



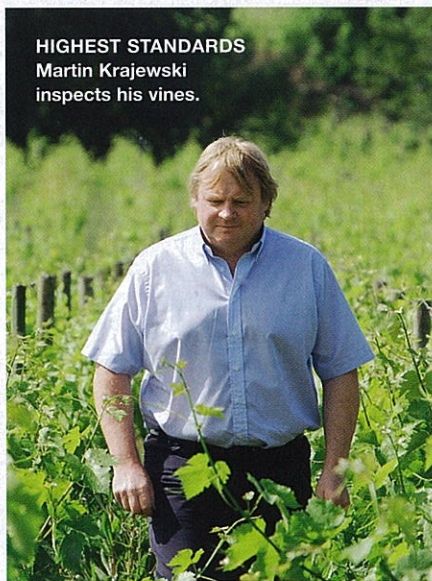
TEXT ANDREW CAILLARD MW

British Bordeaux

With a goal of preserving the integrity of his Bordeaux vines, optimising complexity and interest, British ex-pat Martin Krajewski is turning out a raft of fascinating drops.

It is just past daybreak at Château de Sours in the Entre-Deux-Mers region of Bordeaux. Grape-pickers bob behind canopies of vines, while cagettes, filled with merlot fruit are dragged or wheel-barrowed to the end of the rows. A tractor waits for its first load of the day, while a team of sorters in the new winery hangs around for the vintage crop. The scene, repeated across the whole of Bordeaux, is a symphony of man and nature. It is the end of the growing season and the beginning of something magical and transcendent. For Martin Krajewski, 2011, his eighth vintage, has been a challenging year. After glorious weather from early April to early July, cool, wet conditions prevailed with intermittent days of sunshine. Disease pressure and the threat of crop-losses have been ever present since veraison. Vigilance and meticulous

HIGHEST STANDARDS
Martin Krajewski
inspects his vines.



Aussie-inspired, Krajewski was one of the first vigneron in Bordeaux to use screwcap closures.

attention to detail have been the main ingredients of success this year. "You can only be involved in something like this if you have passion and commitment," says Krajewski. "Achieving the best-quality fruit requires sacrifice at every step of the way."

The English-born Krajewski, ended up becoming a vigneron by happenstance. As an avid wine collector, he was seduced into becoming a financial partner of Château de Sours, a small wine producer located near the sleepy village of St-Quentin-de-Baron. Initially things did not turn out well. The place was run-down, poorly managed and ailing under debt. Krajewski invested further by taking full ownership.

The initial plan was to repair the buildings, grow the business and then sell it. But the obsession and romance of wine kicked in.

The vineyards were renovated and more land was acquired. The château and winery have been completely restored. It has inspired his own children, Charlotte and Matthew, to study winemaking, and has drawn an intuitive and experienced team of professionals.

The approach to winemaking is highly contemporary and meticulous. Preserving the integrity of the vineyards, optimising complexity and interest, and making delightfully fresh, well-priced wines are central values. Aussie-inspired, Krajewski was one of the first vigneron in Bordeaux to use screwcap closures to preserve freshness and lengthen the cellaring potential of his wines. As a result, all his drops have a compelling sheen, precision and buoyancy. In a polarised market where minor Bordelais wine producers struggle to sell or articulate a meaningful

difference, Château de Sours has found its stride by bringing an authentic and delicious Bordeaux experience for a general audience of wine drinkers. The clean, aromatic sauvignon-blanc dominant Bordeaux Blanc (A\$28) resembles and transcends much of the overly-priced white wines of Graves. The classically proportioned fine-grained Château de Sours Rouge (A\$28), based on merlot, soars above its price point and thumbs its nose quite nicely towards the expensive and often under-performing reds of more renowned subregions including St-Émilion.

For all the reasons above, combined with well-managed versatile vineyards, Château de Sours has become an ascendant star outside the madness of the Grand Cru Classé constellation. One of its strengths is that it makes a great rosé, a genre of wine that is considered by many Bordeaux producers as far too prosaic to bother with. The salmon-pink Château de Sours Rosé (A\$28), however, is arguably one of the very best rosé wines in the world. At under \$30 a bottle, this early-drinking, knock-it-down style is a beautiful example of elegance and exuberance. The delicious 2010, the latest release, is intensely aromatic and gloriously unserious with cassis, light cherry, Turkish Delight aromas and flavours, loose-knit chalky texture, plenty of volume and mouthwatering acidity.

Without the aristocratic wine heritage of family and place (as exemplified by neighbouring Château Marjosse, owned by Pierre Lurton of Château Cheval Blanc and Château d'Yquem fame), Krajewski can only succeed by stumping up better wines, working hard to find markets and building trust with his customers. It is a hugely taxing life, but the results are very impressive. The generosity of spirit and verve at Château de Sours is as palpable as the rising sun.