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PROMOTING GERMAN GEMS

After promoting top German drops recently at the Top of Toronto, CN Tower, our Wine Estate representatives proceeded to George Restaurant for a memorable Winemakers' Dinner. Pictured from left to right were: Rainer Lingenfelder, Lingenfelder Estate; Andrea Besslich, Schloss Reinhartshausen; Juergen Sibbold, Badischer Winzerkeller; Melanie Unsleber, German Wine Princess; Marcel von den Benken, Schloss Schonborn; Sabine Sparwasser, Consul General of Germany, Monika Reule, CEO of the German Wine Institute.

SUPERSTITION - HALLOWEEN SENSATION

"Trick or treat, smell my feet, give me something good to eat..." You have probably heard this hundreds of times, with different rhyming endings, while shelling out treats to the kids as they cruise the neighbourhood on Halloween. Forget apples, oranges or bananas, unless you want to see Miss Chiquita burned in effigy during next year's devils night. The kids want to load up on the Lowney's, heap up the Hershey's, munch on Mars bars or crunch on Coffee Crisps instead. Mom and dad, however, should have a nice glass of crisp white wine on reserve for themselves, out of sight of the kiddies, while doing door duty. What better wine to enjoy than Superstition, a drier 51% Riesling, 49% Pinot Blanc Rheinhessen blend from Schmitt Soehne, the same fine folks who bring you RELAX and Fünf Riesling. The label prominently shows Lucky, a black cat. An often told tale from Germany's wine regions, tells of a vintner's black cat. It would become very feisty and literally defend certain casks it was perched upon from being purchased by wine brokers inspecting the cellar and its wines. As it turned out, that cask turned out to be the best one that the vintner and his family enjoyed for themselves or sold to favourite customers. Superstition or luck, it's your call. Schmitt Soehne took its best casks of wine to ensure your enjoyment. Drink on its own, or try with white fish covered with a fruit salsa or chicken and pasta in an Alfredo sauce.

PLEASE NOTE: this is a limited, one time seasonal purchase by the LCBO. Unless you can wait till next Halloween, stock up on a few bottles. **Superstition Riesling Pinot Blanc G238063, \$11.95.**



KINGS OF CABS AND CABS OF KINGS

When the Undurraga family, from the winery of the same name, decided to sell their interest in the business, which was founded in 1885, they knew they couldn't just sit around for too long counting their pesos. Without a stretch, to call them "Kings of Cabs" would be an understatement. They have winemaking in their veins and a stirring passion in their hearts to continue making the best wines. Despite being shareholders in one of Chile's largest wineries, they were no longer satisfied producing huge amounts of sound, commercial wines. Thus was born the Koyle project by the sixth generation of Undurrugas. After much searching, they settled on the higher region of the Colchagua Valley, called Los Lingues, to plant their vineyards. Here, where the slopes of the Andes start, the climate is Mediterranean with cooling winds coming down off the mountains. The low fertility soils are well drained with its combination of clay, large buried stones and decomposed volcanic matter. They consider Cabernet Sauvignon to be the king of red wines, hence the name ROYALE was chosen for their most regal, characterful line of wines. The vineyards are planted in high density formations and farmed biodynamically. After hand harvesting, a very selective sorting of the grapes is undertaken before the winemaking process starts.

The wine has small amounts of Malbec and Carmenère blended in before bottling in order to balance the tannins of the Cabernet Sauvignon as well as adding elegance and a velvety softness. Cristobal Undurraga, winemaker, has garnered some phenomenal winemaking skills around the world which he now applies to the Koyle range of wines. He worked at Chateau Margaux in Bordeaux, Rosemount in Australia, Franciscan Estates in California and Kaiken in Argentina. We can talk and applaud all we want, but tasting is believing so don't be afraid to buy a few bottles and pair it with rack of lamb. It will also make a great host gift next time you are invited out. Over delivering in all departments, no one will ever guess it only set you back \$19.95. **2008 Koyle Royale Cabernet Sauvignon V255760, \$19.95** (Arrive in Style- Oct 15)

HARRY'S HARANGUE (ABRIDGED) Blue Berry Hill

When finally ready to be harvested, the grapes will have blue skins. The Austrians call them Blauburgunder, the blue grapes of Burgundy. The Germans call them Spätburgunder, the late ripening grapes of Burgundy. The New World calls the grape by its French name, Pinot Noir. The vineyard hills all over the Baden region of Germany, across from the Alsace and down stream from Switzerland, hang full with ripe Pinot Noir grapes. Allowed to be called by its international name for export, Germany is the third largest producer of Pinot Noir in the world, after France and the U.S.A. A real treat awaits Ontario wine consumers. Tony Aspler, well-known Canadian wine journalist and author says: "It's hard to find a Pinot Noir for under \$10, but here's a really tasty example from the Badischer Winzerkeller in Germany's Baden region - actually Germany's warmest. Light ruby in colour with a nose and flavour of cherries and sweet rhubarb. At \$9.95 it's a bargain." **Baden Pinot Noir G231373, \$9.95**

Harry

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TIME FOR TANNAT YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE URUGUAY



Sandwiched between Brazil to the northeast and Argentina to the west, Uruguay has an interesting story to tell as it pertains to viticulture and winemaking. Wine consumption here is second only to Argentina and lies on the same latitude.

The fact that there is a huge cattle industry, whose plentiful and inexpensive beef beckons to be washed down with decent red wine, explains the history of wine in the pampas. The red grape most widely planted here is the Tannat whose ancestral homeland is south western France in Madiran, near to the Spanish border. In fact, it was Basque immigrants from Spain that first brought the grape to South America in the 1870's. Due to the climate, the grape takes on slightly different characteristics than home. The climate is sunny, but more rainfall is received. The vineyard area is not cooled by higher elevations which is the case in Argentina. With a landscape that is gentle and rolling, about an hour north of the nation's capital of Montivideo, the cooling influence comes from air currents blowing in from Antarctica and the South Pole. Evenings are cool, promoting a refreshing acidity. Fresh aromas and flavours are offset by plummy, velvety fruit. Our producer, Casa Filgueira, is one of Uruguay's most respected wineries. The "proof is in the pudding," so to speak, as they export to eight diverse countries located in South and North America, as well as Europe. It was also the first winery in South America to receive the ISO 9001 Certification. Granted by the International Organization for Standardization, this international guarantee of management and production standards is backed up by regular reviews and independent audits. Now, let's get to the wine. Upon sniffing our glass, we are met with aromas of plums, licorice, vanilla and leather. The taste is of ripe fruits, with soft tannins, medium body and a long, sustained finish. This wine screams: Where's the beef? Steak, empenadas or BBQ baby beef rib tips will do quite nicely, thank you. So get off that bucking bronco machine, hang up your cowboy hat and chaps and get down to some serious eating and moderate drinking. **2008 Casa Filgueira Tannat Fuga V229161, \$12.95.**

HAUT-BRION SCION?

Ah, Haut-Brion, it is one of the five top Premier Grand Cru Classé wines from the famous 1855 classification of Bordeaux. And it's one of the most expensive, too. Nowadays, it finds itself politically and geographically situated within the city limits of the city of Bordeaux and still sports the Leognan Pessac appellation. It was bought by Clarence Dillon, then U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, in 1935 and brought back to its former glory days. Could they ever use a guy like him in the U.S.A. today. It is still in the Dillon family, with a great grandson, whose title is Prince Robert of Luxembourg, running the show. That's what happens when successive generations of the founder spend most of their time in France and fall under the spell of beguiling European aristocracy, fall in love and get married. A Scion is the latest design of funky, minimalist, counter-culture, youth-inspired Toyota cars. It also refers to a grape cutting used to graft onto rootstock when planting vineyards. So where is this all leading to? Italy, would you believe! As many wine drinkers know, the movement to Super Tuscan wines was born of the fact that Italian wine and D.O.C. appellation laws dictate which grapes can be grown there. International varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Syrah were a no-no and could be only used if the wine were classified as IGT (Indication of Geographical Typicity). The pricing, quality and high scores by the international press pushed the fact that the wine had only an IGT classification, and no D.O.C., into irrelevance. Vignamaggio's estate Super Tuscan project, which resulted in the highly rated wine called Obsession, led to a small experimental parcel planting of Cabernet Franc cuttings that came from Chateau Haut-Brion. The vines are now 30 years old and the resulting, very limited production wine, is spectacular, to say the least. That Robert Parker scored the wine with "95" points in the Oct. 31, 2010 issue of the Wine Advocate, is obviously further proof that the folks at Vignamaggio are to be commended for their efforts and foresight. To quote Parker: "This beautifully sculpted, powerful Cabernet Franc captures plenty of varietal expression married to an unmistakable sense of Tuscany." **2006 Vignamaggio Cabernet Franc IGT Toscana CC236190, \$59.95** If Super Tuscan isn't your shtick, we have a traditional alternative. Named after the lady with the mysterious smile, who happens to have been born at the estate over 500 years ago, Vignamaggio's Monna Lisa - note the correct spelling- is their top end Reserve Chianti. Since the estate is located in the heart of Chianti, in the Village of Greve, all their wines carry the "Classico" designation. "Super rich and opulent," it received a "92" from Robert Parker on 10/31/2010. **2007 Monna Lisa Chianti Classico Riserva CC930651, \$36.95.** (Both wines can easily be laid down for at last 10 years.)



FROM FUNGUS TO FABULOUS

Tokaji Aszu is the only wine, other than Champagne, that must go through a second fermentation to end up in its final, one-of-a-kind state. A dry table wine, made up of a fermented cuvée of local white, indigenous Hungarian wine grapes of Harslevelu, Furmint and Muscat Blanc, is the starting point. Then, a second fermentation is created by adding the desired number of puttonyos, a measure of shrivelled aszu grapes that have been affected by the friendly botrytis cinerea fungus, to neutral wooden casks containing base wine. The more puttonyos, the sweeter the resulting wine. This ranges from a minimum of three to a maximum of six. The wine will then go through the second fermentation with the aid of a cellar-born fungus, cladosporium cellerae, that covers the labyrinth of cellar walls, deep below the surface. In a miracle of nature, unique to the Tokaji region, the casks act as wooden wombs, so to speak. The wine develops into the unctuous dessert wine, the world has come to appreciate and love. It is a beautiful wine to sip on its own, with the appropriate background music, especially when in a contemplative mood. Think rhapsody rather than rap. It's also a great partner with fois gras, but we think the match made in heaven, or in the cheese shop, is blue-veined cheese. Then again, it's the perfect liquid dessert. Our 2006 vintage Tokaji Aszu got "94" points in the Wine Spectator on June 30, 2010 and was pegged at # 28 in the magazine's 2010 Top 100 list. Sold in the 250 ml bottle, it is the perfect size for a small gathering or romantic interlude. It makes a great hostess/host gift for taking to a home where the local LCBO staff recommendation as to "what's popular" just won't cut it. **2006 Royal Tokaji 5 Puttonyos Tokaji Aszu V972836, \$19.95 (250 ml)**

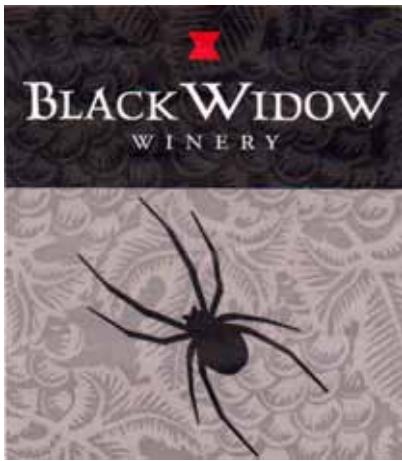
SHOWCASING CHINON FRENCH FRANC AT ITS BEST

With the continuing Euro currency crisis, of which France is a major supporter of rescue funds to bail out the PIGS (Portugal, Italy, Greece, Spain), there are many citizens of La Belle France who would probably love their French Franc currency back, but, maleureusement, this isn't going to happen. At least France still has the Franc in liquid form, Cabernet Franc that is. Known as the "Valley of the Kings," the Loire River Valley is dotted with royal castles that are masterpieces of architectural design and building. Just think of Chenonceau, Amboise and Chambord, to name a few. Google them and have a peek. After all, it was within a comfortable travelling distance from Versailles on the outskirts of Paris to the magnificent forests for hunting, relaxing and entertaining. And then there were the vineyards. The confluence of the Loire River and its tributary, the Vienne, is the kingdom of the Cabernet Franc grape. The climate benefits from the mild oceanic climate which has its source starting with the mouth of the Loire River where it empties into the Atlantic Ocean. Named after one of the founders of the Couly-Dutheil winery, the Rene Couly label comes from their 15 hectare estate located on a plateau above Chinon. It is a well deserved accolade to his entrepreneurship and dedication to viticulture on the Loire generally, and Chinon specifically. Founded in 1921, the family owns over 100 hectares of vineyards in the most prestigious middle Loire appellations. Headquarters is in the town of Chinon, considered to be the best appellation for red wine and epicentre of Cabernet Franc. That the wine won a Gold Medal at Angers, the Loire Valley's key wine competition, is further proof of Couly-Dutheil's red wine expertise. Chinon wines are all about finesse. Our example has a seductive bouquet of violets and wild strawberries. The taste is very elegant with lots of fruit. We would pair it with rabbit stew. **2009 Chinon Domaine Rene Couly V7286, \$17.95**

NOTE PRICES: LCBO prices are valid on the date of the publication, are subject to change without notice and are for 750ml sizes unless specified otherwise.

Consignment warehouse prices are for licensees including all taxes, charges and delivery. G=General listing, V=Vintage listing, CW=Consignment Warehouse, CC=Classic Catalogue

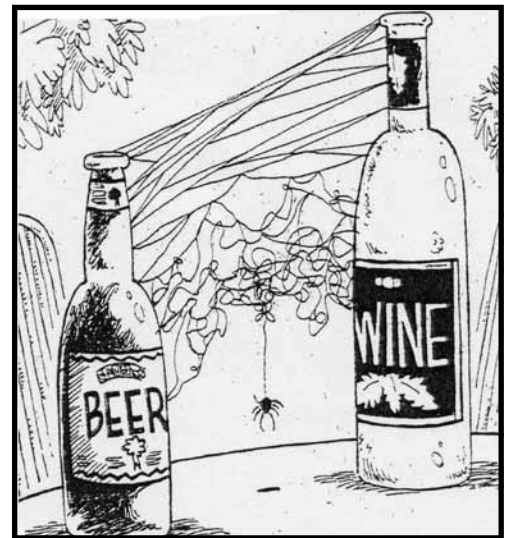
ISD=In Store Discovery - selected city key LCBO Stores. Check www.lcbo.com/vintages for locations.



HOURGLASS FOR YOUR GLASS

The hourglass is the poison reservoir located in the underbelly of female Black Widow spiders. A sting can be very toxic. In fact, their venom is 15 times more poisonous than a prairie rattlesnake. But contrary to popular belief, Black Widows are scaredy-cats, literally, quite shy and want nothing to do with humans. These shiny black beauties can be found hanging upside down from their irregularly spun webs. A favourite hang out spot is in-ground irrigation pipe valves or any other dark places close to the ground. Look before you reach, is the motto when working in a western vineyard or winery. The bright red hourglass design is clearly visible on the belly and also figures prominently in the winery logo. The female Black Widows are content to look for nourishment in the form of mosquitoes, flies, moths and crickets. As well, they keep their ugly male partners, which are about a third the size, in check. Sometimes they have even been known to eat their mates if they have mistaken him for a meal. So enter Dick Lancaster, competitive home winemaker, who has won enough medals over the last 25 years, or so, to fill a few steamer

trunks. He picked a 7.25 acre steep-sloped, western facing, rock-strewn vineyard located on prime Naramata Bench real estate on the eastern shore of B.C.'s Lake Okanagan to perfect his calling. It's the ideal desert micro-climate, dry with little rainfall and tons of sunshine. Looking for a winery name, Black Widow was the obvious choice based on the abundance of the critters locally. The gravity flow winery itself is built into the steep hillside with five levels. All juice, and finally the wine, is handled ever so gently contributing further to the myriad of complex flavours. No pumping required. The 2008 Hourglass red is predominantly made up of Merlot with 5% Cabernet Sauvignon blended in for further complexity and age ability. This wine can be laid down for at least five years, but it is definitely worth giving it a chance to provide pleasure sooner, by decanting it and serving it with a hearty dish. With fall upon us, temperatures cooling, leaves colouring and that "fallsy" nip in the air, we are going to recommend a hearty beef stew. Try and get some good Alberta beef. Instead of lots of beef, we recommend adding a greater proportion than normal of fall root vegetables – carrots, turnips, parsley and potatoes. By letting the stew simmer for a longer period of time at lower temperatures, the vegetables are able to really absorb a great deal more of the tasty juices of the beef. On another note, the local Okanagan folks and neighboring Albertans seem to find themselves in a friendly stew every now and then. When the Albertans come for the weekend, or decide to retire there, throwing around agri, logging or petro dollars in order to build lavish hillside mansions, there is never a dull moment. Throw in huge four-wheel-drive monster pick up trucks for a little more variety. The red neck rowdies try to co-exist, as best as possible, with their polite Anglo-Saxon influenced, back-to-nature, Birkenstock wearing, British Columbians. **2008 Black Widow Hourglass Naramata Bench VQA CC258822, \$54.95**



"Wine drinkers look good, are intelligent, sexy and healthy"

Hugh Johnson

Bumper sticker seen while driving through the Okanagan Valley wine region:

"Honk, if you love Jesus. Text while driving if you want to meet him."



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