

the Flying Winemaker

An Opera of Carménère: Historical Carménère Hong Kong 2015

By Kevin Bonnet, Wine Writer for The Flying Winemaker Hong Kong

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This Wednesday 3rd of June 2015, the Flying Winemaker wine team was lucky enough to attend a rather special Chile wine tasting. This event was organized by the Trade Commission of Chile in Hong Kong, Pro Chile, and Top Winemakers Chile, taking place at Woolloomooloo, Wan Chai. The 12 wines tasted in this seminar were all made from one criminally under-rated varietal, Carménère, which is quickly ascending in prestige all over the world. The wonderful and energetic speaker for this event was Mr Rafel Prieto, director at Top Winemakers Chile.

What we learned:

This event aimed at promoting Chile as premium wine producers, an alternative to its reputation of affordability and easy drinking. There is nothing wrong with those cheap and tasty Chilean wines, often served by the class all over Hong Kong, but there is an entire other aspect to discover.

The 12 featured Carménère were all from different estates, and 4 separate valleys, namely Maipo, Cachapoal, Colchagua and Curico-Maule. These 4 have a special connection with Carménère in their history and commitment to its expansion. What was striking was the sheer impact of climate and geography on these wines. All of them were from alluvial valleys, on mountainous, central or coastal locations. The shift of wine style from one valley to the other was unmistakable. We are now quite certain that Carménère, being so terroir expressive, can offer a fascinating galaxy of styles for all palates.

What we liked:

The first 3 wines were from one of Chile's most famous areas, Maipo Valley, in central Chile and nearby Santiago. Its Carménère was certainly the most modern, with a very New World style. They had bright acidity, and some green notes, like cut grass or green apples. Very refreshing and very drinkable wines, my personal favorite from this first bracket was the very fresh **Viña Tres Palacios 2011**, with very soft tannins.

The second bracket was from Cachapoal Valley, further south. These wines had greater amplitude and stronger tannin. My personal favorite was a very classic, very old Chilean-styled Carménère from **Viña Santa Carolina 2008**, with great maturity and superbly elegant.

The third bracket featured wines from Colchagua Valley, and were without, a doubt, my favorite style for the event. These wines were juicy and super fruit-driven, ending up as jammy and satisfying wines. My favorite was a state-supported project called Microterroir. Their wine **Viña Casa Silva 2008** had the most delicious aroma of cassis and blackcurrant, slightly sweet but with big tannins to balance it out.

The fourth and last bracket featured wines from the largest production area of Chile, Curico-Maule Valley. Again a very distinctive transition of style. Drinking the wines felt like biting into freshly cut fruits, supported by a slightly salty minerality. I loved the **Viña J.Bouchon**, for its maritime and unique expression of Carménère.

What blew our minds:

More than satisfied with the interesting wines and the tasty food of Woolloomooloo, the seminar had yet one final surprise to offer. A surprising 13th was poured, and is one of the most ingenious creations I've ever drunk. Imagine blending wine from 50 barrels, 50 unique vineyards and with 50 winemakers into a single wine. From our experience, working with just one winemaker is already no light work (although we suspect Eddie is a tad more excitable than your average oenologist). This **50 barricas de Chile Carménère 2012** is a project by Top Winemakers and a formidable collaboration of talents. It beautifully expresses the personality of Chile, a spirit of unity, and the outstanding potential of Carménère as a grape. This wine felt perfectly balanced, miraculously so, and has great aging potential. The audience of sommeliers and wine educators were unanimous, and in love with it.

One last word:

I believe we are going to see more and more good Carménère on the Hong Kong wine scene. Its soft, velvety tannins and great food friendliness is irresistible to demanding palates once they dare try it. I would recommend you try some for yourself and get used to the varietal. We have found so much diversity in styles with today's tasting that there is no way you won't fall in love with it.

Carménère 的獨腳戲

June 9, 2015

Kevin Bonnet (譯: Alison Lee)



本月 3 日, The Flying Winemaker 的 Wine Team 有幸出席一個十分特別的智利葡萄酒品酒活動。活動由香港區的 ProChile 和 Top Winemakers Chile 在灣仔 Woolloomooloo 舉辦。我們在試酒會中品嚐了 12 支葡萄酒, 它的風格和美感各有千秋, 但它們都有一個共通點——都是以 Carménère 釀製。一直被看輕的 Carménère 近年在世界舞台迅速崛起。今次, 帶領我們欣賞 Carménère 的是 Top Winemakers Chile 的總監 Rafael Prieto。



我們的收穫

眾所周知, 智利的葡萄酒價錢實惠、容易入口; 但是, 其實智利也生產了不少高品質的葡萄酒。今次活動目的就是向大家推廣智利的高級葡萄酒。

今次所嚐的 Carménère 產自 12 個不同的生產商、來自 4 個不同的山谷: Maipo, Cachapoal, Colchagua and Curico-Maule。對於 Carménère 日漸變得廣為人知, 這 4 個產區實在是功不可沒。當地的氣候和地理是生產出優美的 Carménère 的關鍵因素。這 4 個山谷分佈在高山、中部以及海岸旁, 它們的泥土主要為沖積土。由於 Carménère 擅於表露當地風土特色, 因此四個產區的葡萄酒風格大相逕庭, 必定能滿足飲家們不同的口味!

我們的最愛

品酒環節分為 4 個回合, 每個回合都有 3 支來自同一產區的葡萄酒。

第一回合登場的酒均來自智利最有名的 Maipo 山谷。Maipo 山谷位於智利的中部, 毗鄰聖地牙哥, 產出的 Carménère 具有典型新世界葡萄酒的風格。清純的酸度、帶點青草和青蘋果氣息, 口感平易近人之餘予人清新的感覺。在這 3 支酒當中, 我最愛的是鮮果香氣突出、丹寧柔和的 *Vina Tres Palacios 2011*。

第二回合的酒來自較南邊的 Cachapoal 山谷。這裡出產的酒性格更鮮明、丹寧更強而有力。我個人偏愛有經典智利 Carménère 風格、展盡成熟優雅姿態的 *Vina Santa Carolina 2008*。

第三回合, 來自 Colchagua 山谷的酒, 毫無疑問成為了我當日的最愛! 這個產區的葡萄酒鮮美可口、果味豐盈, 香甜美味的餘韻令人滿心滿意。深得我心的是 *Vina Casa Silva 2008*。它是一個國家資助計劃「微風士」(Microterroir) 的成果。這支酒有極奇吸引的黑加侖子香氣, 微甜, 但有結實的單寧使其感覺較平衡。

最後一輪的酒產自智利最大的產區 Curico-Maule 山谷。再一次, 你完全能感到智利不同的風土為葡萄酒帶來的分別。此產區的葡萄酒味道新鮮得有如鮮榨果汁, 收結有一絲由礦物而來的咸味。我較愛 *Vina J.Bouchon*, 因為它呈現出 Carménère 與別不同的一面以及其海洋氣息。

最觸目的是.....

除了 12 支有趣的葡萄酒以及 Woolloomooloo 令人垂涎欲滴的小食外, 大會還有一項體貼的安排——第 13 支酒。這是我喝過最具原創性的葡萄酒: 一支來自 50 個不同莊園、出自 50 位釀酒師、在 50 個不同的木桶釀製的酒, 合而為一而成的葡萄酒! 眾所周知, 釀酒師們各有風格, 為了原則問題有時甚至水火不容 (當然, 我們相信 Eddie 是較易相處的一面); 但 Top Winemaker 還是有能力造出這支集各家之大成的 50 Barricas 2012 (直譯: 50 木桶)。它淋漓盡致地反映了智利和不同的特性, 除了酒體完美平衡外, 它還並充分表現了 Carménère 的陳年潛力, 取得了在場每一位嘉賓的一致好評!

結語

我相信, 在不久的將來, 香港的葡萄酒界一定會出現更多 Carménère 的蹤影。它柔和絲滑的丹寧以及其百變的形象和各類美食配搭得天衣無縫, 即使再高要求的食家, 在試過和 Carménère 的配搭後都一定會讚不絕口。大家不妨一試。

標籤: Event Wine Tasting 品酒筆記



大家好, 我是這個Blog 的小編 Alison。如果想進一步認識我, 按這裡吧!

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