

An Evening of Celebrity Chefs and the World's Greatest Wines

Verticals

Abreu Madrona Ranch
1999, 2003, 2008

Colgin IX
Proprietary Red Estate
2004, 2006, 2007

Dunn Cabernet
Sauvignon Howell
Mountain
1987, 1993, 1994

Latour
1959, 1982, 2001

Mouton Rothschild
1986, 1996, 2003

Pavie
1998, 2000, 2003

Peter Michael Winery
Les Pavots
Proprietary Red Wine
1997, 2001, 2002

Pichon
Comtesse de Lalande
1982, 1986, 2000

Shafer Hillside Select
2001, 2002, 2003

Spottswoode
2001, 2005, 2007

Horizontals

1989 Pichon
Baron, Montrose,
Lynch-Bages

1990 Lynch-Bages, Pichon
Baron, Leoville Las-Cases

1999 Lafite Rothschild,
Palmer, Pavie

2001 Dalla Valle Estate,
Pride Reserve, Araujo Eisele

2000 Lynch-Bages, Angelus,
Pichon Baron

2002 Araujo Eisele,
Spottswoode, Hundred Acre
Kayli Morgan

2003 Leoville Barton,
Leoville Poyferre,
Lynch-Bages

2003 Margaux, Haut-Brion,
Valandraud

2005 Harlan, Kongsgaard,
Scarecrow

2007 Abreu Thorevilos,
Madrona Ranch, Cappella



An Unforgettable Wine Dinner Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank

Monday, February 24, 2014 at the Jonathan Beach Club

6:30 pm Cocktails | 7:15 pm Dinner

\$1,000 per ticket

Cocktail Attire



An Unforgettable Wine Dinner Celebrating the 40th Anniversary
of the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank,
the 2013 LA Business Journal Charity of the Year

Monday, February 24, 2014 at the Jonathan Beach Club
6:30 pm Cocktails | 7:15 pm Dinner

This wine and food event is presented by your neighbors in LA County who have more wine than they need, so that the LA Regional Food Bank can continue to provide nutritious food to our neighbors who have less food than they need. The Food Bank collects and distributes over a million pounds of food every week in LA County, and distributes food for four meals for every dollar raised!

The evening will start with a cocktail hour featuring some of the world's finest vodkas, courtesy of Nic's Beverly Hills, home of the *VodBox*. Our chefs for this phenomenal event will be Jason McClain, Executive Chef of the Jonathan Club, Iron Chef's Cat Cora (www.catcora.com) and Church & State and Spring's Tony Esnault (www.churchandstatebistro.com). Caitlin Stansbury, the Jonathan Club's outstanding sommelier, will be commenting on the great wines, winemakers and vintages we will have the privilege of tasting.

The format for this wonderful evening revolves around verticals (great vintages of the same wine) and horizontals (great wines from the same vintage) from two of the world's greatest wine regions—Napa and Bordeaux. Each table of 8 will enjoy a 3-bottle vertical and a 3-bottle horizontal of the world's leading red wines at one of the tables listed below, determined by lottery.

Tasting notes reprinted with permission of eRobertParker.com. There will be a business card drawing for an autographed magnum of *Beaune Freres* Pinot Noir from Robert Parker's cellar.



Jason McClain
Executive Chef,
Jonathan Club



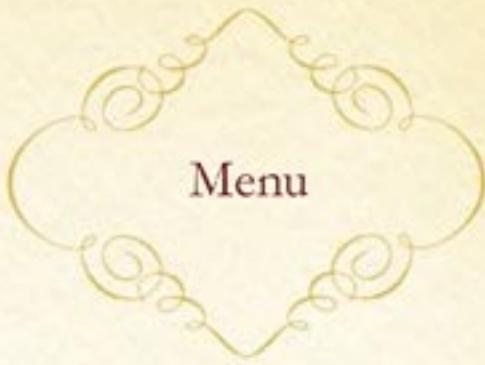
Cat Cora
Iron Chef



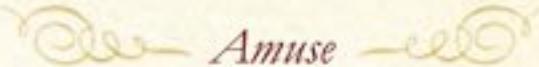
Tony Esnault
Church & State, Spring



Sally Camacho
Executive Pastry Chef,
Jonathan Club



Menu



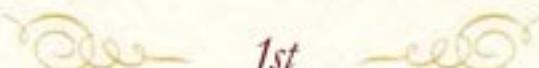
Amuse

Chef Jason McClain

Steak Tartare

Onion Chips, Frisée

Cornichon Mustard Remoulade



1st

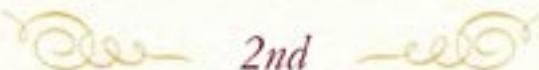
Chef Jason McClain

Weiser Family Farms Beet Salad

Duck Two Ways: Smoked & Confit

Blood Orange, Candied Pistachios, JC Garden Gem Lettuce

Laura Chenel Chevre

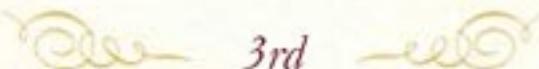


2nd

Chef Cat Cora

Bittersweet Chocolate Agnolotti with Roasted Butternut Squash,

Brown Butter Sage and White Chocolate Emulsion



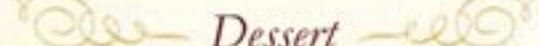
3rd

Chef Tony Esnault

Noisettes de Chevreuil

Venison Saddle, Sweet Potato, Parsnip, Quince, Savoy Cabbage

Sauce Veneur



Dessert

Chef Sally Camacho

Chestnut Chocolate Montage

Milk Chocolate Glace, Complexite Cremeux, Chestnut Rum Purée,

Chestnut Chocolate Brown Butter Cake

Table One

Vertical: Shafer Hillside Select (2001, 2002, 2003)

2001 and 2002 Shafer Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon Hillside Select (100 each)

I should not be surprised that the 2001 Cabernet Sauvignon Hillside Select merited a perfect rating since I rated it 99 eight years ago. I also gave the 2002 Hillside Select a perfect rating. Kudos to Doug and John Shafer for creating two perfect wines in back to back vintages. The 2001 is a big wine (14.9% natural alcohol), but the alcohol is buried beneath an avalanche of creme de cassis, wood smoke, toast, licorice and spring flower characteristics. Super full-bodied with fabulous fruit purity, a broad, expansive mouthfeel, lots of glycerin and a huge upside, this 2001 is still an infant at age ten, but it is approachable as well as compelling to smell and taste ... of the great young, legendary classics from Napa Valley. It was a privilege to taste.

2003 Shafer Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon Hillside Select (100)

One of the great so-called "first growths" of Napa . . . This has been one of the top dozen or so wines in every vintage for over 15 years. A big wine at 14.9% alcohol, it is aged an atypically long time of 32 months in 100% new French oak, but at ten years of age, no oak is present. It is an utterly perfect wine, surpassing almost everything else made in 2003! It possesses everything one could desire in a Cabernet Sauvignon – minerality, flowers, creme de cassis, blackberries, velvety tannins, a skyscraper texture, perfect balance and integration between the acidity, tannin, alcohol and wood, all well-concealed by the luxurious nature of this great wine. The finish is endless in this prodigious offering from a great family of grape growers and winemakers. It proves the point that good girls can finish first. This 2003 should continue to drink well for 25-30 years.

Horizontal: 1999 Bordeaux – Lafite Rothschild, Palmer, Pavie

1999 Lafite Rothschild (95)

It is a quintessential offering from Lafite Rothschild. This prodigious wine is both elegant and intensely flavored, and almost diaphanous in its layers that unfold with no heaviness. An opaque ruby/purple color is accompanied by a complex bouquet of lead pencil, graphite, cedar, creme de cassis, toast, and vanilla. It is medium-bodied, with extravagant layers of richness yet little weight, and a finish that is all sweetness, ripeness, and harmony. This extraordinary Lafite increasingly appears to be a modern day done of the majestic 1953.

1999 Palmer (95)

Deep color. Slowly building nose becomes more generous and powerful with aeration. The 1999 Palmer yields scents of blueberry, sweet spices, smoke, leather, and forest floor. As a total package, it's a sensational bouquet. Rich and mouth-filling, with elegance, opulence, and impressive structure. While still having tannin to shed, the 1999 is fruit forward in a lavish way. Very long and spicy finish...

1999 Pavie (95)

The 1999 Pavie is a candidate for "wine of the vintage". It boasts an opaque ruby/purple color in addition to gorgeous aromas of crushed minerals, smoke, licorice, cherry liqueur, and black currants. The wine is exceptionally pure and multilayered, with stunning texture and overall balance. The tannin level suggests 3-4 years of cellaring is warranted; it should age gracefully for 25+ years. If readers are wondering why Pavie has become so much better under the administration of Chantal and Gerard Perse, keep in mind that yields are one-third of what they were under the previous owners.

Table Two

Vertical: Colgin IX Proprietary Red Estate (2004, 2006, 2007)

2004 Colgin IX (98)

The 2004 IX Proprietary Red Wine is amazing out of bottle. Flamboyant, super-fragrant aromas of graphite, creme de cassis, espresso roast, flowers, and the entire black and blue fruit spectrum jump from the glass of this gorgeous wine. In the mouth, silky tannin and a multi-dimensional, skyscraper-like mouthfeel are offered without heaviness or coarseness. This totally profound wine exhibits what a great site, extraordinary winemaking, and a commitment to excellence can produce.

2006 Colgin IX (100)

From the Pritchard Hill Vineyard, the 2006 IX Proprietary Red Estate . . . reveals the noble sweetness of tannin, the extraordinary rich, intense mouthfeel, and sumptuous aromas of flowers, burning embers, blackberries, blueberries, spice box, and cedar. With extraordinary intensity, beautiful purity, a texture and flavors that build incrementally on the palate, and a significantly long finish, this is a perfect wine. Colgin is one of the reference points for just what heights mountain-grown Cabernet Sauvignon, Bordeaux varietals, and more recently, Syrah, can achieve in Napa Valley.

2007 Colgin IX (100)

The staggeringly rich, complex, harmonious, impeccably well-balanced 2007 IX Proprietary Red Estate exhibits aromas of spring flowers, cedarwood, Asian spices, licorice, blueberries, and blackberries. A distinct liqueur of minerals buttresses the full-bodied, massive concentration, giving an overall impression of elegance, purity, and harmony. This is another seamless tour de force in winemaking. It should drink well for 25 or more years. Colgin's 2007s, which include their final vintage of Cabernet Sauvignon from the Herb Lamb Vineyard, are all extraordinary, world-class wines.

Horizontal: 2003 Bordeaux – Leoville Barton, Lynch-Bages, Valandraud

2003 Leoville Barton (95+)

One cannot admire enough proprietor Anthony Barton and his classic, potentially long-lived wines that are models of power, elegance, and longevity – in short, these wines symbolize what makes Bordeaux so world-renowned! Probably capable of rivaling the 2000, the uncompromisingly made, formidably powerful, masculine, and highly extracted 2003 has an inky purple color to the rim, a big, deep personality with a tight but promising nose of forest floor, creme de cassis, smoke, charcoal, licorice, and perhaps even truffle.

Valandraud (93)

The home property of Jean-Luc Thunevin, the inspirational spirit for Bordeaux's garagiste movement, is Valandraud. The 2003 is a full-bodied, powerful St.-Emilion offering up notes of espresso roast, chocolate, sweet currants and cherries, and hints of minerals as well as cedar. Expressive and pure, with copious tannins lurking behind the cascade of fruit and glycerin, this wine requires 2-4 years of bottle age, and should drink well for two decades or more.

2003 Lynch-Bages (95)

This seedy, evolved, dense ruby/purple-tinged 2003 reveals notes of smoke, herbs, black currant jam, licorice and graphite. Full-bodied, opulent and flamboyant, it is another example of a stunning 2003 northern Medoc that can be drunk now or cellared for 10-15 more years.

Table Three

Vertical: Abreu Cabernet Sauvignon Madrona Ranch (1999, 2003, 2008)

1999 Abreu Cabernet Sauvignon Madrona Ranch (93)

Exhibits a saturated purple color in addition to a gorgeous bouquet of espresso beans intermixed with licorice, incense, blueberries and blackberries. There is more tannin in the unusually austere finish, but the wine is remarkably complex, and should be exceptionally long-lived. This is the wine of a genius who refuses to make any compromises. For example, even though I thought it was outrageously delicious, Abreu declassified his 1998 Madrona Ranch Cabernet because it was not up to his personal standards.

2003 Abreu Cabernet Sauvignon Madrona Ranch (96)

Possesses a freshness that almost belies the vintage character. Its dense purple color is just beginning to reveal some garnet. The nose exhibits abundant floral notes intermixed with notions of blueberries, black raspberries and licorice-infused cassis. Graceful, elegant, and close to full maturity, it is drinking beautifully, displaying secondary nuances, a supple, full-bodied texture and a lush, layered mouthfeel. There is not a bit of aggressiveness, and the tannins, wood and alcohol (14.5%) are all beautifully integrated. As one might expect, this is one of the vintage's superstars. Drink it over the next 10-15 years. It is hard to give enough credit to winemaker Brad Grimes and owner/winemaker/viticulturist David Abreu.

2008 Abreu Cabernet Sauvignon Madrona Ranch (97)

Espresso, mocha and licorice meld into dark red fruit and sweet exotic spices in this superb wine. The 2008 is an extraordinarily polished, refined wine for the vintage. Sweet spiced and floral notes reappear to round out the finish. The relatively high percentage of Cabernet Franc (37%) comes through in spades here. . . . Brad Grimes is one of the most brilliant winemakers in Napa Valley. He seems guided by a sense of intuition married to experience rather than the more technical approach that is quite common throughout the Valley. Co-fermentations are quite common. Grimes isn't going to lose any sleep if a few stuck stems make it into the fermentation tanks. The winery itself is as immaculate as it could possibly be. Simply put, these are some of the most beautiful wines being made in Napa Valley today.

Horizontal: 2003 Bordeaux – Margaux, Haut-Brion, Leoville Poyferre

Chateau Margaux (99)

Am I being too stingy with the 2003 Chateau Margaux? A wine of extraordinary complexity and intensity, it reveals a deep purple color, a style not unlike the 1990 Margaux (possibly even more concentrated), a velvety texture, and notes of spring flowers interwoven with cassis, melted licorice, creme de cassis, and pain grille. Not a blockbuster, it offers extraordinary intensity as well as a surreal delicacy/lightness. There is riveting freshness to this offering, which tips the scales at a lofty (for this estate) 13.5% alcohol, as well as an alluring sweetness and accessibility. It. . . is a profound Chateau Margaux that brings to mind a hypothetical blend of the 1982 and 1990.

Chateau Haut-Brion (95)

The blockbuster 2003 Haut-Brion (13% alcohol) possesses extremely high tannin, but that component is well-concealed by a cascade of mulberry, blackberry, cherry, and plum-like fruit. There is even a hint of figs under the blue and red fruit spectrum. While broad and ripe with a sweet, glyceral mouthfeel as well as a long, powerful, persistent finish, it retains its elegance and nobility. A wine of both power and finesse, it will benefit from 3-4 years of cellaring, and keep for 25-30.

Table Three (continued)

2003 Leoville Poyferre (98)

It is a colossal success and a potential legend in the making. Its saturated, dense inky/blue/purple color offers up notes of crumbled rocks, acacia flowers, blueberries, black raspberries, and creme de cassis. A synthesis of power and elegance, this multi-layered wine has spectacular concentration, sweet but high tannin, and low acidity. A stunning effort that showcases this legendary terroir, it is a brilliant, brilliant success. The quintessential Leoville Poyferre?

Table Four

Vertical: Peter Michael Winery Les Pavots Proprietary Red Wine (1997, 2001, 2002)

1997 Peter Michael Winery Les Pavots Proprietary Red Wine (96)

The 1997 Les Pavots originates from a hillside vineyard overlooking the Knight's Valley that has 23 acres planted with Bordeaux varietals. The 1997 blend consists of 79% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, and 9% Cabernet Franc. The wine was aged in French oak (50% new). A blue/black/purple color is followed by an extraordinary bouquet of toast, blackberries, creme de cassis, licorice, and cedar. Full-bodied, with silky tannin, low acidity, and layers of concentrated, pure black fruits judiciously wrapped in subtle toasty oak.

2001 Peter Michael Winery Les Pavots Proprietary Red Wine (97)

A spectacular Knight's Valley proprietary red wine from Peter Michael, the 2001 Les Pavots performed brilliantly in the horizontal tasting I did in Napa Valley in late May. Its dense opaque blue/purple color is accompanied by notes of graphite, charcoal, burning embers, creme de cassis, licorice and chocolate fudge. Opulent and full-bodied with sweet tannin as well as low acidity, it is just beginning to strut its stuff and reveal secondary nuances.

2002 Peter Michael Winery Les Pavots Proprietary Red Wine (99)

A great, great success, the 2002 Les Pavots, which I loved from barrel as well as bottle, still has a good 20+ years of life ahead of it ... Inky black/purple, with a nose of incense, licorice, balsamic and Asian soy notes interwoven with blackberry, blueberry and hints of truffle and camphor, this wine is full-bodied, opulent and voluptuously textured, with sensational mid-palate, depth and richness. This is a killer Bordeaux-styled, ripe, exuberant, flamboyant red from Peter Michael that stands as one of the all-time great Les Pavots cuvées ever made. Bravo!

Horizontal: 1989 Bordeaux – Lynch-Bages, Pichon-Longueville Baron, Montrose

1989 Lynch-Bages (99+)

Its dense purple color reveals a slight lightening at the edge and the stunning bouquet offers classic notes of creme de cassis, subtle smoke, oak and graphite. Powerful and rich. It should prove to be a 50 year wine.

Table Four (continued)

1989 Pichon Baron (95)

The dense, full-bodied 1989 is brilliantly made with huge, smoky, chocolatey, cassis aromas intermingled with scents of toasty oak... Well-layered, with a sweet inner-core of fruit... it should last for three decades or more. It is unquestionably a great Pichon-Louquerville Baron.

1989 Montrose (96)

An outstanding Montrose, the 1989 is one of the vintage's stars. It possesses an opaque dark ruby/purple color, a sweet nose of minerals, black fruits, cedar, and wood, dense, medium to full-bodied, highly extracted flavors, low acidity and moderate tannin in the long finish...

Table Five

Vertical: Spotteswoode (2001, 2005, 2007)

2001 Spotteswoode (95)

This is a beautiful wine... This blend of 95% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Cabernet Franc, from one of Napa's prestigious sites on the valley floor tucked behind the town of St. Helena, has a dense blue/purple color and a beautifully sweet nose of spring flowers intermixed with raspberry jam, blueberries and black currants. Some licorice and subtle oak are followed by a quintessentially elegant yet substantial wine with sweet tannins, medium to full body and a seamless texture. Drinkable already, the wine will continue to offer the more elegant, complex, evolved style of Napa Cabernet Sauvignon produced in 2001 for at least another 15-20 years.

2005 Spotteswoode (96)

The utterly profound 2005... exhibits notes of blueberries, cassis, spring flowers, licorice, and forest floor. Beautifully pure and full-bodied with excellent overall harmony as well as superb purity, it reveals a Chateau Margaux-like personality. Spotteswoode Vineyard is one of Napa's most well-known landmarks, and its winemaking team, owner Beth Novak, and assistants Rosemary Cakebread and Jennifer Williams, represents a trifecta of talented young women. When the history of Napa's great vineyards is written, the 40-acre Spotteswoode Vineyard, tucked behind the quaint town of St. Helena, will be counted among the finest grand cru vineyards of the region. These wines have always been good, but over the last decade, the quality has soared, no doubt because of a much more strict selection in the vineyard as well as in the winery.

2007 Spotteswoode (99)

Retasting the 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon was a treat as I believe it is the greatest Spotteswoode has ever produced. Wonderful aromas of black raspberries, blueberries, black currants and flowers jump from the glass of this dark ruby/purple-tinged Cabernet. As I have stated before, if Chateau Margaux were in Napa Valley, it would be Spotteswoode. The purity, balance and delicacy of this wine are impressive. Perhaps slightly less dense and powerful than the 2008, the 2007 is flawlessly put together with nothing out of place. It, too, should age effortlessly for 20-30+ years. This historic estate, tucked behind the town of St. Helena in the foothills of the Mayacamas Mountains, was established in 1882, and is run by one of the grand ladies of Napa, Mary Novak, along with her daughter, Beth. These have long been very good, classic wines, but over the last 10-15 years their quality has soared into the upper echelons of the Napa hierarchy.

Table Five (continued)

Horizontal: 1990 Bordeaux – Lynch-Bages, Pichon Baron, Leoville Las-Cases

Lynch-Bages (99)

This magnificent Lynch-Bages has been drinking well since the day it was released and it continues to go from strength to strength. The biggest, richest, fullest-bodied Lynch-Bages until the 2000, the fully mature 1990 exhibits an unbelievably explosive nose of black currants, cedarwood, berries and spice. The majestic, classically Bordeaux aromatics are followed by a full-bodied, voluptuously textured, rich, intense wine with superb purity as well as thrilling levels of fruit, glycerin and sweetness. This beauty should continue to provide immense pleasure over the next 15+ years.

Pichon Baron (97)

A remarkable vintage for Pichon Longueville Baron, 1990 is one of this estate's two or three finest wines made in the last 40 years. Still inky/blue/purple-tinged to the rim, it reveals an extraordinary bouquet of charcoal, incense, creme de cassis, blue and black fruits, and a hint of licorice as well as an impressively long finish.

Leoville Las-Cases (96)

As one might expect, this is a brilliant wine, but it remains shockingly young, even for the fast evolving 1990s. Its deep ruby/purple color is accompanied by a classic, nearly restrained set of aromatics that includes notions of sweet black cherries, black currants, lead pencil, and wet stones. In the mouth, it is full-bodied, and while technically low in acidity, there is a freshness, delineation, and classicism in this full-throttle, rich, concentrated, impeccable 1990.

Table Six

Vertical: Dunn Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain (1987, 1993, 1994)

1987 Dunn Howell Mountain (94)

The massive 1987 Cabernet Sauvignon-Howell Mountain is super-rich, extremely tannic, and very long.

1993 Dunn Howell Mountain (95)

The 1993 Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain reveals an opaque black color, huge tannin, terrific purity, and density, a broad, heavyweight mouthfeel, and gobs of ripe tannin. It is a massive Cabernet Sauvignon ... sweet, cassis, mineral-tinged fruit, full body, and blockbuster levels of extract and tannin. These are classic, very long-lived, mountain Cabernet Sauvignons meant to survive four to five decades of cellaring.

1994 Dunn Howell Mountain (95)

Look out for the behemoth 1994 Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain. This black/purple-colored wine adds a few more nuances (minerals, licorice, and floral scents) to the lavish display of creme de cassis. Full-bodied, with a blockbuster level of extract and density, this is an outstanding Cabernet Sauvignon for readers with patience, good genes for longevity, or the foresight to purchase it for their children.

Table Six (continued)

Horizontal: 2000 Bordeaux – Lynch-Bages, Angelus, Pichon Longueville Baron

2000 Lynch-Bages (97)

Beginning to open magnificently, the still dense purple-colored 2000 reveals a blossoming bouquet of blackberries, cassis, graphite and pen ink. Full-bodied with velvety tannins that have resolved themselves beautifully over the last eleven years, this wine is still an adolescent, but it exhibits admirable purity, texture, mouthfeel and power combined with elegance. One of the all-time great examples of Lynch Bages ...

2000 Angelus (97)

A wine of great intensity, bluish/black, with a big, sweet kiss of graphite, crushed rocks, blueberry, spring floral garden and blackberry liquor; unctuously textured as well as pure, dense, stunningly rich, this full-bodied wine can be drunk now or cellared for another 25-30 years.

2000 Pichon Baron (97)

This is one of the great wines of the vintage, and certainly a candidate for one of the finest wines made at this estate under the management of Christian Seely and proprietor AXA. Showing incredibly well at two tastings of 2000s, the wine has a dense bluish/purple color and a beautiful nose of incense, melted asphalt, and creme de cassis as well as hints of new saddle leather and licorice. It is superbly concentrated and very pure, with excellent texture and opulence. The acidity seems low, the tannin high but well-integrated. This is a compelling 2000 that is just dosing in on its window of maturity and should stay there for at least 20 or more years. Bravo!

Table Seven

Vertical: Latour (1959, 1982, 2001)

1959 Latour (96)

Dark garnet with an amber edge, the 1959 Latour reveals a touch of volatile acidity in the nose, along with aromas of melted caramel, tobacco, and jammy red and black fruits. As the wine sat in the glass, notes of minerals, coffee, spice, and underbrush emerged . . . this sumptuous, complex, fragrant, super-rich Latour cuts a broad swath across the palate.

1982 Latour (100)

Always somewhat atypical (which I suspect will be the case with the more modern day 2003), the 1982 Latour has been the most opulent, flamboyant, and precocious of the northern Medocs, especially the St.-Julians, Pauillacs, and St.-Estèphes. It hasn't changed much over the last 10-15 years, revealing sweet tannins as well as extraordinarily decadent, even extravagant levels of fruit, glycerin, and body. It is an amazing wine . . . The concentration remains remarkable, and the wine is a full-bodied, exuberant, rich, classic Pauillac in its aromatic and flavor profiles. It's just juiced up (similar to an athlete on steroids) and is all the better for it . . . Drink it now, in 20 years, and in 50 years! Don't miss it if you are a wine lover.

Table Seven (continued)

2001 Latour (95)

A brilliant offering, which should be drinkable much earlier than the blockbuster 2000, the 2001 Latour boasts an inky/ruby/purple color to the rim as well as a glorious bouquet of black currants, crushed stones, vanilla, and hints of truffles and oak. A blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon and the balance primarily Merlot with a touch of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot, it reveals a sweetness on the palate that is atypical for such a young Latour. The beautiful integration of tannin, acidity, and wood is stunning. The wine flows across the palate with fabulous texture, purity, and presence. This luscious, full-bodied Latour was surprisingly open-knit on the three occasions I tasted it from bottle. However, do not mistake its aging ability as this 2001, despite its precociousness, will last 20-25 years.

Horizontal: 2005 Cabernet – Scarecrow, Kongsgaard, Harlan Estate Proprietary

2005 Scarecrow Cabernet Sauvignon (96)

The 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon goes from strength to strength. Beautiful notes of crushed rocks, white flowers, and blue, red, and black fruits form a complex, compelling set of aromatics. The wine reveals superb richness, a full-bodied mouthfeel, excellent integration of acidity, wood, and tannin, and a terrific finish. This beautiful 2005 is already displaying some secondary nuances, and it should drink splendidly well for 2-3 decades. One of the true blue chip vineyards and wines of Napa Valley, winemaker Celia Mazyrek fashions approximately 400 cases of 100% Cabernet Sauvignon from a legendary Rutherford vineyard with 60-year old vines. Aged in 100% new oak, this cuvee reveals a very singular character. If California vineyards were ever classified *a la French* sites, this Rutherford terroir would be judged a grand cru.

2005 Kongsgaard Cabernet Sauvignon (94)

The debut vintage of Cabernet Sauvignon, the 2005, has turned out beautifully. Made from fruit grown in David Abreu's vineyards, this Cabernet Sauvignon (which includes tiny amounts of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot) comes from three distinct vineyards, one above Dalla Valle, and two on the back streets of St. Helena. A deep ruby/purple color is accompanied by notes of espresso roast, fudge, forest floor, creme de cassis, and smoked meats. The wine is layered, full-bodied, and rich. A tour de force in Cabernet Sauvignon, it can be consumed over the next 15-20 years.

2005 Harlan Estate Proprietary Red Wine (97)

Not unexpectedly, the 2005 Harlan Estate performed slightly better than it did last year. As these wines often do, it continues to put on weight as it is bottled very late by Napa standards, and there is no fining or filtration. The 2005 exhibits a gorgeous thick-looking, ruby/purple color in addition to a beautiful nose of burning embers interwoven with creme de cassis, roasted meats, sweet black truffles, and spring flowers. A hint of lead pencil shavings also emerges from this cuvee, which seems to want to be both a Pauillac and a ripe vintage of La Mission Haut Brion. Full-bodied, dense, pure, and revealing sweeter tannin than I remember, it can be drunk now; but it will no doubt display even greater complexity in 10, 20, and 30 years.

Table Eight

Vertical: Pichon-Longueville Comtesse de Lalande (1982, 1986, 2000)

1982 Pichon-Lalande (100)

One of the monumental wines of the last century is the 1982 Pichon Lalande. Since bottling, it has flirted with perfection, and was a sprinter out of the gate, which gave rise to questions about how quickly it would begin its decline. However ... it retains all its glossy, rich, flamboyant cassis fruit, chocolaty, berry jam-like notes, and plenty of earthy, foresty flavors. This is a full-bodied, extravagantly rich Pichon Lalande seemingly devoid of acidity and tannin, but the wine is incredibly well-balanced and pure. It is an amazing effort.

1986 Pichon Longueville Lalande (94 points)

Pichon-Lalande's dense ruby/purple-colored 1986 still has the color of a 4 or 5 year old wine. The wine shows notes of cedar, black currants, earth, spice box, and licorice, followed by a medium to full-bodied, very concentrated, intense palate with a still noticeable tannic structure, a relatively big, muscular style for Pichon-Lalande.

2000 Pichon-Lalande (96)

I find this to be a spectacular Pichon Lalande. Deep purple in color, with loads of coffee, mocha, creme de cassis, and chocolate notes ... This is a rich, opulent, stunning Pichon Lalande that is beginning to drink beautifully, yet should continue to improve for least another 10-15 years and last 30 or more years.

Horizontal: 2001 Cabernet – Dalla Valle Estate, Pride Mountain Reserve, Araujo Eisele

2001 Dalla Valle Estate (94+)

The 2001 Cabernet Sauvignon (a blend of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Cabernet Franc), from their hillside vineyards in Oakville, exhibits a dense purple color along with a beautifully sweet perfume of cedarwood, creme de cassis, incense and spice box. Full-bodied and rich with gorgeous purity and texture as well as a multidimensional mouthfeel...has at least two decades of life ahead of it.

2001 Pride Mountain Reserve (98+)

Staggeringly pure notes of creme de cassis, violets, licorice and graphite soar from the glass of this inky/purple-colored wine. Composed of 98% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Petit Verdot, it is a stunningly pure, rich, full-bodied, prodigious example of high elevation mountain Cabernet Sauvignon that ... should age beautifully for another two decades or more. It is a magical wine to smell, taste and contemplate.

2001 Araujo Eisele (99)

A compelling example of this noble terroir in the northeastern sector of Napa Valley, the 2001 Eisele Vineyard still has a dense purple color and possesses a seamless personality with spectacular notes of licorice, incense, black raspberries, black currants, crushed rock, and spring flowers. Stunnningly full-bodied, multi-layered, with great purity and expression, this fabulous wine is still youthful but very accessible, as the tannins are velvety and well-integrated. This wine will keep aging beautifully for a minimum of another quarter century. Bravo!

Table Nine

Vertical: Mouton Rothschild (1986, 1996, 2003)

1986 Mouton (100)

Deep garnet-black colour. An incredible array of aromas on the nose: blackberry, black cherry, tobacco, espresso, leather, black olive and loam. The palate is absolutely seamless from first impression to finish, effortlessly building layers of complexity in the mouth and leading to a very long, earth and spice finish. I can't see how this could possibly be improved upon so have no alternative but concede perfection.

1996 Mouton (94)

This estate's staff believes that the 1996 Mouton-Rothschild is very complex. I agree that among the first-growths, this wine is showing surprising forwardness and complexity in its aromatics. It possesses an exuberant, flamboyant bouquet of roasted coffee, cassis, smoky oak, and soy sauce. The impressive 1996 Mouton-Rothschild offers impressive aromas of black currants, framboise, coffee, and new saddle leather ... By the way, the 1996 blend consists of 72% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot, and 8% Cabernet Franc.

2003 Mouton (95)

Backward, powerful, and extremely tannic, the dense purple-colored 2003 Mouton-Rothschild, a blend of 76% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc, and 2% Petit Verdot ... full-bodied, meaty, powerful, dry flavors as well as a huge finish.

Horizontal: 2002 Cabernet – Spottswoode, Araujo Estate, Hundred Acre Kayli Morgan

2002 Spottswoode Cabernet Sauvignon (99)

The 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon is a glorious example of elegance combined with power, purity and richness. A compelling wine in all senses, it reveals a haunting bouquet of acacia flowers, raspberries, blueberries, black currants, graphite and pen ink. The sweetness of the tannins and medium to full-bodied, extraordinarily poised and breathtaking mouthfeel that builds incrementally is all about nobility and balance. It is an honor to taste this special wine. Drink it over the next 20-25 years. As I have always said, if there is a Chateau Margaux to be found in Napa Valley, it is Beth and Mary Novak's iconic Spottswoode winery, situated on the back streets of St. Helena.

2002 Araujo Estate Cabernet Sauvignon Eisele Vineyard (99)

Araujo's spectacular 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon Eisele Vineyard is a 1,700-case blend of 96% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot from a vineyard tucked in the lower hillsides of northeastern Napa Valley, not far from the quaint town of Calistoga. Araujo has enjoyed an incredible string of top-notch vintages from 2001 through 2005 and again from 2008 through 2010. Extremely youthful at age ten, the 2002 is a candidate for perfection. Its dense blue/purple hue is followed by abundant aromas of cassis, incense, crushed rocks and spring flowers. Full-bodied and opulent as well as pure, rich and authoritative, with abundant but beautifully integrated tannins, this opulent, plush 2002 can be drunk now or cellared for another 20-25 years.

2002 Hundred Acre Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon Kayli Morgan Vineyard (100)

Aged 30 months in 100% 3-year-old, air-dried French oak, this wine (which is also reviewed in the 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon retrospective elsewhere in this issue) was tasted again for this vertical, and it is pure perfection. It boasts an extraordinary perfume of graphite, cassis, blackberries, creamy white chocolate and subtle smoke. This full-bodied, opulent, beady, rich, velvety-textured 2002's finish lasts for 50+ seconds. This killer Napa Cabernet Sauvignon should last for another two decades.

Table Ten

Vertical: Pavie (1998, 2000, 2003)

1998 Pavie (95)

A 50-year wine, this opaque purple-colored offering exhibits a strong, precise nose of black fruits, liquid minerals, smoke, and graphite. Extremely full-bodied, yet brilliantly delineated, powerful, and awesomely concentrated, it boasts a fabulous mid-palate as well as a finish that lasts for nearly a minute. A tour de force in winemaking, it has the potential to be the most profound Pavie ever produced, except for its two successors.

2000 Pavie (100)

The 2000 Pavie has moved out of the closed, dormant, broodingly backward stage into an adolescent period where one can see its extraordinary vibrancy, and great complexity as well as potential. It boasts an sumptuous display of rich, cedar box-infused cassis fruit and liquid minerality. The tannins have sweetened, yet the wine has thirty years of longevity and potential evolution. A beautiful wine of great mass as well as elegance, it is good to see the extraordinary efforts that Gerard Perse and his team have made confirmed in this prodigious wine. A legend now . . . a legend for the future.

2003 Pavie (98+)

The 2003 Pavie is closest in style to the 2000, but slightly more evolved and exotic. Its dense plum/purple color is accompanied by an extraordinary perfume of charnel, creme de cassis, melted licorice, espresso roast, and blackberries. The wine, which hits the palate with a dramatic minerality, comes across like a hypothetical blend of limestone liqueur intermixed with black and red fruits. The integration of acidity, tannin, and wood is flawless, and the wine is incredibly pure, rich, and intense. Kudos to Gerard Perse, who is trying, in a more modern fashion, to recreate the glories of such ancient Bordeaux vintages as 1921, 1929, 1945, 1947, 1949, 1959, and 1961. From my perspective, he comes as close to that goal as anyone in Bordeaux.

Horizontal: 2007 Abreu Thorevilos, Abreu Madrona Ranch, Abreu Cappella

2007 Abreu Thorevilos (100)

The 2007 Thorevilos is monumental, and stands out as one of the most singular and greatest Napa red wines I have ever tasted. An expansive fragrance of subtle barbecue smoke intermixed with graphite, blueberries, espresso, white chocolate and a liqueur of rocks soars from the glass of this full-bodied, prodigious effort. It has the texture of a skyscraper yet never becomes heavy or overbearing. This offering, which can send chills up your spine, is a candidate for one of the finest wines ever made in Napa Valley. It will last for 2-3 decades. David Abreu's reputation was established as the superstar viticulturist for most of the rich and famous Napa Valley proprietors, but my familiarity with him derives from the extraordinary wines he produces . . . they are about as good as it gets for Bordeaux varietals in Napa . . . or anywhere else in the world. Becoming one of the top half dozen or so vineyards in all of Napa Valley is Thorevilos.

2007 Abreu Madrona Ranch (98)

The 2007 Madrona Ranch is a compelling, creamy-styled red offering an assortment of aromas, including white chocolate, graphite, forest floor, blackberries, cassis and blueberries. Pure, multilayered and super-rich, without any harshness or astringency, this is one of those wines that can be drunk young or laid away for 25+ years.

2007 Abreu Cappella (96)

The 2007 Cappella is a riveting effort displaying a dense blue/purple color as well as a sweet perfume of blueberries, camphor, incense, creme de cassis and a distinctive floral scent. It possesses tremendous ripeness, full-bodied richness, incredible purity and a singular style that stands out from the crowd.



Tasting Notes



Many thanks to the Jonathan Club
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