



2003 CHATEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

Tuesday, February 19, 2010

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

[Toronto Board of Trade](#) (4th Floor), 1st Cdn Place,
(Entrance off Adelaide St. between Bay & York)

Members' Fee: \$70 Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$85

By and large the most celebrated and well-known appellation of the Southern Rhone, Châteauneuf du Pape has a long history beginning in the 14th century when the papal palace was built in the centre of town and for which the appellation is named (New Castle of the Pope). For hundreds of years the wines produced in southern Rhone were considered rustic. Since Robert E. Parker began promoting them, however, they have gained in popularity and appeal.

Châteauneuf-du-Pape is an Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée (AOC) and unlike its northern Rhone neighbours, allows up to thirteen different grape varieties although the blend is predominantly Grenache. Other red grapes used are Syrah, Cinsault, Counoise, Mourvèdre, Muscardin, Terret Noir and Vaccarèse. There has been a movement toward using fewer varieties in the blend with the top wines using only two or three.

Robert Parker Jr. describes the 2003 vintage as "wines with enormous concentration as well as remarkable intensity, along with high alcohol and tannin, that may turn out to be legendary efforts, but it is an irregular vintage." The area is populated with varying terroirs from sandy, clay soils in the East to rocky mountainous areas in the north whereby the heat of the day is absorbed by the stones and given off during the night creating a constant even temperature for optimum phenolic and alcoholic maturity. The combination of different terroirs is ideal to obtain a wine with finesse, density, richness and elegance, together with great ageing potential.

Most of the domaines showcased have evolved over the last hundred years and are family-owned and operated with viticulture passion. From Domaine de Cristia, the blend is 90% Grenache and 10% Syrah. The wine underwent three weeks of fermentation and maceration in concrete vats followed. Temperatures were kept low in order to produce aromatic wines. The wine was aged for 18 months in barrel. From Domaine Font de Michelle, named from a hidden spring, comes the Cuvée Etienne Gonnet which honours their father. This wine was first introduced in 1988 to be the brothers' top wine. With a 70% Grenache from 90 year old vines, 15% each of Syrah and Mourvèdre blend, the style is somewhere between classic Châteauneuf and a more modernistic approach with plenty of colour, fruit and structure. The same blend can be found in the Domaine de la Charbonnière's Cuvée Mourre des Perdrix. It will be interesting to taste how the same blend differs from domaine to domaine. The oldest domaine showcased is also the only one to use all thirteen varieties authorized in the appellation and include those mentioned above as well as Clairette, Picpoul, Picardan, Bourboulenc and Roussanne. We are pleased to present the 2003 Chateau Beaucastel and challenge you to pick this more traditional Châteauneuf du Pape from among the more modern blends.

NOTE: Your 2010 membership must be paid up before you can register for this event!! To renew, go to <http://www.onlineregistrations.ca/torontovintners/> If you can't recall renewing, please call us to check at 416-209-1442 or email wine@torontovintners.org.

REGISTER / BUY TICKETS

Buy tickets online at <https://www.onlineregistrations.ca/tvcevent2/> **ALL ticket sales/reservations are final whether paid by credit card or cheque.** Cheques must be received by Friday, February 12. The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight Tues, Feb. 9th after which only credit card sales will be accepted until midnight Sunday Feb. 14th or earlier if the event sells out. You will be sent an email confirmation once your registration is completed. If you did not receive an electronic confirmation, please contact torontovintners@onlineregistrations.ca or wine@torontovintners.org

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Domaine De Cristia Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2003 \$49

The 2003 Chateauneuf du Pape exhibits a deep plum/ruby/purple hue as well as fresh, lively, peppery, floral aromas interwoven with scents of garrigue, blueberries, cherries, and earth. Medium to full-bodied with moderate tannin, it should drink well for a decade. Score - 88. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2006)

Domaine Font De Michelle Châteauneuf-du-Pape Étienne Gonnet 2003 \$79

Readers who love kirsch liqueur intermixed with ground pepper and almost a liqueur of herbes de Provence and earth will go bonkers over the character and concentration of the 2003 Chateauneuf du Pape Cuvee Etienne Gonnet. This wine is so gorgeous now it is hard to believe it is actually going to age that well, but knowing this wine from the 1990 vintage, which is somewhat similar, it ages beautifully for 12-15 years. Score - 93. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2006)

Domaine De La Charbonniere (Rhône) Châteauneuf-du-Pape "Mourre De Perdrix" 2003 \$53

The 2003 Chateauneuf du Pape Mourre des Perdrix is a real terroir-based wine showing resinous notes of a pine forest intermixed with herbes de Provence, damp earth, and balsamic notes as well as oodles of kirsch liqueur. The wine is structured, medium-bodied, firmly tannic, and jagged in the finish. Drink it over the next decade. Score - 89+?. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2006)

Bosquet Des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2003 \$59

The light ruby/garnet-colored 2003 Chateauneuf du Pape offers a heady concoction of kirsch, pepper, seaweed, and salty sea breezes followed by broad plum and cherry flavors, soft tannins, low acidity, and a plump finish. Drink it over the next 8-10 years. Score - 89. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2006)

Ch. De Vaudieu Châteauneuf-du-Pape Val De Dieu 2003 \$79

A new cuvee, the 2003 Chateauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée Val de Dieu is a structured effort with a flamboyant bouquet revealing a touch of barrique aging along with copious amounts of black cherry and raspberry fruit, cassis, melted licorice, and smoke. Long, full-bodied, fleshy, low acid

flavors possess plenty of punch as well as depth. Give it 1-2 years of bottle age, and drink it over the following 12 plus. Score - (90-93). (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Dec. 2004)

Clos De L'Oratoire Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Choregies 2003 \$99

The luxury cuvee, the dense blue/purple-colored 2003 Chateauneuf du Pape Les Choregies, is extremely extracted and borders on an international style. However, just as it appears there is a lack of typicity or personality, aromas of smoke, garrigue, licorice, black cherry jam, and cassis begin to emerge from the glass. This full-bodied, intense Chateauneuf reveals a touch of new oak in the background, but as with most of its peers, oak is, at most, a minor seasoning in the overall aromatic and flavor profiles. This broad, powerful offering possesses considerable concentration as well as tannin. Very impressive ... and as aeration established ... very Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Anticipated maturity: 2007-2017. Score - (92-94). (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Dec. 2004)

Domaine Saint-Benoit Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Truffière 2003 \$59

The 2003 Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Truffiere is a good wine offering copious quantities of black cherry fruit intermixed with resinous pine forest notes, garrigue, and some spice and currants. It should drink well for 4-5 years. Score - 88. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2006)

Ch. De Beaucastel Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2003 \$80

The 2003 Beaucastel Châteauneuf-du-Pape turned out as well as I could have hoped and is certainly an outstanding wine, deep ruby/purple with a tight but promising nose of black fruits, loamy, earthy notes intermixed with pepper, smoke, licorice, and dried herbs. The wine is somewhat closed in the mouth (but it had been bottled 30 days prior to my visit), has full bodied, moderately high, slightly rustic tannins, but big-impact flavours with plenty of texture, density, and purity. Give this wine 3-5 years of bottle age, and drink it over the following 20 years. Score - 92+. (R. Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2006)