

VINOGRAPHY: a wine blog

Wine and food adventures in San Francisco and around the world

Vinography Unboxed: Week of 11/18/18

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Hello, and welcome to my periodic dig through the samples pile. I'm pleased to bring you the latest installment of Vinography Unboxed, where I highlight some of the better bottles that have crossed my doorstep recently.

This week included a variety of interesting wines. Let's start with an old-school Sherry, the Fino en Rama from Tio Pepe, which is unfiltered and unclarified and selected from 62 specific casks at the Gonzales Byass facility in Jerez. If you're a sherry fan, you'll enjoy the salinity of this bottling, though it ends up being a little rich for my tastes.

Next, I've got a few wines from Carneros beginning with a fine, quite flavorful Sauvignon Blanc from Cuvaision that is aged in concrete (or "beton" in French) and has a lovely purity. Still in the white department, the Truchard Roussanne has been one of that estate's signature wines for years.

Moving on to red, but staying in the Carneros breeze, I've got a few Pinots as well, starting with the beautifully aging Saintsbury reserve, that was probably pretty hefty in its youth, but is aging into a seamless and complex whole that is really appealing.

Of special note was the Garnet Pinot from the storied Stanly Ranch. Garnet used to be the lower-end bottling from Saintsbury, but the brand was sold a number of years ago and is now a stand alone offering that continues to offer excellent value wines, of which this wine is a prime example.

Moving on, and much farther afield, I can highly recommend some more of the wines from the



Reva Monforte d'Alba resort and winery in Piedmont, Italy. While this producer might seem to be pretty commercial, tied as it is to a resort hotel, and not someone's grandfather in a rickety shed somewhere, the wines are very pretty and definitely well made. The Nebbiolo and the Barolo in particular are very well priced for their quality.

And last but not least, I've got a single-vineyard offering from Acumen, to whose wines I was recently introduced. Their Cabernets have really impressed me, as this one does, from the top of the Atlas Peak AVA, showing great acidity and incredibly well integrated oak. If you like top Napa Cabernets this one can easily hold its own against wines twice its price.

All these and more this week. Enjoy!

NV Gonzalez Byass "Tio Pepe Fino En Rama" Sherry, Jerez, Andalucia, Spain

Medium gold in the glass this sherry smells of nut skin, diesel fuel, and dried apples. In the mouth, salty flavors of roasted nuts, vanilla, seawater and freshly snuffed candle have an angular bite, thanks to excellent acidity. 15% alcohol.

Score: around **8.5**. Cost: \$30. [click to buy.](#)

2017 Cuvaision "Méthode Béton" Sauvignon Blanc, Carneros, California

Light gold in the glass, this wine smells of gooseberries and passionfruit. In the mouth, flavors of green apple, linalool, and passionfruit have a silky texture but lack the zip that I would want for this wine to be truly delicious. Lovely pure flavors though. 14.4% alcohol. Score: around **8.5**. Cost: \$35. [click to buy.](#)

2017 Truchard Vineyards Roussanne, Carneros, California

Medium gold in the glass, this wine smells of lemon and pear and vanilla. In the mouth, lemon and poached pear flavors mix with a touch of yellow flowers and herbs, but the vanilla of oak is more present than I would like. 14.2% alcohol. Score: around **8.5**. Cost: \$25. [click to buy.](#)

2016 Etude "Grace Benoist Ranch Heirloom" Pinot Noir, Carneros, California

Medium to dark garnet in color, this wine smells of cherry and raspberry fruit. In the mouth, cherry and raspberry fruit have a nice gauzy blanket of tannins wrapped around them, and good acidity. Hints of dried herbs linger in the finish. Score: around **8.5**. Cost: \$95. [click to buy.](#)



2014 Garnet "Stanly Ranch Carneros" Pinot Noir, Carneros, California

Medium ruby in color with just a hint of garnet still remaining, this wine smells of cedar and dried flowers. In the mouth, flavors of cherry and cedar mix with a touch of carob. Powdery tannins linger with hints of red apple skin and carob. Score: around **8.5**. Cost: \$22. [click to buy.](#)

2002 Saintsbury "Reserve" Pinot Noir, Carneros, California

Dark ruby in the glass, this wine smells of mushrooms, autumn leaves, and dried cherries. In the mouth, rich dried cherry, herbs, and forest floor notes linger for a long time on the finish. Tacky, muscular tannins grip the edges of the palate as notes of dried flowers linger. Intense and quite rich. 14% alcohol. Score: between **8.5** and **9**. Cost: \$35. [click to buy.](#)

2014 Reva Barolo DCG, Piedmont, Italy

Light to medium ruby in the glass, this wine smells of dried flowers and dried citrus peel. In the mouth, juicy citrus and dried flowers mix with leather and strawberry as muscular, powdery tannins squeeze the palate. Very pretty and likely to be quite ethereal as it ages. Excellent. 13.5% alcohol. Score: between **9** and **9.5**. Cost: \$42. [click to buy.](#)

2016 Reva Nebbiolo d'Alba DOC, Piedmont, Italy

Light to medium ruby in the glass, this wine smells of strawberries and a touch of asphalt. In the mouth, tart strawberry and sour cherry flavors are gripped by tight, muscular tannins that could do with a couple years mellowing. Excellent acidity, and juicy citrus peel notes in the finish. 14% alcohol. Score: between **8.5** and **9**. Cost: \$26. [click to buy.](#)

2013 Reva "Ravera" Barolo DCG, Piedmont, Italy

Light to medium ruby in color, this wine smells of dried flowers and dried herbs with a touch of leather. In the mouth, gorgeously juicy dried flowers and dried citrus peel flavors mix with a darker leather and dusty road or pine duff. Muscular, very fine grained tannins grip the palate as the wine finishes long with citrus notes. Excellent acidity and balance. 14.5% alcohol. Score: between **9** and **9.5**. Cost: \$60. [click to buy.](#)

2014 Acumen "Peak - Attelas Vineyard" Cabernet Sauvignon, Atlas Peak, Napa, California

Dark garnet in color, this wine smells of black cherries. In the mouth, gorgeous black cherry fruit mixes with cola notes and fantastically bright acidity under a gauzy haze of fine grained tannins. Beautifully restrained and elegant, with stunning poise and well-integrated oak. Fantastic acidity and balance. 14% alcohol. Score: around **9.5**. Cost: \$150.

Posted by: [Alder](#) on November 24, 2018 5:53 PM