

ARTS & LIFE

Free samples, take a wine tour

By SEAN WOOD Wood on Wine
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Over the last few years, the Halifax wine club By the Glass, headed up by sommelier Mark DeWolf, has successfully mounted some outstanding wine events locally, as well as a series of very popular tours to prominent world wine regions.

This summer's highlight is an extensive tour of Burgundy led by Montreal-born, Burgundian-trained Thomas Bachelder.

Bachelder was viniculture manager of Le Clos Jordanne, the Canadian-Burgundian joint venture in Niagara. Under his guidance, Le Clos Jordanne has set the Canadian benchmark for Burgundian-styled Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

For more information, call 902-488-9959 or visit the website: www.bytheglass.ca

SAMPLE EIGHT WINES

The Bayers Lake store now has eight wines available for sampling at no charge. This is a great way to taste first before paying for a bottle of more expensive wine. Below are the selected wines for the Easter weekend:

- Rorero Arneis 2009, Piedmont, Italy
- Chateau De Sancerre 2009, Loire, France
- Petaluma Piccadilly Chardonnay 2008, Australia
- Conundrum 2008 Blend, California
- Tussock "Nelson" Pinot Noir 2006, New Zealand
- Epicurea Cote de Bourg 2006, France
- Modus "Super Tuscan" 2006, Italy

- Epsilon Barossa 2006, Australia

REVIEWS

Mission Hill Five Vineyards Pinot Grigio 2009, VQA, Okanagan Valley, \$15.50 (special price), NSLC: Lively green apple aromatics followed by a crisply fresh but attractively ripe green apple flavour. Evolves toward creamy baked apple balanced by brisk acidity on the finish. A vigorous wine with none of the flabbiness all too common with this grape.

Donnafugata Sedara 2008, Sicilia Ross IGT, 13 per cent, \$19.19, Cristall & Lockett, Sunnyside Mall, Bedford: Mostly Nero d'Avola, this moderately complex wine displays Mediterranean ripeness on the nose with developed berry fruit, fig and a lick of spice. Smoothly rich dark fruit, supple tannins and some earthy minerality on mid-palate lead into well-integrated fruit, spice and dark chocolate shavings on the finish.

Quintay Chardonnay 2010, D.O. Casablanca Valley, Chile, 14 per cent, \$21.99, Harvest Wines, Bedford Highway (beside Clearwater Lobster): Aged in new French barrels for 10 months, this one boasts emphatically aromatic musky floral, citrusy and tropical fruit notes. Very concentrated citrus and secondary tropical fruit flavours, subtle buttery vanillin and grippy mineral on the finish.

Quintay Pinot Noir 2009, D.O., Casablanca Valley, Chile, 14 per cent, \$24.99, Harvest Wines: Aged eight months in French oak before bottling without filtration, this is still a youthful wine with distinctively Chilean piquant herbal scent, good varietal cherry and lightly spicy, chocolatey overtones. Big generously ripe, berry-like fruit fills the mouth, backed by firm but not overbearing tannin and a pinch of green herb. Milk chocolate and plenty of spice contrast with astringent dryness on the finish. Worth aging for another year or two.

Apothic Red Winemakers Blend 2009, California, 13 per cent, \$17.48, NSLC: Just released with much fanfare, this blend of Zinfandel, Syrah and Merlot shows mellow, fleshy ripe fruits with a touch of clove on the nose. Quite a confection of flavours in the mouth, with rather sweet fruit, plenty of mocha and milk chocolate smoothness on the finish. Not really my style but I am sure that it will appeal to many palates.

BARGAINS

Trapiche Varietals Pinot Noir 2010, Mendoza, Argentina, 13.5 per cent, \$11.49, NSLC (general list): The ever-reliable Trapiche varietal series has changed to screw caps in the currently available 2010 vintage. The Pinot shows decent varietal style with softly ripe raspberry and strawberry scents and more cherry-like character on the palate. Easy drinking and easy to like.

Trapiche Varietals Malbec 2010, Mendoza, Argentina, 13 per cent, \$11.49, NSLC (general list): Red fruit, spice and a whiff of vanilla with cherry and plum flavours surfacing on the palate. Moderate tannins and a splash of dark chocolate round out this well-balanced, honest value wine.

Sean Wood is a wine judge and writer.

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