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Winter 2011

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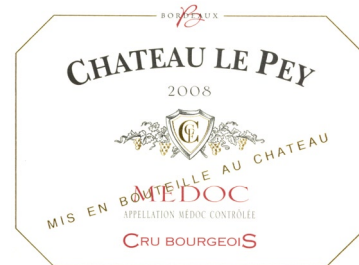
DIRTY HARRY MEETS THE LADIES OF DIRTY LAUNDRY

Harry Drung is pictured with the lovely ladies of Dirty Laundry Vineyard in the retail wine shop in Summerland, B.C. Harry went to the Okanagan Valley a couple of times this past year to obtain exclusive agency rights for Ontario. It must have been Harry tracking in dirt on his shoes into the tasting room, after inspecting the vineyards, that earned him the new nick name. Sorry Clint! Although quantities are limited at this stage, as production increases, we expect to be able to supply more Dirty Laundry wines to the wine lovers of Ontario. Contact us for information on availability and selection. See coverage of Dirty Laundry's Bordello Bordeaux blend elsewhere in this newsletter. And do visit www.dirtylaundry.ca.

PEY DAY, PEY DAY & CELEBRITY CHEF GORDON RAMSAY

What's the connection? Read on! Pey Day, the day when Château Le Pey hits the LCBO end aisle displays as its "Wine of the Month," is every day this January. You may pick up as many bottles as you wish, or can fit into your shopping basket or cart. Hailing from the village of Bègadan in the northern Médoc and owned by the Compagnet family, the vines in this 32 hectare Bordeaux estate average twenty years of age. The clay and limestone soil combination will give these mature grapes a depth of flavours from the moisture holding clay plus a pleasant minerality and acidity from the limestone. Consulting oenologist is Antoine Medeville who plies his craft very seriously. The 55% Cabernet Sauvignon and 45 % Merlot blend is harvested at optimum ripeness. Once crushed, the grapes are allowed to soak and macerate for an extended period to allow contact with the skins. This ensures maximum colour extraction before the fermentation starts. After fermentation, the new wine is aged for a minimum of 12 months in French oak barrels, of which 25% are new oak. The colour is deep garnet with a complex bouquet reminiscent of deep woods, mocha-chocolate and spices. The rich, earthy, plum flavours finish with chocolate and sandalwood notes. A great companion with all red meats. Or why not enjoy it with your favourite cheese and a hunk of baguette in front of a crackling fireplace full of glowing logs. As the temperature drops, cheer will rise. The "proof is in the pudding," so to speak, as the 2008 vintage bottles sport the 2010 Médaille D'Or (Gold Medal) from the Paris based Concourse Général Agricole wine competition, one of France's most important. Now, for the connection to TV Chef Gordon Ramsay. He's cer-

tainly gained super celebrity status with his shows, Kitchen Nightmare, Hell's Kitchen and the F-Word. It seems as though Gordon should have his mouth washed out with soap by his momma after every show filled with a never-ending stream of expletives. So when you hear **F** - this, **F**- that, the bleeps may actually block out what he is really trying to say. His **F** words should refer to wine and **F**ood - **F**ine, **F**ull, **F**ilet, **F**ish, **F**lank, **F**lour, **F**ondue, **F**ork, **F**rench, **F**ries, **F**reeze, **F**ruit, **F**resh, **F**ungi and **F**usilli. Gordon loves **F**rench wines. Château Le Pey is at the top of the red wine list at his La Veranda Restaurant. This lovely brasserie overlooks the lush gardens of the Palace of Versailles, the famous property on the outskirts of Paris, home to the former French kings. This wine also carries the Cru Bourgeois designation. This is an additional designation of quality granted to any Médoc chateau that submits itself to an annual inspection, by an independent panel, of the vineyards, review of its production processes followed by a tasting and sensory analysis. **2008 Château Le Pey Cru Bourgeois Médoc V200071, \$17.95. (WINE OF THE MONTH)**



QUINTA - ESSENTIAL QUALITY - TRIUMPH OF EVEL

All the major port producers have vineyard holdings, called Quintas, along the Douro River. Since Real Companhia Velha is Portugal's oldest and largest port producer, its holdings of prime vineyard land along the steep and winding slopes of the Douro are extensive. This gives them a phenomenal choice of the very best parcels to allocate for red table wine production. Many of them, quite old, are planted with the "usual suspects" of grapes, Touriga Nacional and Tinta Roriz (a.k.a. Tempranillo), plus Tinta Barroca and then there are a plethora of other varieties. In fact, up to ninety varieties are allowed. Hot, hot, hot is the climate with stifling temperatures in summer. Steep, steep, steep are the rugged slopes where the vines are planted on neat terraces. Some of the old stone walled terraces have actually been preserved in order for the region to keep its UNESCO World Heritage Site designation. Soil is almost non-existent on the steep hillsides, which is why walls were built on the steep hillsides. Newer terraces can now be worked by tractor as a result of vineyard rationalization that took place in the 1970's and 1980's due to the dwindling labor force. Much of the labour was done by elderly ladies who grew up working the slopes from childhood onwards but are being called with regularity to meet their maker and spend eternity in more angelic surroundings. Also, the movement of local farm folk to the cities has caused labour shortages which have, in part, been replaced by reliable, Euro Dollar seeking seasonal workers from North Africa or Eastern Europe. Evel is the leading Douro red wine brand in Portugal. It hails from the famous vineyards of Quinta de Cidrô and Quinta do Casal da Granja located in the San João da Pesqueira and Alijó districts. This beautiful, very dark red with violet tints entices us with an intense aroma of ripe fruits, cocoa and coconut. A full-bodied mixture of round tannins and subtle oak integrate well with the berry flavours. The finish is long and rounds out the taste experience. Enjoy with lamb burgers.

2007 Evel Tinto Douro V190694, \$14.95.

HARRY'S HARANGUE (ABRIDGED)

20 * C + M + B * 11

Travel through the wine growing regions of many European countries and one may see the above written in chalk on the doors or door frames of house entrances. C is for Caspar, M is for Melchior and B is for Balthasar. These are the names of the three Wise Men who came to visit and worship the baby Jesus and bring him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. It is from this event that the tradition of Christmas gift giving is said to originate. The celebration takes place on January 6, following the Twelve Days of Christmas. Called Epiphany, the general population also uses the word to mean a moment of revelation and insight into something. Children from the local church congregation visit homes, sing popular hymns and gather offerings for the less fortunate. The chalk message is to represent a blessing for the household throughout the year, in this case 2011.

Harry

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TUMBARUMBA ROCKS

From California's Santa Lucia Highlands to New Zealand's Islands, from Tasmania to Romania, and points in between, Pinot Noir has found its niche to provide consumers with wines of elegance that compliment food and don't overpower. While France's Burgundy region is the ancestral home of Pinot Noir, and where it reaches the pinnacle of perfection in some of the world's most expensive wines, the heartbreak grape keeps popping up in new world wine regions challenging those that seek the holy grail of grapes. The successful are rewarded with the crown of glory, the less successful are forced to swallow their pride, not to mention thin, weedy wines. Australia has scored some notable successes with Pinot Noir from Tasmania, and Victoria's Yarra Valley, Geelong and Mornington Peninsula, where prices start to rival top Burgundy appellations from the Côte d'Or. A relatively new region for Australian Pinot Noir, showing good results, is Tumbaramba. Located in the Snowy Mountains, part of the Australian Alps, vineyards can be found at altitudes ranging from 300 to 800 metres. Tumbaramba's climate is cool but no more so than that of the Yarra Valley. High sunshine hours with brilliant light, cold summer nights and a late start to the growing season are the order of the day. Frost is an ever-present threat and its presence dictates the necessity for careful site selection and management. There are typical high mountain soils, derived from decomposed granite and basalt, with a typically gritty and granular texture. The choice of vineyard sites is chiefly determined by aspect (north and northeast-facing preferred, south-facing almost impossible) and slope (sufficiently steep to promote good air drainage at night and thus minimize the risk of frost). Gee, sounds almost like Burgundy or Oregon's Willamette Valley. Pinotfiles, it seems, are visionaries, masochists bent on inflicting pain and hardship with religious fervor on themselves and their followers. The Calabria family of Westend Estate, located in warm Riverina region, specially created a range of wines called the "Cool Climate Series" for varieties such as Pinot Noir. Small, hand harvested parcels of fruit with intense flavours from selected growers ensure the highest quality. An aromatic nose of black cherry, forest mint and dried herbs is supported by a silky, savoury palate of ripe berries and earthy spices. We can think of nothing better than to pair this wine with a mushroom risotto. Earth to earthy, must to must have, should we wish to eulogize this unique, complex grape. **2009 Westend Estate Tumbaramba Cool Climate Series Pinot Noir V203141, \$17.95.**

WESTEND

COOL CLIMATE SERIES

PINOT NOIR



TUMBARUMBA

14.5% ALC/VOL

2009

750ml

STACCATO, THE SOUND AND TASTE OF ARGENTINA

Musically speaking, Staccato is the riveting beat that gives notes in tango tunes their memorable magic and seductive sound. Viticulturally speaking, Staccato is Caligiore winery's Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon blend made with organically grown grapes. Based in Mendoza's premium Lujan de Cuyo wine growing region, Caligiore's vineyards are farmed organically at the foot of the majestic Andes Mountain range at an altitude of 900 meters above sea level. Here the sun melts into remarkably elegant wines which fully capture the unique flavour of the High Valley of the Mendoza River. A 60% percent Malbec and 40% Cabernet Sauvignon blend, we were struck by the purity of fruit, depth of flavour and lingering finish when we tasted the Caligiore wines during our scouting tour to Argentina two years ago. No doubt, some of the vines being 75 years old contribute to the quality of the finished product. Brilliant ruby with purple tones, the bouquet exhibits floral and red fruit notes finishing with a dash of spice. On the palate, we are greeted with the taste of sweet fruits, a fine balancing acidity and smooth tannins. Dig into some BBQ'd baby back ribs and wash them down with this seductive smoothy. Even if you have to wear a parka while manning the grill, borrow mom's oven mitts to keep the hands warm. The agony of the cold feet will pay off with ecstasy in the mouth as the meat mixes with the wine and deftly dances over your tongue, past your tonsils and down the hatch. Oh what we wouldn't give for a great cut of grass fed pampas pampered Argentinian beef to go with this wine. **2009 Staccato Malbec Cabernet Sauvignon V196600, \$12.95.** (Made with organically grown grapes.)



Dirty Laundry™

DIRTY LAUNDRY AT LCBO

One of the hottest boutique wineries in the Okanagan Valley is Dirty Laundry. Located in the town of Summerland, the unique story behind the label and the quality of the wines to boot, have this winery scrambling to meet demand. In fact, the winery is closed this year from January to the end of April as they are out of wine to sell. As well, there is a major construction project taking place to expand their capacity. We were able to convince the owners and management to part with a small parcel of their precious inventory in order to supply

a few restaurant accounts plus provide a shipment for the LCBO. The winery takes its name from a local bit of history that was kept "hush, hush." Even the corks have the words printed on them, almost beckoning the consumer, once having pulled the cork, to put his or her pointing finger to their lips, lest the secret get out. According to the tale, there was a Chinese Laundry in town during the late 1800's when the railway was being built. But upstairs, the enterprising laundry man also ran a brothel. The logo and label design show an old fashioned steam iron from which plumes of steam are rising. Closer examination of the steam reveals feminine lines and shapes. Tongue in cheek, literally, Bordello is the winery's top wine, a Bordeaux blend. The grapes hail from select sites in B.C.'s new wine growing gem of a region, the Similkameen Valley. It has been named by Air Canada's EnRoute magazine as one of the world's "five best wine regions you've never heard of." The valley, due west of Osoyoos, straddles the U.S. border. Dotted with cattle ranches plus orchards and vineyards, it has a real western feel to it. With an exotic swirl of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and a dash of Cabernet Franc (49.5/49.5/1%), this gal is silky, velvety, full bodied, and rather provocative. She will flirt with you, and make you crave another encounter. Each bottle of Bordello comes with its own magnifying glass hung over the neck. This allows one to examine some interesting label artwork, not readily visible to the, wink, wink, naked eye. Decant and enjoy with a big steak or lay down to allow this beauty to develop further. **2008 Dirty Laundry Bordello Similkameen Valley V219717, \$49.95.** (Feb. 5)

CABINET AND/OR KABINETT MATTERS

Cabinet and caucus kerfuffles continue in Ottawa. Haiti earthquake support increases. Harper fan mail decreases. Appreciating dollar while the unemployed holler. New fighter jets versus by election bets. Minority rules while Ignatieff cools. National defense incorporates huge G20 security expense. Visit by the Royals versus royalties from oils. Dead tar sand birds elicit nasty words. While provincial rhetoric surges, prepare for penny coin purges. Senate sleeps, NDP weeps. WikiLeaks and the new Governor General speaks. What the heck has this got to do with wine? Well, Cabinet of another type was an historical term used prior to 1971 by German wine estates to designate wines considered to be of superior quality and worthy of space in the producer's own cabinet or cellar. The designation was changed in favour of the term Kabinett in the German Wine Law of 1971. The steep, rocky vineyard "Goldtröpfchen," meaning little drop of gold, located above the romantic wine village of Piesport, is one of the best known sites on the Mosel River. Due to the extreme bend of the river, this vineyard has the shape of an amphitheater facing south. With a SW to SE slope of 60 degrees, the soil consists of light gray weathered slate. These natural conditions create very mineral driven wines with exciting fruit and playful elegance. The Kesselstatt Estate, largest and among the most famous on the Mosel, was founded in 1618. They own 4.5 hectares of this famous site. With aromas of green berries, passion fruit and peaches also jump out of the glass. Elegant and lively, the fine acidity gives a pleasant "kick." - a mouthful of pleasure like gliding on the wings of a butterfly. Did we mention accolades? **"90"** Wine Spectator and **Top 100**, The Fine Wine Review **"91+,"** Robert Parker **"90."** Perfect for that favourite fish dish or great as an aperitif. **2007 Kesselstatt Riesling Kabinett "Piesporter Goldtröpfchen" V189654, \$19.95.**

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.

GOLDEN MILE – BC STYLE



B.C.'s Okanagan Valley, which stretches about 100 km from the international border with Washington, USA, in the south, to past Kelowna in the north, is the extension of the North America's great Sonoran desert. Just south of the town of Oliver is the Okanagan's premier wine growing region, known as the "Golden Mile." While it doesn't have its own appellation yet, they are working on it. Nestled on the scenic south-west

benches of the town of Oliver, the vineyards are gently sloped facing south east. This translates into excellent exposure to the sun while the elevation from the valley floor keeps the vines above the Fall frost zone. Extra depth is added to the wines by the rich, rocky, sandy soils found in these benches. Enter the Gehringer Brothers, Walter and Gordon. First planting vineyards in 1981, the winery was built in 1985 to accommodate their first harvest. With 25 vintages under their belts, Gehringer Brothers Estate Winery is one of the grand daddies of BC wine industry. Their wine making passion is reflected in an unparalleled level of consistency. Always VQA, they have a collection of medals and

awards that literally would fill treasure chests. This brings us to the wine which Ontario wine lovers will finally be able to enjoy. Gehringer Brothers Dry Rock Vineyard is their premium vine growing site. This un-oaked Chardonnay has distinct ripe pineapple and pear flavours. The lower crop yield has lifted the intensity of flavours, while the slow, cool fermentation combined with extended sur lie exposure to the spent yeasts contributes to further complexity. Over the years, this wine has received more medals than a Pentagon four star general. The current 2009 vintage won Double Gold at the International Eastern Wine Competition, and further Golds at the All Canadian Wine Championships and Oregon's NorthWest Wine Summit. Enjoy with grilled chicken breasts with a side of home-made tropical fruit salsa and Asian glass noodles. **2009 Dry Rock Vineyards Unoaked Chardonnay V219642, \$18.95.**

"We like our wine to age – drive home slowly."

Sign at a make-your-own wine retailer.

"Oh, what would become of me if I didn't have the freedom to express my creativity. My passion would become work and my wine would taste boring. Fine wine is born of the land, but also of my labour and my imagination. It is part of me, like my children.

ANON



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Stomp
and press hard
but don't make
me wine.