



TORONTO VINTNERS CLUB Inc.

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Super Tuscans – Vintage 2000

Tuesday, September 11, 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)

What's so super about Super Tuscan wines? Well, most are superb quality and they also command a hefty price tag. You may be surprised to learn that the term "Super Tuscans" was actually coined to denote wines made outside or *above* (i.e., super) the law. "The first Super-Tuscans were created several decades ago by frustrated Chianti producers who bridled against government mandates that included the grapes required to be used in their Sangiovese-based blends—especially white grapes like Malvasia and Trebbiano. The earliest Super-Tuscans epitomized experimentation and daring. Most often made from non-native varieties (Cabernet, Merlot, Syrah), they were sometimes blended with the native Sangiovese, sometimes not. They were also treated differently from Chianti—aged in small French *barriques* rather than in large Slovenian casks. But because they were created only in accordance with the winemaker's personal vision, not Italian winemaking law, these Super-Tuscans were entitled only to the lowliest official designation, "*vino da tavola*." It wasn't until 1994 that the government recognized the quality of the wines, by granting producers their own category, IGT (Indicazione Geografica Tipica)." ¹

It was Piero Antinori who started it all in 1970 in an attempt to redeem the appalling reputation for Chianti at that time. Because his wine didn't conform to the Chianti Classico recipe that called for white wine, he had to concoct a different name for his wine. He selected Tignanello, the name of the vineyard. The first Tignanello was 100% Sangiovese. Next year, Cabernet Sauvignon was added and his new wine became a sensation. Tignanello is usually about 80% Sangiovese to 20% Cabernet Sauvignon. In fact with the change in the regulations controlling Chianti Classico, Tignanello could be labelled Chianti, but it remains firmly Tignanello, with its own individual identity. With this new development, a new type of wine had been created, and soon after, the term "super Tuscan" was coined for any Tuscan red that fell outside the traditional blending laws. But "super Tuscan" also came to describe the most expensive, most full-bodied wine a producer offered. Since Antinori has done more for the reputation of Tuscany than anyone else, we are fortunate to be able to sample 3 of his wines: Tignanello, Solaia and Guardo al Tasso in our tasting also with several other top producers - Ornellaia, Ruffino, Setti Ponti, Frescobaldi, Calbello Costanti - all from the 2000 vintage which is rated 'very good'.

Robert Parker Jr., who in 2004 tasted some of these same wines that we'll be tasting, wrote, "tasting the 2000s gave us a strong sense that Super Tuscans are 95% about being "Super" and 5% about being "Tuscan," the latter percentage offered only for the good acidity these wines displayed, a prominent feature of well-made Tuscan reds." You'll see from the notes on the Back Page that the compositions of these wines vary hugely. They won't have characteristics that make for easy comparison so you'll just have to sit back and enjoy each one for what it is – a superstar!

PLEASE NOTE: TVC members have preference over non-members if we sell out. First come basis; no telephone or e-mail reservations. **Deadline for reservations & cancellations is Sept. 7, 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! To locate the Toronto Board of Trade (downtown center): www.bot.com/ContentIslands/PublicPages/MenuPages/AboutUs/Locations.asp

Names:	
Home Tel:	Email:
_____ # of Member @ \$70 pp	\$
_____ # Of Guests / non-members @ \$85 pp	\$
TOTAL	\$
___ I wish to sit at the Newcomers' table with an experienced taster or to be introduced to others.	

Sept 2007
Super Tuscans

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 responsibility for my behaviour and that of my guests at this event.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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THE BACK PAGE

2000 Solaia (Antinori) \$189

75% Cab Sauv, 5% Cab Franc and 20% Sangiovese. Means "sunny one". Bright aromas of crushed berry and raspberry, with a hint of mineral. Full-bodied and very round, with lovely velvety tannins and a long finish. Big and boisterous. Almost rustic, but hell, it's a beauty. Best after 2006. 7,000 cases made. *Score 92 (James Suckling (JS))*

2000 Ornellaia (Tenuta dell'Ornellaia) \$159

Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Now owned by Frescobaldi. Bordeaux blend of Cabernet Sauv & Franc & Merlot. Lots of currant and spice, with hints of fresh herb. Medium-bodied, with fine tannins and a pretty balance. Delicate finish. Slightly austere. Give it time. A slightly held-back style for Ornellaia. Best after 2006. 12,980 cases made. *Score 90 (JS)*

2000 Tignanello (Antinori) \$90

Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. A big, rich and spicy Tignanello, with hints of smoky wood. Full-bodied, with silky tannins and a medium finish. Chewy. Best after 2007. 27,000 cases made. *Score 90 (JS)*

2000 Guado al Tasso (Antinori) \$80

60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 10% Syrah and other red grape varieties. Guado al Tasso, meaning literally "Badger's Ford" takes its name from a common sight at the estate of Tenuta Guado al Tasso, Bolgheri, where it is produced. Guado al Tasso was first produced in 1990. All the vintages have been produced in limited quantities. Very polished yet wild. Ripe and decadent, with spice, meat and fruit. Full-bodied, with thick, velvety tannins and a long, flavorful finish. A full-throttle red. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Syrah. Best after 2007. 9,500 cases made. *Score 93 (JS)*

2000 Romitorio di Santedame (Tenimenti Ruffino) \$89

Colorino 60% and Merlot 40% A fantastic, honest Tuscan red. Excellent, with blackberry, mineral and licorice character. Full-bodied, with integrated fruit

and very polished tannins. Very long. Colorino and Merlot. Best after 2006. 5,000 cases made. *Score 93 (JS)*

2000 Oreno (Tenuta Setti Ponti) \$72

Cab, Merlot and Sangiovese. Refined red. Dark-colored, showing intense aromas of crushed fruit, toasted oak and dried flowers. Full-bodied, with fine tannins and a long, caressing finish. Best after 2004. Wine Spectator 92.

2000 Giramonte (Frescobaldi) \$79

80% Merlot, 20% Sangiovese. It has a wonderful deep inky/black cherry colour. New vanilla, spicy oak, cherry jam, red licorice mark a nose flecked with pepper, leather and tobacco notes. Super rich ripe and round with supple tannins there is no doubt this is the 2000 vintage. Big spicy, vanilla, smoky, peppery, black cherry jam and licorice flavours with hints of cardamom and Christmas pudding. It is a touch warm (alcoholic) but there is lots of finesse. Drinkable now but will improve over the next five years. Score ? 94. (Anthony Gismondi, Stuart Tobe, www.gismondionwine.com, Sept. 8, 2003)

2000 Ardingo (Calbello Costanti) \$40

75% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauv. A deep intense purple colour. Intense, very peppery, dried plum and cedary red pepper nose. Very intense, full bodied, dried plum and sandalwood flavours with a cedar tinged, fairly rich, ripe blackberry finish. ". . . possesses an opaque purple color, aromas of creosote, new saddle leather, espresso, plums, and blackberries, great intensity, fabulous richness, and a long, full-bodied, powerful, muscular personality. It is an impressive effort, but only for those with cold cellars as well as patience. Anticipated maturity: 2007-2018. 93/100. (Robert Parker Jr., Dec. 2002). Wine Spectator: Lots of blackberries, cream and vanilla with hints of wood. Medium-bodied, with silky tannins and a lovely mixture of fruit and vanilla. Balanced red. Best after 2005. 90/100 (JS)

¹ Lettie Teague, <http://www.foodandwine.com/articles/are-super-tuscans-still-super>