

Who are the young guns of wine in Bordeaux?

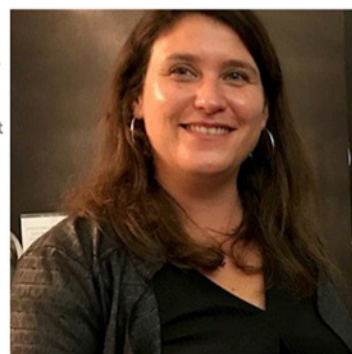


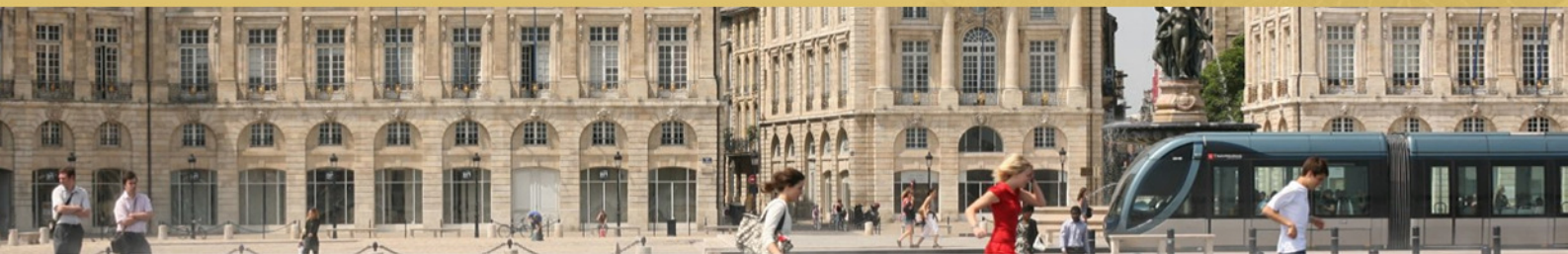
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With the prestigious [Faculty of Oenology](#) right at the heart of the region, it shouldn't be a surprise to find so many up and coming young wine makers in Bordeaux. Their profiles vary from sons and daughters of owners to outsiders from other regions and newcomers to the industry. They may be managers or wine makers or marketers and often, in smaller vineyards, all three at once. Here are a few up and coming stars of wine-making from the Best Of Wine tourism winners.

Manon Deville is the technical director of [Château de la Rivière](#) in Fronsac. A qualified oenologist and agricultural engineer from the university of Montpellier, she has been at the head of the wine making team here since January 2014. It was a return to her roots, as Chateau la Rivière was where she started her wine-making career in 2011. She may be young but since then she has travelled across the wine world making wine in the Languedoc Roussillon, Corsica, New Zealand and the Rhone before coming back to this spectacular 65 ha property on the banks of the Dordogne. She shares with her team of twelve a passion for precision. Thanks to her introduction of intimate plot management and vinification and controlled use of oxygen, they are obtaining the very best expression of the La Rivière Fronsac terroir.

Sophie Burguet started her studies as an interior designer but coming from Burgundy, Gevrey-Chambertin no less, wine was in her blood. She changed to studying oenology, not in Burgundy but in Bordeaux; first at the Lycée viticole in Montagne Saint-Emilion, and then at the Lycee in Château La Tour Blanche in Sauternes. She was already working as cellar master at [Château de Rouillac](#) in the Graves appellation of Pessac Léognan when Mr Cisnéros bought the property in 2010. True to her roots, her first challenge under this new ownership was persuading him to invest in a Burgundian automatic 'pigeur' (punching down machine). The Cisneros family are passionate about horses and, alongside the chateau and cellars, they have renovated the beautiful 17th century stables built by Baron Haussmann when he owned the property. Reviving this traditional association with horses, the estate hosts equestrian events and you can even hold wine-tastings in the stables. Amongst the residents is Titan, a 1.3-ton workhorse who works seven of the 26 hectares currently under red and white vines. This is part of the policy of sustainable agriculture that Sophie and the owners are so passionate about. Rouillac uses neither herbicides nor insecticide; in 2013 they obtained the HVE certificate (Haute Valeur Environnementale), one of the first vineyards in Pessac Leognan to do so.





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Youth and innovation are not restricted to the wine cellar; you can't make a great wine without great grapes. Nicolas Lesaint is the technical director at [Château de Reignac](#) in the Entre deux Mers. This property is famous for producing a Bordeaux Supérieur wine using classified growth techniques. After studying Molecular biology and plant physiology at university, he changed to agricultural engineering and oenology - so it's no surprise he is passionate about vines. He is, after all, a grandson of a Loire wine family. After working at Château Lynch Bages, Château Suduiraut and Vignobles Despagne in the Entre Deux Mers, he started at Reignac as agricultural manager before becoming the technical director. For such a large property (77ha), his attention to detail is impressive, embracing the best that biodynamics, organic and more traditional methods can offer to express the 'terroir' of Entre Deux Mers, given the vagaries of the Bordeaux climate. With his scientific background he is working closely with INRA (The French National Institute for Agricultural Research), to study the impact of biodiversity in reducing the number of treatments used in the vineyards. The introduction of copses and water features is not just for the pleasure of the visiting tourists.

Wine-making is not the only discipline where a youthful approach pays dividends. It must be quite daunting to take over a classified growth, especially one with such an international reputation as [Château Lynch Bages](#). Jean-Charles Cazes has done just this. He now manages all the family vineyards. Like many of the younger generation, he has worked around the world in Brazil, Scandinavia, the UK and the USA. He has a young team backing him up in the cellars too with Jérôme Le Roux leading the winemaking. Wine tourism is of course at the very heart of the Cazes philosophy, they were pioneers in opening the cellars to the public as well as catering for them. His young team stretches to the kitchens of their prestigious hotel and restaurant, [Château Cordeillan Bages](#), with the recent addition of 35 year old, Julien Lefebvre as executive chef.



From the vines to the cellars to the table, the young men and women of Bordeaux are making the most of modern research and innovation. Doing this while respecting both the natural environment and the long-standing traditions that have made the fame of the region is not an easy balancing act. But it is an exciting challenge this younger generation are rising to.

[by Wendy Narby]