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June 2018

Decanter

GLORIOUS GRENACHE

42 world-class buys

BORDEAUX 2015

Top wines from an acclaimed vintage, retasted in bottle

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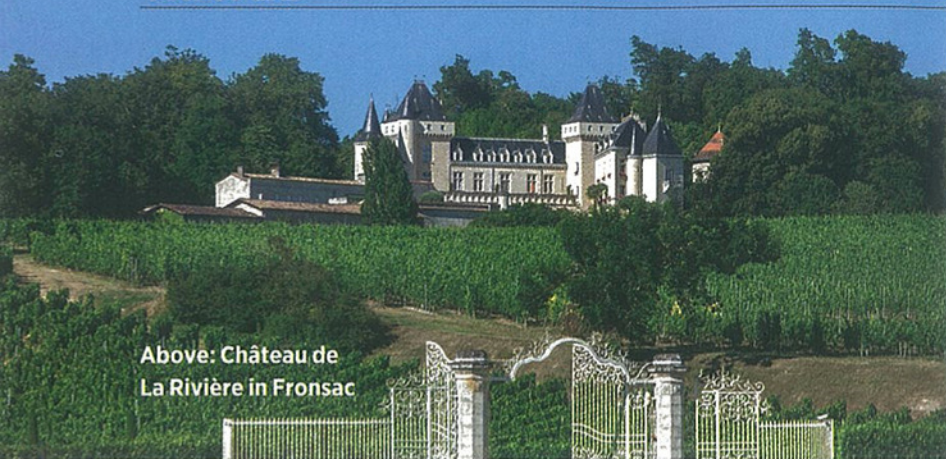
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Above: Château de La Rivière in Fronsac

'The château offers both Pu'er tea and wine tasting'

Château de La Rivière Fronsac

As well as its Disneyland-castle looks and five fairytale rooms, Château de La Rivière is famous for its massive underground cellar that covers an incredible 8ha, a warren of tunnels, which are now used as the setting for an interactive escape game. Purchased in 2014 by the Chinese Bolian Group (following the twinning of nearby Libourne with China's Pu'er, famous for its tea), today the château offers both Pu'er tea and wine tasting.

Guests can swim in the pool, see the Lady's Bath (a spring-fed private stone pond), scour the library, make their own tea blends in the Tisanerie and explore the gardens. In early July La Rivière hosts a three-day art and music festival called the Confluent d'Arts, which this year will feature Goran Bregovic and his orchestra. There's also a pop-up restaurant at the château one Friday each month. Outside of this, and breakfast, guests should look to the surrounding towns of Fronsac, Libourne and St-Emilion for lunch and dinner.

-  **5 doubles**
-  **€137 (£119) for one person, €312 (£272) for en suite rooms that sleep four**
-  **www.chateau-de-la-riviere.com**

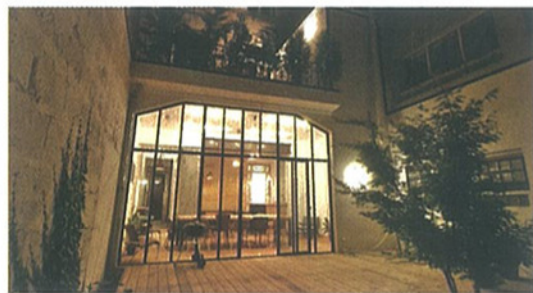
Casa Blanca

Bordeaux

Gildas Quellien opened the Casa Blanca B&B in 2016. His goal is simple: to provide a home for visitors, while also promoting products from local suppliers. The setting is ideal for anyone considering joining the 2018 Fête du Vin in June, which takes place on the quays nearby. Other attractions include the Les Chartrons area, where Bordeaux's wine merchants used to congregate; now a feast of cosy bistros, noisy terrace cafes and antique shops.

Casa Blanca has bikes and skateboards that guests can use to explore the city, plus there's a nearby Bikram studio for anyone who needs a yoga fix. For those who want to explore further afield, Quellien also welcomes guests at Château Lusseau, the family vineyard in the Graves, which has gîte accommodation in July and August.

-  **5 doubles**
-  **€130-€210 (£113-£183)**
-  **www.casablanca-bordeaux.com**



Above: Casa Blanca B&B in the city of Bordeaux




-  **10 suites with kitchen and dining area**
-  **€176-€760 (£153-£663), gourmet breakfast €32 (£28)**
-  **<https://hotelcardinalbordeaux.fr>**

Hôtel Cardinal

Bordeaux

Just off Bordeaux's main square, Place Pey-Berland, where the St Andre Cathedral sits, the Cardinal offers a range of luxurious suites. The concierge here can organise vineyard picnics, private bicycle tours and châteaux visits. Breakfast choices are overseen by two pastry chefs and feature menus specially created by owner, Géraldine Meurisse.

Surprisingly for Bordeaux, there is also afternoon tea, with treats from the newly opened Pierre Mathieu pastry and chocolate shop just a few yards away. The shop is co-owned by Meurisse and Mathieu, formerly a pastry chef at the Mandarin Oriental in Paris. Other delights include the 400-bottle wine cellar, which is stocked by the hotel's partner and wine merchant, Duclot. 

'Other delights include a 400-bottle wine cellar'

Left: an elegant suite at Hôtel Cardinal