



World Syrah *The Happy Medium*

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

Registration: 6:00 PM, Tasting: 6:30 PM

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

Member Price: \$120; Guest/Non-Member Price: \$150

Can wine be polarizing? If you have ever heard a Cabernet Sauvignon devotee debate with a Pinot Noir fanatic, the answer is surely a resounding Yes! And both points of view have merit. Cabernet Sauvignon exudes power, muscularity and austerity, whereas Pinot noir is delicate, elegant and expressive. Is there a happy medium in a polarized wine world? Of course there is. This is where Syrah/Shiraz comes into prominence. Syrah has the power and depth of Cabernet Sauvignon and the expressive aromas and complexities of Pinot Noir. Also, depending on where it is grown, Syrah will pick up distinctive characteristics that reflects each region's terroir, producing different wines across the globe. To explore this varietal, **Toronto Vintners Club** will be taking a world tour of Syrah/Shiraz wines across eight countries and five continents to discover the unique expressions and differences between regions. Our guest speaker will be Jay Whiteley, independent sommelier & wine educator.

The Syrah grape came to prominence in the eighteenth century in the Rhone Valley of France. The grape's rise in fame attracted winemakers from around the globe, including James Busby, widely regarded as the father of the Australian wine industry, who in 1832 visited France and collected vine clippings of Syrah. After planting them in Australia, he discovered how well they adapted to the local climate. At some point, Australian winemakers changed the grape name from Syrah to Shiraz – but no matter which name you use, it's the same grape.

Syrah/Shiraz is a dark-skinned varietal that typically produces full-bodied and powerful wines. Syrah wines can display myriad dark-fruit flavors. It can be quite floral in its youth, developing more peppery and herbaceous notes as it ages. Some examples show tanned leather and smoky scents, while the fruit in these wines tends towards the very dark flavors of blackcurrant and licorice. Shiraz is one of the darkest dry wines on the market, virtually opaque when you hold the glass up to the light.

Our tasting will explore 9 wines that represent the different terroir and winemaking techniques of both Old and New World producers. Our lineup features Northern Rhône, Italy and Spain, where the wines are medium to full-bodied with firm tannins and high acidity with flavors of blackberry, mint and black pepper notes. From the New World we will enjoy wines from South Africa, Chile, New Zealand, Canada, and of course, Australia. New World Shiraz tends to be bold, fuller-bodied with softer tannins and is fruit forward with flavors such as ripe blackberry, plum and dark cherry. The highlight of the tasting will be from one of Australia's greatest vintners, the **2017 Henschke Mount Edelstone Vineyard**, Eden Valley in the Barossa wine region.

Whether you find Syrah a happy medium between Cabernet Sauvignon and Pinot Noir, or it just makes you happy, we hope the trip around the world will be fun! The event price includes reception wine, bread, appetizers and, of course, our main wines! Newcomers and those who would like more tutoring are encouraged to sign up for our Newcomers' Table on our registration page. We look forward to seeing you!

REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS online at [World Syrah March 19, 2024](#) and then pay by e-transfer, credit card (via PayPal) or by cheque. E-transfer & credit card payments must be received within 48 hours of signing up to secure your reservation. Cheques must be received by Tuesday, February 6. You will be sent an automated email confirmation from our online reservation system, Jotform, after submitting your registration. All ticket sales/reservations are final. If you tried to register but did not receive your confirmation, please contact winetastings@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.



Tasting Notes and Information – World Syrah

(Prices are as of date of purchase)

2017 Henschke Mount Edelstone Vineyard,

Eden Valley, Australia

\$225

"Kaleidoscopic, this glorious vintage is terroir translucent, transporting you to the vineyard with its signature aromas of dried sage, Eucalyptus olida (aka Strawberry Gum), wild mint, wattleseed, nutmeg and tinder. Soaring and super-expressive, these scents bring compelling dimension and meld exquisitely on the sweet, juicy plum and bramble palate, with its cocoa nib and earthy hints. Graceful, willowy tannins and mineral acidity make for a long, fluid, markedly perfumed finish. Irresistible already! 98 pts" Decanter, March 2022

2011 Cambridge Road Syrah

Martinborough, New Zealand

\$64

"Ripe, smooth, complex nose of floral black cherries and pepper, with hints of tar and spice. The palate is fresh and lively with pure black cherry and plum fruit, nice freshness, good structure and some bright pepperiness. Just a hint of cloves, but this character isn't too intense. Vivid and bright with depth. 94 Pts" - Les Caves de Pyrene

2014 Porseleinberg Syrah

Swartland, South Africa

\$100

"Vintage coming off a very wet winter with massive rainfall. A big yielding vintage as well with 8 t/ha compared to circa 5 t/ha normally. Quite an earthy, plummy savoury nose with cured meats, dried lavender, potpourri, and a smoky, railway yard complexity. The palate shows delicious freshness, vibrant acids and a savoury melange of salty cassis, oyster shell and light soy hints, finishing with mouth coating chalky tannins without being obtrusive. A slightly unique expression but beautiful nonetheless. 95 Pts" - Greg Sherwood MW

2012 Chateau Haut-Blanville 1955 Gres de Montpellier

Rhone, France

\$57

"A sinewy, open-knit red, showing concentrated raspberry sauce, Linzer torte and licorice flavors woven together with black tea, mineral and floral accents. Full tannins show suppleness on the long finish. Syrah. Drink now through 2023. 500 cases made. 91 pts" - Wine Spectator

2015 Castell D' Encus Thalarn Syrah

Catalunya, Spain

\$68

"I have tasted two vintages of pure Syrah, named after the village where the winery is located. The oldest of these is the 2015 Thalarn. It has been in the bottle since June 2017, after 12 months in new barrique and seven months was aged in the Foudre. The wine had floral and spicy characteristics with hints of liquorice, fennel and other Mediterranean herbs. On the palate it felt balanced, with very fine tannins, polished and with well-integrated oak. 8,000 bottles and 200 magnum bottles produced. 95 Pts" - Wine Advocate

2015 Errazuriz La Cumbre Syrah

Aconcagua, Chile

\$90

"The 2015 La Cumbre is produced as a mix of Syrah grapes from the cooler Max 5 vineyard in Aconcagua, with less from Max 1, and from vines in the cooler Aconcagua Costa. The hand-picked grapes were destemmed, crushed and fermented in stainless steel vats at temperatures ranging from 26 to 28 degrees Celsius. The wine aged for some 22 months in French barriques, half of them new. Despite the warmer year, the 2015s are the freshest wines I remember from Errázuriz. They were able to harvest earlier, and all the wines feel very fresh; in the Syrah, they have low yields and stopped pushing for more ripeness and keeping the vines with enough water so they don't get stressed. This is a spicier expression with some varietal aromas, violets, raspberry leaves and sour cherries. The palate is completely dry and lively, with very fine tannins and a supple finish. This is a more complete and deeper wine than the Aconcagua Costa Syrah, but I still like the style of the Coastal better... 10,667 bottles were filled in February 2017." 93 Pts - Wine Advocate

2012 Tenimenti D'allesandro Il Bosco Cortona Syrah

Tuscany, Italy

\$62

"The Bosco is characterized by an intense ruby red color. The nose opens with a bouquet full of fruity hints of black cherries and blackberries, enriched with pleasant balsamic and spicy notes. On the palate it is full and compact, with enveloping tannins and a pleasantly long and persistent finish. Perfect to accompany roasts and stews, it is ideal in combination with game and mature cheeses." Tasting Note - Vino.com

2015 Burrowing Owl Syrah

Okanagan, Canada

\$45

"A ripe, rich and meaty Burrowing Owl Syrah from the warm 2015 vintage. The nose shows blackberry, dried blueberry, ripe damson plum and smoky, meaty, bacon, coconut, leather and coffee with some dark chocolate and floral violet notes. The palate is rich and full bodied, intense and combines charred meat, paprika spice, black pepper and leather with dried blueberry, blackberry, dried fig and some toasty vanillin oak. Pair this rich wine with a beef and black pepper stew or braised lamb shanks." Rhys Pender, Master of Wine

2015 Creekside Unbroken Press Syrah

Ontario, Canada

\$50

"The brawnier, bolder brother of our Broken Press Syrah, this full-bodied wine has a nose of black currant, raspberry, grilled meats, kirsch, pepper and a lifted floral note. Rich and weighty on the palate, with wild and integrated fruit, bramble and rousing spices to go with the firm tannin and delicate acidity." Estate Tasting Note