



POP A CORK FOR A CHAMPAGNE EVENING!

Tuesday, November 20, 2012

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

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

Members' Fee: \$61; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$76

"I drink champagne when I'm happy and when I'm sad. Sometimes I drink it when I'm alone. When I have company I consider it obligatory. I trifle with it if I'm not hungry and drink it when I am. Otherwise I never touch it - unless I'm thirsty."

Madame Lilly Bollinger. London Daily Mail, October 17, 1961

Champagne wine is suggestive of the unmistakable popping-cork sound, an elegant setting with fluted glasses, rosy cheeks, celebrations and laughter. It's unfortunate this wine tends to be reserved for special occasions because it deserves to be drunk more frequently. So as the holiday season approaches and we ready ourselves for multiple celebrations and a little decadence, what better time and place to sample Champagne than at the last TVC tasting of the calendar year?

What's the difference between Champagne and sparkling wine? Today it's about place of origin. Sparkling wine that's produced in the Champagne region of France is the only product that can legally be labeled Champagne while bubbly from all other regions of the world is referred to as "sparkling wine". Years ago this was not the case and Canada played a key (infamous??) role in a decades-long battle over use of the term "champagne" that finally resulted in major lawsuits between the two countries. While Canada won a court battle, they didn't win the war. To learn more about the fascinating history and war between Canada and France over wines called Champagne, visit:

<http://www.winesandvines.com/template.cfm?section=features&content=66138&ftitle=In%20the%20Wake%20of%20the%20Champagne%20Wars>

Three types of grapes are used to produce Champagne: Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. Chardonnay provides freshness and elegance; Pinot Noir gives body and structure and Pinot Meunier brings fruitiness and aromas. Typically, as Champagne ages, Chardonnay turns "toasty" and Pinot Noir "biscuity", although the reverse is possible and even a whiff of clean sulphur can in time contribute to the toastiness of a wine. Some first-class sparklers develop specific, complex aromas such as flowery hazelnuts, creamy brazil nuts and mellow walnuts. The greatest Champagnes can age gracefully for decades to create rich nuances of macaroons, coconut, cocoa and coffee.

When you imbibe Champagne, you're drinking a part of history as you can see from our notes. Most of the Champagne houses go back centuries and their founders and wines often played roles in political, royal, literary and wine-making history. We will taste seven Champagnes from very notable houses - Pol Roger, Mumm, Bollinger, Veuve Clicquot, Lanson, Piper-Hiedseck, Charles Hiedseck - and one award-winning sparkler from Ontario (an infant in sparkling wine timelines), whose winemaker originates from Burgundy. Whether you're a fan of Ian Fleming/James Bond (Bollinger), a racing car enthusiast (Mumm) an ardent support of royalty (Charles Heidsieck), or just a wine lover, drinking champagne is one of those 'must do' activities in life and hopefully, more than just at New Year's, birthdays and anniversaries. Come celebrate the upcoming holiday season with TVC and make your Champagne choices for 2012. NOTE: Light appetizers will be served with the champagnes.

REGISTER / BUY TICKETS

Register/buy tickets online at <http://www.torontovintners.org/2012/Champagne.html> and click on "Event Registration". You must register online and then can pay by credit card or by cheque. **ALL ticket sales/reservations are final whether paid by credit card or cheque.** The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight, Tuesday November 13, after which only credit card sales will be accepted until Sunday November 18 or earlier if the event sells out. Cheques must be received by Friday, November 16. You will be sent an email confirmation once you have completed your registration.

Tasting Notes and Information

Bollinger Brut Special Cuvée Champagne NV \$ 69.95

Bollinger has roots in the Champagne region dating back to 1585 but the Champagne house of Renaudin Bollinger wasn't founded until 1829 by Hennequin de Villermont, Paul Leveux Renaudin and Joseph Bollinger (originally from Germany). The partners agreed that the Villermont name would not be used on the labels, hence the house name Renaudin Bollinger. Even though Paul Renaudin passed without an heir to his name, the label did not become solely Bollinger until the 1960s. Bollinger has been the official supplier to the British court, receiving a Royal Warrant in 1884 from Queen Victoria. (Wikipedia)

"A rich, smoky Champagne, with hints of marzipan and fennel seed accenting honeyed malt, bread dough, baked apple and gingersnap flavors. It's all focused by intense acidity, which meshes beautifully into the layers of flavor and refined texture, with a lingering finish. Drink now through 2021. Highly Recommended. Score - 94." (Alison Napjus, *winespectator.com*, Dec. 31, 2010)

Pol Roger Brut Champagne NV \$60.60

Pol Roger made his first sale of wine in 1849 and the family settled in Epernay in 1851. It was the favourite drink of Winston Churchill who is quoted as saying, "In victory, deserve it. In defeat, need it!" Typically 40% Chardonnay and 60% Pinot Noir. "Pale straw colour with fine mousse; apple, bread/toast, yeast and citrus aromas; medium bodied and dry; ripe apple, biscuit, mineral and citrus flavours; balanced with long lively finish." LCBO

Piper Heidsieck Brut Champagne NV \$49.75

Founded in Reims, France in 1785 by Florens-Louis Heidsieck. After his death in 1828, the business was taken over by his nephew, Christian Heidsieck, and his cousin Henri Guillaume Piper who combined to form Piper-Heidsieck. "Light straw colour; dry and medium-bodied with fine bubbles and rich yeasty aromas; biscuits and apricot fruit flavours with a crisp finish." LCBO. "Piper is always among the lighter, racier styles. This is a firm, lively bubbly with lemon, yogurt, garlic and toasty aromas. Evenly balanced and subtle, but not excessively dramatic. Very good length. 4.6/5. Wine Align

Charles Heidsieck Brut Réserve Champagne \$ 54.95

Founded in 1851 by Charles Heidsieck nephew of Florens-Louis Heidsieck, co-founder of the Champagne house that eventually became Piper-Heidsieck. He's credited with making Champagne popular in the US and was nicked-named "Champagne Charlie". His Champagnes were favoured by Napoleon and by the Csars of Russia. 34% Pinot Noir, 33% Chardonnay, 33% Pinot Meunier.

"Like a Persian carpet this lovely, elegant Champagne seamlessly weaves together its elements, with fine-grained texture and vibrant acidity joining rich flavors of toast, patisserie fruit and candied lemon zest that show subtle spice notes of cardamom and ginger. Drink now through 2020. Score - 93. (Alison Napjus, *winespectator.com*, Nov. 15, 2011)

Veuve Clicquot Brut Champagne NV \$ 67.75

Founded in 1772 by Philippe Clicquot-Muiron, Veuve Clicquot played an important role in establishing champagne as a favored drink of haute bourgeoisie and nobility throughout

Europe. Madame Clicquot is credited with a great breakthrough in champagne handling in the early 19th century that made mass production of the wine possible, with the invention of the riddling rack that made the crucial process of *dégorgement* both more efficient and economic. "Bright yellow straw colour, elegant mousse; Fruity, citrus, mineral, toasty aromas with a hint of bread dough; Dry, full bodied style, with well balanced acidity & complex flavours of mineral, citrus and shortbread on the long finish.

Mumm Cordon Rouge Brut Champagne NV \$60.95

Founded by three Mumm brothers from Germany's Rhine valley and G. Heuser and Friedrich Giesler on March 1, 1827. Mumm's label is famous for its red ribbon (*Cordon Rouge*), patterned after and resembling the French *Grand Cordon of the Légion d'Honneur*. The French confiscated all of the Mumm's property, although they had lived in Champagne for almost a century before World War I, because they had never bothered to become French citizens. G.H. Mumm is an official sponsor of the Formula 1. "Toast and dried fruit notes mix in this very harmonious dry Champagne, which is full of flavor—dried apricot, candied orange peel, nut and smoke—but still elegant and light-weight. The rich, toasty note lingers on the vibrant finish. Drink now through 2020." 92 Points *Wine Spectator*

Lanson Black Label Brut Champagne NV \$49.65

Founded in the late 1700's by François Delamotte, a magistrate in Reims. The house later become known as Lanson, Maison Delamotte. "This is another complex, firm, traditional champagne with obvious toast and garlic notes but more green apple than it previously had. There's a faint touch of vanilla, as well. Medium weight, tight and elegant, with excellent length. 4.5/5. Wine Align
"Lanson's Black Label is one of the most familiar Champagne brands, well known for its rich but dry style. The wine is rounded out with toast, puff pastry and freshened with apple skins. Editors' Choice" 89 Points *Wine Enthusiast*

Huff Estate – Cuvée Peter F. Huff, 2008 \$39.75

Prince Edward County, Ontario; opened June 2004. 65% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Noir. 30 months of lees; 600 cases. Won a Gold Medal and named Best Sparkling Wine at the Wine Access 2011 Canadian Wine Awards, Gold Medal & Judges Choice Award at Intervin and the Lieutenant Governor's Award of Excellence. "Slightly darker in colour than its contemporaries at the 2011 Canadian Wine Awards, the nose is toasty and autolytic, with lemon, apple, slightly smoky, honey and mineral notes. Fairly spicy on the palate, with near perfect balance. A pleasure to drink. (Wine Access)