

# TORONTO VINTNERS CLUB Inc.

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## "HEART OF ALSACE" GEWURZTRAMINER

Tuesday, September 21, 2004, 6:15 P.M.

The Ontario Club, 5th Floor, Commerce Court South  
(Northeast Corner of Bay & Wellington Streets)  
Toronto, Ontario Tel: (416) 862-1270

"Gewürztraminer has the dubious dual distinction of being the easiest grape variety to recognize and the hardest to spell....The heavily scented wine made from the Gewürztraminer has many fans, the majority of them wooed by examples from Alsace. By and large they are exactly those wine drinkers who scorn Italian white wines for their lack of character and body, so they might well be surprised to learn that Gewürztraminer's origins are almost certainly Italian, or at least what we call Italy today.....The well pigmented colour of the skins... means that the wines are some of the deepest colored whites. An Alsace Gewürztraminer is usually mid-gold, sometimes with a slightly peachy glow, especially since some skin contact is beneficial for maximum aroma, provided that the ambient temperature is not so high that oxidation is a problem ...Gewürztraminer is one of the few grapes that can be identified by sight alone...Although its aroma is overwhelming, it is easy in practice to confuse Gewürztraminer with Muscat, at least in the context of Alsace. Both are grapey and intense. Another of Gewürztraminer's hallmarks is a high level of alcohol, up to 14%, often coupled with dangerously low acid. ...Great Gewürztraminer, wines that are capable of interesting maturity, are produced in Alsace perhaps only once in a decade." [Jancis Robinson's Vines, Grapes & Wines.]

The World Atlas of Wine, by Hugh Johnson and Jancis Robinson has some interesting points as well. Both point out that "wurze" means spicy in German. Hence the name refers to a spicy Traminer grape wine. Formerly bone-dry, the average residual sugar level has been increasing, bringing them closer to the German style, where the sugar levels have been decreasing. It also points out that Alsace wine is more about fruit, rather than oak. "The major clues on Alsace label, most unusual for France, are varietal. The grapes that give their names and special qualities to the wines of Alsace are the Riesling of the Rhine – responsible here and in Germany for the best wine of all-.... and the uniquely perfumed Gewürztraminer. Gewürztraminer is the perfect introduction to the province. You would not think that so fruity a scent could come from a wine that can be so clean and dry . . . A more accurate description (than spicy) would make mention of rose petals, grapefruit, and, sometimes, lychee."

The vineyards stretch along the course of the Rhine, South from Strasbourg, with Colmar in the middle. "And Alsace is sunny. The high Vosges to the west are the secret of these vineyards, which lie along the mountain flank at an altitude of between 600 and 12 feet, in a green ribbon that is rarely more than a mile wide. The higher the mountains are, the drier the land they shelter from moist west winds." Our wines for the tasting include those from the best-known merchants in Alsace and from the "Heart of Alsace. The most famous producers are Hugel, Dopff, Trimbach, Humbrecht, Kuehn, and Mure.

**NOTE: 90 places. Guests accommodated only if members don't fill the tasting. First come basis. No telephone or e-mail reservations. Deadline for reservations is Sept. 17. To cancel without penalty until Sept. 17, call 416-209-1442 or email [events@torontovintners.org](mailto:events@torontovintners.org). You will be contacted only if we're sold out. Cheques payable to Toronto Vintners Club Inc.**

Name:		
Bus Tel:	Home Tel:	
Email: _____ Please email future notices to me.		
Guests' Names:		
_____ Member's assessment -	\$ 43.00 pp	\$
_____ Guest / non-member assessment -	\$ 51.00 pp	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>		\$
___ Yes, I would like to sit at the Newcomers table with an experienced taster.		

**Alsace Gewurtz  
Sept. 21/04**

**Mail to:**  
Toronto Vintners Club  
c/o S. Dorosh  
PO Box 1023  
TDC Postal Station  
77 King St. West,  
Toronto, ON  
M5K 1P2

I understand and accept my personal safety responsibilities when attending a Toronto Vintners Club event.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# THE BACK PAGE

## “HEART OF ALSACE”GEWURTZTRAMINER

1. **Trimbach-Regular AC 2000** \$24  
One of the old fine growers and merchants, at Ribeauville. A wine from a vintage ranked as superb by Hugh Johnson's Pocket Wine Book.
2. **Wintzenheim-Zind Humbrecht 2001** \$40  
Near the Hengst Grand Cru, at Wintzenheim, just S. of Colmar, with vines at about 300 metres. 2001 vintage was saved by an Indian summer. Good, but not great year.
3. **Cuvee des Seigneurs de Ribeaupierre Trimbach 1998** \$39  
This has an intense, concentrated, and complex character. Raspberries, flower and roses can be found in this pure, deep and silky-textured wine. Score 90
4. **Jubilee- Hugel 2000** \$29  
Another from the superb 2000 vintage, by the best known Alsace Company, founded at Riquewihr in 1639. Has both a "Tradition" and a Jubilee" range. We shall taste the latter.
5. **Cuvee Theo-Dom Weinbach 2001** \$54  
The Domaine is in Kientzheim, N. of Colmar. Concentrated, intense and opulent. A honey and tropical fruit infused white with personality. Open and off-dry in style with a butterscotch finish. Drink now-score-90
6. **Saint-Hippolyte Marcel Deiss 2000** \$49  
A fine Alsace grower at Bergheim. Beautifully crafted. Plush and saturated with lychee, apricot, honey and orange peel aromas and flavors on a surprisingly spry and airy structure, lending an overall weightlessness and elegance for this varietal. Drink now through 2005-score 90.
7. **Bollenberg -2002** \$20  
A chance to test against a younger wine.
8. **Pfaffenheim Cuvee Bacchus-2001** \$20  
Pfaffenheim is a top Alsace co-op that has 3 Grand Cru vineyards. The vintage was not as good as the 2000, but the wine comes from the "Heart of Alsace." Likely from vineyards at a bit lower elevation, perhaps 220-260 metres, than the Grand Cru Steinert jus north of the town.

Notes from Hugh Johnson & Jancis Robinson's The World Atlas of Wine, Vintages, Wine Spectator and Hugh Johnson's Pocket Wine Book.

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### Toronto Vintners' Upcoming Events:

October 12      **South American Premium Reds**  
November 9     **All Manner of Aussie Shiraz Blends**

#### Other Events:

Sept. 28 **Eat to the Beat: Women Chefs in Harmony**. 7 p.m., Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe Street, Toronto; 9th annual event celebrating the talents of more than 60 of Ontario's top women chefs and benefiting Willow Breast Cancer Support & Resource Services -- 416/778-5000, 1-888/778-3100, [fundraiser@willow.org](mailto:fundraiser@willow.org), [www.willow.org/eattothebeat/](http://www.willow.org/eattothebeat/)

Oct. 4 **Sonoma County Wineries Association Tour**. Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park Crescent, Toronto; Trade Seminar, 1:15-2:30 p.m.; Trade Tasting: 2:30-5 p.m.; Consumer Tasting: 7-9:30 p.m.; Featuring more than 100 Sonoma wines from 25 wineries -- Leanne Feener, 905/336-8932, [leanne@calwine.ca](mailto:leanne@calwine.ca)

Oct. 29 **Spirit of Toronto** 7-11 p.m., Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe Street, Toronto; a showcase of single malt whisky, bourbon and premium spirits from around the world -- Johanna Ngoh, 613/729-7042, [www.spiritoftoronto.ca](http://www.spiritoftoronto.ca)

*The best use of bad wine is to  
drive away poor relations.  
French proverb*