
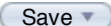


From: The BrightWines Beacon <lighthouse@brightwines.com>
Subject: **bibulous business: upcoming tastings, and mature Aussies!**
Date: September 5, 2014 5:27:19 PM CDT
To: The BrightWines Beacon
 1 Attachment, 393 KB 

The BrightWines Beacon for 9/5/2014: bibulous business

I hope everyone had a pleasant Labor Day weekend, and it appears that the weather forecast (finally) might be correct that we have a gorgeous weekend coming. A hint of fall might be in the air, but there is plenty of warm sunshine to spare yet here in early September. Today's newsletter is all about 3 upcoming tasting opportunities, including a "try before you buy" opportunity on a very special purchase importer clearance of "mature" top-end Australian wines, drinking at peak maturity and at BIG savings from their original retail prices!

**** UPCOMING TASTINGS:** see **The Lamp is Lit** for Store Hours and Tasting schedule (see below for RSVP and ticket details)

option #1: in-store SATURDAY afternoon (see below for details) sampling of mature top-end Australian wines, importer clearance!

option #2: **Fall Wine Tasting at 3M - Tartan Park, Friday September 12th** (open to the public). See below, and attached PDF

THE LAMP IS LIT: Store Hours and TASTING details

**** SATURDAY September 6th: OPEN 10am until 6pm** (regular hours) plus in-store sampling of Australian wine importer clearance -- tasting details --

sampling of IMPORTER CLEARANCE of top-end mature AUSTRALIAN wines, from 3pm until 5:30pm (while supplies last)
This is a try-before-you-buy tasting opportunity (open-house style) on Saturday during the AFTERNOON hours, with samples open to taste of a variety of mature, top-end Australian wines on a special purchase importer-clearance that I have available for this weekend only. This Saturday afternoon, **in-store from approximately 3pm until 5:30pm (store closing at 6pm) I will have a limited but interesting range of bottles open to taste selected from the mature Aussies special purchase** (see today's Bright Lights sections for more details and the list of wines available). The selections will be varied, with a few more white wines than reds probably, given what's available on this shipment. Some of the selections will be just a spare handful of bottles or cases, others will have good quantities available. All of them are being **offered and sampled as "first come, first served" and while supplies last**. This is an open-house sampling, during regular business hours, and will run from approximately 3pm until 5:30pm in the afternoon.

**** NEXT WEEK: BrightWines will be OPEN REGULAR HOURS next week**, with just one notable exception (see below)

FRIDAY September 12th: the annual Fall Wine Tasting at 3M - Tartan Park (open to the public)

-- tasting details -- Next Friday evening, September 12th at Tartan Park, in the golf course clubhouse. This annual wine tasting used to be exclusively performed for 3M Club and for 3M employees (and friends/neighbors) but since Prom Catering took over the banquet operations for Tartan Park this event is OPEN to the PUBLIC. **At least 8 tables full of wines**, all selected for quality and value by BrightWines from my favorite wholesale wine vendors. **Light appetizers included. \$25 per ticket**. For advance ticket reservations please contact Tartan Park at 651-733-0147 and tickets are also available at the door. RSVP accepted next week too (via Tartan Park, 651-733-0147) but even **if you just think you MIGHT attend, please RSVP to Tartan Park TODAY September 5th** (purchase at the door is ok via cash/check/charge) because the more "early rsvp" they get, the more food they will plan to prepare! This event already has over 50 people signed up, and we have capacity for 100 - 150 total. **See attached PDF for more details**, or e-mail dave with questions.

THE VIEW FROM THE TOP: the importance of TASTING. Yes, this is a bibulous business!

"There is no substitute for pulling corks." --Alexis Lichine

I don't know about you, but sometimes I think the world has gone wine-tasting crazy. It seems that everywhere you look there are wine

tasting events at fundraisers, restaurants, special events, liquor stores, you name it; many more than used to be true when I first got into the wine business (22 years ago now). In fact, when it comes to wine tasting events in the world at large we might be reaching a saturation point for wine tastings, as events that used to be routinely very well-attended are seeing lower attendance than they are used to. The events themselves are as good as always, there are just so many more options out there for folks wanting to taste. Yes, I know that BrightWines is part of this too, I host at least 50 if not closer to 100 in-store tasting opportunities every year - and I help coordinate several larger offsite events and fundraisers every year too. The biggest and best one is surely the one I do for the Como Conservatory, but I also do some very nice corporate ones too. So yes, BrightWines is partly responsible for the plethora of "wine tasting" events going on.

But I also know that BrightWines has ALWAYS placed a lot of importance on providing opportunities for my customers to taste my wine selections. Since day one, I have offered as many wine-tasting opportunities as is reasonably possible. It is part of my concept here, I enjoy the chance to showcase my wines as well as to provide some wine education too. And when the event is right and the time is right, I enjoy working on offsite tasting events too. So while it may seem sometimes that the wine business is in "winetasting overload" with too many wine tasting events scheduled any given week, I don't plan to stop offering tastings and classes on wine here in-store, or getting involved in quality offsite events on occasion too.

There is no substitute for tasting. I have learned more about wine by tasting than I ever could by reading or traveling - unless of course you combine reading AND tasting, or better yet traveling and tasting (that's my favorite). Taste is a funny sense too. It varies from day to day, and from person to person; what tastes like blueberry to me might taste like plum to you, I might not mind tannins but you might dislike tannic wines, etc. From a sensory perspective, tasting wine uses all of our senses. Our sense of sight for color and clarity, our sense of smell for aromas/flavors, our sense of taste to be sure, and our sense of touch too (mouthfeel is as important to many as the actual flavors of the wine). Tasting wine critically also requires us to use our minds to examine and organize and to recall what our senses are telling us about the wines we are tasting and wines we have tasted before. While it is not necessary to have a perfect "sense of taste" nor even necessary to cultivate a perfect sense of taste, in order to truly master the art of wine it does take a lot of tasting experience. Part of the challenge is to integrate what we learn through reading and travel with what we are tasting in the glass of wine before us.

When I began in the wine business, over 22 years ago now, I was lucky enough to be part of a circle of wine lovers (many of us just entering the business) who got together with a fairly regularity to taste wines, all sorts of wines. One of the unique things about this circle of wine tasters was that most of the time we were tasting wines BLIND, meaning the labels and bottles had been obscured by brown paper bags. I really feel that I learned quite a lot by being part of that group of wine tasters, and by tasting the wines blind. Tasting blind removed some of the preconceptions, especially about price range and brand-name fame. We were tough on each other, if you had an opinion about a wine you had to be prepared to defend that opinion; often against the whole group. Tasting without knowledge of brand, price range, or even where a wine comes from can force you to concentrate more on the flavors your nose and palate are perceiving. Like the renowned author/critic Clifton Fadiman said, and I'm paraphrasing, wine forces you to think!

While I taste-test nearly every wine I buy and sell here at BrightWines, admittedly it's not often I am tasting blind with my sales reps or at trade tastings. But if we take wine and wine tasting seriously, we can learn much about where and when and how a wine was made (and its relative quality and value) by using our senses, our mind, and our experience. Over the years I have held a few blind tastings here at BrightWines with customers and one of the benefits of those is the chance to taste with fewer preconceptions, which can be invigorating. But tasting can be a lot of work too. I estimate that I taste at least a few dozen wines per week, some weeks I might sample upwards of 50 or even 100 wines if I attend a trade show or have a lot of sales reps bring samples all in the same week. That's a lot of wine to evaluate, and in any given week only a small handful of new wines will "make the cut" for quality and price to become BrightWines selections. The challenge for me as a wine retailer, and for you as a wine consumer, is to use my ability and my sense of taste to help determine quality and value in wine. After all, drinking wine is a sensory experience; and if we take Clifton Fadiman's advice to heart, and take the time to think about the wine when we taste it, then the experience is that much more rewarding. The ability to translate the information learned from a taste of wine into an idea of its relative quality and value, as well as a sense of its artistic and hedonistic qualities, is a skill (or an art) that takes a lifetime to hone. Thankfully it is a fun process!

So the bottom line is that I will continue to provide opportunities for my customers to taste my wine selections, but you can also rest-assured that if you don't have time to attend a tasting personally - that ALL of the wines offered at BrightWines have been tasted by Dave at least once, and often alongside other wine professionals and fellow wine consumers as well. And that I do so with an eye for good quality first and foremost, and for good price (second and foremost).

"Quality in wines is much easier to recognize than it is to define." --Maynard A. Amerine

"I know of no other liquid that, when placed in the mouth, forces one to think." --Clifton Fadiman

"The art of tasting wine is the performance of a sacred rite, which deserves to be carried out with the most grave and serious attention." -- French National Committee for Wine Publicity

BRIGHT LIGHTS: special purchase, importer clearance, of top-end mature Australian wine

This weekend only, while supplies last. A total of just over 50 cases worth of **famous top-end Australian wines, at maturity from vintages ranging from 2002 - 2009**. There are 10 different wines to choose from, so an average per type of just 5 or 6 cases (some more, some less). The wines are priced from 20% **up to 50% off their original prices**, and are drinking at peak maturity. **ALL of the wines have been pre-tasted and evaluated by Dave, and most of them have 90 point ratings** in the wine magazines at retail prices ranging from \$15 - \$38 per bottle, but clearance priced from \$9.99 to \$24.99 each. Of the 10 wines, six are rated 90 or 91 points, and the others are mostly rated 88-89 points and drinking great now.

There will be an "open house" sampling on Saturday afternoon (while supplies last) for those who would like to "try before you buy". I predict that most the sampling on Saturday will be on the mature white wines, as the reds are more limited. I will supplement this tasting with new-release Aussie reds if possible as necessary.

NOTE #1: you do NOT need to attend the tasting to purchase wines from this offer! Word to the wise, there is a chance that the most interesting of these wines (reds especially) may have sold out prior to the open house sampling, and the **samples will only be available to taste (while supplies last) from 3pm until closing on SATURDAY** afternoon.

NOTE #2 (concerning e-mail orders): **e-mail orders for pickup today/Friday or for Saturday prior to the in-store sampling ARE accepted, subject to confirmation**. HOWEVER, due to the limited nature of this importer clearance, any e-mail orders for pickup next week will be confirmed after the in-store sampling this weekend. Word to the wise, there is a chance that the most interesting of these wines may have sold out prior to the open house sampling - but I will confirm e-mail orders, if supplies allow, for pickup next week.

**** IMPORTER CLEARANCE of MATURE and TOP-END (and highly rated) wines from AUSTRALIA ****

(Dave's Top Pick) **YALUMBA 2009 Eden Valley SHIRAZ-Viognier @ \$14.99 per bottle** (10 cases available)

Wine Spectator notes: **"91 points. \$19 retail. Designation: Smart Buy**. Supple, lithe and expressive, this is distinctly spicy and refreshing around a core of cherry and savory roasted herb flavors, persisting on the deftly balanced finish. Drink now through 2018."

KNAPPSTEIN 2006 hand-picked Clare Valley Dry RIESLING @ \$9.99 per bottle (33% off retail)

\$15 retail. "Powerful and intense, it nevertheless finishes clean and refreshing. 88 pts." Wine Enthusiast. -- 11 cases available

Philip SHAW 2007 "no. 19" Orange SAUVIGNON BLANC @ \$9.99 per bottle (50% off retail)

\$20 retail, 88 points Wine Spectator. -- 5 cases available

TATACHILLA 2006 McLaren Vale CABERNET-SHIRAZ @ \$10.79 per bottle (33% off retail)

4 cases available, good value producer. \$16 retail.

PETALUMA 2006 "Hanlin Hill" Clare Valley Dry RIESLING @ \$12.99 per bottle (35% off retail)

90 points "long and full evolution" \$20 retail. Wine Enthusiast. -- 4 cases available

Philip SHAW 2005 (and also some 2006) "No. 11" Orange CHARDONNAY @ \$15.99 per bottle (47% off retail)

6 cases available, mix of vintages, **BOTH rated 90 points** Wine Enthusiast. 30 retail. "just needs some time to develop"

PETALUMA 2005 Piccadilly Valley CHARDONNAY @ \$16.67 per bottle (45% off retail)

only 2 cases available, rated 90 points Wine Enthusiast at \$30 retail

PETALUMA 2002 Coonawarra CABERNET-Merlot @ \$17.99 (53% off retail)

\$38 retail, 89 points Wine Spectator "Has room to flesh out as it ages." -- only 6 cases available

MITCHELTON 2002 Victoria "Print" SHIRAZ @ \$24.99 per bottle

90 points Wine Spectator, **\$35 retail**, "juicy plum and blackberry flavors, lingering on the open, refined finish. Best from 2008 **through 2014**. 200 cases imported. **90 points**." (only 7 six-pack cases available)

That's all for this weekend. Remember that I can only confirm e-mail orders for the Aussies for pickup prior to the sampling on Saturday afternoon. All remaining stocks will be confirmed while supplies last. And speaking of tastings, here is a quick recap of the upcoming tastings here at BrightWines!

option #1: in-store SATURDAY afternoon (see above for details) sampling of mature top-end Australian wines, importer clearance!

option #2: Fall Wine Tasting at 3M - Tartan Park, Friday September 12th (open to the public). See attached PDF.

**** postscript ****

Editors note: inspiration for the title of this week's newsletter was taken from "The Bibulous Business of a Matter of Taste" a short story by Dorothy L Sayers. From the 1928 collection "Lord Peter Views the Body" where Lord Peter Wimsey uses his famous wine palate in a crucial matter of espionage. A particular favorite tale from a fun and famous author.

The Right Wines are BrightWines!

www.brightwines.com 651-748-0793

2420 Margaret Street North Saint Paul, MN 55109



Tartan Park
Open House Wine Tasting
with Brightwines

Friday, September 12, 2014
6pm-8:30pm

\$25 per person

Chef Dennis Dahl will be preparing
light hors d'oeuvres.

RSVP by Friday, September 5 | 651.733.0147


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