

***Notes From The Cellar (NFTC); Winepairings e-letter May01, 2008***  
**Attn. Collectors: 05 Dominus! And another 2005's from the Rhone is in**

You are hearing it here first: The 2005 Dominus which will arrive later this summer is a “not to be missed” wine. See more in the Collector's Corner section below....

It's May 1<sup>st</sup> already, wow 2008 is 1/3 over and things are just jumping. Spring is a time when we get a chance to try some of the new portfolios of wine being distributed. I will keep this short as I am on my way out the door for yet another tasting. With \$1.60 per Euro and the economy heading south we are seeing big jumps in wine prices. I have talked about this scenario many times over the past year and unfortunately my predictions are becoming a reality.

So in a nut shell here is what's happening. The importers and Distributors (as well as more retailers) are getting a lot more gun shy. Instead of concentrating on small production quality wine, we are seeing more emphasis on the “recognized” wine which they can move in dozens of cases.

There is less availability of the special wines we like to feature -and we are heaving a hard time in securing additional quantities -so if you see a wine you like I encourage you to respond quickly. Even better if you purchase something to try for the first time -make sure you sample it & get back to me to avoid disappointment in case that we can't get more of it. Of course some wines are just very limited, especially older vintages. We love to feature those as they represent tremendous value and are often more enjoyable for immediate consumption. Look for some of these in upcoming issues.

We had a tremendous response to our Rhone offering several weeks ago and I am happy to report that another wine we reordered is in. This time it's a white and even if you are not a regular white wine drinker I urge you to pay attention as this is a mind boggling wine value. I have written before about the Viognier grape and how it reaches amazing heights in the tiny commune of Condrieu next to Cote Rotie in the Northern Rhone.

Featuring some of the most complex yet delicate and pretty aromatics of any white, combined with a full creamy mouth texture; these are special wines that are best enjoyed while young, fresh & vibrant. The rub- tiny production and world fame means you will pay \$65 for a good one. That's exactly how much a bottles of Condrieu from Gerin (today's producer) will set you back. But here's the good news -he also produces a “country wine” from the Viognier grape -it's made at the same winery -with the same methodology and care and it's damn good juice for a fraction of the price. Since it's not from the hallowed grounds of Condrieu but next door, you get the wine without the big price tag -you get the picture.

**\$\$\$ wine deals \$\$\$**

**Domaine Gerin Viognier VDP Collines Rhodaniennes 2006 \$27-**

Jean -Michel Gerin and his wife Monique run a small winery in Cote Rotie known for excellence. They were featured as some of the regions top producer's in an article by the wine Spectator “Rising Stars of the Rhone” as a result there is a sign outside their cellar which simply reads “No Cote Rotie or Condrieu available until 2008” . Several months ago at a pre- arrival tasting I got to taste the entire line up and it's the whites that blew me away; both the Condrieu & Viognier VDP were exceptional. For the \$, the choice was easy. I am happy to report that we got our order -just in

time for Summer sipping -this may end up being your favorite Sunset deck wine. Also goes great with a Hammock.

### **Collector's Corner**

#### **Dominus Estate Napa Valley 2005 pre arrival \$118-**

Is 2005 a year you would like to celebrate in the future? Anniversary, wedding, birthday? Here is a wine that you can enjoy now or in 2- -30 years from now. A cellar cornerstone, year in and year out since the early 90's Dominus has been one of California's finest.

I admit It's a favorite of mine and I have been fortunate to have most vintages since the late 80's

Often mentioned In the same League as Harlen , David Arthur Mondavi & Screagle or any other heavy weight from Napa, it has proven to be one of the US finest Cabernet based wines.

While I hope that you purchase this wine to drink (rather than speculate) there is no question that it is considered a blue chip of American wines. The 1997 are selling at \$150 & up with the 1994 fetching \$275 & up and the 1991 recently selling at \$350-\$500....The 2005 is at least as good in my opinion.

Last week Cristian Moueix owner & wine maker of Dominus as well as several Bordeaux estates, was in town & I had the pleasure of sampling several older vintages with him. I also got to preview the upcoming release of the 2005 which is expected to arrive in June. This was a s good a young Dominus as I ever had -unquestionably at the level of the 2001 and 2002 -both vintages that I am happy to own a few bottles in my personal cellar.

Please let me know your interest asap so that you can secure your personal stash on release.

Here is the latest review from Mr. Bob Parker;

Wine Advocate # 174 Dec 2007 **96 points** Drink 2009 - 2037 **release price : \$155-\$157**

*The 2005 Dominus (a 7,000-case cuvee of 92% Cabernet Sauvignon and the rest equal parts Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot) has come of age, and is one of the strongest efforts they've made. It is possibly the best Dominus since the 2001, and perhaps even the 1997 or 1991. A beautiful, sweet nose of roasted coffee interwoven with kirsch, black currant, cedar, and spice box emerges from this deep ruby/purple-colored wine. The wine has fabulous intensity, a layered, opulent, full-bodied mouthfeel, well-integrated acidity, and a stunningly long finish. The layering of this wine as it builds incrementally on the palate is something to behold. An outstanding, sexy, ageworthy Dominus, it will benefit from 2-3 years of cellaring, and last for at least 25 or 30 years. When I am tasting at Dominus, they always present a wine opened the day before and decanted, and one just opened, and the extended aeration version always seems to be the better example of the wine, so plenty of decanting seems to be in order.*

#### **events:**

**Thomas Arvid** is considered by many to be one of the top photo - realistic painters of wine bottles and wine items in the US today -you undoubtedly seen his work in magazines and wineries. A

native of Georgia he is friends with Aaron and Sandy LaPedis, owners of **Fascination Street Gallery** in Cherry Creek. Arvid will be in appearance at the Gallery on May 9 & 10<sup>th</sup> give them a ring to get on the invite list. Always a great show - Check it out at [http://www.fascinationstart.com/thomas\\_arvid](http://www.fascinationstart.com/thomas_arvid)

Thanks again for all your support and referrals, tell your friends, Cheers

Paul David, Chief Fermented Grape Taster.

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