



EVENTS

Cult Wines @ The U of T Faculty Club

Wednesday, March 18 , 6:30 pm

VIN DE CONSTANCE - some history...

In the 18th and 19th centuries "the sweet luscious and excellent wine of Constantia" was recognized as one of the great wines of the world. These historic vineyards were first planted in the late 1600s as part of the original Constantia estate, whose legendary sweet wines were celebrated in literature by Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and Baudelaire.

Chosen for its soil of decomposed Table Mountain granite, and its cooling sea breezes from both the Atlantic and Indian oceans, these vineyards provide the perfect terroir for premium winegrowing.

"From these Elysian fields used to come one of the very greatest wines in the world - the legendary Constantia," writes Hugh Johnson, "Constantia was bought by European courts in the early 19th century in preference to Yquem, Tokay, Madeira..." Kings vied for possession of this wine. Louis Philippe sent emissaries from France to fetch it, Napoleon drank it on the island of St Helena, finding solace in his lonely exile, Frederick the Great and Bismarck ordered it and in England the Prime Minister - who had sampled it with much delight at Downing Street - made sure that consignments from the Cape were delivered to Buckingham Palace for the King.

"The sweet, luscious and excellent wine called Constantia" soon became part of the literature of the 19th century. In Edwin Drood Charles Dickens tells of "...the support embodied in a glass of Constantia and a home-made biscuit", while Jane Austen recommends that her forsaken heroine try a little Constantia for "...its healing powers on a disappointed heart". While German poet Klopstock devotes an entire ode to the pleasures of this wine, Baudelaire transforms it into a sensuous image for his great brooding poem Les Fleurs du mal.

Towards the end of the 19th century the dreaded disease phylloxera arrived at the Cape, causing devastation in the vineyards and bankruptcy amongst winemaking families. Groot

Constantia was sold to the Government as an experimental wine farm and the Cloetes moved away. "The old order changeth, yielding place to new", and with it went the famous sweet Constantia wines which had brought delight and pleasure the world over. The legend lived on however, immortalised in poetry and prose, and still vibrantly alive in many old bottles which lay forgotten in the cellars of Europe's great wine collectors.

Since 1980 Klein Constantia has been redeveloped and everyone involved has seen it as a challenge, almost a mission, to bring back the famous wine, for the farm had been part of Simon van der Stel's estate. Early records were studied and careful selection made from vines which in all likelihood came from the original stock used in Constantia 300 years ago.

Now, a century after its disappearance, comes the renaissance - Vin de Constance - made in the style of the old Constantia, from vineyards which one produced this legendary wine.

Trying the 2002 is a supreme pleasure.

Klein Constantia Vin De Constance 02

Incredibly deep gold, with hints of brass and copper. Beautiful to look at as it captures the light. The nose is spiced marmalade, flint, lemon, heather honey and a touch of marzipan edged with floral perfume and a hint of minerality. Honey and marmalade come alive on the palate - such brilliant purity of sweetness and fruit - oranges, lemons and a touch of peach. It isn't flabby - there's a classic flintiness and minerality. The finish lasts a good couple of minutes. Surprisingly elegant, considering the intense concentration of flavours.
\$79

Sadie Family Columella '05

Highest rated South African Wine in Wine Spectator @ 95 points. A stunning array of blue and black fruit i.e. blackberry, boysenberry, blueberry and currant with licorice, sweet spice, vanilla, mineral. Despite its concentration, it's remarkably elegant, with superb length and a seamless finish.
\$85.00*

Vilafonte Series C '04

Clearly cab led (52%), which name implies: more austere, imposing than M below, though influential 35% merlot adds sweet-fruited mid-palate flesh; Serious tannin grip but also verve, freshness to balance riper style, ensure ageing potential. Seasoned with cab f, malbec (9/4%).
\$59.00

Vilafonte Series M '04

Though style rather than variety determines blend, the two 'Ms' — supple, luxurious merlot & minerally malbec — are major influences here. Marginally more accessible than 'C', though both need min 5 yrs. Sophisticated composition cab, merlot, malbec, cab franc (36/31/25/8); ripe, velvety with dense tannin, focussed freshness. \$45.00

Ken Forrester The FMC

Designed to 'put Cape chenin indelibly on the map'. Powerful & gorgeous, among their best: lush tropical fruit, citrus peel & roasted nuts; voluptuous body with ultra-long, satiny

finish. 9.7g/l sugar tastes dry. Perfect oaking. Wine , IWC gold.
\$55.00

Ken Forrester The Gypsy '04

Spice and vanilla scents. Shiraz & Grenache, vinified separately and only the very best barrels of each variety selected, blended and matured in oak for a total of 24 months to fully express the balanced, yet somewhat "wild" somewhat bohemian character of these 2 noble varieties at maximum extract.
\$49

Veenwouden Classic'03

Opaque purple colour, offering provocative aromas of pure crushed blackcurrants, blackberries, liquorice and a hint of violets. Admirable depth and ripeness with refreshing acidity and a long aftertaste. 47% cabernet sauvignon, 43% merlot, 7% cabernet franc, 3% malbec. 2007 Michelangelo International Wine Awards - Silver
\$38.65

Rustenberg Peter Barlow '04

100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Wonderful and complex nose. Upfront perfume, intermingled with concentrated cassis and black cherries and some herbaceousness. Palate is very concentrated. Finest example of South African cabernet sauvignon and certainly world-class.
Steve Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - 93 Points; Platter - 4½ stars; 2007 Decanter World Wine Awards - Silver Medal \$59.00

Boekenhoutskloof Syrah '04

Solidly ripe, but in more of a Rhône style, with lots of grilled herb, pepper, briar and black currant aromas and flavors, with a structured, mineral finish. High profile Syrah. Elegant, mellifluous flavours/tannins, great concentration. Top of Syrah in S.A.
WS 91, 5* star in Platter's.
\$49.90

Boekenhoutskloof The Chocolate Block '05

Syrah 46%, Grenache Noir 22%, Cabernet Sauvignon 14%, Cinsault 14%, Viognier 4%. Very tasty and reasonably priced. Delicious rich nose of plum and currant, dark ruby color, Flavors of dark cherry, spice, and a hint of chocolate. Rich and fruity with ripe tannins and loads of flavor.

Cheap & Cheerful Cult Wines @ The U of T Faculty Club

Wednesday, January 14 March 18 , 6:30 pm

Mail to:

SAWS
BOX 37085, 6478 YONGE STREET

WILLOWDALE ON M2M 4J0

Enclosed find our cheque payable to **South African Wine Society** or **Visa* credit card** information for ____ member/s @ \$ 55 and ____ guests @ \$ 65 = _____

* Visa charges will appear as **Pushka Holdings** . If we have your credit card information on file, you may book by e-mail to sawsinfo@rogers.com

Name(s) _____

Phone _____

Visa Card Number _____ Expiry ____ /

Name on card _____

We will make every effort to accommodate your food allergies or special dietary needs if you let us know in advance.

WAIVER, RELEASE AND INDEMNITY

Participation in any event acknowledges that I, for myself, my heirs or assigns, hereby release and forever discharge and indemnify the South African Wine Society (SAWS), its executive, all members and their guests, from any and all damages, claims and actions relating to SAWS activities, at society functions or on society grounds. I also certify that I, and my guests, are 19 years of age or older.

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