

Notes From The Cellar (NFTC); Winepairings e-letter July 3, 2008
Aged Bordeaux

Mid year is upon us. So far 2008 has been quite a ride. War, elections, currency, gasoline, the housing market and now the stock market all creating worries and pressures. Sometimes it's easy to loose focus on the real important things we tend to take for granted; Such as health, family and friends. I have been fortunate to travel and live in many countries and in spite of the daily challenges we all face, I believe that we live in a great time and a wonderful country. Tomorrow we get to celebrate our nations Birth Day. A perfect time to kick back and enjoy a glass or two of wine and good times with family and friends. I know that at my house that will be part of the plan. So before getting onto the particulars of this newsletter I wanted to wish all our readers a great 4th of July and Thank You for your support to date. As well as extend my best wishes for the remainder of the year.

Many of you would like to celebrate the 4th with a wine made in the USA -if you happen to have such wine in your collection chances are that at least some of it is California Cabernet Sauvignon as this has the reputation of being the most suitable domestic wine with aging possibilities. This also seems to be the wine that many folks in the US begin to accumulate as they start a wine collection for ageing. Keep in mind that most California Cab. is not made for super long aging. True, most of this wine will be best with a little bottle age, but In general 3-5 years from the vintage are optimal, as the fruit flavors and aromatics are still exuberant. As the wine ages further, it will change and develop more mature characteristics but it won't necessarily get better. Of course there are exceptions, especially in the upper end of the market, but even those wines require good vintages and good competent wine making to improve. Never a sure thing; it is only with time, that it becomes more evident which particular wines will improve, and which vintages are more likely to age well (of course we are assuming good storage conditions without which, trying to age wine for long term will result in disappointment and a waste of money). I frequently come across wine collections where nice wine has been aged too long. Most of the time the owner is not aware that a particular wine is from a vintage that was much better consumed younger. So when you go to pull out that bottle to celebrate the 4th of July keep that in mind. As a quick general tip; if you have California Cabs left from 1998 or 2000, I would recommend you put those into your drinking rotation. (If you or someone you know has "lost tack" of a collection please contact me . I will be glad to help with our Cellar Evaluation Service).

This above note on aging wine also brings me to today's Collector Corner. Over the last few hundred years the wines that have proven to be the most popular for aging, and this is also largely responsible for making them the single most collectible wines on earth, come from Bordeaux. Entire books have been written about Bordeaux so I would not go into a big discussion in this very limited forum. You do however have a wonderful opportunity: in today's Collector Corner we are featuring a few wines that we retained from an avid collector . These have been cellared in perfect condition since their original releases. With 13-14 years since the vintages and over 10 years in bottle age, here is your chance at snagging some very nice wines at very attractive pricing. Very limited - Do not miss them.

As for a great inexpensive red wine for drinking this summer and over the next few years I am

repeating our feature from last week which has been very popular. If you missed it or just didn't get a chance to read about it there is still time to snag a few bottles or cases.

Today's Wine Deal \$\$\$

Dominio Del Plata Crios Malbec 2007 \$16 (only \$14.58/bottle based on case discount of \$ 175/case of 12)

I wrote about this winery from Mendoza Argentina before: founded & owned by two of the nicest people I have met in the wine business, Pedro Marchevski and Susana Balbo. In the past I have featured some of the high end wines from this dynamic duo. While true artisans, like most wineries, they have to make some wines that they can sell at lower price & larger quantities in order to pay their bills. Susana makes a line of wines under the Crios label which often provide fantastic value. In most years she pulls her best barrels to make the high end "signature" wines made in small quantities, which sell at top dollar. What is less known is that some of the other barrels which were made from top selected grapes end up in some of the Crios line wines. Based on what I tasted, I strongly suspect that some excellent material went into the 2007 Crios Malbec as this was excellent juice. The reality is that to get this kind of quality you can not afford to "grow" wine to sell at this price point-not even in Argentina, a wine producing country known for some of its great wine values.

The term used for this kind of wine in the business is "declassified" This is high end wine bottled in an affordable label - one sip and you will immediately notice the quality. This wine is soft yet lush; if you enjoy a good Merlot, chances are you will love this wine. Take a sip and the flavors keep coming. It is full of dark cherries, spices and Sandalwood. The flavors are rich and plentiful yet the wine maintains a nice sense of balance and elegance -a great glass of red to enjoy as a sipping wine on it's own yet there is also a nice note of smoke typical of good Malbec which makes it an easy match to food especially grilled meats. (and pretty much any meats that will come off your BBQ this summer).

This is very versatile red and as I mentioned before a good crowd pleaser. Great now, and if you don't drink it all quickly -no problem, as this can easily age gracefully for another 2-3 years. A great value for \$16 and an even better purchase at a very modest price of under \$15/bottle based on our case deal.

Collector's Corner

Kept in temperature controlled storage since release by a local long time collector. In stock now and priced well below market. Here is an opportunity to purchase some very nice wines with 13 -14 years of age.

1994 Leoville Barton St Julian \$49-

This got 90 points from both Parker & Wine Spectator on release. While the 1994 was never considered a great vintage a handful of wines seem to have been clearly superior. The LB is one of those who have turned out to be better than expected. This wine has started to show very well over the last 2 years. Give it a 3 hr decant and watch it fly.

1995 D'issan Margaux \$37-

The one from this offering most suitable for current consumption. In a 95/96 retrospective tasting by Wine Spectator done in 2007 this got the following report: "Very beautiful and classy aromas of

crushed raspberries, violets and cream. Full-bodied, with ultrafine tannins and lovely fruit. A little tannic still. Give it some more time.. Best after 2008.” –*JS score 90 points*. Give it an hour decant.

Lynch Bages Pauillac 1995 \$89-

A wine known for its ability to age for decades. So if you plan on commemorating a special event from 1995 this will be an excellent choice. The 95 Lynch has been improving steadily since release. In a 2007 Lynch Bages vertical tasting conducted by Wine Spectator this got a 94 point score: “A wine that continues to improve with age. Shows loads of ripe plum, almost prune, with hints of vanilla and mineral. Full, chewy and tight. Still needs time.--Lynch-Bages non-blind vertical. Best after 2008. –*JS* “. If you going to have one soon give it at least 5-6 hr decant.

Did you Know: You can catch our previous NFTC's in our Web site www.winepairings.biz just click on the newsletter tab and you will access all our recent notes.

events:

Too many to mention for the 4th of July weekend. The big one for Denver is of course the Cherry Creek Art festival which goes on all weekend. If you want to escape the heat of the front range check out www.summitdaily.com for a plethora of activities within a few hrs drive from Denver. My favorite fireworks are over Dillon Lake in the Frisco marina. In Denver Glendale fireworks which are always a good display in central town are on the 5th this year (usually they are on the 3rd) and of course the big display on the 16th st mall. Get out and enjoy.

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

Paul David, Chief Fermented Grape Taster.

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