



2003 Red Burgundy - "A Very Rum Vintage"

Tuesday, February 21, 2012

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

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

Members' Fee: \$75; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$100

In 2003, Europe experienced a heat wave that was the hottest on record in almost 500 years. France was the hardest hit by the heat wave, with every single day in early August reaching around 100 degrees. As a result many wine regions were forced to pick their grapes early due to the extreme dry conditions. Jancis Robinson wrote, "In 2003, many grapes were picked after only about 80 days on the vine, because after the record summer, acidities were dangerously low and many of the grapes were beginning to turn into raisins. Those growers who could afford and manage it, refrigerated their grapes as soon as they were picked - a 2003 variant on the pre-fermentation 'cold soak' so beloved by many Burgundian winemakers today. So what sort of wines were made from this freak year in which the harvest took place earlier than in any previous recorded year? The first thing to say is that this truly was and is a quite exceptional vintage - not a 1976, nor a 1947. The wines obey even fewer rules and generalisations than is usual in Burgundy. They have by all accounts changed considerably in barrel since they were made, and to judge from the many wines I tasted several times recently, the majority of which are already in bottle, they take burgundy's notorious capriciousness to new limits." <http://www.jancisrobinson.com/articles/wineneeds050129.html>

Traditionally, the Pinot Noir grapes used in Burgundy are left on the vine for 100 days, however due to the unique conditions of 2003, many wine makers picked their grapes as early as 80 days due to the low acidity levels and the fact that the grapes were beginning to turn into raisins (janisrobinson.com). The 2003 yield was significantly smaller than the average size due to early spring frosts and the summer heat. The grapes that did survive through to harvest were small with thick skins and large pips. As a result, wines made from the grapes picked early had low acidity and high tannins; however the sugar levels were not too high. Growers who were able to hold out to pick their grapes in early September benefited from some rainfall in the end of August, which allowed for more flavourful wines. Despite the harsh conditions, the 2003 vintage is labeled "a very rum vintage" by Jancis.

Last September, TVC tasted an exceptional selection of 2003 red Bordeaux wines, allowing us to experience how the conditions of the 2003 summer affected the wines. What we discovered was that the high sugar levels that resulted from the extreme heat led to dried fruit flavours and relatively high tannins. This February, TVC is offering our members and friends another great opportunity to taste some unique wines that were produced in 2003, this time from fellow French wine producing region, **Burgundy**.

Burgundy is recognized as one of the top wine producing regions in the world, producing some of the finest Chardonnay and Pinot Noirs. The region is comprised of five distinct areas, each with a localized variation on a continental climate and limestone-rich soils. Burgundy is approximately one-fifth the size of Bordeaux, however unlike this larger region Burgundies are described by their place of origin. This traceability is reinforced by a hierarchy that classifies vineyards as regional, communal, Premier Cru, or Grand cru (J. Gordon, Opus Vino).

This February Toronto Vintners Club has the unique opportunity to sample eight of the finest Burgundies from the 2003 vintages, including five Premier Cru wines. See page 2 for details. Appetizers will be served with the wines.

REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS

Register/buy tickets online at <http://www.onlineregistrations.ca/tvcevent2>. You must register online and then can pay by credit card or by cheque. **ALL ticket sales/reservations are final.** Cheques must be received by Friday, February 17th. The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight Tuesday, February 14th after which only credit card sales will be accepted until midnight Sunday, February 20th 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 torontovintners@onlineregistrations.ca before trying to register again.

Tasting Notes and Information

2003 Albert Morot Beaune, Bressandes, 1er cru \$57

The *Bressandes* vineyards are located at the northern end of Beaune's belt of Premier Cru vineyards, near the commune boundary with Savigny-les-Beaune. *Beaune Premier Cru Bressandes* wines are among the most respected of Beaune wines. "Dense concentrated style, ripe fruit. Bramble jelly. Full rich fruit, slightly soft aspect for the vintage, but not dry." 4/5 rating, Decanter.com. "Ruby-red color. Knockout nose combines black raspberry, black cherry, licorice and minerals. Suave and aromatic in the mouth, with lovely cut and clarity for such a hot year. Dense but not heavy. Finishes very fine and long, with excellent palate coverage and notes of spice and licorice. Not overly sweet and not a bit roasted. This will age a long time." 91pts, [Stephen Tanzer](#), Mar/Apr 06

2003 Domaine de Montille - Beaune, Perrieres, 1er cru \$79

"Good bright, deep red-ruby. Lively aromas of crushed redcurrant, minerals, smoke and spices. Stony and fine-grained, with more nuance and energy than the Sizies. Vibrant black cherry flavor. At once solid and classy, finishing with suave tannins and very good length." 89 pts, Stephen Tanzer, International Wine Cellar via. Winemaker's website.

2003 Domaine du Prince Florent de Merode Corton Les Marechaudes \$67

Tucked below the hill of Corton, the small town of Ladoix-Serrigny (the first wine-producing village one arrives at in the Côte de Beaune when driving south from the Côte de Nuits) is dominated by the beautiful Château de Serrigny, family home of the Prince Florent de Merode. The family has owned this property since the early 1700s, and interestingly, it was not broken up during the revolutionary upheaval late in that century. The current Prince has lived at the Château de Serrigny since 1954. Prince de Merode sought to produce wines of more depth, structural integrity and intensity and consequently, the family handed over the reigns to the talented Didier Dubois, who now oversees the vineyards and makes the wine for the property. The wines of Prince Florent de Merode have, for many years, been a watchword for quality that exceeded their modest price. The classic Corton red wine is rich and relatively [tannic](#), meaning that it is quite austere in its youth but develops well with age. Corton tasting notes often refer to flavors of violets, forest berries, leather and earthy notes. 87/100 Burghound.

2003 Rossignol-Trapet - Latricieres-Chambertin \$109

"Medium red with a pale rim. Intriguing aromas of dried cherry and plum, brown spices and underbrush. Sweet, velvety and fat; not especially complex or vibrant for this cru but easy going and rich. Finishes with a suggestion of menthol and dusty tannins." 89pts, Stephen Tanzer, International Wine Cellar via. Winemaker's website.

2003 Taupenot-Merme - Mayzeres-Chambertin \$100

"The wine has a beautiful ruby, dark, young and low clarity. It seems to have been carefully filtered as its brilliance is remarkable. The initial notes of wild strawberry, raspberry and wild mint accents evolve into spicier flavours showing smoke and licorice notes. The wine is straight and very smooth with very fine tannins, and a superb long finish. What a beautiful wine! Excellent." Translated from P. Essa, [dégustateurs.com](#).

2003 Domaine Lignier Michelot - Les Faconnieres, Morey St Denis, 1er cru \$84

"Medium-plus colour. The nose is forward, maybe a hint porty and certainly very ripe but generally the fruit talks of pinot. Ripe, plenty of concentration and very well mannered tannin. The understated acidity provides good balance and just enough freshness." Burgundy Report, Dec. 2008.

2003 Alain Hudelot-Noellat - Nuits St Georges, Les Murgers, 1er cru \$99

Wine Spectator: 88/100. "Although Grand Cru vineyards do not exist in Nuits Saint Georges there are 27 Premiers Crus along with another 10 in Premeaux... Robert Parker, Jr., presents a more studied view, "...There is no doubting that Premiers Crus such as Les Vaucrains and Les Saint-Georges...rival Grands Crus from other villages...there is no question that...northern Premiers Crus vineyards in Nuits-Saint Georges, such as...Aux Murgers can produce wines every bit as stunningly complex, fragrant and rich as their neighbors to the south...All these vineyards produce exceptional Pinot Noir...which rivals the finest Premiers Crus from anywhere in the Cote de Nuits. Unfortunately, the production from these vineyard is small, with...Aux Murgers 12.35 acres...!" Source: http://www.dcflyntmw.com/wine_details.php?name=DOMAINE%20ALAIN%20HUDELOT-NOELLAT%20LES%20MURGERS

2003 Domaine Jean-Marc & Hugues Pavelot Savigny-lès-Beaune aux Guettes, 1^{er} cru \$49

"The Pavelot wines are always rich and full of fruit, yet understated and elegant at the same time. They work the vineyards without herbicides, preferring to plough in the traditional manner. The villages wines see no new oak, and the 1er Cru about 15-30% depending on the vineyard and the vintage. They are recognized around the world as the source of some of the best values in all of Burgundy." (<http://www.scottpaul.com/burgundy-import-company/domaine-pavelot>) "The taste is accompanied by powerful and elegant silky tannins and a very pleasant fruitiness. Very pleasant in his youth, he has undeniable ability to aging." Translated from Winemaker's website.