



## 2004 Châteauneuf du Pape

Tuesday, February 18, 2014

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

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

Members' Fee: \$76; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$96

Châteauneuf-du-Pape is the dominant region in the Southern Rhone. It produces about 110,000 hl of wine (as compared to about 250,000 hl for the Cote d'Or). The "Coteaux" (slope) of Châteauneuf du Pape lies between the cities of Orange and Avignon, in one of the most beautiful landscapes of Provence. Châteauneuf-du-Pape translates as "New Castle of the Pope," and indeed, the history of this commune and its wine are firmly entwined with papal history. In fact, the Popes used to have their summer residence in Châteauneuf du Pape. This area is also famous for the large stones "galets" at the base of the vines. These reflect the afternoon sun and thus ripen the grapes more fully. Galets can also serve as a protective layer to help retain moisture in the soil during the dry summer months when it can reach 40 deg. C or higher.

There are 13 grapes authorized for use in this region, which had the most stringent wine controls in the world until their controls were adopted in the rest of France, in about 1936. Different grapes are used to make the wine more or less spicy, more or less tannic or smooth, early or later maturing. Alex Lichine's Encyclopedia of Wines gives some hint of the uses. Grenache for mellowness and alcohol; Mourvedre, Syrah, Muscadine and Vaccarese add body, colour and firmness; Cunoise, Picpoule and Cinsault give vinosity, bouquet and freshness; Clairette and Bourboulene, finesse and warmth. Three others are allowed, but Hugh Johnson's World Atlas of Wine states that only Chateau de Beaucastel persists with all of these. The Grenache has many uses as a blending grape in France. It has become the second most widely planted dark grape, after Carignan. Thus each grape has its place in the blend.

Châteauneuf-du-Pape wines are often higher in alcohol and must be minimum 12.5% under the appellation rules. Winemakers tend to focus on balancing the high sugar levels in the grape with the tannins, and phenols typical in the wine. The grapes are left with their stems on during the fermentation process, which is usually done at higher temperatures. The dark Châteauneuf-du-Pape colour is derived from the skins, which are frequently pumped over. This also lends to the strong tannins found in Châteauneuf wines.

James Lawther, MW, wrote on Decanter.com that "The 2004 vintage in Châteauneuf-du-Pape is the best since 2001 ... with a mineral balance and freshness, and long ageing potential." The grapes benefitted from an Indian summer in 2004, which allowed winemakers to harvest at their desire during the last two weeks in September and into early October. The vintage is characterized by its minerality and acidity, which was achieved thanks to the contrasting day and night temperatures that were seen in August.

Overall the 2004 vintage should be at its prime after a decade of cellaring and the February tasting is not one to be missed. We look forward to seeing you there.

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### REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS

Register/buy tickets at <http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=vxghb4bab&oeidk=a07e8tng7815517a051>. You must register online and then can pay by credit card or by cheque. **NOTE: ALL ticket sales/reservations are final.** Cheques must be received by Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup> after which only credit card sales will be accepted until midnight Sunday February 16<sup>th</sup> 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 [chris@torontovintners.org](mailto:chris@torontovintners.org) before trying to register again.



## Tasting Notes and Information

### **2004 Vieux Telegraphe**

**\$59**

“Certainly Vieux Telegraphe has acquitted itself well in these two vintages with the 2004 Vieux Telegraphe Châteauneuf du Pape boasting big, smoky, peppery, garrigue notes intermixed with black cherry, licorice, smoke, and sweet currants. The wine is ripe and full-bodied with decent acidity and some mineral notes. Daniel Brunier stated it actually tips the scales at 15% alcohol, which is high for this vintage. It should drink well for 12-15 more years.” 92pts. Robert Parker, [erobertparker.com](http://erobertparker.com), Feb. 2007.

### **2004 Clos des Papes**

**\$69**

“The 2004 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf du Pape has turned out to be one of the finest wines of the vintage, tipping the scales at just over 15% alcohol and actually coming a few tenths of a degree within the 2003 and 2005 in terms of power and alcoholic degrees. The wine displays gorgeously sweet black raspberries, kirsch liqueur, and resinous, loamy soil notes. Medium to full-bodied, this blend of 65% Grenache, 20% Mourvedre, 10% Syrah, and the rest some of the other red varieties that are permitted, is performing beautifully and is certainly one of the vintage’s superstars. The wine is full-bodied, powerful, rich, and as accessible as the 2003, but slightly fresher and not as muscular and thick. Nevertheless, this is a top effort from the father and son team of Paul and Vincent Avril. This wine can be drunk now but can be cellared for 15-20 years.” 95pts. Robert Parker, [erobertparker.com](http://erobertparker.com), Feb. 2007.

### **2004 Chateau de Beaucastel**

**\$92**

“One of the great successes of the vintage and certainly better than their 2003 is Beaucastel’s 2004 Châteauneuf du Pape. Deep ruby/purple in color with loads of licorice, smoked game, black cherry and blackberry fruit, along with incense and truffle, the wine has fabulous richness, high tannin, medium to full body, and beautiful length, richness, and purity. This is a beauty and one of the vintage’s finest wines. Give it 4-6 years of bottle age and drink it over the next 25+ years. It has the potential to be one of the longest-lived Châteauneuf du Papes of the vintage.” 93+pts. Robert Parker, [erobertparker.com](http://erobertparker.com), Feb. 2007.

### **2004 Le Vieux Donjon**

**\$49**

“The 2004 Châteauneuf du Pape is similar in style to their 1999 but with more power. A cedary, sweet bouquet of herbes de Provence, roasted meats, kirsch liqueur, resinous notes, and perhaps incense as well, jumps from the glass of this medium to full-bodied, fragrant, savory style of wine. Its tannins are present and persistent but sweet and well-integrated. The wine reveals outstanding concentration,

purity, and plenty of Provencal typicity. It should drink well for 10-15 years.” 90pts. Robert Parker, [erobertparker.com](http://erobertparker.com), Feb. 2007.

### **2004 Domaine Bois de Boursan**

**\$35**

“The classic garrigue smells of roasted herbs, loamy soil notes, and pepper are present in the dark ruby/purple-tinged 2004 Châteauneuf du Pape. Quite broad, spicy, with excellent texture and purity, this wine tastes like the essence of Provence and smells as if you’re walking through one of the local open-air marketplaces. Drink it over the next 7-8 years as it’s on a relatively fast evolutionary track.” 90pts. Robert Parker, [erobertparker.com](http://erobertparker.com), Feb. 2007.

### **2004 Raymond Usseglio Cuvée Imperiale**

**\$59**

“The regular 2004 Châteauneuf du Pape, available throughout the rest of the world, is elegant, dark ruby, but seems narrowly constructed. It is probably best drunk in its first 7-8 years of life.” 87pts. Robert Parker, [erobertparker.com](http://erobertparker.com), Feb. 2007.

### **2004 Pégau Cuvée Reservée**

**\$90**

“One of the finest efforts of the vintage is the 2004 Châteauneuf du Pape Pégau Cuvée Reservée. There is no Cuvée da Capo in 2004, and as my commentary will make clear, they decided not to produce one in 2005. The 2004 Châteauneuf du Pape Cuvée Reservée has a dark plum/garnet/purple color and a big, sweet nose of kirsch liqueur, lavender, roasted herbs, and beef juices intermixed with some licorice and spice. It is full-bodied, rich, deep, spicy, and dense with some tannins in the finish. The wine is not as accessible as many 2004s, and I would opt for cellaring it for 3-4 years and drinking it over the following 15-20. It’s a gorgeous effort for the vintage. 94+pts. Robert Parker, [erobertparker.com](http://erobertparker.com), Feb. 2007.

### **2004 Andre Brunel Les Cailloux**

**\$46**

“The 2004 Châteauneuf du Pape is elegant, with notes of sweet strawberries and cherries, Provencal herbs, and a hint of nori (the sushi seafood wrapper) along with some plum and fig. This is a fruity, rich, medium to full-bodied, soft and velvety 2004 to drink over the next 7-8 years.” 90pts. Robert Parker, [erobertparker.com](http://erobertparker.com), Feb. 2007.