



“Tasting the Stars” - Sparkling Wines

Tuesday, November 19, 2019

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

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

Members' Fee: \$81; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$101

"Come quickly, I am tasting the stars!"

----- Dom Perignon

Our November event kicks off the holiday season with a fabulous selection of Vintage and Non-Vintage sparkling wines from around the world. With the festive season upon us, what better time is there to tickle our taste buds with delicious bubbles and find the perfect sparkling wine for upcoming dinner parties?

When we think of sparkling wine, Champagne is the first name that comes to mind. Of course Champagne is the most famous sparkling wine, which comes from the region of the same name in France. But not all sparkling wine is Champagne. Vintners around the world try their hand at sparkling wine production, and their offerings add a great diversity of flavors, styles and textures to the category. Some follow Champagne's lead, basing their wines on Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. Others use grapes local to their region, such as the Glera grape in Prosecco, or Lambrusco in red sparkling wine from Italy's Emilia-Romagna.

The major difference among sparkling wines is the production technique used to create the bubbles during the secondary fermentation. In Champagne's traditional method, the secondary fermentation takes place in the same bottle that will later reach the consumer—a process that can be both labor-intensive and expensive. The alternative is the Charmat, or transfer, method, wherein a large quantity of wine is put under pressure during its second fermentation, and the resulting sparkling wine is then bottled.

A sparkler's sweetness level is another factor that comes into play with greater frequency when considering bubbly outside the borders of Champagne. Unlike most still wine, sparkling wine production generally involves the addition of a small amount of sugar, known as the dosage, prior to the final closure of the bottle. The level of sweetness in the bottle depends on the amount of dosage. The labels will tell you what you need to know: **Nature** or **Extra Brut** are the driest; **Brut**, the most common indicator, is dry; and **Extra Dry** or **Dry** (often **Sec** or **Secco** on French and Italian bottlings) indicate lightly to frankly sweet wines.

Finally, almost all still wine is **vintage-specific**, but most sparkling wine is **non-vintage**, blending wine produced from grapes harvested during two or more vintages. Ideally, this creates a consistent house style from year to year—a historic holdover from a time when it was more common to suffer several lesser-quality vintages in a row. During this era, vintage-dated bottlings of sparkling wine were only produced from the very best years, in order to capture the distinctive character of an outstanding vintage.

We will be serving **three vintage-specific wines and five non-vintage**. Four wines were produced in France, two in Spain, and one each in Italy and the UK so we have a nice cross-section of sparklers to sample. The event price includes a reception wine, bread, appetizers and of course, our main wines! Please refrain from wearing scented products. Dress is business casual. Our guest speaker will be **Kimberly Berdusco**, a certified sommelier by both the Court of Master Sommeliers and the Canadian Association of Professional Sommeliers and a certified educator with WSET.

REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS

[Register/buy tickets](https://form.jotform.com/tvc_wine/sparkling-wines) online at https://form.jotform.com/tvc_wine/sparkling-wines. 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, November 15th**. You will be sent an email confirmation after completing your registration. If you tried to register but did not receive a confirmation, please contact winetastings@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.



Tasting Notes and Information – Sparkling Wines

(Prices are as of date of purchase)

2014 Raventos i Blanc De La Finca Vinya Dels Fossils - Spain \$36

“Made from grapes sourced from the 'Vinya dels Fòssils' vineyard, it is no surprise this wine reveals a distinct mineral note. There is a core of intense limey freshness on the palate with a pleasant bitter character to the citrus fruit, accented by a firm saline note. The rush of acidity is exciting and ensures a tight structure. Will certainly reward further patience as it starts to show its autolytic side.” 91 points Decanter

2008 Raventos i Blanc Methode Traditionelle - Spain \$80

“Somehow I had only tasted later releases under the Enoteca label ten years after the vintage, but they also sell a current vintage of their grand vin, a blend personally decided by Pepe Raventós father, Manuel Raventos Negra, after whom the wine is named. 2008 was not an easy vintage, but often challenging vintages result in very good wines, as seems to be the case of the 2008 Manuel Raventós Negra, a Xarello-based blend with 15% each Macabeo and Parellada, presented as a Brut Nature and disgorged at least after six years in contact with the lees. This 2008 is sharp and direct, very lively, vertical and mineral. This is probably a little thinner, but I like the austerity, the verticality it displays. This is the more evolved of the three vintages produced.” 93 points Lluís Gutierrez Robert Parker's Wine Advocate

2008 Pol Roger Vintage - France \$97

“Pol Roger's 2008 Brut Vintage is bright and energetic, but also tightly wound and not fully expressive today. There is good energy to the orchard fruit and citrus driven flavors, not to mention plenty of acid-driven persistence. I would prefer to cellar the 2008 for at least a year or two to see what happens.” Drinking Window: 2020-2028. Score - 90. (Antonio Galloni, vinous.com, July 2017)

NV Pol Roger Reserve Brut - France \$67

“Bright, pale gold colour. After swirling, the nose unfurls brioche, toasted notes and a touch of stone fruits. Seductive silky texture on the palate, delicate, creamy bubbles where suppleness and freshness combine harmoniously.” 89 points Gilbert & Gaillard

NV Ruppert-Leroy Fosse-Grely Brut Nature - France \$69

“Bénédicte and Emmanuel Leroy's grapes come from tiny plots in the Aube Valley and are farmed biodynamically. The wine is produced without sulphur and offers a savoury smoky bacon note with hazelnuts, soft stone fruits and crisp pink grapefruit, all with a fantastic intensity.” Dawn Davies MW

NV Domaine de la Pinte Cremant de Jura - France \$43

“A well-kept secret until now, Jura crémants offer an extraordinary pleasure-price ratio for bubbly lovers. A blanc de blancs made exclusively with Chardonnay, this sparkling wine is delicate, fresh and airy. Accents of ripe apple, almond and toast are perceptible.” 2 stars Le Guide Hachette des Vins

NV Chapel Down Classic NV Brut - UK \$49

“Very neat and dense. Clean and well judged. Piercing acidity but sufficient fruit too. “Distinguished. Score – 16/10. Jancis Robinson, MW, jancisrobinson.com

NV Bisol Talento Pas Dose, Extra Brut – Italy \$48

“From Pinot Bianco, Chardonnay and Pinot Nero gapes taken from the best plots in the traditional grape growing hills. Colour: Golden yellow enlivened by the fine, abundant and persistent perlage. Bouquet: Rich, elegant and balanced bringing to mind the scent of fruit, tobacco leaves, wild meadow and woodland flowers. The wine is dry, full, savoury and inviting yet harmoniously lively and elegant in its persistent finale.” Gassas Wines