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THE WORLD'S BEST WINE MAGAZINE

# Decanter

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## Provenance is all

**A** new player in Bordeaux will provide a 'five-star' provenance certification on every case of wine it sells. Bordeaux Provenance guarantees that all wines sold via its online portal will reach fine wine buyers 'in optimal condition, offering 100% traceability from the château to final destination.'

As well as sourcing ex-château wines, the company's fine wine shipments will use Radio Frequency Identification temperature-monitoring technology, pioneered by US company eProvenance.

Once the wine has been delivered, clients will get a 'certified guarantee of provenance' for every monitored case. This will not only include an independent record of

the duration and temperature fluctuations of the entire shipment, but also a complete history of the wine's previous ownership. 'We believe this provides an all-important point of difference,' says CEO Stephen Rouveyrol.

Meanwhile, a number of UK wine merchants, including Corney & Barrow and Berry Bros & Rudd, are also trialling eProvenance's tracking technology. Most recently, Berrys announced that it aims to be the first London merchant to

use eProvenance's systems to create a verified global fine wine cold chain to ensure that wine in transit is not damaged en route by temperature spikes.

According to eProvenance, if a wine experiences a temperature of 30°C for just 1.5 days, this can

*'Clients will receive a "certified guarantee of provenance" for every monitored case'*



**Above: fine wine can suffer if it experiences temperature spikes during shipping or storage**

degrade its colour, aroma and ageing potential. 'Now viticulture and winemaking have reached the current levels of expertise, storage and shipping represent the largest challenge to the quality of wine the consumer drinks – and it is largely out of control,' says eProvenance's Eric Vogt.

## Latest releases

**Famous for its** single-quinta Ports, the Symington-owned Quinta do Vesuvio has launched two non-fortified wines, **Quinta do Vesuvio** (Berry Bros & Rudd and Wine Direct, about £45), and a second wine, **Pombal do Vesuvio** (Thos Peatling, £19.99).

Laurent-Perrier has unveiled **Brut Millésimé 2000** Sainsburys, Oddbins and Majestic, (£39.99), a blend of 50% Chardonnay from the Côte des Blancs and 50% Pinot Noir from Montagne de Reims.

Islay distillery Bruichladdich has announced its third limited-edition release of Octomore 2.2, **Orpheus**

(pictured), which claims to be the most highly peated whisky ever made. The spirit is aged for five years in bourbon casks, given a 'final polish' in Pétrus barrels and then bottled at 61% abv. The previous two releases were eagerly snapped up by collectors so the 15,000-bottle production is likely to sell out quickly at a retail price of £80 to £90.

## Investors celebrate

The economic crisis may have driven many to drink, but fine-wine investors have undoubtedly done well over the past decade. Compared to most other asset classes, fine wine increased by 178%, beating crude oil, residential property, art and equities, according to trading platform Liv-ex. That represents a solid compound annual growth rate of 11%.

Not only that, but the UK's best-performing commodity during the noughties was a case of 1982 Lafite, which increased by a staggering 857% over the 10-year period. Back in January 2000, it was selling for £2,613 and ended the decade at more than £25,000. Indeed, six of the top 10 performing wines were all Lafite vintages.

## Winners and losers



No prizes for guessing that Lafite came top in Liv-ex's annual Fine Wine Power List, or that Mouton was runner-up. But there were plenty of non-Bordeaux surprises in the top 100, which ranks wines on price, production, sales, scores and trading volumes. France dominates the top 10, with Bordeaux taking eight places, along with Krug Champagne and DRC Burgundy. The biggest movers were Leflaive (Burgundy), up by 44 spots to number 29 and Beaucastel (Rhône) up 41 places to 50.

Spain's Vega Sicilia shot up 11 places from 27 to 16, while Pingus surged from 55 to 20, ahead of Bordeaux's Cheval Blanc and Cos d'Estournel at 21 and 22. Italy's 'Supertuscans' also weighed in, led by Ornellaia (left), which debuted on the Bordeaux Place last year and powered in to no 12. Penfolds Grange is at 26, falling from number five in 2009. The only other New Worlder was fellow Aussie Henschke's Hill of Grace, a new entry at 45.

The biggest fallers included the clarets L'Évangile, L'Église Clinet and Montrose. But the region to suffer most was Champagne. Cristal and Dom Pérignon vintage fell 17 and 19 places respectively, with Salon plummeting 34.

