



Splicing the Mainbrace

Volume 13, Number 4, December 2008

Editors' Notes

As the ancient Chinese curse had it, we live in interesting times. Happily, in times of dropping markets (and banks) and of layoffs and threats of various cutbacks, in December we get to celebrate.

In multiple languages, from a variety of backgrounds, with many excuses, we enjoy good friends and family, good food, and good drink. Instead of obsessing on bad news, we can rejoice in what we have that overpowers what is distressing.

So during this holiday season, all of us at Mainbrace offer you a toast: "May you never forget what is worth remembering or remember what is best forgotten."

Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas, and a congratulatory Kwanzaa!

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Gifts for the Season

Here are some suggestions for those special people on your gift list.

Marqués de Cáceres Gaudium 2002: This top of the line red wine from Rioja in Spain is fleshy and delicious in the mouth, its elegant structure and soft tannins reveal a pleasant fullness. A well-balanced wine showing splendid class. A wine that will captivate your senses. (ANBL, \$84.79)(while supplies last)

Sandalford Sandalera: This luscious, rich dessert wine from Western Australia is tawny coloured, with a complex nose rich in malty toffee aromas of great intensity. It tastes sweet and concentrated yet not heavy; rather like a mouthful of dates, toffee and roasted nuts. (NSLC, \$66.35)(Port of Wines store only)

Yvon Mau Gift box: Six outstanding Bordeaux bottles in a wooden chest: 2005 Château de la Haut Libarde, 2006 Vieux Château Negrit, 2006 Château Proms-Bellevue, 2006 Château Lavison, 2006 Château Ducla Merlot, 2007 Château Ducla Entre-Deux-Mers. (NSLC, \$139.95)(includes an information card with the background of each château as well as notes on the wines themselves)

Montresor Amarone della Valpolicella Classico
Deep garnet red colour with orange reflections. A strong and characteristic bouquet reminiscent of peach blossoms and raspberries. Warm, velvety and soft palate yet full bodied and well balanced. (NLC, \$39.00).

Villa Caffagio Cortaccio Cabernet Sauvignon. Dark purple, almost black in colour. Fabulous aromas of cassis, tar and coffee. The palate is incredibly fat and juicy, with masses of concentrated, voluptuous cassis fruit, huge



body, gloriously silky tannins and an immense finish. (Bishop's Cellar, \$92.00)

Segura Viudas Reserva Heredad Brut. Toasty, nutty, floral Spanish Cava with notes of peach and walnut. Crisp, dry, round, elegant palate hinting at minerals, caramel and lemon. A very suave finish. Anthony Gismondi rates this wine 88 and suggests serving it with seafood tapas and slightly salty light meals. (NLC, \$37.99)

Beaucoup de Choix

La saison des événements de vin est maintenant presque fini pour 2008. Qu'importe la province, des vins de qualité ont été présentés. **Mainbrace** fut favorisé par une sélection intéressante. Des vins de partout furent offerts aux amateurs des Maritimes. En effet nous avons put offrir de la Nouvelle-Zélande le **Gravitas** Pinot Noir et le Sauvignon Blanc qui sont des vins de grande qualité, récipiendaires de médailles sur trois continents, ils sont dignes de mention. La maison **Sandalford** étant égale à elle même nous a présenté le Prendville Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2003 un vin complexe au nez de fruits murs, le coté végétal boisé. Un étalon qui place la marque haute dans votre cellier, pour 25 ans. Les amateurs de vin ont pus satisfaire leur curiosité avec des produits haut de gamme mais aussi avec des découvertes plus abordables. Le Syrah **Casaleiro** qui a remporter la médaille d'argent au Port of Wines en est un exemple.

Dans le domaine des découvertes mettons le **Bleasdale** Sparkling Shiraz qui attirera certainement l'attention des gens de l'Ile du Prince Edouard au printemps '09. Le festival des vins de Californie nous a permit de goûter à choses intéressante de la maison **J. Lohr** mais aussi un Mourvèdre fabuleux de la maison **Cline**. Le Côtes de Ventoux de **Louis Roche** avec son prix modique est surprennant pour la finesse de son goût. Certain vins des vins présentés font partis maintenant des listes régulières des monopoles des maritimes.

La liste serait trop longue pour parler des **Klingenfus**, **Marqués de Cáceres** et **Moselland** qui on fait de cette année une découverte des sens. Mais profitez de toute occasion pour élargir votre connaissance du vin et profitez de la diversité offerte.

Mainbrace a offert à sa clientèle une grande sélection de produits pour 2008 et tout porte a croire que l'an prochain sera tout aussi prolifique. Surveillez le Splicing qui en fera certainement l'annonce. Si vous avez des suggestions

de produits a nous faire ou des questions a poser n'hésitez surtout pas à nous rejoindre.

- par **Marc Paimpec**

Visitors

We are pleased to have had recent visits from:

Blair Albion of Australia's **Old Vine Wines**
Jean-Christophe Alger of **Vin Conseil** (Bordeaux)
Berenice Barker of **Cape Legends** (South Africa)
Grant Brinklow of **Sandalford** (Australia)
Derrick Butler of **Yvon Mau** (Bordeaux)
Michel Courtin, representing Belgian beers
Eric Fourault of **Fourault Wines** (Bordeaux)
Robert Klingenfus, **Domaine Klingenfus**, Alsace
Michael Probst from Germany's **Moselland**
Craig Rosser, of **J.Lohr**, California
MaryAnn Yewen of **Freixenet** and **Segura Viudas**, Spain



Award Winners

Among the wines that have won awards at recent shows in the region are:

At the World Wine & Food Festival in Moncton, **Sandalford Element Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon** won a Silver Medal among red wines under \$20. (NSLC, \$19.25)

At the Port of Wines Festival in Halifax, **Caseleira Syrah** won Top Portugese Table Wine (NSLC, \$14.73) and **Château de la Rivière** won Top Red Wine at \$30 to \$80 and was runner-up for Top Red Wine in the Show (NSLC, \$38.15)





Holiday Recipes

Here are two dandy recipes for items that add to the savour of the holiday meal.

Red Wine Applesauce

- 500 ml red wine such as **Yvon Mau Shiraz VDP l'Aude** or **Langhorne Crossing Red**
 12 apples peeled, cored, and roughly chopped (any apples will do although we prefer Cortlands)
 1 cinnamon stick
 2 bay leaves
 50 ml **Supercassis Crème de Cassis**

Cook the apples in the red wine with the cinnamon and bay leaves. When the mixture has reached the consistency of apple sauce, remove the stick and leaves, add the Crème de Cassis and stir well. Serve over vanilla ice cream for dessert or with roast pork.

Cassis Cranberries

- 500 gm fresh cranberries
 100 ml water
 50 ml **Supercassis Crème de Cassis**



Cook the three ingredients gently until they reach the consistency that you like for your cranberry sauce. Serve with your favourite holiday bird.

New Products / Coming Soon

There are a number of new listings of various sorts in Nova Scotia:

Queen of Syrah from **Cave de Tain** (NSLC General List, \$14.05) A racy and elegant wine full of fruit with spicy notes. Bright purple hue. Plenty of small berry fruits aromas with a touch of oak. Rich and refreshing palate of strawberry and redcurrant fruits. The wine is well-balanced by soft tannins. **Sean Wood** (*The Chronicle Herald*, November 20, 2008) says it is a "Terrific wine for the money."

Yvecourt Bordeaux Rose (NSLC General List, \$14.54) This wine has soft floral aroma and full-bodied expression of cherry, raspberry, grape skin and cleansing

mineral-infused fruit flavour. This a great sipping wine, and pairs well with light foods.

Moselland Divinum Riesling Spätlese (NSLC General List, coming soon) Not as sweet as expected with the spätlese (late harvest) designation. Quite lifted pear, grapefruit, mineral aromas. Light to medium bodied, slightly off-dry, lively and fresh, with good length on the finish.

Gravitas Marlborough Reserve Chardonnay (NSLC OTO, \$32.88) This 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. Awarded the Trophée Excellence at the 2008 Les citadelles du vin competition in France, and a silver medal at Vinalies Internationales 2008 (also in France). (also available in Newfoundland & Labrador: NLC, \$25.83)

Château Ducla Experience Blanc (NSLC OTO, coming soon) 46% sauvignon blanc, 46% sauvignon gris and 8% muscadelle. Here is a wine with the delicacy expected in white Bordeaux, but with good power and depth. The addition of sauvignon gris adds to the aromatic intensity with notes of jasmine, mango and passion fruit. Toasty vanilla comes through nicely and adds to the long and delicate finish.

Marqués de Cáceres Crianza (NSLC OTO, coming soon)(currently available in Newfoundland & Labrador, NLC, \$19.50) 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.

Sandalford Prendiville Reserve Cabernet (NSLC re-order, \$86.33) Dark cherry with an unmistakable magenta hue. This wine has almost a floral nose reminiscent of perfumed violets. Blackcurrant is certainly present as is the cedary and wet forest floor notes derived from both fruit and French oak. There is an immediate wash of sweet brambly fruit flavours in the mouth perfectly weighted with silk-like tannins and respect of fruit and the finish is one of elegance and structure.

Casaleiro Syrah (NSLC re-order, \$14.73) A well-balanced, rich wine showing ruby colours. Robust aroma with flavors of raspberries, red currants, cardamom and cinnamon. The palate reflects a classic Syrah with plums

and spice and a subtle backbone of tannins.

Drinks for the Holidays

As the temperatures drop around Atlantic Canada traditional winter drinks come into their own as part of the festive fun. Here are four recipes to charm your guests:

Finnish Glögg

- 750 ml red wine such as **Canaletto Montepulciano d'Abruzzi** or **J.Lohr Valdiguié** (Bishop's Cellar)
sugar to taste
100 gm raisins
1-2 cinnamon sticks
5-6 whole cloves
peel from one small orange (no pith)
100 gm blanched, slivered almonds

Heat the ingredients together very gently (you don't want to boil off any of the alcohol in the wine). Serve warm in mugs or smallish glasses.

German Egg Nog

- 4 eggs, well beaten
250 ml **Ars Vitis** or **Bernkasteler Riesling**
500 ml skimmed or low fat milk
5 ml vanilla extract
nutmeg, freshly ground

Mix the first four ingredients together, serve in mugs or small glasses topped by a pinch of nutmeg.

Festive Sangria

- 750 ml red wine such as **Fougères Beaujolais**,
Quinta de San Joao Batista Reserva, or
Achaia Clauss Demestica red
250 ml orange juice
2 peaches, peeled and sliced thinly
1 lemon, unpeeled, thinly sliced
1 orange, unpeeled, thinly sliced
50 gm sugar (or to taste)
soda water

Mix together all ingredients except the soda water. Chill overnight. Serve in glasses over ice with a splash of soda water on top. The amount of soda water is a matter of taste.

Spanish Martinis

For each martini,

- 100 ml vodka or dry gin
25 ml **Gonzalez Byass Tio Pepe Sherry**

Shake or, for purists, stir the ingredients together with ice. Strain and serve with a small stuffed olive or, if you change the name from Martini to Gibson, a small pickled onion.



Sparklers for New Year Celebrations

Castellblanch Brut Zero This sparkling wine has a lightly floral nose with the accent on apple blossom. It is well-balanced, with fruity tastes, light body and fresh palate. Crisp on the finish with a lively feel. A fine example of the Spanish cava style. Rated 89 by *Wine Enthusiast* who calls it a Best Buy. (ANBL, \$16.35, NLC, \$15.44; NSLC, \$15.25)

Lavit Rosado Brut This wine presents an attractive pale strawberry colour, bright and transparent. Abundant bubbles, fine and constant that form a thin crown. Fruity aromas of youthful raspberry, currant and grenadine. In the mouth it is fresh with a good presence of fruits. It is light and has a sweet touch that spreads in the palate. (ANBL, \$16.35; PEILCC, \$16.28)

Bouvet Ladubay Brut Using the méthode traditionnelle on grapes grown in Loire Valley vineyards where Chenin grapes were being cultivated well before the Roman conquest of Gaul, Bouvet-Ladubay produces one of the great sparkling wines of France. (NSLC, \$21.66)

Still Available

A number of products in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are in relatively short supply and/or are remainders from the Port of Wines Festival or the World Wine & Food Expo. Shop early!

Château Tausinat l'Hermitage St-Emilion Grand Cru (NSLC, \$38.47) Great care from the vineyard to winery has produced a deep red coloured wine with a fruit and framboise nose that gives way to a well made wine with balanced acidity and tannin leading to a smooth finish.

Château de la Rivière. (ANBL, \$35.78) This Merlot from Fronsac is a deep, almost black colour. Very ripe fruit aromas with a hint of fresh roasted coffee. Rich and long on the palate, underpinned by dense, elegant tannin. Also available in Nova Scotia (NSLC, \$38.15)

Beni de Batasiolo Barolo DOCG (NSLC, \$37.46) 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. (also available in New Brunswick: ANBL, \$38.48; and in PEI: PEILCC, \$29.80)

Château Vieux Dominique (ANBL, \$17.79) 80% Merlot-20% Cabernet Sauvignon. Ruby-red colour with dark crimson highlights. Bouquet spicy overtones and mature red fruit aromas. Round, smooth structure with elegant fruit tannin. Very smooth just two years after the vintage, although it can age well for ten years.

Marqués de Cáceres Reserva (NSLC, \$38.95) Bright, vivid dark ruby colour. Good concentration in the mouth with delicious tannins that highlight the wines rich fruit (plum) and tobacco, minerals and spice. This is an unctuous wine with a pleasant fullness that lingers on the pallet with a depth of refined toasted notes and a spicy, floral finish and superb potential for development. Named Best Rioja by *Wine & Spirits* December 2007. Awarded a rating of 90/100 by *Wine Spectator* (15 December 2007).(also in PEILCC, \$34.38)

Bleasdale Malbec (NSLC, \$28.22) This is an excellent example of what Malbec can produce by itself in Australia. In its early years the vibrant primary fruit flavours of plums, red berries and spices make the wine delightful drinking. Velvety smooth tannins also ensure a soft, lush finish making for ideal early consumption.

Bleasdale Sparkling Shiraz (NSLC, \$25.15) Premium Langhorne Creek Shiraz grapes were selected and blended to produce this richly flavoured wine. Sweet berry fruit flavours and traditional sparkling wine making methods have combined to produce a wine of great colour and depth of flavour.

Château Taillefer Pomerol (NSLC, \$56.23) A very deep, concentrated, darkly coloured wine. On the nose it has confit fruit in a jammy-serve bramble style. It shows a big, soft style, with piles and piles of ripe and mouth-gripping tannins on the mid-palate

Château Preuillac Médoc (NSLC, \$37.56) Quite an amazing colour, dense and pure, and a vibrant and precise nose with lots of crisp fruit aromas. A very appealing palate, which has a lovely balance of components and plenty of fresh, rounded, ripe tannins. (also available in Newfoundland & Labrador: NLC, \$28.21)

Gravitas Sauvignon Blanc (NSLC, \$28.22) Intensely aromatic with a strong entree of melons, citrus and passion fruit, moving through to gooseberries and an herbaceous note. It has its own distinctive character - hints of mineral and citrus with more rounded acidity and an extremely long finish. Bronze medal winner in the Decanter 2007 World Wine Awards. (also available in Newfoundland & Labrador: NLC, \$25.12)

Gravitas Pinot Noir (NSLC, \$37.42) This wine has a deep cherry-red colour and a concentrated aroma of berry fruits and forest floor character. Intense ripe fruit and spice flavours underpinned by soft tannins have created a wine of impeccable balance, length and complexity.

Quinta de San Joao Batista Reserva (NSLC, \$14.79) Brilliant ruby tawny colour, with complex aromas of mature dark berry fruits, black cherries and damsons with hints of liquorice and smoke. Dry and full bodied with a rich Christmas cake complexity, fresh acidity, mellow tannins and a long warm finish (also available in Newfoundland & Labrador: NLC, \$16.07; and in PEI: PEILCC, \$15.16)

Lomond Estate Sauvignon Blanc (NSLC, \$21.13) Brilliantly clear with green tinges. Bouquet and taste are a romantic blend of lavender and rose pedal aromas rounded off with tropical fruit and a soft creamy finish.

Stocking Stuffers

J.Lohr Seven Oaks Cabernet Sauvignon in half bottles (375 ml). (Bishop's Cellar, \$22.00)

A deep ruby colour with rich purple hues. The aromas are of blackberry and plum with a hint of blueberry, and some chocolate and toasted oak overtones. On the palate, expect berries, chocolate and smoky toasted oak. The flavours are rich and full,



with a soft, supple texture and a lingering, black licorice-infused finish. Wine Spectator (April 30, 2008) rates the Seven Oaks 87/100.

Moselland Cat Bottle Riesling. Available this year in red bottles and white bottles. The slightly off-dry Riesling makes a nice sipping wine with or without snack foods. The bottles are a reminder of the festivities of the season. (NLC, \$11.99)

Warsteiner Premium Verum Beer This 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, Warsteiner quenches the beer lover's thirst for a clean, crisp, refreshing beer. (ANBL, \$2.56; NSLC, \$2.65)

Moselland Ars Vitis Riesling. Fine, fruity Riesling bouquet, well-balanced palate with hints of exotic fruit. This straight forward Qualitätswein is very crisp and refreshing. The "window bottle" features a winter scene from the Mosel Valley of Germany by artist and wine grower Heinz Ames, so this makes an excellent gift. (ANBL, \$16.29; NLC, \$15.43; NSLC, \$15.60)

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. (NSLC, \$2.72)

Château la Rame Reserve Made in the style of Sauterne by one of the premier wineries in Sainte Croix du Mont. Intense Botrytis and sharp Seville orange marmalade nose. Very well defined flavours of citrus and tangerines and a very lengthy finish. Try it with foie gras for a mouthful of bliss (ANBL, \$40.29, 500 ml)

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 of Atlantic Canada..

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.

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Check out the web site at

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for recipes and tasting notes