

Reds of Southern France - The Road Less Travelled

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

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

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

Members' Fee: \$70; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$90

NOTE: This event is held on the 4th Tuesday of March, rather than our usual 3rd Tuesday, to avoid March Break.

In March we'll explore an interesting and eclectic mix of red grape varieties that dominate the lesser known vineyards in Southern France and see how the final "assemblage" is translated into quite different styles of wine by some of the most accomplished winemakers in the region. While these are likely to be bold wines, the winemakers' restraint should shine through to ensure a well-balanced profile suitable for a wide range of accompanying food.



Our story begins with what's planted in the vineyard. Our selection takes many a subtle turn as the land broadens out along the Rhone valley down to the shores of the Mediterranean from the Camargue via Montpellier and Beziers down to Spain. To the east of the Rhone and Avignon are the vineyards of Cotes Ventoux (wine #1, Pesquie - composed of Syrah/Grenache 50/50); further south in the Rhone Delta lies the Bouches du Rhone (wines #7&8, Trevallon - Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon). In the heart of Languedoc-Roussillon there is Costieres de Nimes (wine #4, M. Gassier - Mourvedre, Grenache, Syrah) and Faugeres (wine #5, Léon Barral - Carignan, Syrah, Grenache); moving further south lies Cotes du Roussillon Villages (wine #2, Thunevin-Calvet - Grenache,

Carignan, Syrah, Mourvedre). Thus, we have a range of unique blendings of grapes reflecting both the terroir and the style the winemaker wishes to express.

To make an interesting comparison with these largely GSM blends, we also include two outliers to this region to contrast wines that have a somewhat different grape pedigree and terroir. From Northern Rhone, and closer to Lyon we have the Saint Joseph (wine #3) which is 100% Syrah, but grown in a cooler climate. To the far south west, where the climate is hotter but also influenced by the proximity of the Pyrenees, we have Boucassé's Madiran (#6) which is made largely from Tannat (a grape renowned for its high tannins and astringency), usually softened with some Cabernet Sauvignon and Cab Franc. (Note: for those looking for a healthy excuse to drink wine, the Tannat skin has one of the highest concentrations of oligomeric procyanidins which are thought to be cardioprotective). The most dominant characteristics of the Tannat grape are spices, coffee, cocoa and vanilla.

Please remember to refrain from wearing scented products and dress code is business casual. Light appetizers will be served with our wines.

REGISTER/BUY TICKETS. You must [register](#) online and pay by credit card or cheque. **NOTE: ALL ticket sales/reservations are final.** Cheques must be received by Friday, March 18th. The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight Tuesday, March 15th after which only credit card sales will be accepted until Tues. March 22nd or earlier if the event sells out. You will be sent an email confirmation after completing your registration. If you tried to register but did not receive your confirmation, please contact chris@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.

Tasting Notes and Information – Reds of Southern France

2012 Chateau Pesquie - Artemia, AOC Ventoux \$47

50 % Syrah & 50 % Grenache

Showing more Grenache character (this cuvee is a 50/50 blend of Grenache and Syrah), the 2012 Ventoux Artemia has awesome black raspberry, garrigue, sweet spice and creamy licorice aromas and flavors all soaring from the glass. Hard to resist, it's medium to full-bodied, voluptuous and downright sexy on the palate, with polished tannin, beautiful mid-palate depth and no shortage of length through the finish. It's a thrilling wine to enjoy over the coming 5-6 years, although I wouldn't be surprised to see it evolve for longer. Drink: 2014 – 2020. eRobertParker.com #216 (Part 2), Jan 2015. Jeb Dunnuck 93/100

2009 Thunevin-Calvet - Hugo. Côtes du Roussillon

Villages, Languedoc-Roussillon, France \$59

50% Grenache, 20% Carignan, 20% Syrah, 10% Mourvedre

"Even more impressive, the 2009 Cotes du Roussillon Villages Hugo is rock star stuffit delivers deep, rich and layered aromas and flavors of creme de cassis, raspberry, chocolate and toasted bread to go with a full-bodied, mouth-filling profile on the palate. While it's a big, textured effort, it has sound underlying structure, ripe tannin, and serious length. It's gorgeous and should evolve gracefully for over a decade. Score - 94. (Jeb Dunnuck, erobertparker.com, April 2014)

2012 Les Vins de Vienne Saint Joseph Les Archevêques

\$47

"100% Syrah aged 16 months in 40% new oak, it will drink well on release and over the following 7-8 years.

The red, and a serious looking barrel sample, the 2012 Saint Joseph Les Archeveques exhibits fantastic black raspberry, plum, graphite, licorice and raw earth to go with a medium-bodied, nicely textured, yet decidedly elegant and fresh feel in the mouth." Wine Advocate #210, Dec 2013, Jeb Dunnuck, 89-91. Drink: 2013 – 2021

2011 Michel Gassier, Lou Coucardié Rouge \$35

48% Mourvedre, 30% Grenache and 22% Syrah

"The richest and most concentrated cuvee, the 2011 Costieres De Nimes Lou Coucardie, which was bottled earlier in the year, offers up aromas and flavors of ripe black fruits, chocolate, graphite, licorice and hints of smoked herbs. A blend . . . that spent 12-18 months in French oak, it is a serious, layered and textured effort that was hard to spit. While hard to resist now, it should have a broad drink window as well. " The Wine Advocate – Robert Parker 93/100.

2004 Domaine Léon Barral - Faugères Jadis

Languedoc Roussillon \$49

50% Carignan, 30% Syrah, 20% Grenache. Jadis is the top level wine from Leon Barral.

"Lots of fresh plowed earth on the nose with aromas of dried meats, leather saddle and a host of dried flowers and herbs a much bigger version of the 1st wine with a good amount of plum and sundried cherry berry fruit. An explosion of flavors on the palate with a lot of that perfumed flowers and herbs on the tongue with a nice savory finish lots of red berry fruit a wine that finishes with lots of complexity without being heavy, smooth tannins on the finish make this an excellent choice to drink tonight."

2006 Ch. Boucassé Vieilles Vignes Madiran \$36

"65% Tannat, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10%

Cabernet Franc yielding 45 hl/ha. Malo is done in barrel and the wine is bottled without filtration. An elegant expression of Madiran offering more body and depth than many Bordeaux at prices that reach well above the modest price for this wine. Fragrant with blackcurrants plum and spice. Wonderfully fresh on the palate with remarkably refined tannins. Offers great drinking pleasure now." 95/100 John Moon, WineAlign.com

2001 Domaine de Trevallon AOC VDP des Bouches de

Rhone \$95

50% Syrah, 50% Cabernet Sauvignon. "This still has an impressively deep colour at 12 years old. Little fade.

There is a big wafting nose full of dense fruit. The palate is full of sweet cassis with spice and roasted meat. This is complex, rich and earthy and lovely to drink now. For me the Cabernet comes through a bit more than the Syrah in this vintage but Trevallon is a wine that can taste of Bordeaux, Rhone, Burgundy and Barolo from bottle to bottle (often in the same vintage)." 18/20 points.

<http://www.farrvintners.com/blog>, 2013-07-15

2003 Domaine de Trevallon AOC VDP des Bouches de

Rhone \$99

50% Syrah, 50% Cabernet Sauvignon. "The wine is aged for two years in small oak barrels. The 2003 Trevallon is a deep wine, reflecting the warmth and generous fruit of the vintage. However, this grand red deserves at least 5 years in the cellar due to it's powerful framework.

<https://www.klwines.com/Products/i?i=1022378>