



CHAMPAGNE EVENING

Tuesday, November 17, 2009

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

[Toronto Board of Trade](#) (4th Floor), 1st Cdn Place,
(Entrance off Adelaide St. between Bay & York)

Fee (Member's & Guests/Non-Members): \$78

Champagne - a wine synonymous with celebration, special occasion and decadence. Just the mention of this particular wine and we can almost hear the popping of the cork and visualize an elegant setting with fluted glasses and candlelight. As the holiday season approaches and we ready ourselves for multiple celebrations and begin to plan events, what better time to taste eight wonderful offerings from France so we can compare the unique blends of Chardonnay, Pinot noir, and Meunier.

We have seven non-vintage sparklers which are often overlooked by lovers of fine wines, who tend to concentrate more on the vintage wines and super cuvées. Yet non-vintage Champagne is probably the most important wine produced in the region. Why? Well, firstly these are the entry level wines for most consumers. For many drinkers, these will be the only Champagnes they ever drink, as the increase in expenditure necessary to purchase many vintage wines (and certainly the super-cuvées) is an understandable barrier to many. As a consequence, it is by these wines that many of the Champagne houses will be judged, rather as a restaurateur's wine buying prowess may best be assessed by tasting the house wines, rather than bottles from the top end of the list.

Typically, as champagne ages, Chardonnay turns "toasty" and Pinot Noir "biscuity", although the reverse is possible and even a whiff of clean sulphur can in time contribute to the toastiness of a wine. Some first-class Chardonnays develop specific, complex aromas such as flowery hazelnuts, creamy brazil nuts and mellow walnuts. The greatest Champagnes can age gracefully for decades, to create rich nuances of macaroons, coconut, cocoa and coffee. This particular wine is almost a decade old. How will the fruit hold up?

Will you be able to discern the champagne from the oldest winery in the appellation and their expertise against one of the first wineries to use the biodynamic process? Will the differential between Vilmart's 70% Chardonnay 30% Pinot Noir blend versus Gosset's 50/50 blend be distinguishable? Will you be able to spot the Vintage Robert Fleury amongst the line-up of non-vintage wines?

Come and celebrate the upcoming holiday season with us while preparing yourselves for your Champagne choices for 2009 and answer some of these questions. NOTE: Light appetizers will be served with the champagnes.

REGISTER / BUY TICKETS

Register/buy tickets online at <http://www.onlineregistrations.ca/tvcevent9/> You must register online and then can pay by credit card or by cheque. **ALL ticket sales/reservations are final whether paid by credit card or cheque.** The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight, Tuesday November 10, after which only credit card sales will be accepted until Sunday November 15 or earlier if the event sells out. Cheques must be received by Friday, November 13. You will be sent an email confirmation once you have completed your registration. If you did not receive a confirmation by email, your registration was not successful so contact torontovintners@onlineregistrations.ca. Processing may take up to a minute or two so be patient. Please be careful not to register twice.

TORONTO VINTNERS CLUB INC.

www.torontovintners.org

CHAMPAGNE TASTING NOTES

Drappier Blanc de Blanc Non-Vintage (NV) \$55
A delightful Blanc de Blancs with a full spectrum of freshly baked bread, lemon zest, almond, and passionfruit. James the Wine Guy 9/10

Gosset Excellence Brut NV \$60
50/50 Chard/Pinot. Rather steely character, lemon and herb aromas, rather tight and firm. The palate is attractively clean and well defined, with bright lemon citrus fruit packed in by good acidity. It is very tightly composed and has some fine potential I think. From the 2008 annual Champagne tasting. 16+/20 (March 2008)

Vilmart Grand Cellier NV \$70
70/30 Chard/Pinot. Light yellow with a strong bead. Exotically perfumed nose displays iodine, pear skin, vanilla and vitamin B. Rich and smoky, with powerful orchard fruit and honey flavors becoming more minerally with air. Deftly blends vivacity and depth on the stony finish, which strongly repeats the vanilla and smoke notes. This is a wild ride. *Josh Reynolds, rated 93, November 2008*

Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Blanc d'Ay Brut NV \$55
Bright yellow. Exotically perfumed, smoky bouquet of pungent flowers, pear skin, orange, lime, sweet butter and minerals; smells like a Meursault. Fleshy orchard fruit flavors are complicated by musky herbs, turning nuttier with air. Drinking very nicely right now; this has the power and finishing cut to work with richer foods. Made entirely from 2004 juice. *Josh Reynolds, rated 91, November 2008*

Lanson Brut Rose NV \$60
A rosé champagne with a beautiful pure colour with pale salmon touches. Aromas of roses and fruit predominate, with discreet notes of red fruit. On the palate: Initial impression is tender; well-rounded and fresh, this wine has harmonious balance and good length on the finish. *Wine Spectator*
Beautiful texture. It's difficult to pinpoint the individual flavors, so well is this put together, but fresh berries and graphite come to mind, along with flowers and citrus. Very complex, with a

long, lingering aftertaste. Drink now through 2008. Score: 92. —Bruce Sanderson, November 15, 2004.

Lanson Brut NV \$57
Yellow-gold. Pungent pear and white peach aromas are deepened by toasty lees and buttery brioche. Plump pit fruit flavors are given a tart jolt on the back by zesty acidity, which carries into the finish. This is quite dry but in no way austere. *Josh Reynolds, rated 87, November 2007*

G H Martel Brut Blanc de Noir NV \$40
Blanc de Noirs is a great choice for lovers of floral, dark berry-fruited sparklers; this wine, made from Pinot Noir and Meunier grapes sourced from Premier Cru and Grand Cru vineyards, is a prime example. Quite dry, it's bursting with berries and hints of forest flower and brewed tea, held aloft on fine bubbles with a lovely, silky mousse and a lengthy finish. This is a versatile Champagne that's perfect with appetizers or mildly flavoured roasted chicken, pork or fish dishes. (VINTAGES panel, Feb. 2009)

2000 Vintage Robert Fleury Brut \$89.00
Champagne Fleury has been around since 1895, releasing their first bubbly in 1929. Vineyards are located on steep slopes that have a calcareous clay soil and see ample amounts of sun, so the grapes have an outstanding ripeness. Continental and oceanic climates combine for cool mornings and nice bursts of heat in the afternoons. Fleury was one of the first vineyards to start converting to biodynamics, beginning in 1989, completing the process for all of their vineyards by 1992. This is a barrel-fermented blend of one-third each chardonnay, pinot blanc and pinot noir. Pinot blanc is a real rarity in Champagne, and only exists in a few spots in the Aube. Complex broad herby nose is quite vinous with a lemony freshness. The palate has an unusual broad, nutty, herby character.

Burgundy makes you think of silly things, Bordeaux makes you talk of them and Champagne makes you do them. -- Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin