



Malbecs of Mendoza

Tuesday, October 15, 2013

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

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

Members' Fee: \$73; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$93

With a continental climate and semi-arid desert conditions, the Mendoza Province of Argentina is the country's most important wine region, accounting for nearly two-thirds of the country's entire wine production and now the heart of the winemaking industry in Argentina. Argentina's most highly rated Malbec wines originate from Mendoza's high altitude wine regions of Lujan de Cuyo and the Uco Valley located in the foothills of the Andes mountains between 2,800 and 5,000 feet elevation. "Good Argentine Malbec, and there is a great deal of it for Argentina is one of the world's most prolific wine producers, is deeply coloured, spicily rich with an exuberant juiciness and has as a trademark an almost velvety texture". - Jancis Robinson

Malbec grapes are characterized by their thin skin and love of the sun and heat. The grapes ripen mid-season and are known to produce rich, dark and juicy wines. While the Malbec grape originated in France and is one of the six varieties permitted in Bordeaux wines, the amount of land dedicated to growing the grape has been declining for some time. In contrast, the popularity has been surging in Argentina and has become the "national variety" of Argentine wine. Argentine Malbec is recognized for its velvety texture and fruity flavours. Malbec was first introduced in Argentina in the mid-19th century by a French agronomist who brought cuttings to the country. The growing conditions in Argentina proved to be ideal for the Malbec grapes. Today, Malbec is the most widely planted red grape variety in the country. The Argentine Malbec grapes are smaller and grow in tighter clusters than the French relatives. This leads many wine experts to believe that the cuttings brought to Argentina were a unique clone that may no longer exist in France, most likely killed off due to frost and the phylloxera epidemic. In Argentina's largest wine growing region, Mendoza (representing 85% of the Malbec vineyards), the average altitude of the vineyards is approximately 900m. As a result, the temperature is typically lower but the sunshine is stronger. The temperature swings significantly from day to night, contributing to the colour and aromatic qualities of the wines. The grapes grown at higher altitudes tend to have higher concentrations of tannins.

Mendoza's Malbecs are typically medium to full body with deep dark fruit and vanilla notes. They tend to have a unique style that's different from their counterparts in the Old World. Malbec's most significant characteristic is its intense dark color. Its aromas evoke cherries, strawberries or plums; in some cases it's reminiscent of cooked fruit (e.g. marmalade), depending on when the grapes were harvested. In the mouth Malbec is warm, soft, and sweet, with non-aggressive tannins. When it is aged in oak, it develops coffee, vanilla and chocolate aromas. Recognized for their great value, Malbecs are great with food or on their own. Malbec wines have Controlled Denomination of Origin (DOC) in some regions of Argentina, helping maintain the high quality of the wines. The first DOC of the Americas was Malbec Lujan de Cuyo. Malbec from this region has an intense, dark cherry color. The wines tend to have hints of black fruit with sweet spices standing out. In the Northern DOC regions of Salta and Catamarca, the high altitudes lead to aromas of very ripe red fruit with black pepper and paprika. The climate in the Patagonia regions is colder and the altitude is lower, which results in wines with notes of ripe black fruits and a more mineral tone. Malbecs from Tupungato, Tunuyan and San Carlos tend to be more elegant and display distinctive spicy and floral notes.

TVC has six wines that are 100% Malbec and two that are blends with Malbec – all from Mendoza. This will give you an opportunity to become familiar with Argentina's most important grape and wine region and to sample a single grape variety as well as to assess how Malbec adds complexity in Bordeaux-style blends.

REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS

Register/buy tickets online at <http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e86zhddv792dc192>. 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, October 11th. The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight Tuesday, October 8th after which only credit card sales will be accepted until midnight Sunday October 13th 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 wine@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.

www.torontovintners.org 416-209-1442



Tasting Notes and Information –Malbecs of Mendoza

2008 Bramare Vina Cobos Marchiori Vineyard Malbec \$79

“The 2008 Bramare Malbec Marchiori Vineyard is a more saturated color with the nose favoring the black fruit side of the spectrum. Dense, layered, and rich, it conceals enough tannin to evolve for 3-5 years and will deliver prime drinking through 2023.” 92-95 pts. Jay Miller, www.erobertparker.com, Aug 2009.

2008 Achaval Ferrer Finca Mirador Malbec \$79

“The 2008 Finca Mirador offers up a kinky nose of wild berries, brier, underbrush, and exotic spices. Already complex with superb depth and intense flavors, this is an exceptionally lengthy offering that will benefit from 3-4 years of additional bottle aging and should be at its best from 2013 to 2023.” 96 pts. Jay Miller, www.erobertparker.com, Dec 2010.

2007 Vina Alicia Brote Negro Malbec \$74

“The 2007 Brote Negro is a unique strain of Malbec that was isolated and propagated by the Bodega. The wine spent 12 months in 50% new French oak. Medium purple in color, it proffers a bouquet of smoke, pencil lead, violets, exotic spices, and black cherry. On the palate it is elegant, relatively forward, and releases tons of flavor. This pleasure-bent effort is likely to develop for another 2-3 years but will be hard to resist now.” 94 pts. Jay Miller, www.erobertparker.com, Dec 2010.

2007 Alta Vista Single Vineyard Temis Malbec \$45

“The fruit for the 2007 Temis Single Vineyard was sourced from a vineyard planted in 1939. The wine is 100% Malbec aged for 18 months in new French oak. A glass-staining opaque purple color, it delivers a nose of balsam wood, graphite, cinnamon, allspice, incense, black cherry, and black raspberry. It has more focus on the palate than the two preceding wines along with a sense of elegance to accompany the obvious power. Layered, sweetly-fruity, and smoothly-textured, it has impeccable balance, 4-6 years of aging potential and a drinking window extending from 2014 to 2027.” 93+ pts. Jay Miller, www.erobertparker.com, Aug 2009.

2007 Alta Vista Single Vineyard Alizarine Malbec \$45

“The purple-colored 2007 Alizarine Single Vineyard is 100% Malbec sourced from a vineyard planted in 1927, the first purchased by Alta Vista, and located near the Cheval des Andes vineyard. The nose is reticent, but gives up an aromatic array of pain grille, pencil lead, mineral, incense, and black cherry. Full-bodied on the palate and the most structured of the single vineyard wines, it has tons of spicy

black fruit, incipient complexity, loads of fine-grained tannin, and a lengthy, fruit-filled finish.” 93 pts. Jay Miller, www.erobertparker.com, Aug 2009.

2007 Lamadrid Matilde Agrelo Single Vineyard Malbec \$59

“The flagship 2007 Malbec Matilde was sourced from the same estate vineyard as the Gran Reserva, but from a particular parcel, with aging for 24 months in new French oak. This loaded effort displays more obvious (but well-integrated) oak, soaring aromas of black cherry, black raspberry, and exotic spices, full body, and a plush, velvety palate feel. Underneath all that flesh is enough ripe tannin to support another 6-8 years of evolution, so this suave effort will be at its best from 2018 to 2027, if not longer.” 94 pts. Jay Miller, www.erobertparker.com, Dec 2011.

2008 Altamira Grande Reserve Navigato Family Selection \$47

“The 2008 Navigato Family Selection is a blend of 40% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 30% Malbec aged for 24 months in French oak before bottling without filtration. Complex aromas of wood smoke, violets, exotic spices, and assorted black fruits lead to a loaded, exceptionally concentrated, layered wine that has the structure to evolve for another 2-3 years.” 93 pts. Jay Miller, www.erobertparker.com, Dec 2011.

2007 Cheval Des Andes \$95

“The 2007 Cheval des Andes is a blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Malbec, 4% Merlot and 1% Petit Verdot that is aged for 18 months in oak. Tasted on two occasions, it was unexpectedly bashful and unresponsive on first acquaintance. The second meeting was more promising. It offers a ripe bouquet of raspberry coulis, strawberry, vanilla and cedar, augmented by cigar box with a little aeration. It is well-defined, and the oak is neatly folded into the fruit. The palate is fleshy in the mouth, to the point where you would think it was more Merlot than Cabernet Sauvignon. It is nicely balanced, although I searched for more backbone and structure, especially on the finish, which is delineated but laconic. It is undoubtedly a very pleasurable wine, but I feel it could give so much more. Drink now-2017.” 91pts. Neal Martin, www.erobertparker.com, Oct 2012.