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## Château Latour's New Wine: A Burgundy

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By Jake Lee



Château Latour

Latour's chief winemaker, Frédéric Engerer

Château Latour is an impressive wine: The French estate dates back to the 14th century, was a favorite of Thomas Jefferson in the 18th century and is one of five wines that hold the top Bordeaux ranking of *Premier Cru*, or first growth.

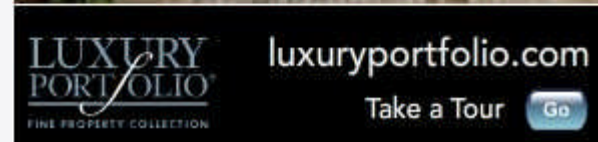
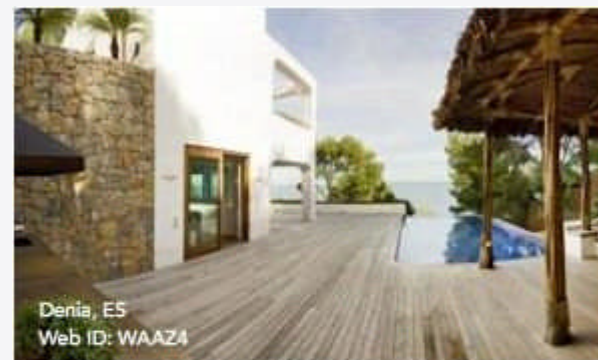
But when Latour's chief winemaker, Frédéric Engerer visited Hong Kong recently – for a trip packed with dinners that served Latour vintages back to 1970 and cost 1,980 Hong Kong dollars (US\$255) a seat – it was surprising to find he was most keen to talk about his new venture: Burgundy wine.

In 2006, Château Latour's billionaire owner, François Pinault (he also owns French luxury goods company PPR), snapped up winemaker Domaine René Engel when it became available and renamed it Domaine d'Eugénie. In charge, he placed a new winemaking team led by Mr. Engerer, a former management consultant.

The move was unusual because Burgundy and Bordeaux – the top two French wine-growing regions, which have different climates and grow different grapes using different methods – rarely work together.

“It's like a different country, different rules,” said Mr. Engerer, who says he visits the Burgundy estate almost every week. Yet, “the philosophy of making a great wine is the same thing. Pleasure, structure, freshness – these are ideas of a great wine, which is the same in each region.”

Domaine d'Eugénie is based in the village of Vosne-Romanée, where Burgundy's greatest and most expensive red wines are made. The winery owns slices of land in the Clos



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— and most expensive — red wines are made. The winery owns slices of land in the Clos-Vougeot, Grands-Echezeaux and Echezeaux vineyards, with prices of its bottles ranging from HK\$398 to \$1,545 a bottle, according to Hong Kong retailer and distributor Altaya Wines. That's cheap compared to Château Latour bottles, which start in the thousands of Hong Kong dollars.

“It's another challenge for me,” said Mr. Engerer, who also owns two of his own winemaking estates in the south of France and the Rhône Valley. “It's very good for the ego, as making a great wine like Latour can create a big ego, but going to new regions” where the price of wine is far lower, “is humbling.”

Mr. Engerer has been holding off on showing the Burgundy wines until now, because he wanted two years he was proud of to be bottled and ready for tasting. He brought the 2007, the first year he says he mastered, and the 2008 to Hong Kong, a city he says “rolls on food and wine.”

Bordeaux, Burgundy, Chateau Latour, Wine

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
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