

Retrospective

CABERNET SAUVIGNON



VINTAGES 1974 - 2005

CABERNET SAUVIGNON RETROSPECTIVE TASTING NOTES

1974 - Break Out the Cheese

Our very first Cabernet has stood the test of time and has matured into a delightful old wine. Red brick in color with a complex nose of cocoa, brandied cherries, cedar, dried rose petals, anise, sun-dried tomato, tobacco, tar, and plums. Balanced and medium bodied on the palate with dried cherry, leather, nuts and a slightly dry finish, this wine is starting to oxidize, but would be fantastic after dinner with hard cheese.

1975 - Delicate Elegance

Brick-brown in color, this wine is delicate on the nose with a fascinating blend of peppermint, earth, tobacco, tar, dill, green pear, vegemite, leather, and dried flowers. Elegant and balanced in the mouth, with surprisingly grippy tannins, the fruit is starting to fade, but this is still a pleasure to open.

1976 - Way Over the Hill

Medicinal and musty, this wine is just not worth drinking.

1977 - Savory

Brick in color with aromas of bell pepper, clove, leather, dried rose petals, wood smoke, coffee, and cherry cola. A little dried up, and slightly reduced, but it still has a good mouthfeel.

1978 - Silky

Tawny in color with a bright gold rim, the '78 tickles the nose with complex aromas of cocoa, dried cherries, cedar cigar box, dried strawberries, black tea, tar, and dill. Soft and silky on the palate, there isn't much fruit left, but it still has decent tannins, with medium body and medium acidity.

1979 - Not Bad for an Old Man

Along with the '74, our favorite Cab from the '70s. Berries, tart cherries, mint, leather, earth, cedar, cigar box, cardamom, wood smoke, and cocoa, with a decent balance of body, tannins, acidity, and concentration. Classic Bordeaux.

1980 - A Stinker

Some wines are a challenge from the very beginning, and do not age well. Such is the case with this vintage. This wine is extremely green with aromas of bell pepper, canned green beans, and cauliflower. It is hard, tart, and astringent - nothing much here to enjoy.

1981 - Reserved

A lovely, restrained wine with aromas of dried cherries, dates, sun-dried tomatoes, sandalwood, tobacco, black currant, and a hint of earth. Nicely balanced and structured, it's a bit thin, but still drinks well.

1982 - Open and Enjoy

Smoky and spicy in the nose with notes of tobacco, chinese five spice, brandied cherries, coffee, dried plum, and fennel, the tannins are soft and acidity lingering. Perhaps a bit tired, it is still enjoyable with a black and red berry finish bringing it home.

1983 - Past its Prime

Brick-tawny in color, this wine shows its age with oxidized aromas of candied date, raisin, dried fig, as well as soy sauce, tar, and port. On the palate, it shows decent texture and acidity, but lacks structure.

1984 - Drink Up

Garnet in color, this wine blends delightful blackberry, cherry, vanilla, and toasty oak aromas with some barnyard funk. The tannins are a bit astringent, but it shows good body.

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1985 - Nice Legs

Vivacious and pretty, this dark ruby-colored wine is ripe with aromas of dried black cherries, blackberry, plum, leather, cigar box, mint, and coffee. Rich and dense with firm, balanced tannins and a nice finish, this relatively youthful wine is still running.

1986 - Over the Hill

A tawny-brick color, this wine hasn't held up very well. It is severely oxidized with strong aromas of soy sauce, port wine, and horse hoof trimmings. Would still do OK with roast meat, but not terribly pleasurable on its own.

1987 - Tart, but Nice

Garnet in color, the '87 has a nice, pretty nose. Cherries, raspberries, and dried rose petals swirl with toasty oak, oregano, and pencil shavings. Very tart acidity is a bit surprising, but not too off-putting.

1988 - On a Downwards Slope

A lighter vintage, the '88 exhibits some nice aromas of cranberry, blackberry, tomato leaf, black olive, black currant, and bell pepper. Some fruit is left, but a bit tart and light, it's fading.

1989 - To Open or To Save?

Along with the '85, our favorite wine from this decade. Lighter in style than the '85, the '89 displays aromas of cherry, cocoa, fennel, lavender, Queen Anne's lace, and smoky cedar cigar box. With a caressing texture, balanced acidity, and well-integrated fruit, it may be enriched with further age, but is a delight right now.

1990 - Still Needs Time

Lean and delicate in style, this wine has some nice cherry, and berry fruit, laced with bell pepper, cumin, and toasty oak. The fruit carries through to the palate, with a soft, velvety mouthfeel and balanced acidity. There is some green tartness, however, that still needs some time to round out.

1991 - Intense

Displaying great fruit intensity, along with good depth and a nice mouthfeel this wine is showing well. Aromas of cherry candy, strawberry, blackberry, anise, dill, and smoke.

1992 - At Its Peak

With aromas of black cherry, blackberry, cedar, Chinese five spice, leather, rose petals, this wine really pulls together on the palate with tart acidity, black currant, and an elegant mouthfeel leading in to a nice finish. It's not going to get much better than this.

1993 - Keep it Simple

Showing more color than the 1992, this wine shows nicely with aromas of black cherry, cigar box, cranberry, coffee, dried herbs, and bell pepper. Medium bodied, with light tannins and tart acidity, this wine is a bit simple but still pleasant.

1994 - Tasting Great

Bright and complex aromas of ripe plum, raspberry, cherry, currant, black stone fruit, leather, fennel, olive, cocoa, and toasted oak. Showing good intensity on the palate, it has bright acidity and a full, soft mouthfeel. May get even better with time.

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1995 - Wow

Dark, concentrated blackish red. Cedar/cigar box, earthy, oak forest, and sweet, generous, round fruit, very finely wrapped. Rich and interesting palate, balanced tannins, long finish. A strong wine.

1996 - Tasty for a While

Showing more body and depth than earlier vintages from the '90's, with aromas of Bing cherry, cranberry, blackberry, leather, earth, and toasty oak. With firm tannins, a full mouthfeel, and tart acidity, this wine will last a while.

1997 - French-ish

An earthy, smoky wine, the strawberry and cherry fruit is a little subdued, with more savory characters rising to the fore. Clove, cola, coffee, leather, cured meats, and if we're honest, a little Brett. Dry on the palate, with bright acidity.

1998 - French Au Pair

Also earthy and smoky with, yes, a touch of Brett, the '98 exhibits more youthful fruit than the '99 with aromas of currant, cherry, blackberry, coffee, clove, black pepper, and cedar. Vibrant and enjoyable now, it definitely has the making of something special given a few years time.

1999 - Learning to be a Gentleman

Bursting with concentrated fruit, firm tannins, and toasty oak, this wine is a serious hunk. Given some time, he'll pick up more cultured ways as everything slowly softens. Aromas of blackberry, plum, and black cherry with hints of black pepper and anise. Ripe, structured, concentrated dark fruits, youthful with a long finish.

2000 - A Tasty Little Wine

Less concentrated than '98 and '99, this is nonetheless a superbly crafted wine, with delightfully delicate red fruit and floral aromas. Cherries, pomegranates, cranberries, and rose petals lead with black pepper, and cloves providing a spicy edge. Light and lively with a nice round palate, elegant fruit, lean tannins, and a lasting finish. Beautifully balanced, the 2000 is light on her feet and ready for a marathon.

2001 - Still a Babe

Aging with characteristic Trefethen grace, the '01 tastes as fresh as many current offerings on the market today, with just a hint of cellar qualities picking up in the background. Deep ruby and ripe, deep, forward aromas of blackberry, tart blueberry, and cherry. Medium bodied with concentrated blackberry, black currant and anise flavors. Firm tannins, nice structure.

2002 - Ripe? Yes, Quite

A very warm (some might say hellishly hot) vintage produced a jammy, intensely concentrated wine. Aromas of dried cherries, plums, blackberries, pomegranate, baking spices, and wood smoke lead into a rich, opulent mouth, with nice, balancing acidity. Pleasant now, it is still a bit awkward and could use time.

2003 - Solid Foundation

Extremely youthful and still a bit angular, the '03 is still developing, swirling around a strong core of black fruit and toast. Aromas of raspberry, cherry, blackberry, cranberry, clove, and cinnamon add to the nose, while the palate is soft but rich, with balanced acidity and firm, slightly astringent tannins.

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2004 - Debonair

Deep purple in color, this wine is rich but not ostentatious. A youthful perfume of rich, dark fruit is punctuated by hints of cranberry, tobacco, mocha, leather, butterscotch, and toasted oak. Ripe and lively with balanced tannins and a long finish, it's a fine companion now, and will only prove more charming with age.

2005 - Finding Its Way

Just a babe, this wine exhibits deep color and concentration with aromas of blackberry, black cherry, cranberry, bittersweet chocolate, caramel, brown sugar, and currant. Nicely structured with a satiny mouthfeel and very firm tannins, it needs time to integrate fully.

2006 - Barely in the Bottle

Dark, opaque ruby in color. Youthful and grapey, with blackberry, plum, dark cherry, and anise. Richly textured, medium-full body, and a long finish. This is going to be good.