



Splicing the Mainbrace

Volume 13, Number 2 June 2008

Editors' Notes

It has now been almost twenty years since we started in the beverage alcohol business in Atlantic Canada. When we began, with a predecessor of Mainbrace International, we represented three wines from Australia. One was a gem at \$23 a bottle (in 1988!).

There were only two independent agents handling wines, and one was on the point of retiring. Wine sales per capita were highest in the region in Nova Scotia at about 4 litres per adult per year. Australia was just beginning to penetrate local markets, the big foreign suppliers were from Italy and France. Biggest of all was domestic Canadian wine.

Today there are a multitude of independent agencies. Wine sales are up all over the region and passed 8 litres per adult in Nova Scotia several years ago. Australia is now our largest source of imported wines and domestically sourced wines have declined in importance almost every year for the past twenty years. This domestic decline overall includes a drastic reduction in sales of low-end Canadian wines and a considerable increase in up-market wines.

Consider Atlantic Canadian producers. Twenty years ago pioneers like Roger Dial and the Jost family in Nova Scotia were almost alone as serious winemakers. Now each of the four provinces has a growing and vibrant wine industry. This phenomenon, combined with a greatly expanded cadre of professional sommeliers and first rate chefs, has transformed the region's restaurant industry and its connection with wine. Once upon a time, in all but a few restaurants the response to a customer's query: "What wines do you have?" would have been "Red and white, I think." Now over a dozen restaurants in the region feature in Wine Spectator's list of best wine offerings.



Provincial monopolies in the region have responded with an increased range of products and an expanded number of agency stores to bring wine to a wider audience. In Nova Scotia, four private wine stores have added significantly to what is available.

The producer and marketing structure of the wine industry has changed dramatically in twenty years. International conglomerates have gobbled up many familiar brands that used to be independent, often family-owned, wineries. This has led to considerable concentration: consider Constellation, Diageo, and Fosters. At the same time a very large number of new, smaller wineries have started up. The Atlantic Canadian start-up experience is replicated across Canada, in the US, in Australia, and in New Zealand as well as in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and South Africa. This makes life extra interesting (or is it "confusing"?) for wine drinkers.

Our sense is that, as the Chinese curse would have it, we live in interesting times. The wine industry has become bigger, more complex, more demanding, and more challenging, and it is more fascinating to be part of it.

In this issue:

Editors' Notes	1
Les vins de la Vallée du Rhone	2
New Arrivals in Newfoundland & Labrador	2
Nova Scotia Arrivals and Returns	2
Recipes for late spring	4
Warsteiner	4
Halifax Seaport Beerfest	4
Wine Controversies	5
FestiVin in Caraquet	5
Drunken Strawberries	6



Les vins de la Vallée du Rhone

Qui sait déguster, ne boit plus jamais de vin mais goûte des secrets. Côte-Rôtie, Hermitage,

Crozes-Hermitage, Gigondas et le réputé Chateauneuf-du-Pape sont des noms qui évoque des secrets et des régions les plus méconnues de France. Ce n'est pas d'hier que ce cultive cette plante, car a partir de l'an 600 avant J.-C. les Grecs étaient présents dans cette vallée prospère et déposaient les prémices d'une science désormais légendaire. Cette région fournie des vins amplement généreux et chaleureux ils sont également puissants. A l'étude, un connaisseur peut faire la différence entre les vins des appellations septentrionales et celles des appellations méridionales. Comme dans le cas de la Côte Blonde ou de la Côte Brune, qui bien qu'issu de même raisin ont des caractères différents. Mais pour nous tous, ces saveurs on ceci d'attirant; les assemblages de cépages peu connus. En AOC Chateauneuf-du-Pape, par exemple, treize cépages sont autorisés. Connaissez-vous le Picpoul Noir, le Mourvèdre, le Cinsault dans les raisins noirs? Il y a aussi la Clairette, la Marsanne et la Roussane pour les blancs. Ils sont parmi les cépages utilisés dans cette appellation car le Chateauneuf-du-Pape contient des raisins blancs.

Ces vins si caractérisés vous permette de les associer facilement avec la nourriture du pays. Certainement steak et BBQ peuvent être agréables, mais les pâtés, les civets et la cuisine traditionnelle vont ouvrir d'innombrables combinaisons et enchantements au palais. N'hésitez pas à présenter une volaille avec un Vacqueyras!!!

Le vin doit mettre les mets en valeurs sans jamais les écraser. Qu'importe la couleur de l'un ou de l'autre, l'harmonie est harmonie que si elle fait apparaître le contraste. Expérimentez.

Si vous avez des question n'hésitez pas à m'écrire ecritsvinssommelier@gmail.com .

Marc Paimpec, Sommelier
Mainbrace International

New Arrivals in Newfoundland & Labrador

Now on NLL shelves are two new products from Italy: **Canaletto Primitivo di Puglia** and **Canaletto Montepulciano d'Abruzzo**. **Primitivo** shares a grandfather (or is it great-grandfather?) with Zinfandel. This is a modern, up-front wine, with a deep, rich red colour and a bright berry fruit nose. The palate is smooth and ripe, with an attractive spicy character and a long velvety finish. It is an ideal match for even the richest of dishes, but smooth enough to enjoy on its own. The **Montepulciano** is intense purple in colour. It is the quintessential Italian red, capturing the intense aromas and rich, robust characteristics typical of the region. Intensely spicy, cherryish flavours. Serve it with roasts, beef stews, bar-b-q, and big pasta dishes.

Nova Scotia Arrivals and Returns

Santa Tresa Nivuro Nero d'Avola Cabernet Sauvignon Sicilia IGT is a Sicilian wine that is coming soon to the NSLC. Its colour is deep, purple red with an intense nose featuring black pepper and spices. Powerful on the palate with bursts of warm dark berry fruit, **Nivuro** has excellent balance, with a surprisingly soft, long finish. This wine pairs well with flavoursome meat dishes.

Batasiolo Barolo is due for release in the Nova Scotia Port of Wines in June. This wine from Piedmont in Northwestern Italy is 100% Nebbiolo in its subvarieties of Michet, Lampia and Rosé. The colour is deep ruby-garnet red that turns brick red with age. The nose is ethereal, intense, with notes of spices and dried fruits. Offers great finesse on the nose and palate, which is

dry, full-bodied, imposing-yet-elegant, austere-but-velvety. The wine is ideal for accompanying game, roasts and strong, ripe cheeses.

Also due for release to the Port of Wines in June are two wines from **Marques de Cáceres**, one of Spain's premier wineries. **Marques de Cáceres Reserva** (Bright, vivid dark ruby colour. Intense bouquet that brings to mind jelly made from fruits of the forest (bilberries) and sweet spice. Good concentration in the mouth with delicious tannins that highlight the wine's rich fruit (plum) and tobacco, minerals and spice that have become more complex following ageing in the barrel. On the whole, an unctuous wine with a pleasant fullness that lingers on the pallet with a depth of refined toasted notes and a spicy, floral finish. A very elegant wine with superb potential for development. Named Best Rioja by *Wine & Spirits* December 2007. Awarded a rating of 90/100 by *Wine Spectator* (15 December 2007). Pairs well with savoury fish dishes such as fresh tuna in spicy tomato sauce, refined delicatessen products (chorizo, salami), all kinds of beef (roasted, stewed or grilled), foie gras, duck, partridge, game and mature cheese) and **Marques de Cáceres Blanco** (A rich, dry white wine from the heart of Rioja made from Viura grapes. This is one of the world's best-selling white Riojas. Light lemon straw in colour. Aromas of pear, apple, cold blossoms and citrus fruit. The mouthfeel is light-bodied, juicy and round. Tart green apple and citrusy flavors plus traces of herbs. It finishes cleanly and crisply. Serve chilled. Pairs well with seafood and chicken dishes.)

Château Tausinat l'Hermitage from France's **Yvon Mau** will be on the Port of Wines shelves in June. This Saint-Emilion Grand Cru is fine and expressive in the nose (cherry, raspberry and other fruit). On the palate it is ample with a hint of liquorice. Supple, with very full tannins in the finish. Pair this wine with roast lamb, steak in wine sauce, or braised veal cutlets with baby vegetables.

Two New Zealand wines have been ordered by NSLC and will be released in the Port of Wines in due course.

Both are currently available in Newfoundland & Labrador. **Gravitas Reserve Chardonnay** is a powerful, complex Chardonnay with great fruit concentration and a very impressive length. Ripe citrus and peach fruit are balanced by a rich, creamy palate and a subtle oak flavour that adds complexity. *Wine Access* (October/November 2007) rated this wine 87/100 and called it a Judges Choice. Pair this crisp wine with white sauced pasta, stuffed roasted chicken, pan-fried freshwater fish or sushi. **Gravitas Unoaked Chardonnay** hails from Marlborough. This is a powerful yet elegant Chardonnay with aromas of ripe stone-fruit and yeasty complexity gained from lees contact. The fruit flavours are generous, supported by a creamy texture from partial malolactic fermentation. The wine has a long, dry finish that is beautifully balanced and will drink well for up to 3 years.

Also to be released by NSLC in due course are **Marques de Cáceres Rioja Crianza** (Attractive deep garnet colour, very fresh bouquet of ripe red fruit with a delicate depth of oak that gently enfolds a few notes of spice. Full and intense in the mouth with pleasant texture, nice body, and rich flavours. Aging in barrel has resulted in soft and silky tannins that make this wine a pleasure to experience. A fine accompaniment to any dish, especially roast, stewed or braised meats, as well as game, cheese, and foie gras) and **Cycles Gladiator Syrah** from California (An intriguing combination of raspberry and plum aromas framed by fresh black pepper and pretty oak notes. The mouth is decidedly rich and spicy with big red fruit flavours layered over spice, tobacco and blueberry, with soft tannins that melt into a medium thread of acidity. The gamy components of this wine make it a perfect match for duck and other wild fowl, lamb in a red wine reduction, or ribs and BBQ sauce).

Two very popular wines will be returning soon to the NSLC. **Lamura Nero d'Avola di Sicilia IGT** took the recent Saveur show by storm and quickly sold out around Nova Scotia. This Sicilian red wine has deep, soft, tasty aromas of ripe red berries. It is perfect for drinking with pasta dishes but also on its own.

Canaletto Autentico Italiano Pinot Noir: The idea of a Pinot Noir from Italy might seem slightly unusual, but this inexpensive take on Burgundy's fabled red

grape is as good as anything from France or Chile in its price range. Violet scents and bright cherry flavours. Try this wine with beef or chicken stew or as a sipping wine.

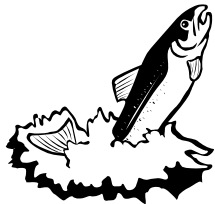
*Drinking good wine with good food
in good company
is one of life's most civilized
pleasures*

Michael Broadbent

British wine personality, recently turned 80

Recipes for late spring

Ginger and Black Soy-Glazed Salmon



- 2.5 cm fresh ginger, peeled and finely grated
- 1 large clove garlic, finely grated
- 80 ml **Tio Pepe** sherry
- 50 ml unseasoned rice vinegar
- 50 ml black soy sauce (also called kecap manis or sweet soy sauce)
- 5 ml hot sauce
- 4 2.5 cm thick salmon fillets, patted dry and pin bones removed
- 2 green onions, trimmed, sliced very thin on bias

Blend together ginger, garlic, sherry, vinegar, black soy sauce and hot sauce in a bowl. Marinate the salmon, flesh side down in the refrigerator for 8 hours.

Remove the salmon and reduce the marinade to a thick syrup.

Broil the salmon until just opaque, about 4 minutes, then brush fish liberally with the reduced marinade and cook until fish is just set and glossy, 3 to 5 minutes longer. Brush fish with any remaining sauce and serve immediately, topped with green onions and with steamed rice on the side.

Try this with Canaletto Pinot Noir

Crockpot Beef Stew



- 450 gm potatoes, peeled and quartered
- 1 onion, roughly chopped
- 400 ml sliced carrots
- 250 ml sliced mushrooms
- 2 stalks celery, sliced
- 400 gm lean stewing beef, trimmed
- 5 ml herbes de Provence
- 1 bay leaf
- 50 ml finely chopped fresh parsley
- 10 ml cornstarch
- 125 ml beef broth
- 125 ml red wine such as Fougères Beaujolais or Canaletto Montepulciano d'Abbruzzo

Place potato pieces in the bottom of a 4-quart crockpot, add the other vegetables then the beef. Sprinkle in herbs and add the bay leaf. Mix the cornstarch with the broth and pour over meat and vegetables, followed by the red wine. Cover and cook slowly for 6 hours.

This pairs brilliantly with Painter Bridge Zinfandel or Cline Five Reds.

Warsteiner

Look for **Warsteiner Premium Verum** in 76 NSLC Coolers at Cash during the month of June. Take home a cool of Germany's best selling beer. Of course, **Warsteiner** is also available in New Brunswick at most ANBL stores.

Halifax Seaport Beerfest

The Halifax Seaport Beerfest will be held Saturday, August 16 on the Halifax waterfront near Pier 21. Mainbrace will be there pouring lashings of refreshing **Warsteiner Premium Verum** (Since 1753 **Warsteiner** has brewed its beer in accordance with

Germany's Purity Law. **Warsteiner** contains no chemicals, preservatives, or additives. It is a pilsner style beer with a smooth, rich, full-bodied taste wrapped in a thick creamy head. With the typical hops on the finish, **Premium Verum** quenches the beer lover's thirst for a clean, crisp, refreshing beer), and **König Ludwig Weissbier** (This top quality beer is brewed from the finest Hallertau aroma hops, malt from selected wheat, and the brewery's own specially-cultured pure yeast strain. The beer is golden in colour and naturally cloudy since it is unfiltered. It is well-balanced and malty with aromas of apples and bananas).



Wine Controversies

The world of wine like any other aspect of our society is not without controversy. Shock waves spread around the wine world after the 1976 Paris Tasting of American and French Chardonnays and Cabernet Sauvignons. Organized by British wine buyer, Steven Spurrier, it was assumed French wines would win. Such was not the case! The title of Charles M. Tabler's 2005 book Judgement at Paris: California versus France and the Historic Paris Tasting that Revolutionized Wine details the results. On the 30th Anniversary in 2006 a similar event (a rematch?) was held but once again American wines generally scored higher. **Battle Shock**, a film that dramatizes the 76 Tasting debuted this year. A film version of Tabler's book, **Judgement at Paris** is in the works. (Jude Law and Hugh Grant are being considered for lead roles). As an aside, remember the movie **Sideways** and the Pinot Noir/Merlot fallout! Mr. Tabler's new book: To Cork or Not to Cork: Tradition, Romance, Science and the Battle for the Wine Bottle is sure to start another round of debates. Related to that topic is news that ReCORKAmerica, sponsored by Amorim, a huge Portuguese cork manufacturer, has started a "cork recycling" program in California.

Robin Goldstein's new book The Wine Trials will probably upset many wine purists. As reported in

Decanter, "It details the results from a series of 17 blind tastings that ended in February in which non-experts consistently preferred cheaper wines." Last month the results of a similar university based study appeared online. Students were given fake prices for wines they tasted and consistently chose the "bogus higher priced" ones. Without price information they rated cheaper wines more highly. To sum up, it appears a variable like price is closely correlated with pleasantness when tasting wine.

Another issue worth watching is the attempt to eradicate "the tyranny of homogenization of the wine world" as covered in the movie **Mondovino** and by Alice Fiering's new book entitled The Battle for Wine and Love or How I saved the World from Parkerization. There's never a dull moment in the fascinating world of wine!

Stanley Laite
Mainbrace International

FestiVin in Caraquet

Plan to be in Caraquet, New Brunswick for the always friendly **FestiVin**.

Mainbrace will be pouring **Segura Viudas Lavit Rosado Brut** (Bright and transparent with an attractive light strawberry colour and an abundant, fine and constant mousse that forms a thin crown. Fruity aromas reminiscent of raspberry, red currant and pomegranate. In the mouth it is fresh with a good presence of fruits. Light with a hint of sweetness that spreads on the palate), **J.Lohr Bay Mist Riesling** (Very youthful, pale brassy yellow colour with enticing fruit aromas of green apple, jasmine, citrus and pear. The residual sugar is balanced by the crisp grape acidity and natural spritz from a long, cool fermentation. This is delightfully fruity and refreshing wine with a subtle, mineral note which is characteristic of sound Riesling. It is also available at Bishop's Cellar in Halifax), **Cline Ancient Vines Mourvèdre** from Contra Costa California (Redolent of dark plum, chocolate, eucalytus and a hint of oak, this juicy wine is delicious now and will age for well over a decade. Good intensity with dusty berry

flavours on the finish. This flavourful and soft wine pairs well with grilled lamb and pasta puttanesca. It is also available at the NLC in Newfoundland & Labrador, and at the Oak Tree store in Charlottetown, PEI), **Louis Roche Château Couat** (A classic St. Foy, Bordeaux red with Cabernet Sauvignon 42 % Merlot 38 % Cab. Franc 20 %), and **Château la Caussade** (A golden coloured Botrytised wine (75% Semillon, 25% Sauvignon Blanc) from Entre-deux-mers, Bordeaux, with reflections of darker gold and green. The wine is bright, limpid and has an oily appearance in the glass due to its concentration and residual sugar level. A very attractive wine, with translucent shades. The nose is dominated by notes of honey and fresh mushrooms. The wine opens with notes of raisins, apricots, mango and pineapple, accompanied by further notes of plums and watermelon. With aeration, the wine lets a fresher and more incisive nature be uncovered. Keep for a while longer and there may well be a few more surprises in store! The same honey-like impression is found on the palate as was found on the nose, accompanied by a concentrated yet delicate attack. The wine is fat and round and is carried by the same fruity flavours as on the nose, with an additional, more acidic note of crystallised citrus fruits. The wine is long and finishes with fresh and incisive notes).



Drunken Strawberries

- 8 strawberries
- 200 ml sparkling wine such as Castellblanch Brut Zero, Bouvet Ladubay Brut, or Segura Viudas Lavit Rosado Brut
- 2 fresh mint sprigs

Place four strawberries into each of two Martini glasses and top up with the wine. Garnish with a sprig of mint.

The role of **Mainbrace** is to market the beverage alcohol products that we represent to final consumers, to licensees, to private wine stores, and to the Provincial Government agencies. We aim to enhance responsible enjoyment for consumers, to facilitate profitable sales for licensees and private wine stores, and to assist agencies in fulfilling their mandates.

For further information, contact:

Ann Trecartin or John Chamard, Certified
Sommelier

Mainbrace International Limited
P.O. Box 27177

Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 4M8
Canada

Phone 1-902-422-6193

Fax 1-902-423-4367

e-mail mainbrace@mainbrace.ca

Stanley Laite

Mainbrace International Limited
6 Conran Street

St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador A1E 5G8
Canada

Phone 1-709-368-1888

e-mail stanleyglait@nl.rogers.com

Marc Paimpec, Certified Sommelier

Mainbrace International Limited
20 Cliff Street,

Lakeville, Westmorland County,
New Brunswick E1H 1C8

Canada

Phone 1-506-227-0187

e-mail paimpec@gmail.com

In the next issue:

Previews of wine fairs in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland & Labrador. Also, Oktoberfest information.