

The wines of François Mitjavile 2019

Domaine de Cambes, Bordeaux	**2019**	**6 per case**	**£184 per case in bond**
Roc de Cambes, Côtes de Bourg	**2019**	**6 per case**	**£260 per case in bond**
Château Le Tertre Roteboeuf Grand Cru St Emilion	**2019**	**6 per case**	**£790 per case in bond**

"His aim, year on year, is to represent firstly the vineyard and then the vintage, with the property name more of a distraction."

St Emilion is dominated by limestone – it's all around you, in the buildings and the soil, visible from afar as you approach the town, and it is the same limestone which is responsible for the reputation of the top wines. With the notable exceptions of Figeac and Cheval Blanc, all of the *premiers grands crus classés* from the first classification were ringed around the town on a limestone plateau and its associated outcrop, which passes through St Emilion and out towards the Côtes de Castillon. *En route*, it passes through the hamlet of St Laurent des Combes, home to Château Le Tertre Roteboeuf, which sits on a limestone cliff, with its vineyards in front on the limestone plateau and below, at the foot of the cliff, in a stunning natural amphitheatre of vines.

Our picture above shows owner, **François Mitjavile**, perched on a wall above his vines doing what he does best – sharing passionately his minutely detailed knowledge about the *terroir* of which he is custodian. François came to wine through his wife, Milout, who had inherited the small patch of vines at Tertre Roteboeuf and it was only in the late 1970s that he took over running the estate after his studies and a *stage* at Figeac. François is a thinker; no visit to Tertre Roteboeuf is complete without a conversation in his book-lined sitting room on any subject, art, philosophy, history – anything but wine – before eventually going to the cellar to taste the wines. The effect is to allow the palate some r & r, to reset the tasting memory, before moving onto François' wines, and it really works. Nowadays, we are as likely to meet **Nina, François and Milout's daughter,** who is working with her father both at Tertre Roteboeuf and at Roc de Cambes, where she lives.

Conversations with François are peppered with the word 'degraded'; he strongly believes that the fruit needs to be tipping into over-ripeness, which brings a degree of degradation to the flavour, **in order to make wines which truly represent both the vineyard and the vintage.** In turn, this has an effect on the colours of his young wines; where other young wines are purple-black in colour, his are on the deep red spectrum, and the flavours equally evolved and powerful. His aim, year on year, is to represent firstly the vineyard and then the vintage, with the property name more of a distraction. In 2019, the very hot summer had all but blocked the vines from photosynthesising, but heavy rain in mid-September allowed the fruit to press on to ripeness, with the bonus, from his point of view, of the final ripening taking place under cooler autumnal conditions which, in turn, bring their own flavours at the same time as degrading the harsher tannins and acidity. **The result is wines which are more voluptuous, with grace and charm, and, in the case of Roc de Cambes, even spectacular but without any brutish power showing through.**

We always ask our growers for technical information about the harvest, more as a way of getting background intel on the wines than from any particularly geeky need to understand every tannin index reference or microscopic change in pH, although my inner nerd does rather enjoy the discovery. Refreshingly, François hates divulging that sort of information not because it is a trade secret but because he thinks it is a complete distraction from the physical thing that is his wine – **the taste is what counts, not a series of numbers** which he considers to be important tools of the winemaker's trade, rather than for tastings. Suffice to say that his 2019s have the correct levels of alcohol and polyphenols, without going into numbers.

Nicola Arcedeckne-Butler MW, May 2020

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Domaine de Cambes, Bordeaux	**2019**	**6 per case**	**£184 per case in bond**

80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc, harvested 3rd and 4th October for both varieties.
Deep red black, almost opaque, tactile, with a nose of prunes, cooked yet fresh black fruits, with a hint of spice and some cinnamon behind the fresh, almost raspberry note. On the palate deliciously ripe black fruits, fresh again with notable acidity and lovely grip, warm and juicy with good tannins, and a hint of savoury, really rich and delicious with a supple, silky, long, spiced finish. Cool and poised. Highly recommended. Drink 2025 - 2035

Roc de Cambes, Côtes de Bourg	**2019**	**6 per case**	**£260 per case in bond**

85% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, harvest 5th and 7th October for Merlot and 11th October for Cabernet Sauvignon.
Paler red to the rim, yet still dense, with a rich, toasty, grilled, coffee-inflected nose, restrained but alluring, leading to an equally restrained palate of fresh, almost racy red fruits, very ripe but tight and focused, mineral, richly spiced with more structured tannins behind than Domaine de Cambes; long and elegant and will drink well over a long period of time.
Drink 2027 - 2037+

Château Le Tertre Roteboeuf Grand Cru St Emilion	**2019**	**6 per case**	**£790 per case in bond**

80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc, harvested on 2nd and 6th October.
Dense red black again, not opaque, with a tight, restrained nose, savoury and grilled, really rich yet very reined in; on the palate, supreme, super-ripe black fruits, yet wonderfully fresh too, spiced, grilled, plush and rich with a big, supple, masked tannic structure going to a long, grilled, evolving finish. Punchy stuff – so very Mitjavile, so very elegant. Wow!
Drink 2030 - 2045+

Large formats are available on request

These wines are offered per case, in bond, subject to availability, and will be shipped in the Spring of 2022.
Private Cellar's *en primeur* terms and conditions of sale apply.

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For more information about François' views on the 2019 vintage,
we highly recommend this video:
https://vimeo.com/411024261

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