

WINE JOHN HAWKESBY

A vine investment

YOU HAVE to admire and respect the entrepreneurial recklessness of those souls who, for whatever reasons, have been seduced into the romantic notion of owning their own vineyard or even chateau.

Martin Krajewski is a case in point. A wine-loving Englishman and keen golfer, who played regularly on the British amateur circuit, he was doing very nicely, having set up in the early 80s an outsourcing consulting and financial services company.

"Frankly, it was ticking over very smoothly and I was getting bored," he admits.

Krajewski began investing, in a small way, as a silent partner in a Bordeaux Winery, Chateau de Sours, an 80ha property planted with merlot, cabernet sauvignon, cabernet franc, petit verdot, sauvignon blanc and semillon.

"Every year I had to put more money into it and kept investing until I finished up owning it." In 2008 his family relocated and the former corporate executive is now a fully engaged proprietor of the beautifully restored chateau and vineyard, set

Recommended

2010 Chateau de Sours Bordeaux Rosé

Widely acknowledged as one of the finest rosé wines made in France, and at a most reasonable price. It is 70 per cent merlot and 30 per cent cabernet franc and is luscious, vibrant and ideal summer drinking with loads of berry fruit and cream.

Price: \$35

2010 Chateau de Sours Richemont

Entry-level red wine offering easy drinking for lunch or as a lighter-style dinner wine, it is a blend of merlot and cabernet franc with a dash of cabernet sauvignon full of raspberry, menthol and blackberry flavours with a fruity finish.

Price: \$22

high on a commanding limestone plateau to the south-west of Libourne and Pomerol and facing the ancient town of St Emilion.

Krajewski has a pragmatic approach to the business so, unusually for French wines, most are screwcap.

"Our wines are modern in style, fruit-driven and fresh and we have a lot of new young vines as well as established vines."

Chateau de Sours dates back to the 14th century when it served as an inn on the pilgrimage route to Spain. The Comtes du Richemont planted its first vines and built the current house in 1792.

The modern new winery has an annual production capacity of 850,000 bottles and beneath it is a labyrinth of caves, used for the patient storage of an exceptional sparkling rosé during the secondary fermentation. Annual production is around 60,000 cases and 90 per cent of that is exported worldwide.

A tiger for punishment, he recently bought into the Grand Cru St Emilion rising star, Clos Cantenac.

Boardroom consultancy is a fading memory. ☺

