4	1.36%	16	£4,422	28	-1.2%	234	57	12		
Salon	13	79	285	62	0.78%	32	0.26%	96	£4,713	23	30.7%	4	10	165		
Méo Camuzet	14	86	286.5	101	0.27%	73	0.14%	148	£3,122	43	7.6%	89	82	3		
Mouton Rothschild	15	4	286	2	5.90%	2	2.02%	8	£4,656	25	-1.8%	241	48	17		
Haut Brion	16	6	292.5	7	3.46%	6	1.41%	14	£3,913	34	-1.2%	233	51	15		
Cheval Blanc	17	16	293.5	17	2.12%	11	0.82%	33	£4,124	31	-0.3%	217	40	20		
Georges Roumier	18	11	297	128	0.44%	57	0.07%	221	£ 10,745	8	10.3%	64	30	33		
Lafite Rothschild	19	2	297.5	1	8.24%	1	2.54%	3	£5,182	20	-4.0%	263	55	13		
Guigal	20	40	309	18	0.87%	27	1.17%	21	£1,194	137	4.9%	131	53	14		

IF YEARS of the secondary market were planes coming into land at an airport, then 2019 would definitely be in a holding pattern.

"It feels like a transition year," Liv-ex co-director, Justin Gibbs, remarked at our annual review meeting in November.

Those who read last year's Power 100 report will see many similarities in this year's: the continued dominance of Burgundy, the ongoing strengthening of Italy, a general broadening of the market and a mixture of highs and lows dogging fine wine favourite, Bordeaux.

Last year marked a new high in the number of wines and brands traded (5,700 and 953 respectively), and this year that rose again with 6,367 wines traded from 995 brands.

Three labels from Bordeaux and two from Italy dropped out of this year's rankings, and those five places were taken up by Burgundian wines.

Regional trade share by value continues to slip away from Bordeaux. From a high of 95% in 2010 that share is now 55%. The value for Champagne, Italy, the Rhône and Rest of the World remained broadly the same (up a little to 8.5% for Italy) but the real benefactor is still Burgundy, which jumped from a value of 14.5% in 2018 to 20.4% this year.

With more Burgundian labels joining the Power 100 there seems to be a little more liquidity appearing in the category – but only a little, and pricing is still an issue.

Much remains the same, therefore, but there are a number of narratives developing. In one very important aspect there has been a major change in the Power 100 in that for the first time there are no first growths in the top five places, and, indeed, just one, clinging on by its fingernails, in the top 10.

Burgundy, Champagne and Italy rule the roost, but in these uncertain times can

any of these hold on long enough to cement a true dynasty?

TOP 10

Quickly scanning the Power 100 list you'll see that one of the superstar Burgundy regulars on the auction circuit, Armand Rousseau, has leapfrogged Domaine de la Romanée-Conti (second place) and last year's number one, Domaine Leroy (now third), to the top spot. Remember that the wines on the list, those that have qualified at least, are graded according to their performance in four criteria: year-on-year price performance; trading performance on Liv-ex (by volume and value); the number of wines and vintages traded; and the average price of the wines.

A wine does not need to top every category to end up at the top of the rankings, and we can see that Rousseau comes into its own with the number of unique wines traded (146), for a strong >

Liv-ex Power 100: 21 to 40 of the top fine wine brands

Source: Liv-ex

Brand	Overall ranking		Score	Value & Volume Rank	Value Traded		Volume Traded		Avg. Trade Price		Price Performance		Unique Wines Traded	
	2019	2018			Share	Rank	Share	Rank	Price	Rank	Change	Rank	Number	Rank
Pichon Lalande	21	26	310	20	0.78%	31	1.08%	22	£1,148	143	6.6%	104	30	33
Lafleur	22	17	314.5	53	1.16%	20	0.25%	98	£7,353	10	3.3%	155	20	70
Pichon Baron	23	49	316	16	0.93%	25	1.22%	17	£1,214	132	5.8%	115	26	45
Mission Haut Brion	24	18	317.5	31	1.03%	23	0.53%	55	£3,096	44	1.3%	189	29	38
Palmer	25	14	321	22	0.90%	26	0.85%	31	£1,692	86	2.2%	173	32	29
Vega Sicilia	26	43	322.5	75	0.34%	63	0.29%	91	£1,881	75	10.7%	59	19	76
Ramonet	26	118	322.5	119	0.16%	105	0.13%	159	£2,013	69	15.6%	26	24	49
Vieux Château Certan	28	83	327	38	0.67%	38	0.58%	51	£1,829	78	6.3%	107	17	85
Montrose	29	31	334.5	13	1.40%	18	1.84%	10	£1,207	134	4.9%	132	24	49
Penfolds	30	21	338.5	79	0.34%	62	0.24%	100	£2,242	58	4.8%	133	32	29
Figeac	31	45	341.5	25	0.72%	36	0.95%	30	£1,210	133	7.4%	95	19	76
Bruno Giacosa	31	56	341.5	119	0.18%	97	0.12%	167	£2,460	54	12.0%	51	22	58
Yquem	33	41	343	56	0.51%	47	0.39%	73	£2,078	66	3.0%	160	30	33
Gaja	34	26	352	26	0.63%	40	0.82%	32	£1,217	131	2.0%	178	75	4
Petrus	35	8	354.5	61	3.39%	7	0.20%	120	£ 27,334	3	-0.4%	219	28	41
Domaine Ponsot	36	63	358.5	39	1.02%	24	0.45%	66	£3,666	36	-2.0%	242	37	22
Mommessin	37	57	360	78	0.52%	46	0.21%	115	£3,970	32	7.8%	86	13	125
Cos d'Estournel	38	19	360.5	9	1.88%	14	1.90%	9	£1,584	96	-0.6%	224	33	27
Dujac	39	35	361	122	0.19%	92	0.11%	174	£2,812	50	7.6%	90	29	38
Roulot	40	123	367	132	0.15%	108	0.10%	176	£2,225	59	27.4%	7	15	103

average price (£13,185 per case) and with a decent price performance (up by 20.8% over the past year).

Comte de Vogüé is another strongly performing brand this year, and Prieuré Roch has shot out of nowhere straight in at number six on the list.

The likely reason for this can be linked to the death of Frédéric Roch last year, which may have seen previously sat-upon stocks being released from cellars. As

Comte de Vogüé is a strongly performing brand this year, and Prieuré Roch has shot out of nowhere straight in at number six

Gibbs says: “We never saw it traded; now the liquidity is there.”

It’s a similar story, albeit further down the list, with René Engel, another defunct Burgundian domaine, whose wines have dropped straight in at number 56.

Geneva-based auction house Baghera held a sale of 1,157 bottles of varying formats, constituting the “last” bottles held in the family cellar in June this year. The sale made £1.4 million in total, with 24 bottles of the 2004 Grands Echézeaux selling for £40,100.

With wines beginning to hit these sorts of prices (albeit at auction), more wines are coming onto the market, and Gibbs notes that those vintages of Engel traded tend to be older ones (older than 2004, at least, the last vintage Philippe made before his death).

But the real story of the Top 10 is the inclusion of three big Champagne brands: Krug, Louis Roederer (aka Cristal) and Moët & Chandon (aka Dom Pérignon).

Feature findings

- > The story of 2019 continues many of the narratives of the past few years, such as a broadening market at the expense of Bordeaux, but other developments are palpable.
- > Champagne and Italy are making a charge up the rankings with three prestige cuvée Champagnes and one Super Tuscan in the top 10.
- > Italy in particular is really starting to get into its stride, driven by Tuscan brands for now, but with Piedmontese wines building a strong following too.
- > Poor price performance is holding the first growths back, nearly all of which are out of the top 10 this year, but there is a gang of up-and-coming labels from the Left and Right Banks that are picking up steam and cutting through the *en primeur* gloom.

Advert

Liv-ex Power 100: 41 to 60 of the top fine wine brands

Source: Liv-ex

Brand	Overall ranking		Score	Value & Volume Rank	Value Traded		Volume Traded		Avg. Trade Price		Price Performance		Unique Wines Traded	
	2019	2018			Share	Rank	Share	Rank	Price	Rank	Change	Rank	Number	Rank
Domaine Leflaive	41	13	369.5	47	0.50%	51	0.60%	49	£1,316	121	2.5%	171	61	7
Pavie	42	38	371	24	1.24%	19	0.74%	40	£2,660	53	-1.5%	237	26	45
Bollinger	43	46	374	34	0.52%	45	0.75%	39	£1,112	146	9.4%	74	15	103
Angélus	44	34	375.5	15	1.89%	13	1.05%	25	£2,868	47	-3.1%	253	23	53
Chapoutier	45	98	376.5	89	0.18%	95	0.24%	102	£1,203	135	6.6%	103	69	5
Léoville Las Cases	46	25	380	14	1.16%	21	1.43%	13	£1,292	123	0.2%	211	35	25
Coche Dury	47	9	384	116	0.36%	60	0.08%	197	£7,087	13	7.5%	94	15	103
Opus One	48	15	387.5	43	0.80%	30	0.46%	63	£2,757	51	3.9%	147	13	125
Alain Hudelot Noellat	49	42	388.5	121	0.14%	113	0.13%	152	£1,616	93	8.6%	81	30	33
Duclot	49	#N/A	388.5	69	0.85%	28	0.19%	121	£6,979	15	4.0%	145	13	125
Pin	51	37	390.5	127	0.73%	34	0.05%	243	£ 25,653	4	6.1%	111	17	85
Lynch Bages	52	22	394.5	11	1.50%	17	2.17%	7	£1,101	147	0.3%	207	36	24
Pâpe Clément	52	74	394.5	35	0.50%	50	0.79%	37	£1,004	160	4.4%	141	28	41
Ducru Beaucaillou	54	36	396	32	0.62%	41	0.76%	38	£1,308	122	0.7%	199	33	27
Léoville Poyferre	55	66	398	18	0.77%	33	1.38%	15	£ 881	175	4.2%	143	23	53
René Engel	56	#N/A	399.5	173	0.19%	89	0.04%	258	£8,519	9	21.9%	14	14	117
Solaia	57	92	407	60	0.48%	53	0.39%	72	£1,960	71	5.6%	121	13	125
Louis Jadot	58	51	412.5	83	0.19%	91	0.27%	94	£1,134	144	4.8%	134	59	10
Domaine Jean-Louis Chave	59	191	416	150	0.17%	102	0.07%	207	£3,582	38	10.7%	60	16	93
Etienne Sauzet	60	50	418	112	0.12%	125	0.19%	122	£ 960	163	10.3%	65	37	22

Cristal and Dom Pérignon in particular have hovered on the outskirts of the top 10 for a while, their combination of excellent branding, widespread distribution, perceived quality, (relatively) accessible price point in the world of fine wine, decent production levels and solid price performance making them staunch favourites in the secondary market of late – and the same is true for other grandes marques as well.

“Champagne is low risk,” remarks Gibbs, and adds that anticipation over the release of the much-hyped 2008 vintage helped “massively”.

Then finally, Sassicaia, the Super Tuscan breaching the inner sanctum of the Power 100 for the first time. Fellow Tuscan Tignanello may have snatched a few headlines in the UK this year thanks to its popularity with prime minister Boris Johnson and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, but it’s Sassicaia that’s the real hot ticket among the Super Tuscans.

It has been mentioned before that of all Italian wines Sassicaia is the one label from the country that’s a real ‘brand’, and that is beginning to ring true.

It acts like Bordeaux of old used to, with a good price that gives it room to grow, and decent volumes (it is the number one brand traded by volume on the Liv-ex Exchange this year) to back up demand, which was high this year for the, justifiably, highly rated 2015 vintage, which rose in price by 25% when it was named *Wine Spectator’s* Wine of the Year, and the 2016 has appreciated by 71% since Monica Larner of *The Wine Advocate* gave it a perfect 100 point score.

FIRST GROWTHS?

In 2016 the top five of the Power 100 were: Lafite, Mouton Rothschild, Margaux, Haut-Brion and Latour.

A year later, DRC and Angélus were in the fourth and fifth spots, and last year Lafite was in second place with Mouton

and Margaux in fourth and fifth. This year, Latour has scraped in (barely) to a joint 10th place, Margaux is 12th, Mouton 15th, Haut-Brion 16th and Lafite 19th. This might seem like a wholesale collapse but that’s not the case. Latour is where it is because, explains Gibbs, “there’s less Latour about, it’s less liquid so its price performance is slightly better”.

Sassicaia acts like Bordeaux of old used to, with a good price that gives it room to grow, and decent volumes to back up demand, which was high this year for the highly rated 2015 vintage

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Liv-ex Power 100: 61 to 80 of the top fine wine brands

Source: Liv-ex

Brand	Overall ranking		Score	Value & Volume Rank	Value Traded		Volume Traded		Avg. Trade Price		Price Performance		Unique Wines Traded	
	2019	2018			Share	Rank	Share	Rank	Price	Rank	Change	Rank	Number	Rank
Carmes Haut Brion	61	105	425.5	51	0.32%	64	0.62%	47	£ 827	184	18.0%	22	12	143
Pol Roger	62	99	428	26	0.68%	37	0.80%	35	£1,350	119	2.8%	167	15	103
Rauzan Segla	63	106	431	64	0.24%	76	0.52%	56	£ 756	193	9.0%	78	21	64
Léoville Barton	63	62	431	30	0.51%	49	1.02%	28	£ 794	188	3.5%	153	26	45
Calon Segur	65	58	441.5	55	0.31%	66	0.58%	53	£ 864	179	5.2%	127	23	53
Beaucastel	66	33	443.5	21	0.54%	44	1.47%	12	£ 585	228	4.0%	146	29	38
Beychevelle	66	32	443.5	23	0.66%	39	1.22%	19	£ 858	180	2.8%	165	21	64
Comte Liger Belair	68	69	444.5	185	0.21%	85	0.01%	284	£ 22,210	6	28.0%	6	11	155
Clos Fourtet	69	48	448.5	65	0.28%	72	0.46%	63	£ 953	166	7.5%	92	16	93
Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier	70	44	449	160	0.14%	110	0.07%	216	£3,343	40	9.3%	76	16	93
Tignanello	71	76	455.5	29	0.51%	48	1.03%	27	£ 787	189	5.7%	120	15	103
Masseto	72	89	456.5	49	1.03%	22	0.32%	82	£5,198	19	-2.3%	247	14	117
Raveneau	73	103	457	186	0.10%	137	0.05%	233	£2,832	49	13.0%	44	17	85
Bouchard Père et Fils	74	72	464	140	0.13%	115	0.10%	181	£2,101	65	4.4%	140	24	49
Sylvain Cathiard	74	60	464	198	0.10%	134	0.03%	260	£4,670	24	12.0%	50	16	93
Église Clinet	76	91	466	70	0.25%	75	0.39%	75	£1,053	155	2.1%	177	32	29
Arnoux Lachaux	77	210	466.5	163	0.09%	143	0.09%	188	£1,604	94	10.8%	58	20	70
Faiveley	77	55	466.5	77	0.27%	74	0.30%	85	£1,438	113	-1.0%	229	60	9
Trapet Père et Fils	79	195	467	152	0.14%	111	0.08%	200	£2,913	46	10.2%	68	13	125
Pierre-Yves Colin-Morey	80	52	468	146	0.07%	165	0.15%	139	£ 749	196	14.1%	33	40	20

One might argue that its non-participation in *en primeur* strategy is paying off but its ex-cellar offers are not working all that well. The re-release of the 2008 this spring was well received, but the 2011 release in September was wide of the mark price-wise, and the autumn release is now running into a slew of releases from the négociants, providing a lot of competition for Latour's ex-cellar premium to cut through.

If you look at the top labels traded by value, then Lafite is still right at the top this year, followed by Mouton, then DRC, then Margaux, Latour and Haut-Brion

One thing to remember with the Power 100 is that a wine falling down the list doesn't necessarily mean that it's failing in the marketplace, it is often just the case that it's being overtaken by rapidly rising brands that could fall away equally quickly and leave the likes of the first growths back in the upper echelons next year. They're like a rock, submerged then revealed again by crashing waves.

If you look at the top labels traded by value, Lafite is still right at the top this year, followed by Mouton, then DRC, then Margaux, Latour and Haut-Brion. By volume too they're well represented in the top 20.

If measured on value and volume trade alone Lafite would still be number one overall, and the other firsts are also top performers. These are still wines that have high demand in the secondary market.

Where they're failing currently is in price performance, with Margaux and Haut-Brion at -1.2%, Mouton at -1.8% and Lafite trailing at -4%.

BURGUNDY: END GAME

As noted above, the number of Burgundian labels on the list grew to 34 this year, and their share of trade by value now accounts for 20%.

"We're slightly rolling through second-line Burgundies now," says Gibbs. "It's showing signs of maturity, and there's an expanding field."

Prieuré Roch and René Engel have already been touched upon but some of the other entrants this year include labels from domaines that have younger winemakers at their helms, such as Arnoux Lachaux, Ramonet, Roulot and Raveneau.

It's striking that white wine producers are catching a bit of attention at the moment, especially with Meursault.

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Liv-ex Power 100: 81 to 100 of the top fine wine brands

Source: Liv-ex

Brand	Overall ranking		Score	Value & Volume Rank	Value Traded		Volume Traded		Avg. Trade Price		Price Performance		Unique Wines Traded	
	2019	2018			Share	Rank	Share	Rank	Price	Rank	Change	Rank	Number	Rank
Ausone	81	28	475	96	0.46%	56	0.14%	149	£5,235	18	-2.5%	249	21	64
Dominus	82	38	481	100	0.16%	106	0.21%	113	£1,151	142	6.2%	109	18	80
Conseillante	83	81	481.5	53	0.35%	61	0.51%	57	£1,099	148	2.7%	169	17	85
Pontet Canet	84	68	489.5	5	1.82%	15	2.65%	2	£1,094	150	-4.6%	268	21	64
Henri Boillot	85	149	490.5	115	0.11%	127	0.17%	128	£1,047	156	5.8%	117	26	45
Canon (Saint Émilion)	86	61	492	36	0.61%	43	0.63%	45	£1,536	101	3.1%	159	9	178
Emmanuel Rouget	87	47	496.5	177	0.17%	99	0.04%	257	£7,272	11	15.0%	27	8	193
Jacques Prieur	88	114	508	160	0.09%	140	0.09%	186	£1,641	92	5.8%	118	22	58
Harlan	89	167	513	134	0.22%	82	0.07%	206	£4,796	22	11.2%	55	6	235
Trotanoy	90	116	514.5	109	0.17%	101	0.15%	140	£1,814	79	1.4%	187	17	85
Ornellaia	91	53	519.5	39	0.47%	54	0.80%	36	£ 942	168	-1.3%	235	22	58
Gruaud Larose	91	79	519.5	45	0.29%	69	1.03%	26	£ 450	248	2.5%	172	31	32
Domaine Chevalier	93	78	530	80	0.16%	104	0.47%	62	£ 543	234	5.5%	123	23	53
Fontaine Gagnard	93	75	530	158	0.08%	158	0.12%	164	£1,010	159	7.5%	93	28	41
Perrier-Jouët	95	70	534	44	0.49%	52	0.70%	42	£1,117	145	5.0%	130	8	193
Soldera (Case Basse)	96	#N/A	539	192	0.11%	131	0.04%	252	£4,251	30	24.1%	9	7	212
Anne-Françoise Gros	96	211	539	190	0.09%	141	0.05%	236	£2,835	48	15.0%	28	9	178
Smith Haut Lafitte	98	84	541	76	0.22%	79	0.34%	78	£1,045	157	0.1%	212	22	58
Comtes Lafon	99	82	541.5	179	0.08%	157	0.08%	203	£1,655	91	5.9%	112	20	70
Haut Bailly	100	119	542	66	0.29%	71	0.39%	71	£1,158	141	-0.5%	222	18	80

Gibbs says they're "awesome wines", but they're also being drunk, as their appearance in numerous social media posts at least somewhat attests to. Is there still a fear of premature oxidation? Either way, their price performances are what's driving them up. Ramonet has seen a change of 15.6% this year, Roulot 27.4% and Raveneau 13%.

Burgundy has been a juggernaut for the past few years but, just like Marvel's

Burgundy has been a juggernaut for the past few years but, just like Marvel's cinematic Avengers extravaganza, this year feels a lot like its endgame too

cinematic *Avengers* extravaganza, which finally came to an end in 2019, this year feels a lot like its endgame too - at least for prices at the very top end. This has been a recurring theme for a while and is often countered by cries that 'demand and interest has never been higher'

But ongoing interest in Burgundy doesn't equate to sustainable prices. Gibbs points out that much of Burgundy's positive performance this year comes from feeding off a strong finish to 2018, because for much of this year the Burgundy 150 index was in a fairly deep slump and was outpaced by other sub-indices.

Burgundy is a very volatile market, Prieuré Roch and Engel's out-of-the-blue impact may dissipate completely by this time next year. Liquidity for a lot of wines is low, with single bottles sometimes all there is available.

While some labels have shot up the rankings, elsewhere it's a story of decline.

Number of wines in the Liv-ex Power 100 by region

Region	2016	2017	2018	2019
Bordeaux	57	53	45	42
Burgundy	19	24	29	34
Italy	9	8	10	8
Champagne	6	6	7	7
Rhone	3	3	4	4
US	3	3	3	3
Spain	1	1	1	1
Australia	2	2	1	1
Argentina	0	0	0	0
Chile	0	0	0	0

Domaine Leflaive, Faiveley, Emmanuel Rouget, Coche Dury, Pierre-Yves Colin-Morey, Jacques Frédéric Mugnier, Comtes Lafon, Georges Roumier, Sylvain Cathiard and Etienne Sauzet have all seen their rankings slide this year, sometimes considerably.

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Gibbs notes that Burgundy buyers are increasingly “tentative”, and they “struggle to price these wines”. The bid-to-offer ratio for Burgundy this year has been 50%, while for Bordeaux, Champagne and Italy it’s 100%.

It’s not that buyers don’t want Burgundy, nor that we’re about to see a pricing crash, but the upper tier has reached a peak, and the price performance reflects that, as does the inclusion of more names from domains where prices have not quite run ahead of themselves... yet.

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

Away from the first growths, talk of Bordeaux generally revolves around the misery of failed en primeur campaigns, with a moderately successful 2016 offering quickly eclipsed by the shrieking disasters of 2017 and 2018.

Yet, doom and gloom aside, from the ruins there is a bit of a shift in hierarchy going on in Bordeaux, and new players are emerging from both banks.

While these post-2010, post ‘the good times’ futures campaigns have revealed some estates to be entirely tone deaf, others have proved anything but.

One particular group of over-achievers includes Canon, Rauzan-Ségla, Calon Ségur, Beychevelle, and Carmes de Haut-Brion. If you’ve read *db’s* en primeur coverage of the past few years you’ll know these are the names that crop up consistently as wines that have been seen as offering excellent quality and, crucially, well-priced releases. They are releases that merchants and their clients can really get behind.

“They’re all brand-conscious owners, and all close in the rankings,” Gibbs points out in his analysis.

Carmes in particular is “blazing a trail”, he says. This is the first year it has been in the Power 100, jumping from 105th to 61st place. Its price performance of 18% is excellent, and with an average price of £827, it has a lot of room for appreciation.

Other big movers and shakers in

The rise of ‘natural’ fine wines

If there’s one subject in wine guaranteed to raise hackles, it’s the subject of ‘natural’ wines, what they are, what they really mean and just how good they actually are.

Semantics aside, however, there is no doubt that there is a movement in fine wine that is very much behind ‘artisan’ producers, eschewing typical AOC norms and digging deeper than others into the repertoire of varieties their countries provide.

France in particular is a hotbed of incredibly desirable grower wines.

Once the preserve of ‘those in the know’, who passed around bottles in their inner circles with hushed reverence, these labels are increasingly beaming known – if still not entirely accessible – to a wider audience.

Grower Champagnes and wines from Jura, the Loire, Beaujolais and parts of the Rhône are foremost in this rising tide. Whether or not they all count as ‘natural’, many are produced under organic or biodynamic principles.

The style and message is creeping into the more established fine wine world as well, with biodynamics, less filtration and a lighter touch in the winery becoming more prevalent, especially in Bordeaux.

The issue was discussed in the June issue of *the drinks business*, and French online auctioneer and retailer iDealwine in particular has seen a big increase in demand for these wines. Last year 19% of its volume and 17% of its value came from organic, biodynamic and ‘natural’ wine labels and it’s a trend that has continued into this year too.

Other merchants too are becoming increasingly enthusiastic about some of these regions. Nick Pegna, global sales director at Berry Bros & Rudd, says: “Rhône Valley wines and Loire reds and whites have all been discussed and tasted by us recently, and we feel are very exciting as areas of growth.”

Meanwhile, Corney & Barrow’s fine wine director, Will Hargrove, notes that “top bottlings” from Jura are “exploding” but adds, “The main trend though is for certain estates (wherever they come from) to explode with popularity by being seen as ‘best in class’, ‘authentic’, and with a real sense of place.”

Bordeaux must include Vieux Château Certan, which was the biggest riser among the Bordeaux labels this year, up 55 places from 83rd to 28th. Volumes traded have risen sharply on Liv-ex, and while the price change has been good, Gibbs still thinks it “still looks relatively good value”, and buyers are “clearly circling”

Carmes in particular is ‘blazing a trail’. This is the first year it has been in the Power 100, jumping from 105th to 61st place

as a result. Pichons Baron and Comtesse, Figeac, Haut-Bailly, Pape Clément, Trotanoy and Eglise Clinet would be other brands to watch.

FORZA ITALIA

The secondary market is very much French in character, dominated by Bordeaux, Burgundy and Champagne, but Italy is coming to the fore. Ten years ago the country’s share of trade by value was just 2%, now it’s 8.5%, and the number of Italian wines on the exchange has exploded. The number of individual Italian wines traded on Liv-ex is up by more than 1,000% in the past decade, with the number of labels traded doubling every two years.

This year, Liv-ex released an in-depth report on Italy’s development in the secondary market, which only really

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began 40 years ago.

Greater automated trading and more widely available stocks are two reasons Liv-ex pointed to as being drivers of the rise of Italian wines, and with it has come greater exposure and increase in volume and value trading.

By far the majority of these trades are the Super Tuscans. As well as the aforementioned Sassicaia, Solaia, Masseto and Tignanello are creeping up – though Ornellaia took a tumble to 91st place. It was joined this year by Brunello producer Case Basse, whose irascible but respected figurehead, Gianfranco Soldera, died in February. This has perhaps boosted its prices but volumes and values remain low. Nonetheless, Corney & Barrow, which is the label's sole representative in Asia, says its performance is "superb".

SUPER TUSCANS

The Super Tuscans in particular work because they follow the Bordeaux model of good volumes and value and brand strength. As Liv-ex said in its report: "Tuscany offers one of the cheapest entry points into the fine wine market." As long as that continues then these wines will continue to thrive.

The other talking points for Italy are Barolo and Barbaresco. If Tuscany is the Bordeaux of Italy, then Piedmont is its Burgundy, featuring smaller production, terroir-driven, single site wines and more expensive expressions.

Yet there's 'expensive' and there's 'expensive'. Bruno Giacosa (who died in January 2018) has been one notable riser, and has an average case price of £2,460. Gaja – admittedly diluted somewhat by the number of wines it offers – has an average case price of £1,217.

Therefore, while top Barolo can be expensive, one is still looking at paying less for it than top Bordeaux, and far less than Burgundy produced in the same volumes. Some Barolos are even rarer and their production more miniscule.

That said, being small production and

Italy: In it to win it

Liv-ex's recent Italian report concluded with the resounding proclamation that: "Italy has all the fundamentals for achieving global recognition as one of the world's premier fine wine producing countries: producers with an international outlook, warm critical reception, and, most importantly, consistently high quality. As collectors continue to diversify portfolios beyond the traditional French regions, Italy stands to win big."

Not just Italy either. As Bordeaux *en primeurs* shrink in overall importance for most fine wine merchants, so their attention has shifted elsewhere, and Italy is proving an absolute boon.

Georgina Crawley, business development director at Goedhuis, says that getting involved with Italy today, "really feels like Burgundy 20-30 years ago".

She continues: "Italy has been a huge success in general, with the main focus on Northern Italy. We are delighted to work with some of the top growers in Barolo and Barbaresco, and have visited the region regularly. This has delivered a new audience for us, and will continue to do so with the release of the 2016 vintage in the coming year. We are extremely excited about this market and its potential, not only for the collector, but also from a drinking perspective too.

"Tuscany and Brunello are also still key markets for us, and continue to deliver strong sales. With the new release of 2015 Brunello we are looking forward to growing this side of our sales in the coming months and into next year. The Super Tuscan market shows no signs of abating, and the key names are always in demand."

At Armit, one of the UK's leading Italian fine wine importers, managing director Brett Fleming, agrees with Crawley's view that the 2016 Piedmont and 2015 Brunellos will keep the momentum rolling.

"These are the last Italian regions to be moving through these truly astonishing vintages; they're must-haves," he says, and it's rare to hear anything quite so emphatic about some other regions at the moment.

agency-driven Barolo is, says Gibbs, "hard to form a secondary market around", but there is "something going on" and trades are starting to happen.

Dominus and Opus One both saw strong positions eroded. Screaming Eagle, meanwhile, has 'hit a wall': its price has topped out and it slid out of the top 100

KICKING AND SCREAMING

The US has had a topsy-turvy year. Dominus and Opus One both saw previously strong positions eroded. Screaming Eagle, meanwhile, has "hit a wall" – its price has topped out and it slid out of the top 100.

But Harlan Estate has zoomed up and in, helped by a good price performance (11.2%) and average price (£3,716) but volumes are next to negligible.

Other labels, such as Colgin and Scarecrow, although not in the top 100, have also fallen back a long way too.

It would seem, therefore, despite some recent positive chatter about Californian labels, the real beneficiary of an expanding market is still Italy.

With Screaming Eagle it's an issue of price and rarity, and the others are also likely suffering from collectors sitting

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About Liv-ex

Liv-ex is the global marketplace for the wine trade. It has 470 members in 42 countries, that range from start-ups to established merchants. Liv-ex supplies them with the tools they need to price, source and sell wine more efficiently.

Liv-ex publishes the actual prices which wines are transacted at, and their database contains over 644m current and historic price points, which are relied upon by the world's biggest fine wine players. These price points are also quoted by media outlets worldwide including Bloomberg and Reuters.

Liv-ex's mission is to make the wine market more transparent, efficient and safe for the benefit of everyone in the trade.

on stocks, especially of expressions of Dominus and Opus One, strangling their liquidity.

Out of the top 100, meanwhile, but a new entrant that qualified was Joseph Phelps, which this year took an increasingly popular route to market, through La Place de Bordeaux.

NEW AVENUES

When talking of an expanding fine wine market there are still parts of the world that are not benefiting from the switch away from Bordeaux. South America in particular would be one such area, and

Spanish wine works well when it is offered by merchants. Excellent quality, value and volume make them popular sells but their secondary market is zip

Is it all over for Bordeaux?

Bordeaux is in the proverbial dog house somewhat, and the perfect storm of Brexit and US tariffs doesn't bode well for the 2019 *en primeur* campaign next summer. But is it all bad for Bordeaux?

Arguably, as Burgundy continues to rocket up in price while claret languishes, it's the latter that is going to look more attractive.

BBR's Nick Pegna reports a "reviving interest in mature Bordeaux. The Bordeaux *en primeur* campaign plays a big part in our fine wine business, and we had a very successful 2018 campaign.

"For our wider business, *en primeur* is important, as these wines are most often stored with us then traded in the future by customers, becoming a significant source of mature stock for us and our BBX trading platform."

Despite the odd moan, *en primeur* remains broadly popular among UK merchants and their customers.

Crawley explains: "Great vintages always sell well, and lots of new younger buyers are coming to the market. It will be the same as 2018, if the wines are good and well-priced then there will be demand, but they have to keep things sensible.

"The return of Neal Martin from illness will help. But Bordeaux has to start offering the consumer some upside from release for the market to change its view and fall back in love with *en primeur*."

Top 10 biggest risers in the top 100

2018	2019	Wine	Region	Change
210	77	Arnoux Lachaux	Burgundy	133
191	59	Domaine Jean-Louis Chave	Rhône	132
195	79	Trapet Père et Fils	Burgundy	116
211	96	Anne-Françoise Gros	Burgundy	115
118	26	Ramonet	Burgundy	92
123	40	Roulot	Burgundy	83
167	89	Harlan	US	78
86	15	Méo Camuzet	Burgundy	71
79	13	Salon	Champagne	66
149	85	Henri Boillot	Burgundy	64

Top 10 biggest risers overall

2018	2019	Wine	Region	Change
210	77	Arnoux Lachaux	Burgundy	133
191	59	Domaine Jean-Louis Chave	Rhône	132
195	79	Trapet Père et Fils	Burgundy	116
211	96	Anne-Françoise Gros	Burgundy	115
249	144	Veuve Clicquot	Champagne	105
118	26	Ramonet	Burgundy	92
226	134	Denis Mortet	Burgundy	92
195	110	Poggio Sotto	Italy	85
123	40	Roulot	Burgundy	83
167	89	Harlan	US	78

Spain has always struggled in the secondary scene. Not much has changed in this regard.

Spanish wine works very well when it is offered by merchants. Excellent quality, value and volume make them very popular sells, but their secondary market – save for Vega Sicilia – is zip.

Nonetheless, the South Americans, alongside Italians and Californians, are increasingly turning to the Bordeaux négociants to help their international distribution. They also help négoce weighed down by all that unsold en primeur stock. A bunch of 15 Super Tuscans, top Napa and icon South

Three key fine wine markets: the UK, US and China, are all facing unsettled economic and political futures, fuelled by unrest in Hong Kong, Brexit uncertainty and America's recently imposed 25% tariffs

Americans now account for 10% of CVBG's business, according to commercial and marketing director, Valentin Jestin.

Almaviva, Seña, Cheval des Andes and Catena Zapata are three recent converts, and how it will affect their global standing will be interesting to track. Some of them, however, may be coming to the market at too high a price for the demand they're getting. 'They need to be low and build or people will lose money and won't buy them,' warns Gibbs.

AN UNSETTLED WORLD

And what of a brief sketch of the future? The three key markets for fine wine: the UK, US and Hong Kong/China, are all facing unsettled economic and political futures, fuelled by unrest in Hong Kong against Chinese authoritarianism, the UK's 'will-they won't they' split with the European Union, and America's recently imposed 25% tariffs.

Although at the time of going to press the full figures are yet to be published, it seems likely that Liv-ex's measures of the secondary market, the Liv-ex Fine Wine 100 and 1000 indices, will finish the year in the red. The Liv-ex 100 in particular has, save for a brief and limp rally over the summer, stuttered all year, and in October was down by 1.2% on the year to date.

The US tariffs present a problem for all wines, save Champagne and Italy, which were, for some reason, left out of the increased import duty, and from which situation they may very well profit considerably.

TIMELESS RIOJA



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Sassicaia is emerging as a true brand

Not that Burgundy and Bordeaux trading will die away completely in the US, given that there is a lot of stock in the country already, but it does put a strain on future imports. There are stories of cancelled orders on unshipped stocks and négociants having to take price cuts to ship others after the tariffs were imposed.

Then again, as Goedhuis' business development director, Georgian Crawley, says: "The talk in the market is that the US will review these going into 2020, and there is every chance of them going as quickly as they came."

Maybe they won't be a factor, therefore, but can anyone count on that?

The biggest headache of this triple-headed beast, however, will be felt most by the Burgundians (who had an excellent but not huge 2019 vintage) to an extent next spring but most particularly by the Bordelais.

MISHANDLED MARKETING

It has been touched on before, but the en primeur process is creaking. There has been an unprecedented run of good and

The en primeur process is creaking. There has been a run of good and great vintages since 2014, but many estates have mishandled their marketing and pricing

Top 10 fallers in the top 100

2018	2019	Wine	Region	Change
28	81	Ausone	Bordeaux	-53
38	82	Dominus	US	-44
47	87	Emmanuel Rouget	Burgundy	-40
9	47	Coche Dury	Burgundy	-38
53	91	Ornellaia	Italy	-38
32	66	Beychevelle	Bordeaux	-34
15	48	Opus One	US	-33
33	66	Beaucastel	Rhône	-33
22	52	Lynch Bages	Bordeaux	-30
13	41	Domaine Leflaive	Burgundy	-28

Wines Traded

Year	# of wines traded	# of brands traded	brands that qualified
2015	3,000+	271	166
2016	4,000+	670	199
2017	4,000+	750	220
2018	5,700	953	248
2019	6,367	995	288

Top 10 trade price ranking

Av. trade rank	Brand	Region	Av. LX trade price
1	Auvenay	Burgundy	£43,679
2	DRC	Burgundy	£42,437
3	Petrus	Bordeaux	£27,334
4	Pin	Bordeaux	£25,653
5	Screaming Eagle	US	£22,255
6	Comte Liger Belair	Burgundy	£22,210
7	Armand Rousseau	Burgundy	£13,185
8	Georges Roumier	Burgundy	£10,745
9	René Engel	Burgundy	£8,519
10	Lafleur	Bordeaux	£7,353

Top 10 price performance ranking

Price perf. rank	Brand	Region	Av. market price change
1	Cappellano	Italy	65.42%
2	Prieuré Roch	Burgundy	51.02%
3	Bizot	Burgundy	50.66%
4	Salon	Champagne	30.66%
5	Keller	Germany	28.41%
6	Comte Liger Belair	Burgundy	28.04%
7	Roulot	Burgundy	27.38%
8	Jasmin	Rhone	27.14%
9	Soldera (Case Basse)	Italy	24.08%
10	Glaetzer	Australia	23.38%

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Liv-ex Power 100: Methodology

To calculate the scores, Liv-ex took a list of all wines that traded on Liv-ex in the last year (from 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2019) and grouped these by brand. Similar to last year, Burgundy labels with both maisons and domaines were combined as one. It then identified brands that had traded at least three wines or vintages, and had a total trade value of at least £10,000. Brands were ranked using four criteria: year-on-year price performance (based on the market price for a case of wine on 1 September 2018 with its market price on 31 August 2019); trading performance on Liv-ex (by value and volume); number of wines and vintages traded; and average price of the wines in a brand. More than 6,300 different wines/vintages were traded on the exchange. These were grouped into 995 brands, of which 288 qualified for the final calculation. The individual rankings were combined with a weighting of 1 for each criteria, except trading performance, which had a weighting of 1.5 (because it combined two criteria).

Top 10 number of wines traded

No. wines rank	Brand	Region	Unique # of LWIN11s traded
1	Armand Rousseau	Burgundy	146
2	DRC	Burgundy	94
3	Méo Camuzet	Burgundy	82
4	Gaja	Italy	75
5	Chapoutier	Rhône	69
6	Leroy	Burgundy	64
7	Joseph Drouhin	Burgundy	61
7	Domaine Leflaive	Burgundy	61
9	Faiveley	Burgundy	60
10	Louis Jadot	Burgundy	59

Wines that fell out the top 100 this year

Brand	2019	2018	Chg
François Lamarche	115	23	-92
Screaming Eagle	114	54	-60
Talbot	131	59	-72
Marquis d'Angerville	147	64	-83
Armailhac	141	65	-76
Clerc Milon	164	70	-94
Paul Jaboulet Aîné	136	73	-63
Grand Puy Lacoste	109	77	-32
Produttori Barbaresco	116	87	-29
Giscours	139	90	-49
Clinet	126	94	-32
Luciano Sandrone	277	95	-182
Tua Rita	241	96	-145
Duhart Milon	107	97	-10
Troplong Mondot	105	100	-5

Wines that entered the top 100 this year

Brand	2019	2018	Chg
Anne-Françoise Gros	96	211	115
Arnoux Lachaux	77	210	133
Trapet Père et Fils	79	195	116
Domaine Jean-Louis Chave	59	191	132
Harlan	89	167	78
Henri Boillot	85	149	64
Roulot	40	123	83
Haut Bailly	100	119	19
Ramonet	26	118	92
Trotanoy	90	116	26
Jacques Prieur	88	114	26
Rauzan Ségla	63	106	43
Carmes Haut Brion	61	105	44
Raveneau	73	103	30

great vintages since 2014. But many estates have badly mishandled their marketing and pricing, and with the advent of another excellent vintage in

‘The châteaux need to find a price that reflects the demand. Then the machine can start again. If we play as usual, that’s it; the game is dead’

2019 to be rolled out next summer, many face the prospect of being snookered in how they can go about presenting these wines in a market that, frankly, doesn’t want or need to pay for yet another ‘great’ vintage, when one has already been proclaimed in 2018, 2016 and 2015 to varying degrees of accuracy. Certainly, Neal Martin’s recent appraisal of the 2018s stopped well short of calling it a universally ‘great’ vintage.

The Asian market doesn’t buy futures, the US is going to be very cautious due to the tariffs, and goodness knows what the tax and currency situation will be for the UK at that time. So what do the Bordelais do? Raise prices again?

“More expensive? In this environment? No way!” says François Thienpont, who has a foot in both camps, as owner of châteaux and a négociant business.

“The châteaux need to find a price that reflects the demand of the market,” he continues. “Then the machine can start again. If we play as usual, that’s it; the game is dead.”

It’s a comfortably sensible sentiment, and perhaps next year’s en primeur campaign will prove a pleasant surprise – but past form suggests not all will listen and act so attentively. *clb*