



"Come quickly, I am tasting the stars!"

----- Dom Perignon

Joint Event - Sparkling Wine

Wednesday, November 16, 2021

Registration 6:00 PM, Tasting 6:30 PM

Faculty Club, Univ. of Toronto, 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto

Members' Fee: \$150; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$200

Although the story of the blind monk accidentally discovering sparkling wine is likely a myth, the heavenly experience of a quality sparkling wine is very real. To launch the holiday season in style, **Toronto Vintners Club** and **Winetasters of Toronto** have combined forces to offer their members a fabulous selection of sparkling wines from around the world. The beautiful Wedgewood room at the University of Toronto's Faculty Club will be the setting for the first time that these distinguished wine clubs have held a joint event. There will be food stations, 5 champagnes, 6 sparkling wines from places that span the globe, an expert-lead-tutored tasting and discussion, and plenty of time to interact with friends old and new.

When one thinks of sparkling wine, champagne (which takes its name from the region of Champagne) is the first name that comes to mind but not all sparkling wine is champagne. Vintners around the world craft sparkling wines with products that offer a great diversity of styles, textures, and flavors. Like still wine, terroir is king, and both where the wine comes from and how the wine is made are two factors that distinguish one sparkling wine from another.

The grapes used to make the wine provide another distinguishing feature. In Champagne, you will commonly encounter wines based on Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier, either solo or in various blends. But, there are actually seven permitted grape varieties that can be grown in Champagne. The other four are Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Petit Meslier, and Arbane, all white varieties that make up less than 1% of all the region's plantings. One of the champagnes we will be serving is made with all 7 grape varieties. Many countries follow Champagne's lead, basing their wines on Chardonnay, and/or the two Pinots, while others use grapes local to their region. For example, in the Alt Penedes region of Spain, you will encounter sparkling wine, known as cava, made with Xarel Lo, Macabeu, and Parellada grapes. You will experience a premium example of this blend in this tasting.

Unlike most still wines, sparkling wine production often involves the addition of a small amount of sugar, known as the dosage, and added prior to the final closure of the bottle. The amount of the dosage is one of the factors that determine a wine's perceived sweetness. The labels will tell you what you need to know: Nature and Extra Brut are the driest; Brut, the most common indicator, is dry; and Extra Dry or Dry are actually on the sweet side for the modern palate. Tastes have changed through the years. Most people now seek out drier sparkling wines and that is the style you will encounter when you attend this event. In fact, 5 wines will be Nature / Extra Brut, 5 Brut, and 1 Extra Dry.

The size and nature of the producer also result in significantly different wine styles. Historically, huge producers dominated the market globally. In Champagne in particular, small "grower producers" are becoming more prevalent. These producers typically take a more artisan approach to making wine often with stunning results. It's probably fair to classify seven of the event's wines as being artisan. Obviously, Toronto Vintners and Winetasters have a soft spot for artists.

Lastly, most sparkling wine is not vintage specific. There are many reasons why producers blend two or more vintages together when they make sparkling wine. For example, the objective may be to achieve a consistent house style from year to year. In recent years, vintage sparkling wines are becoming more common. It's also becoming common for producers to provide information on the harvest years included in the blend. Smaller producers often do not have the capacity to store multiple years of wine and their offerings are vintage champagne in all but name.

We will kick off the evening with a reception wine and then a blind tasting of two wines discussed by our experts. After that you will be free to explore eight sparkling wines in any order you like and experiment pairing them with the food stations that will be set up around the room. To make this event more fun, Toronto Vintners and Winetasters members can bring a guest at member pricing. We look forward to a sparkling evening with you!

REGISTER/BUY TICKETS online [TVC/WT Sparkling Wine November 16, 2022](https://www.tvc-wt.com/Sparkling-Wine-November-16-2022) and pay by e-transfer, credit card (via PayPal) or cheque. **Price includes all food and wines.** All ticket sales/reservations are final. E-transfers/cheques must be received by **Friday, November 11**. Confirmations are sent automatically by our registration system, **Jotform**. Please check your Junk/Spam email folder, in case it was sent there. If you have not received a confirmation please contact winetastings@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.

Sparkling Wines Tasting Notes and Information

(Prices are at date of Purchase)

Graham Beck Brut Natural South Africa \$30
 "If the 2015 release was a blend, this is an all-Chardonnay Blanc de Blancs, showing Pierre de Klerk and Pieter Ferreira's ability to mix things up. Rich, creamy and intense, with some stone fruit flavours, nutty complexity, fresh acidity and a hint of barrel influence. Drink date: 2021-2026." Score - 93. (timatkin.com, South Africa Special Report 2021)

Pertois Le Brun L'Extravertie Champagne \$95
 Translated from a vendor's website: L'Extravertie by Pertois-Lebrun has a straw-gold color with silver highlights. Its bubbles are fine, lively and persistent. On the nose, we discover beautiful citrus notes, and a note reminiscent of wet chalk. Then on the second nose, brioche and buttered aromas appear. The attack on the palate is supple, elegant and delicate. In the mid-palate we find the citrus notes and the mineral touch discovered on the nose. The finish is tense, slightly iodized and lasts for good seconds.

Marie Courtin Resonance Champagne \$114
 From Decanter: Dominique Moreau's 2.5ha of vines are all located within a single parcel in the village of Polisot, in the Aube. Typically of this area, most of her vines are Pinot Noir, although a small section of her vineyard is planted with Chardonnay, which she uses to make a blanc de blancs called Eloquence. A cuvée called Resonance is made entirely of Pinot Noir, while Efflorescence is a Pinot Noir Champagne vinified in oak barrels. Both show the pungent depth of fruit and distinctly flinty minerality typical of the Aube, but they also demonstrate a remarkably elegant poise, expressing themselves with a refinement and discreet grace.

Bollinger Special Cuvee Champagne \$103
 "This harmonious Champagne is wonderfully vibrant as it dances across the palate, with the satin like mousse carrying flavors of white cherry, Marcona almond and ground coffee that show accents of candied kumquat, ginger, aromatic verbena and graphite. A streak of racy salinity emerges on mouthwatering finish. Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier." Wine Spectator 93 points

Chartogne Taillet Sainte Anne Champagne \$54
 40% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir, 10% Meunier
 "The NV Brut Cuvée Ste.-Anne is an absolutely stunning Champagne for its complexity, value and soulfulness. Rich and creamy on the palate, with tons of resonance, the Cuvée Ste.-Anne is absolutely impeccable. Dried orchard fruit, spice, pastry, baked apple tart and lemon confit all infuse the Cuvée Ste.-Anne with striking complexity and depth. I can't think of too many Champagnes that deliver this level of quality for the money. Not surprisingly, I have seen it offered by the glass in a number of top restaurants around the world. Alexandre Chartogne does a fabulous job with this cuvée. Don't miss it." Antonio Galloni

Raventos I Blanc De La Finca 2017 Spain \$38
 Winemaker Notes: De La Finca is perhaps the best representation of the estate - a pure, expression of the marine mineral soils with no dosage. On the nose, it has citrus zest aromas with notes of white flowers and ginger. Super focused on the palate with Meyer lemon, pear and bitter tonic flavors. A long, impressive finish that is nervy and energetic, leaving fresh, subtle herbal notes behind. Blend: 60% Xarel-lo, 30% Macabeo, 10% Parellada. Critical Acclaim: 96 points Decanter - Intense honey, pear skin, apple and citrus fruit nose. Elegant and toasty in the mouth with a mineral-salty character. Long, expressive finish. A beautiful wine. Second glass please! WS91 Wine Spectator - This sparkler has an appealing toasty edge, with fresh, nicely balanced layers of pineapple, smoke, almond and brioche flavors. The mousse shows finesse.

Olivier-Horiot Cuvee-Solera Brut Nature Champagne \$161
 From a vendor's website: Olivier Horiot's Champagne Soléra is the result of the blending of seven grapes (Arbane, Petit Meslier, Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris, Meunier and Pinot Noir), coming from vineyards located in the north-west area of Ricey village, in Côte des Bar; where the terroir is characterized by grey marl on Kimmeridgian hard limestone. This Réserve Perpetuelle is realized according to the Solera method, has a minimal addition of sulfites and no final dosage (Brut Nature). Austere and elegant, the Champagne Soléra impresses for the harmony of its aromas and flavors. The bouquet reveals complex and evolving notes of yellow fruit, exotic fruit, medicinal herbs and tertiary notes (almonds). The taste is ample and complex with vanilla notes just mentioned, great freshness and drinkability.

Bernard Gaucher Prestige 2015 Champagne \$75
 Chardonnay & Pinot Noir, Champagne, France
 From Grapewitches.com (a local bottle shop). Classic-in-all-the-right-ways Champagne from Bernard Gaucher, a family-owned Domaine in the heart of the Côte des Bars. For celebrations, casual gatherings & everything in-between, the time for Champagne is NOW and if you need a reason to open it, I've got one right here - it's me, being thirsty and telling you to open the damn thing already. Pearly and opalescent with a pitch-perfect balance of high-acid freshness and toasty notes - Bartlett pear, oyster shell, pink Himalayan sea salt and a Riesling-like minerality that sparkles like polished marble. Definitely a splurge but you simply won't find a better value Champagne on the market.

Devil's Corner Premium Cuvée Sparkling Chardonnay/Pinot Noir Tasmania Australia \$30
 From the producer's website: A pale, straw-coloured sparkling wine with medium bead and good persistence. Aroma: The emphasis is on the bright and lively aromas of ripe new season's apples and a citrus fruit lift. Palate: This Tasmanian sparkling is lively and fresh in the mouth with a good persistence of flavour and a finish that is dry and refreshing, ready to enjoy now.

Harrow and Hope Brut Reserve No. 6. United Kingdom \$70
 From the producer's website: No 6 is based on 2017, a year noted by its devastating frost both in the UK and in Europe. After being severely frosted in 2016 we were not going to stand by and let it happen again so wisely invested in an army of frost candles and managed to ward it off with very little damage. We were rewarded with a relatively cool but calm season and started picking late September, our earliest pick on record. 2017 favoured Chardonnay and it really shows in the wine with a more refined, soft and gentle character than previous releases. 20% oak aged reserve wines were used in the blend to add extra richness, complexity and length. Always fresh and vibrant on release it will reward extra cellaring with increased toasty complexity. Drink now until 2028. Blend: 40% Pinot Noir 40% Chardonnay 20% Pinot Meunier, Reserves: 20% (2014), Lees Ageing: Min 36 months. Total Acidity: 7.6g/L. Residual Sugar: 7g/L

Contadi Castaldi Franciacorta Rose DOCG Italy \$46
 From Terroni's website: Coral pink, very bright, with a fine and persistent perlage. An original Franciacorta in a modern style, making skilful use of the Pinot nero grapes. The nose features distinct notes of wild berries, fresh rose petals, hints of apple and tropical fruit. Structured palate, crisp and sapid. The finish is long and well balanced. Varietals: 65% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Nero. Vinification/Ageing: 20 day fermentation in stainless steel tank followed by partial malolactic fermentation. Refinement for 7 months, partly in stainless steel and partly in barrique. Aged on the lees for 24-30 months with an additional 3-4 months ageing in bottle before release.