



Chile - Reinventing the Bordeaux Blend

Tuesday, March 17, 2015; 6:00 PM

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

Members' Fee: \$77; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$97

Despite being politically linked with Spain, Chile's wine history has been most profoundly influenced by the French, particularly Bordeaux. In the early 19th century, wealthy Chilean businessmen travelled to France, inspired by the wines and began importing vines to plant. The first grapes imported into Chile were Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Sauvignon Blanc. From humble beginnings, Chile is now the fifth largest exporter of wines in the world. Chile has benefitted from the influx of foreign winemaking talent that began in the late 20th century and this has dramatically elevated the status and quality of their wines. More and more prominent winemakers saw the potential of Chile and began investing and collaborating with local wineries. Investors such as Robert Mondavi, Miguel Torres, Chateau Lafite Rothschild, and Chateau Mouton Rothschild saw the long narrow country dominated by the Andes mountains to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west, as an ideal place to make wine.

Today Chilean reds are considered some of the best in the world. In January 2004 at what became known as the Berlin Tasting featuring 2000 and 2001 vintages (this tasting was fashioned along the lines of the Judgement of Paris pitting French Bordeaux against California), Chilean reds took 1st, 2nd place beating out Ch Lafite Rothschild and Ch Margaux. Second place went to Chile's Viña Seña, one of the wines in our lineup. In 9th place was Don Maximiano, another wine in our tasting, which beat Ch Latour. In 2011, Chilean wineries earned a total of 206 gold medals from 10 prominent international competitions. Consistency is the hallmark of great wine making and the vintages from our Chilean tasting event demonstrate the world class quality of these wines. Our 5 different vintages are rated as "Excellent" to "Outstanding" by Robert Parker: 2005 – 90 pts; 2006 – 89 pts; 2007 – 88; 2009- 88 and 2010 – 90.

The wines for our tasting have been influenced by Bordeaux techniques and blending styles highlighted by incredible craftsmanship and praise. Don Maximiano Founder's Reserve, the flagship Icon wine from **Viña Errázuriz**, is the only wine that has been named the Best Wine of Chile in two consecutive Annual Wines of Chile Awards (AWoCA), the country's foremost wine competition, for its 2010 and 2011 vintages (we have the 2009). Wines from **Montes** winery are the pioneers of Chilean Ultra-Premium wine. Their winemaker goes as far as painstakingly selecting individual grapes rather than bunches at harvest time in this aim for supreme quality, eliminating variables that might compromise quality for their Montes Alpha M label. **Don Melchor**, produced by Concha y Toro, has amassed the highest scores ever given a Chilean wine in the history of *Wine Spectator* (March 2014, Winespector.com). Influenced by Bordeaux, the style is both complex and refined. The French winemaker Pascal Marty from **Cousino-Macul** is charged with bringing an elegance and roundness to the wines which balance varietal fruitiness, body oak and deep colour and excellent acidity. The well-known wine expert and writer Hugh Johnson described Cousino-Macul as, "The first growth of Chile.". "Proving Chile has become a serious contender in the Cabernet stakes is the wine from **Santa Rita**. Hailing from the Maipo Valley, each lot is individually vinified for optimum ripeness and then aged in French oak barrels." – The Drink Business. Viña Seña is the result of a partnership between Robert G. Mondavi and Eduardo Chadwick, the president of Viña Errázuriz. Chile has no laws governing blends, like in Bordeaux, or traditions, like in Tuscany; they just have the creativity and innovation of the winemaker. Chile's wine heritage is connected to Bordeaux, but Chile is reinventing the Bordeaux blend and showing the world it's a powerful international producer of quality red wines.

Toronto Vintners has amassed some of the very best red wines from Chile. Light appetizers will accompany the main tasting portion of the event. Please refrain from wearing perfumed products. Newcomers and those wishing more tutoring are encouraged to sign up for our Newcomers' Table on our registration page.

[REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS](#)

[Register/buy tickets](#). You must register online and then can pay by credit card or by cheque. **NOTE: ALL ticket sales/reservations are final.** Cheques must be received by Friday, March 13. The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight Tuesday, March 10th after which only credit card sales will be accepted until Tuesday March 17th 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 – Chilean Reds

2007 Montes Alpha, Alpha M. Santa Cruz. \$79

“Blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Cabernet Franc, with the balance Merlot and Petit Verdot aged for 18 months in new French oak. It exhibits a striking perfume of pain grille, pencil lead, herbs, spices, a hint of balsamic, and assorted black fruits. Dense, structured, and incipiently complex, this velvety textured wine conceals enough structure to evolve for another 5-6 years. It offers a drinking window extending from 2017 to 2027.” 94 pts Jay Miller, Feb. 2012, erobertparker.com

2005 Altair Tinto. Cachapoal Valley. \$42

“From a small, very classy winery focused on high end blends only, this combines 85% cab sauvignon with syrah and carmenere. It’s a super rich red with a saturated nose of cassis/rhubarb jam, mincemeat and chocolate fudge. It’s full bodied, very dense, soft and supple with great fruit. Chilean to its core. Excellent to outstanding length. It should age well for a decade but it’s not a requirement for enjoying it. (They need to lose the overweight bottle). Best 2012 to 2020. Tasted February 2011. 94 pts.” David Lawrasson, www.winealign.com

2010 Santa Rita, Casa Real. Maipo. \$60

Cabernet Sauvignon. “After a rooty, spicy opening that includes aromas of tree bark, leather, marzipan and ripe berry fruits, this perennial winner shows superb balance, mouthfeel and overall integration. Flavors of cassis, cherry, plum, dry spice and chocolate finish long, lightly herbal and with complexities. Drink through 2020. 93 pts.” Michael Schachner, Wine Enthusiast, Dec. 31, 2013

2009 Viña Errázuriz, Don Maximiano Founder's Reserve, Aconcagua Valley. \$80

“Blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Carmenere, 5% Petit Verdot and 5% Cabernet Franc from the Maximiano vineyard, aged for 20 months in new French oak. It has a more elegant, fresher nose than the 2008 with a red rather than black fruit profile: wild strawberry, raspberry, kirsch and a touch of shortcake. The palate is medium-bodied with finer tannins than the 2008, with ripe graphite infused black fruit and a masculine, tannic finish that is still continuing to show too much oak in proportion to the fruit. Drink 2015-2022. 88 pts.” Neal Martin. erobertparker.com

2007 Concha y Toro, Don Melchor, Puente Alto. \$80

“Blend of 98% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Cabernet Franc aged in French oak (78% new) and one-year old oak. It has a rounded, smooth tobacco and cedar scented bouquet with plush red fruit. The palate is full-bodied with chalky tannins, smoky black tarry fruit and a reserved, slightly austere finish with dark chocolate lingering on the aftertaste. It has Old World sensibility and is well crafted. Drink now-2016. 90 pts.” Neal Martin. erobertparker.com #204, Dec. 2012

2007 Cousiño-Macul, Lota. Maipo. \$87

“Cabernet Sauvignon & Merlot. The “LOTA” project started in 2003, when the Cousiño family decided to create a world class wine to celebrate the 150th anniversary. “The 2007 Lota, again raised entirely in new French oak, has a ripe blueberry and cassis nose augmented by orange zest and shoe polish. There seems to be a little more volatility here. The palate is sweet and peppery on the entry. It has ripe, plump tannins, plenty of spicy fruit and aniseed. It is endowed with a dense, oaky finish that is balanced and clean, offering a sweet kirsch-tinged aftertaste. Drink 2015-2025. 88 pts.” Neal Martin. erobertparker.com #204, Dec. 2012

2006 Perez Cruz, Quelen Special Selection. \$49

“... blend of Petit Verdot, Cot (Malbec), and Carmenere. It offers up an inviting nose of licorice, tar, espresso, black cherry, and blackberry. Dense, rich, and muscular on the palate, this is a large-scaled effort with impeccable balance and exceptional length. It will require 4-6 years of additional cellaring to reveal its full potential but has the balance to become something special.” 94 pts”. Jay Miller, erobertparker.com, #192, Dec. 2010

2007 Viña Seña, Aconcagua Valley. \$85

“57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Carmenere, 12% Merlot, with the balance Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. It puts forth an enthralling bouquet of sandalwood, underbrush, exotic spices, incense, floral notes, blueberry, and blackcurrant that borders on kinky. Already remarkably complex on the palate, with layered flavors, a plush palate feel, and precision balance, this beautifully rendered offering will evolve for another 6-8 years and provide a drinking window extending from 2016 to 2032. 96 pts.” Jay Miller, erobertparker.com, #192, Dec. 2010