



TORONTO VINTNERS CLUB Inc.
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Château Léoville-Barton

Tuesday, June 12, 2007

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

Toronto Board of Trade (4th Floor), 1st Cdn Place, King St. West (NW Corner of King & Bay)

This will be, for most of us, a once-in-a-lifetime tasting opportunity - a **vertical tasting of Châteaux Léoville-Barton**, one of Bordeaux's stars. We will be tasting the 1988, 1993, 1994, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002 all with power and longevity. These vintages have been rated as "good" to "excellent". (See over for tasting notes.) Léoville-Barton, located in the commune of St. Julien, is ranked as one of the top châteaux in Bordeaux. It carries a 2nd growth (Deuxieme Cru) designation within the 1855 Bordeaux Classification system but is regarded by many now as a "super second" because of its steady improvement in quality for the past 2 decades. Jancis Robinson gives the estate an 18/20 - only 0.5 lower than her rankings of the chateaux of Lafite-Rothschild and Latour which are 1st Growths. Decanter (English wine magazine) rates it 5/5 and Wine Spectator magazine(USA) gives it 92-94/100.

The history of the Barton family in Bordeaux goes back to 1722, when Irishman Thomas Barton settled in Bordeaux. Grandson, Hugh, began a trade in the region and partnered with Daniel Guestier in 1725 to found the negociant firm of Barton & Guestier. Thomas Barton purchased Chateau Langoa Barton (3rd growth) a few years before the Léoville estate. Both châteaux are still owned by the Barton family today, making them the longest of single-family ownership of any property in Bordeaux. While ownership of the property recently passed to Liliane Barton (seventh generation), it was her father Anthony Barton who was responsible for LB's rise in stature to "super second". Anthony's aims were to maintain the high quality of both Langoa-Barton and Léoville-Barton, to continue to produce wines in a classic St Julien style, and - importantly to the final consumer - to release them at a reasonable price. Anthony continues today as a consultant to the family wine business.

The Bartons produce a wine with a strong personality, partly due to the extremely high proportion of cabernet-sauvignon and a far weaker proportion of merlot which is unique in Médoc. The percentage of Merlot has increased from about 15% in the 1970s and Cabernet Franc has almost disappeared. The planting mix of the vineyard is now 72% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot, 8% Petit Verdot, 0% Cabernet Franc although some vintages do contain Cab Franc. There is a significant proportion of old vines, another important influence on quality. If you're planning a visit to Bordeaux and specifically to Léoville-Barton, you might be surprised to learn that the estate has no actual house or winery. The term 'Château' actually refers to the vineyard property; buildings are not a requirement for a property to be called a "château". Its wine is made and bottled at the Barton's neighbouring Château Langoa-Barton property. A new chai (winemaking facility) was put in place at Langoa- Barton by Anthony in the mid-1980s. Unlike many facilities that were built in the 1970s and 1980s in Bordeaux, the traditional wood fermenting vats were retained rather than replaced by stainless steel vats.

PLEASE NOTE: First come basis; no telephone or e-mail reservations. **Deadline for reservations& cancellations without penalty is June 8, 2007.** To cancel, call 416-209-1442 or email events@torontovintners.org. Cheques payable to Toronto Vintners Club. Dress code is business casual; no jeans please!

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

June 2007
Léoville-Barton

Mail to:
Toronto Vintners Club
c/o S. Dorosh
PO Box 1023
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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. **Ch. Léoville-Barton 1988:** "Deep colour. On the nose, strong oak notes which in no way hide the ripe red fruits. On the palate long fine tannins, complexity and volume. The wine has great keeping potential but does not lack charm. No worries about this complex rich bottle." *Revue des Vins de France* 1991. "A ruby garnet colour, even more open on the nose, with smoky, weedy blackcurrant fruit, and some new oak. Packed with fruit on the palate, with better integration of tannins. Elegant texture, medium bodied, and balanced. More of that lovely weedy fruit, but despite this my overall opinion is a rich, firm, evolved wine from a good vintage. *Very good.* www.thewinedoctor.com. Robert Parker: 88/100.
2. **Ch. Léoville-Barton 1993:** 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot and 8% Cabernet Franc. "One of the biggest, richest, most impressive wines of the vintage, Leoville-Barton's 1993 reveals a saturated black/purple color, dense, foresty, rich, blackcurrant, and chocolatey aromas and flavors, excellent ripeness and depth, good glycerin, and hard tannin on the finish. This is a backward, exceptionally well-endowed 1993 that needs another 5-7 years of cellaring. It should keep for 20 years." Robert Parker, *The Wine Advocate*. 91/100. Decanter: 4/5 stars
3. **Ch. Chateau Léoville-Barton 1994:** "The 1994 continues to be a classic Léoville Barton that will repay 20-25 years of cellaring, although it will be drinkable in 5/6 years. The wine possesses an impressively dense, opaque ruby/purple color, as well as a strikingly intense nose of cedar, vanilla, ripe blackcurrants, and spice. Full-bodied, structured, powerful, and muscular, this is the consummate textbook St Julien that is meant for the long-term cellaring yet has enough appeal and sweetness of fruit to be drunk at an earlier age. This beautiful wine is close in quality to the 1990." R. Parker: 90/100. Decanter: 4/5 stars
4. **Ch. Léoville-Barton 1997:** "Its colour, saturated with crimson and prune, reflects a fondness for taste, found here in successive touches of small red and black berries, spices and liquorice [sic]. Pure delight." Robert Parker: 86/100.
5. **Ch. Chateau Léoville-Barton 1998:** "Impressive, it exhibits an opaque ruby/purple color, and a sweet nose of blackberry and cassis fruit intermixed with licorice, earth and wood. Extremely high in tannin, but with the concentration and muscle to support its brawny structure, this is a big, dense, old fashioned wine that will require 7-10 years to round into shape. Full-bodied and impressively-endowed, as well as harmonious, Léoville Barton has turned in an exemplary performance. Anticipated maturity : 2008-2025. Robert Parker (April 2001) Decanter: 4/5 stars.
6. **Ch. Léoville-Barton 1999:** "This has a good colour, just fading a little bit but this is quite appropriate for the vintage. Obvious advancing maturity on the nose, with a bloody, beefy, iron nail character. Rather severe style on the palate, very precise and perhaps even austere. Hard-edged tannins, reserved, even brutal. There is some decent fruit, but I'm a little concerned as to how this well pan out. Will there be anything of interest left when the tannins have resolved? Nevertheless, there is appeal in parts. 16+/20 www.thewinedoctor.com. "Léoville Barton's wines are consistently well-made, so it is not surprising that their 1999 is muscular, serious, broadlingly rich effort. An opaque ruby/purple color is accompanied by impressive aromas of cedar wood, black fruits, spice box, and loamy soil. Dense, chewy, and built to age, this unflattering yet potentially outstanding full-bodied. Léoville Barton is one of the most concentrated and age-worthy wines of the vintage. Anticipated maturity : 2006-2022. Robert Parker. *Wine Advocate* (Apr. 21/00)
7. **Ch. Léoville-Barton 2001:** "Consistent from bottle (I tasted it three times), this is an outstanding offering, although not quite at the prodigious level of the 2000. Civilized and approachable for a young Léoville-Barton, it exhibits a saturated plum/purple color along with classic Bordelais aromas of damp earth, creme de cassis, smoke, vanillin, and tobacco. Medium to full-bodied and rich, with high but well-integrated tannin, and a long, 40+ second finish, it should turn out to be a brilliant effort, and one of the stars of the Medoc. Robert Parker, *Wine Advocate* #153 (Jun 2004), Rating: 92 points Drink 2008-2020. "Decanter" 4/5 stars.
8. **Ch. Léoville-Barton 2002:** 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc. 50% in new barrels "Closed in with only hints of fruit in evidence now. Brilliantly crafted modern style. Rich carpet of fruit with encompassing fine tannins. Serious wine. 5-12 years. 5 Stars. (Hugo Rose - Decanter - Apr-2005). "Even better from bottle than from cask, and one of the finest wines of the vintage, this dense purple-colored 2002 reveals wonderfully sweet notes of charcoal, fresh mushrooms, smoke, earth, leather, cassis, and cedar. Full-bodied, highly extracted, broodingly backward, dense, and deep, this impressively endowed offering is built for the long term. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2028." Parker # 158 (4/1/2005). 92/100. Maturity: 2012-2028.

Did you know?The cellars of the Barton family were spared by the Germans in WW2 because Daniel Guestier told them their estate was owned by a neutral Irishman who, unbeknownst to them however, ended up joining the British army!