

# Selections



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## A Cahors of a Different Colour ... from Château Famaey



“Cahors is certainly the most celebrated red wine of the scattered regions of the southwest (of France). The ancient town on the river Lot with its famous fortified bridge is linked in the public mind with dramatic-sounding ‘black wine’. The legendary blackness of Cahors came from the Malbec, a grape grown in Bordeaux more for big crops than quality. But in its Cahors manifestation (where it is known as the Auxerrois) it is a horse of quite another colour.

Cahors was destroyed by phylloxera in 1880 and struggled back very slowly, with little to raise it above the second class of VDSQ until the 1960s and 1970s, when a businesslike cooperative and a handful of estates pulled the region together. It was promoted to appellation status in 1971, not for wines of any extraordinary colour or concentration but for well-balanced, vigorous and agreeable reds.



The trend today is to keep the wine relatively light and to drink it much younger, even after two years. Most growers advise drinking it cool.” – *Hugh Johnson, Modern Encyclopedia of Wine.*

We first met Luc Luyckx, owner of Château Famaey (along with Marc Van Antwerpen) and his son Maarten in February 2006 at the storied Carleton Hotel in Cannes. Known far and wide as “Lucky Luc”, the affable M. Luyckx introduced us to the wonderful world of Cahors wines, brilliantly represented by those of Château Famaey. The legendary black Cahors were a favourite of the English and the Popes of Avignon in the Middle Ages. We had expected big, tannic, brooding behemoths but instead found wonderfully fragrant, elegant, stylish and extremely satisfying wines.

Luc and Marc, two Flemish gentlemen with a consuming passion for wine, purchased what was then Château Fontaynes in 2000. Since then they have invested heavily and, as their wines will attest, wisely in all areas of the winery. At the outset they hired a top ‘Maitre de chai’ who brought over thirty years of experience to produce the extensive array of fine wines at Château Famaey.



“Lucky Luc” at ‘Vinisud’ in Montpellier

Château Famaey is located adjacent to the magnificent Medieval town of Puy-L’Évêque (just 225 kilometres east of Bordeaux) amid 25 hectares of vineyard. The vines, that are between 25 and over 50 years old are situated on the second and third terraces of the Lot River and benefit from an exceptional terroir of clay and gravel soil and plenty of sunshine. No chemical fertilizers or pesticides are used, yields are very carefully controlled and the best parcels of the vineyard are manually harvested.

Château Famaey wines can be found on the shelves of the Québec and Manitoba liquor control board outlets and the privately owned liquor stores in Alberta. Find out more about Luc, Marc and Maarten as well as Château Famaey at [www.chateaufamaey.fr](http://www.chateaufamaey.fr).

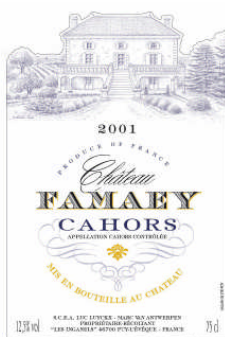
## The Wines of Château Famaey

The three Château Famaey wines we have chosen to feature: the 2004 Cuvée Tradition, the 2003 Élevé en Fût de Chêne and the 2003 Cuvée X are comprised mainly of Malbec (sometimes called Cot as well as Auxerrois) with small portions of Merlot and/or Tannat added to round them out. All come in **twelve-bottle cases**.

### 2004 Cuvée Tradition – (12.5% Alc./Vol.)

**\$15.50**

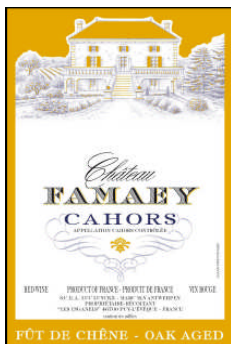
This delightful bargain is comprised of 80% Malbec and 20% Merlot. It comes from vines between 25 and 54 years of age and the yield is about 55 hectolitres per hectare. There is no oak on this wine. It is a deep ruby colour and on the nose it possesses a definite note of raspberries complemented by an array of spices and a hint of liquorice. In the mouth it is surprisingly powerful at the outset, expressing black currants, red fruit and leather and finishes nicely with tongue-coating, soft tannins. This medium-bodied, surprisingly elegant wine is drinking beautifully right now and will keep for three or four years. It is an ideal companion for cold cuts, roasted chicken and lightly seasoned pasta dishes. [Order](#) some of this little beauty now.



### 2003 Élevé en Fût de Chêne – (13.0% Alc./Vol.)

**\$23.00**

This powerful, very full-bodied wine is made from 80% Malbec, 15% Merlot and 5% Tannat.



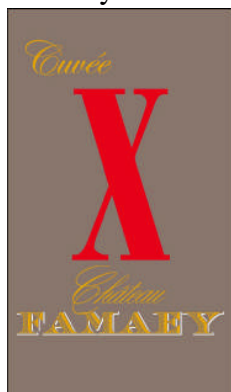
All of the grapes were hand harvested, selected according to variety, quality, age and vine location. The vines were between 22 and 52 years old and the yield was restricted to only 21 hectolitres per hectare. Traditional maceration lasted between fourteen and eighteen days and the wine was aged in oak for fourteen months (30% new and 70% one year old oak from Allier in central France).

This really is an almost black wine with glints of mahogany. On the nose there is a profusion of spices including pepper along with notes of dark fruits (black currants and cherries) along with a persistent hint of liquorice. The oak is very subtle. The aromas carry on in the mouth with the addition of stewed prunes and sweet vanilla. It is a round, chewy, well-structured and complex wine possessing very fine tannins. It is a very, very good wine that needs to be decanted an hour or more before consuming. It is drinking very nicely now and will age gracefully for at least another decade. Drink it with stews, game, roasts and most cheeses. [Select](#) a case or two of the great winter wine for your cellar.

### 2003 Cuvée X – (13.0% Alc./Vol.)

**\$37.00**

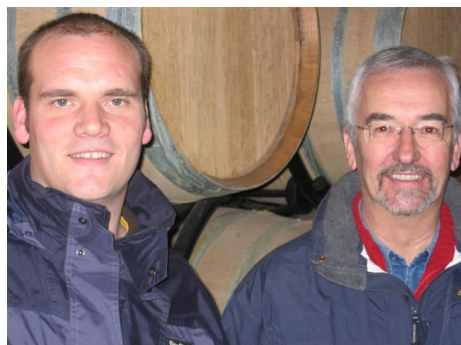
X really does mark the spot! This is what Cahors is all about. Cuvée X is made from 95%



Malbec and 5% Tannat, all carefully selected by hand from 22 to 52 year old vines and the yield is only 20 hectolitres per hectare. The juice is macerated for sixteen to twenty days and is aged in completely new oak for eighteen months. The wine is bottled unfiltered.

Cuvée X is an inky black wine with slight reflections of rose. The nose is very complex, very aromatic with gobs of black and red berries, prunes, cedar, tar and old leather which persist in the mouth with added spices and vanilla. It is a huge, well-balanced wine with just the right combination of powerful fruit and oak. It is drinking surprisingly well now, but I suspect it will become even more pleasing as it evolves over the next two decades. Underscored in my tasting notes are the words delightful and super. Cuvée X really needs to be decanted, well before consuming. It will go wonderfully with roasted lamb, hearty stews, confit de canard, cassoulet and game. [Acquire](#) some of the rare, delicious Cuvée X for your cellar.

We will be ordering these fine Château Famaey wines in early September to make sure they are here well before the cold winter weather sets in (perish the thought).



*Maarten and Luc in the barrel room*

Luc, Marc and Maarten welcome visitors to Château Famaey, but please call ahead as they travel the world in search of new markets. Those wishing an extended stay to savour all the wonders of the Lot valley might want to consider nearby Mas de Martin, a beautiful traditional cottage with a swimming pool that is owned by Martin le Belge (guess who that is!) - [www.masdemartin.com](http://www.masdemartin.com).

## **Soon to Emerge from Arthur's Cellar**

Next will be some delicious whites and a Blanquette de Limoux from Domaine Rives-Blanques. Then will come some more marvellous Italian Barbera d'Asti from Poderi Rosso Giovanni, nectar from the Burgundian house of Alex Gambal, some more Parker rated Châteauneuf-du-Pape (these from Mousset-Barrot), delightful Beaujolais from Domaine du Pelois, delicious value-priced Côtes-du-Rhône from Château Bosc la Croix along with the return of many of your favourites.

## **2004 Notturmo, Barbera d'Asti Superiore – Wonderful Response**

Response to our 2004 Notturmo, Barbera d'Asti Superiore has been overwhelmingly positive. It is currently available at most LCBO VINTAGES stores for only \$19.95 a bottle - product # 026088. If you haven't tried it, we encourage you to do so; if you have and enjoyed it, please let others know.

## **Member Feedback**

Your feedback is greatly appreciated. It helps us improve our club and better respond to your requirements. Many of your suggestions have been implemented and we are working on several others. Thank you and please keep the comments coming ([jaswalker@arthursellers.com](mailto:jaswalker@arthursellers.com)).

**For the wine club to be successful, we need as many wine buying members as possible – please forward this newsletter to likely prospects and keep those referrals coming.**

Thank you and cheers!

Hélène and Jim

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