

L'ESPRIT DE BORDEAUX

PAR YVON MAU

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Wine Liz Sagues



Growers bring back spirit of Bordeaux with

The wines of Bordeaux suffer a very mixed press. At the top end, fine wines from great vintages such as 2009 and 2010 are lauded to the stars – yet often the chateaux which make them are accused of blatant money-grabbing. Down at the bottom end, there is widespread condemnation of poor wine-making standards, but also demand for cheap bottles.

Now there is a middle-of-the-road initiative which is aiming to avoid such extremes and win converts to wines which should, with their celebrated history, be very widely respected and enjoyed.

L'Esprit de Bordeaux is a grouping of eight growers – four on the left bank, four on the right – who span a clutch of the major appellations and have a real enthusiasm for quality at sensible cost.

It helps, of course, that the initiative has been launched with the 2009 vintage, one of ripe, deeply-fruited and well-structured wines, which can't help but win new friends to Bordeaux. The 2010 wines are great too, though in a more classic way, with more tannins and higher acidity. The challenge will come with the more difficult 2011s, which will sort the good from the mediocre and show

whether the momentum of 2009 and 2010 can be kept going.

Those behind L'Esprit are determined that it will. "Churchill said he would never surrender and, in Bordeaux, we will never surrender – especially in the UK," says Philippe Laqueche, managing director of the negotiant company Yvon Mau, which is behind the grouping. The posh wines of Bordeaux, he adds, were doing fine, the low end was suffering. "In between, we have some marvellous wines." L'Esprit offered those – "all different, all of strong character and personality".

Wildlife and Gilbert

Mild winters dangerously disrupt nature's cycle of life

Warm winters are affecting migration patterns of insects

Winter was a cruelly cold one in the north, but in the south it was a mild one. The result is that many insects are not migrating as they should. In the north, the cold has kept many insects from migrating south, while in the south, the mild weather has kept many insects from migrating north. This is a problem for many insects, as they rely on migration to find food and shelter. In the north, the cold has kept many insects from migrating south, while in the south, the mild weather has kept many insects from migrating north. This is a problem for many insects, as they rely on migration to find food and shelter.



Sketching species adds to enjoyment of nature walks

Richard Nourry says he has been sketching species for years. He says that sketching is a great way to enjoy nature walks. He says that sketching helps him to observe nature more closely and to appreciate the beauty of the natural world. He says that sketching is a great way to enjoy nature walks.



Philippe Bardet, of Chateau du Val d'Or



Philippe Bardet, of Chateau du Val d'Or

Picture: Richard Nourry

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