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## Notes From The Cellar "NFTC" Newsletter *May 06, 2010*

### **2000 Fonseca -a great Port at a terrific price**

Just in case you wondered there was no NFTC last week. Several days ago I got back from a comprehensive tasting tour of **California's Central coast**. It has been a good 4 years since I visited the region and I was truly impressed with the quality of the wines.

Speaking to many growers and producers ( and tasting of course) it became evident that there has been a lot of emphasis on improvements of vineyard practices, as well as vinification techniques. The recession has also brought home the reality of keeping prices reasonable. So, from a consumer point, the combination of top quality wines at good prices is something to take notice of.

The wines from here have distinct and unique characters: the smart producers are making a point to make wines which represent the local conditions rather than trying to copy other famous wine regions. As more experience is gained with every passing vintage the top sites and varieties that grow best in specific sites become evident. When it comes to white wines there is still a reliance on Chardonnay due to it's popularity but more and more, one can find more interesting examples made out of Sauvignon Blanc, which has proven to be an excellent grape to grow here,. As well, I discovered some very tasty wines made from Roussanne and even some made from other less common grapes used mostly in central Europe.

Many of the producers are making wines that are food friendly by taking advantage of the cool climate which help maintain a good natural acidity. The Reds that were most impressive where the Pinot Noirs, and the Rhone varietals namely Syrah, Grenache and also some blends featuring these two as their back bone. A lot of the best wines are made in small quantities and sold mainly to private mailing lists and restaurants. While many producers would like to expand their markets, I kept hearing the familiar song of how frustrated they were with the current distribution system. I feel that knowing these producers and their wine gives me a great opportunity at introducing many of our regular clients to some of these excellent wines. I will look for the chance to do so even more frequently in the future, as more of them become available. in the interim Here is a tip- 2007 has been a tremendous vintage in the region and most established producers made some of their best wines ever. These wines especially the reds are now circulating in the market place; Next time you happen to be at a restaurant with a decent wine list you may want to give one of these a try. and now back to our regular sales pitch:

**\$\$\$ Today's Wine Deal \$\$\$**

# FONSECA Vintage Port 2000

**\$71.00/bottle, or \$68-/ bottle- with our cash discount** (checks are ok)

The Critics agree: **94 points from Wine Spectator**

**95 points from Parker**

**95 from Tanzer and perhaps the most impressive endorsement of them all :**

**97+ from Roy Hersh in " For the Love of Port"**

Today's wine needs very little introduction. Those of you who are regular port drinkers will recognize this as an outstanding deal, as this is even **below release price!**

-to get one of the finest ports from a great vintage at age 10 under \$100 is something that you don't encounter very often. (A quick check on the Internet indicated most discounters are selling this at \$90-100 yet, our offer is the lowest price in the country! )



If you are new to port this is a great opportunity to familiarize yourself with one of the top names in the business. While this port can age and improve many more years, it is very enjoyable already -my recommendation will be to decant it overnight for maximum enjoyment.

A bottle I had several weeks ago over a 3 night period exhibited deep dark small berry fruit, with old leather spice, and even a nice hint of iodine (like you get in some fine single malts) on the mix. Perfect balance, and a nice medium mouth feel- which is entering a nice stage, but definitely beyond infancy. The finish is broad and deep and coats the entire palate and mouth.

I also thought that in general, the wine was under-rated by the pros at release, so if you are impressed by the above scores - my guess is that they will continue to improve as this port matures further and gets re examined.

I wanted to keep this entire stash, but already had a bunch in my cellar from previous purchases (at higher prices.) But one has to take advantages of opportunities and this is such an occasion; While I couldn't help but add a few more bottles to my collection, I have a few to sell but not many. While this would be perfect for father's day I would bet that mothers will like it too!

For all of you who have been wanting to pick up previous orders I should be around for the near future. Cheers

**Thanks for all your support and referrals.**

**Tell your friends, share the wine, & spread the good vibe. Cheers!**

*Paul David*, Chief Fermented Grape Taster.

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