

The Wine Guy's Wine Tasting Notes

November, 2009



Louis Latour, 2005 Vosne-Romanee, Burgundy \$50.

The month of October was a light month for me to have higher quality wines, so I pulled out this one to keep up my taste buds. Vosne-Romanee, a small village in Burgundy, contains perhaps the most expensive agricultural acreage in the world. Since Domaine Romanee Conte property has not been offered for sale in the past 100 years we can't be sure, but with some bottles selling for more than \$1,000, it is a pretty good assumption. That said, this Latour wine came from an outstanding region and proved to be delicious. However, I was slightly disappointed that it wasn't as outstanding as I had expected. Could it be in the "dumb period," which is a point in some wines' development where the wine fades for a year or two? I tasted this before I bought it and still have another bottle which I will try in several years. Stay tuned.

Louis Jadot, 2006 Beaujolais-Villages, France

My New Year's resolution is always to drink more Beaujolais, but I seldom accomplish this just like my other resolution of being a better person. However, I opened this mid-level wine (higher in quality than plain Beaujolais but not as high as the communes like Moulin-a-Vent, Julienas, etc.), and as usual I was pleased. We were having a poached chicken and this light, fruity red wine was a very good match. Also notice that it's almost 4-years-old, which disproves the myth that all Beaujolais must be consumed very young.

Domaine de la Janasse, 2008 Vin de Pays de la Principaute d'Orange, France \$12.

This has become one of my favorite producers in the Rhone region of France. The blush wine is a blend of 35% Grenache, 35% Syrah and 30% Mourvedre. It is always hard to find a good quality blush wine, but they are out there. Many of the good ones come from the Southern Rhone region. This was a clear, crisp wine which we had with a Moravian chicken pie. Unfortunately this wine was really a bit too light, even for this dish. Perhaps this would work better as a patio wine in the summer, but stay on the lookout for this producer.

Weingut Max Ferd. Richter, 2004 Riesling Brauneberger Juffer Kabinett, Mosel

It is always a joy to go back to good German wines. If you've followed these notes for a while you will have seen others by this producer. The August '08 notes reviewed the same vineyard, but from the '02 vintage. The '04 vintage was a very good one in a long streak of fine weather and this 5-year-old wine shows that quality. Light sweetness with great balance, which is the hallmark of Dr. Richter.

Kir Royal

Opus One, 1982, Napa Valley

Dominus, 1992, Napa Valley

All were tasted at The Stocked Pot in Winston-Salem. Chef Don has reopened this cooking school/gourmet food store after too long an absence. He is doing a series of cooking classes based on books and invited me to participate in the class devoted to "The Perfectionist," a book about a French 3-star Michelin chef. I was included since I have met the owner/chef and eaten at this restaurant. We started the evening with Kir Royal, a blend of sparkling wine and Creme de Cassis. Chef Don prepared the veal chop that I had back at the restaurant, and with the meal we had the two red wines. Both had corks that crumbled while I opened them. Clearly the Opus needed decanting, which I did about 30 minutes prior to eating. We also decanted the Dominus. This 27-year-old Opus was soft and elegant yet had a depth that only great wines can have. The Dominus was rich and bold right out of the bottle and stayed there

throughout the tasting. What a great night of tasting wine, cooking demonstrations and discussing great restaurants.

Chrysalis, 2005 Petit Verdot, Virginia

This winery, about eight years old, bears its name from the story of a moth turning into a butterfly (think about it). They produce a wide variety of wines and this Petit Verdot is interesting for this area. It is usually a blending grape included with Bordeaux blends, but only a few producers make a varietal out of it. This '05 is softer than you might expect from Petit Verdot and is pleasant at first, but the finish leaves something to be desired. I would describe it as a bit rustic.

Elyse, 2005 C'est si Bon, Naggiar Vineyard Sierra Foothills \$23.

The song by the same name was playing when the owner was trying to come up with a name for this blended wine. I opened it because I was preparing to do a program on unique wine varietals. One of the varietals I would be pouring was Mondeuse, and this wine contains a small amount of the grape. Elyse always produces intense, rich wines and this is no exception. This wine could have aged for several more years and been as good, or perhaps even better. We did decant it 30 minutes before serving.