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**Grape Escapes raises a toast to Bordeaux's classic clarets
with new wine-tasting tour**

Wannabe wine buffs can now journey back to where wine classification first began with specialist operator Grape Escapes' new wine-tasting weekend honouring Bordeaux's classic clarets.

The new 1855 Classic Clarets tour offers enthusiastic wine lovers an affordable introduction to Bordeaux and includes visits to a vineyard from each of the regions known collectively as The Medoc or Big Four, namely Margaux, St Julien, Pauillac and St Estephe, all located north of the city of Bordeaux.

These famous regions were chosen by Napoleon III, alongside Sauternes located to the south of the city, to showcase France's best wines during the Exposition Universelle de Paris in 1855, marking the beginning of wine classification, which still exists today.

Grape Escape's 1855 Classic Clarets tour starts from £289 per person. The price includes two nights accommodation in Bordeaux at the Mercure Meriadeck, a full day guided group tour visiting four vineyards in the Big Four regions with tastings and a three-course gourmet lunch at a chateau in Pauillac with accompanying wines. The package does not include travel from the UK to Bordeaux.

1855 Classic Clarets tour dates are 3 – 5 April, 29 – 31 May and 23 – 25 October, 2009.

For more information or to book call 08456 430 860 or visit www.grapeescapes.net

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About Grape Escapes

Grape Escapes is a specialist in travel to the French wine regions offering a selection of gourmet wine-tasting weekends in Champagne, Burgundy, Bordeaux, the Loire and the Rhone. Catering for all food and wine lovers from the serious connoisseur to enthusiastic beginner, Grape Escapes' small group tours average just 16 guests and blend tastings at prestigious chateaux and Champagne houses with more intimate invitations as the guests of smaller family-run estates. Grape Escapes also offers longer tailor-made self-drive itineraries, private group tours for friends or social groups such as hen weekends and weddings. www.grapeescapes.net

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