



TORONTO VINTNERS CLUB Inc.
www.torontovintners.org



2001 California Cabernets

Tuesday, April 10, 2007

Reception Wine: 6:00 PM, Formal Tasting: 6:20 PM

NEW! Above Board Restaurant, Toronto Board of Trade, 1st Cdn Place, King St. West

The 2001 vintage in California has to rank as one of the best vintages overall, especially for Cabernet of the past 20 years. Robert Parker rates it a 96/100, the highest rating he has ever given to California - period. He wrote, "A superlative vintage across the board, 2001 appears to be the finest year for Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot since 1994 and 1991. A long, cool growing season was followed by fabulously warm weather in September and October, allowing disciplined producers to harvest at their leisure. The crop size was large, but not excessive. The wines possess extraordinary ripeness, great delineation, noticeable but sweet tannin, and high levels of glycerin and alcohol. However, the balance is astonishing, at least for the top producers. . . . the top 75-100 producers have turned out brilliant wines made from fabulously ripe fruit, with great aromatics, full phenolic maturity, and extremely rich, concentrated mid-palates. This is an undeniably exciting vintage offering wines with tremendous upside as well as aging potential."

This is the second part of Toronto Vintners' exploration of this phenomenal vintage. Our first tasting was of California's signature variety Zinfandel. Now that the wines have acquired some bottle age, it is time to taste 2001 California Cabernet Sauvignon. Cabernet Sauvignon is the grape quality wine in California is most closely associated with and absolutely world-class.

Vérité's Archipel is a blend of 96% Sonoma County, 4% Napa County estate vineyards, aged 12-14 months in French and American oak barrels. The **Hess Collection** sources fruit within the Mount Veeder area of Napa Valley with its distinct influence of altitude, the cooling marine air of the bay and a mix of volcanic and sedimentary clay soils. Expect a more 'classic' or cooler-climate profile of Cabernet from Hess. Louis Mel's **Vendimia**, which means 'harvest' or 'vintage' in Spanish, is a blend of 67% Cabernet Sauvignon and interestingly 16% Petit Verdot. Along with Archipel, Vendimia has the lowest amount of Cabernet so look for the influence of the spicy Petit Verdot characteristics to make its presence known. The grapes for **Raymond Winery's Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon** come from Raymond's Rutherford and St. Helena estate vineyards along with a small amount of Napa Valley growers. Robert Young was the first grower to plant Cabernet Sauvignon in Alexander Valley, Sonoma County in 1963. A 1450 case production the **Robert Young Scion 2001** is entirely from Alexander Valley in Sonoma. Grapes from **St. Francis Winery & Vineyards Nun's Vineyard** were hand-picked and raked into French and American oak barrels after fermentation, barrel-aged for twenty-four months and finally bottled and held for another twelve months before release. This is a rich, fruity wine with toasty oak and a lush texture. Benchmark Cabernet's from two of California's leaders have been included. **Beringer** and **Robert Mondavi** hardly need an introduction. Sometimes overlooked due to their large production, these stalwarts represent excellent value and often perform well against their more expensive peers when tasted blind. The 2001 vintage allows these examples to show their best with fruit sourced from many growers. See the back page for notes on the wines.

PLEASE NOTE: We will be meeting in a new location for April. The Board of Trade has a dress code of business casual. TVC members have preference over non-members if we sell out. First come basis; no telephone or e-mail reservations. **Deadline for reservations/cancellations without penalty is April 6, 2007.** To cancel, call 416-209-1442 or email events@torontovintners.org. Make cheques payable to Toronto Vintners Club.

Names:	
Home Tel:	Email:
_____ # of Member @ \$59 pp	\$
_____ # of Guests / non-members @ \$69 pp	\$
TOTAL	\$
___ I wish to sit at the Newcomers' table with an experienced taster or to be introduced to others.	

April 2007
2001 Calif Cabs

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 & accept my personal safety responsibilities when attending a Toronto Vintners Club event.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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1. **VÉRITÉ ARCHIPEL 2001**. Napa/Sonoma \$58. A serious blend of 62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, and 8% Cabernet Franc from Napa and Sonoma vineyards owned by Jess Jackson, the 2001 Archipel is a wine of formidable intensity. Big, blackberry and cassis flavors are interwoven with cedar, toasty oak, and spice box. Supple tannin as well as full-bodied flavors suggest it will drink well young, yet age nicely for 10-15 years. Score – 91. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Dec. 2003)

2. **THE HESS COLLECTION CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2001**. Napa Valley \$48. Offers an attractive, slightly herbaceous, cedary, black currant, smoky, earthy-scented bouquet, medium body, a supple texture, and a superficial seductiveness. A well-made, elegant, delicious effort to enjoy over the next 3-4 years. Score – 88. (Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #157 (Feb 2005)

3. **MURRIETA'S WELL VENDIMIA MERITAGE 2001**, Livermore Valley \$42. A beautiful example of how nice Livermore Bordeaux-style reds can be when made well. This age-worthy wine is quite tannic now, but the tannins are dried, fine and drinkable with rich meats. The cassis, plum and blackberry flavors are impressively deep and long-lasting on the finish. Score – 92. (Steve Heimoff, winemag.wineenthusiast.com, Nov. 15, 2003)

4. **RAYMOND CABERNET SAUVIGNON RESERVE 2001**, Napa Valley \$32. From a fantastic vintage for Napa Cabs, this is a complex and savoury wine that can be enjoyed now with some decanting but will soften further over the next five years. "Firm and complex, with a tasty mix of herb, currant, sage, cedar and berry fruit that's tightly wound, with solid tannins on the finish. Best from 2006 through 2011." - Wine Spectator, 87 points

5. **ROBERT YOUNG SCION 2001**, Alexander Valley \$69. 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Cabernet Franc, 9% Merlot.. Exhibits a rich, concentrated core of Cabernet fruit, built around dense sour cherry, blackberry and wild berry flavors. Tightly wound and closed, finishing with a dash of mocha and a firm band of tannins that give it excellent structure. Best from 2006 through 2012. Score - 91. (James Laube, www.winespectator.com, June 30, 2005)

6. **ST. FRANCIS CABERNET SAUVIGNON NUN'S CANYON 2001**, Sonoma Valley \$45. Well-oaked, with gobs of smoky, toasty, mocha-laced wood flavors that hold the upper hand over the rich currant, black cherry and blackberry flavors. Finishes with a burst of fruit and wood flavors that are tight and focused. Drink now through 2009. Score - 88. (James Laube, www.winespectator.com, Nov. 15, 2004)

7. **BERINGER CABERNET SAUVIGNON KNIGHT'S VALLEY 2001**, \$45. According to Robert Parker: "A sleeper selection, the realistically priced 2001 Cabernet Sauvignon Knights Valley is a sexy concoction of chocolate, plums, sweet cherries and currants. This sensually textured offering possesses silky tannin, medium to full body, a sweet mid-section, and a long, heady finish. It is the type of Cabernet Sauvignon that will make a lot of friends for this varietal. Drink it over the next 7-10 years." 88 points. " (02/05). Stephen Tanzer: " Bright ruby-red. Quintessential cabernet aromas of cassis, graphite, bitter chocolate, currant leaf and leather. Sweet, lush and sexy; showing well after the bottling. Finishes with firm tannins and lingering fruit. At the moment, this is mostly from vines planted in 1989 and 1987, as much of the rest of these vines were recently replanted due to phylloxera. 89 points. (Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar, May/June 03)

8. **CABERNET SAUVIGNON NAPA 2001, ROBERT MONDAVI**, \$38. Showcases the restraint in fruit that characterizes Mondavi, and so different from many of his neighbors' lavishly ripe Cabs. The hallmark is elegance and drinkability, with its moderated berry flavors, earthiness and robust tannins. Should age well through the decade. Score: 89. —Steve Heimoff, October 01, 2004 (Wine Enthusiast). The 2001 Cabernet Sauvignon Napa (84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot) possesses excellent red and black currant aromas intermixed with licorice, tobacco leaf, and spice box. This medium to full-bodied, supple, delicious Cabernet is ideal for drinking over the next 10-12 years. Score: 89. —Robert Parker, December 2003 (The Wine Advocate). Good medium ruby. Smoky aromas of cassis, game and currant leaf. Very suave and fine in the mouth, with less obvious sweetness than the 2002 but perhaps more precision of flavor. Notes of currant, coffee, smoke and game linger impressively on the firm finish. Classy cabernet for the price. Steven Tanzer: 91 points.

TVC UPCOMING EVENTS

May 8 – Australian Shiraz

June 12 – Chateau Leoville Barton

Other Events

April 2 – **Germany: Wines with Jazz** Consumer tasting, 7-9 p.m.; Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe Street, Toronto) -- Ron Fiorelli, Wines of Germany, 905/815-1581, rfiorelli@sympatico.ca

April 27 – **Decant-** an exclusive tasting of over 150 premium wines not available in stores. Fundraiser for Cdn Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and Altruvest, www.decand.ca 416-234-9449