

## ***Notes From The Cellar (NFTC); Winepairings e-letter May 28, 2008***

### **An opportunity -restock on Super Tuscan**

Before we get into the meat of the newsletter, I will take a moment to mention the loss of an Icon in the wine world : Robert Mondavi RIP . Many of you have been readers of Bill St John who lived & wrote many food & wine articles in Denver. Bill has moved to Chicago and does some consulting for a local large retailer there. He recently penned a nice article about Mondavi which I have enclosed towards the end of this newsletter that I hope you will enjoy.

Today's wine was originally featured in February. It was a direct import deal a great wine for the price. I was recently informed that there was a small stash left at the distributor. So instead of spending the energy in marketing this wine, management figured they will just dramatically lower the price -just the kind of deal I love to find. Not for me is to question the logic of wine distribution: I am just happy to have another crack at this wonderful wine and know it will make some of you very happy. At this price this will be one of the best deals we offer this summer... Here is my write up from February:

### **\$\$\$ wine deals \$\$\$**

#### **Stebbi Casole DOC 2005 (was \$24- in february)**

This Super-Tuscan comes from a small family operation near Sienna. It's one of these rare small production wines that I am fortunate to encounter every once in a blue moon. After tasting a sample of it, I ordered it directly through the importer. By the time the wine arrived some 5 months later it had some additional bottle time which made it seem even smoother, a superb effort. While the wine is modern in style, The Montovani family Still uses traditional methods such as harvesting the grapes using wicker baskets. Production was 750 cases, so this is truly artisan small production. The 2005 is a beautifully balanced wine: rich yet elegant. The predominant dark fruit flavors remind you of a home made plum jam combined with smoke nuances and a whiff of tar. While this is drinking beautifully now, it has a solid back bone of smooth tannins which will contribute to the long term development of this wine. Like all great Tuscan wines it has a nice core of minerals on the finish. I have tasted many wines from that part of the world at two to three times the price that weren't close in quality. A great choice for hearty dishes, stews or a nice plate of cured meats, salami and cheeses . The grape composition is 80% Sangiovese with 20% Merlot enjoy it now or watch it develop over the next few years, though I am convinced it will easily be drinkable for another 5-6 years beyond that, but I honestly doubt that it will stick around once you try it.

**Today's offer (distributor closeout while they last) \$21,**

**Buy 6 or more for \$19-/bottle**

**Did you Know:** missed a few newsletters ? No need to stress - go to our web site [www.winepairings.biz](http://www.winepairings.biz) and click on the "newsletter tab" or try here: <http://winepairings.biz/newsletter.php>

### **events:**

***Taste of the Nation:*** a perennial favorite foodie fest -mark your calender for Sunday June 1<sup>st</sup>

details at:

[http://taste.strength.org/site/Clubs?club\\_id=1032&pg=main](http://taste.strength.org/site/Clubs?club_id=1032&pg=main)

One of the big joys of travel for me is to eat my way through a varied cuisine..

If it involves street life and people watching -even better . Here is an event that promises to be a killer deal. Tuesday June 10 for \$20 this will be hard to beat! C U there....

*The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Feast on the Fax* details:

<http://feastonthefax.com>

## **The Man, The Legend: Robert Mondavi (1914-2008)**

The quality of American wine today would not be where it is were it not for the life of Robert Mondavi, who died last week at the age of 94 (now *that's* your benefit of drinking red wine each day).

The arc of Mondavi's life is well known by wine aficionados: how his father, Cesare, moved the young family from Minnesota to Lodi, Calif., in the early 1920s; how Cesare was convinced that California had promise as a wine-producing state and inculcated that to his sons; how Mondavi convinced his father to purchase Napa Valley's oldest winery, Charles Krug, in 1943.

And we are acquainted with the fractious relationship that Mondavi had with his brother, Peter, at that winery; how the two split up after a nasty fisticuff; and how Mondavi then ventured out on his own.

And that is where the story really begins. Napa Valley – not to say California as a whole – was not making very good wine in the mid-1960s. Mondavi introduced a great deal to Napa (and, as a consequence, to all of American) winemaking: cold fermentation, the use of French oak, popularizing lesser-known wine grapes (at the time) such as Sauvignon Blanc.

Many things – and a lot of showmanship, too. He was an unfailing huckster of Napa Valley wine, and of American wine by extension. He held blind tastings of his reds against much more famous counterparts from Bordeaux and Burgundy (confident, as indeed it turned out, that they often would better the Europeans). And the man could talk, endlessly, about the role of wine at the family table, how food was made for wine and vice versa (no first-generation Italian would say otherwise), how American wines are the equal of the world's.

I once saw him, during a Napa Valley Wine Auction week, hobble up onto the top of a wine barrel – he had notoriously poor knees – and declaim for an hour, standing bow-legged like a cowboy just off his horse, about Napa wine, allowing his well-lubricated guests to become even more so as they soaked up his wine and his message both.

Many considered Mondavi uppity when he joined with Baron Philippe de Rothschild of Château Mouton-Rothschild, or the Marquese Frescobaldi of Tuscany, to produce wines that were a blend of the Old and New Worlds of wine. But he considered it just melding families, tight-knit groups of people who had the same image for wine as, at once, a beverage of moderation and an enhancer of food.

That is his greatest legacy, I think, that he passed on wine's proper place in our lives.

**- Bill St. John**

Thanks again for all your support and referrals, tell your friends, Cheers

Paul David, Chief Fermented Grape Taster.

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All orders are sold and shipped by a licensed Colorado wine retailer. Title passes to you, the buyer, in Colorado.

The buyer is solely responsible for the shipment of wine. We make no representations concerning your legal right to ship or receive wine into any state outside Colorado or any country outside the United States. By placing any wine order with us, you authorize Winepairings to act on your behalf to engage a common carrier to deliver your order to your selected destination.

Please note that **you must be at least 21 years old** to order or receive alcohol from this newsletter. All orders require the signature of a person at least 21 years of age.