

Balthasar Ress

Vertical Tasting

Those of you who know Balthasar Ress will already be reserving their place. Balthasar Ress is a family owned estate now in its fifth generation (although our wines come mainly from the previous generation – Stefan Ress).

All of their wines come from the Rheingau region of Germany – along with the Mosel, these are the top two wine producing areas. Situated along the North bank of the Rhine, so that the vineyards face south, this area has been famous for wine since Roman times. A couple of hundred years ago ‘Hock’ prices (so-called because the wines originated from the village of Hochheim) fetched the same as (sometimes more than) the wines that we know as the First Growths of Bordeaux (Lafite, Latour etc). Only 3% of German wine comes from the Rheingau.

These can be stunning wines – and all are 100% Riesling grape – the grape that was voted Winetasters’ favourite grape after our multi-tasting of white varietals over several years.

German wines have more rules surrounding them than any other country – and they are followed rigidly. For this tasting we will limit the variation. All wines (nominally) have the same sweetness – Spätlese, so are medium-sweet. That sweetness, plus the characteristic acidity from the Riesling, allows these wines to age wonderfully, leading to a roundness and complexity, supporting an elegance that provides the ideal wine match for perfectly ripe fruit – whether it be peaches, pears, apricots – or even grapes.

We will compare two wines each from 4 villages – Hochheim (mentioned above), Johannisberg (Riesling is often referred to as Johannisberg Riesling, reflecting its pre-eminent quality in this village), and Hattenheim and Oestrich which lie between the other two. All are in the MittelRhein – the top sub-region within Rheingau.

Our vintages range from a 1982 Oestricher Doosberg (the latter is the vineyard name) Riesling Spätlese (we also have the same wine from 1992) through to the 1999 Hochheimer Domdechane Riesling (to compare with the Hochheimer Kirchenstück from 1986). From Hattenheim we have the Nussbrunnen from both 1997 and 1998 and the Johannisberg wines are the Erntebinger 1993, and the Klaus 1990 (my prediction to top the tasting).

Germany has had an unparalleled run of excellent vintages since the early 1980’s – possibly the most consistent country in the world – maybe more evidence of global warming, but at least we can enjoy the fruits. All of these wines were shipped to us directly from the Balthasar Ress cellars in Germany.

As always with our tastings, this event will be strictly non-smoking, and we request your cooperation in not wearing any scented after-shave or perfume.

Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2011
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Limit: 88 people

North York Memorial Community Hall
5110 Yonge St. (under library)
North York Centre Subway

Cancellations accepted up to October 7, 2011 — David Hutchison (416-690-0281 **evenings**). **No reservations by phone, please.** No confirmations will be issued — you will be contacted only if we are sold out. First come basis. Non-members may attend at guest rates, but preference will be given to members.

You can register online using a credit card at www.winetasters.ca, or send in this form with a cheque.

Tear and Enclose _____

Cheque payable to:
Winetasters Society of Toronto
c/o Dave Hutchison
270 Glen Manor Drive West
Toronto, Ontario
M4E 2Y2

Names: _____

Phone: (____) _____ W (____) _____

Cheque Enclosed for: **Balthasar Ress**

_____ Members @ 37.00 each _____
_____ Guests @ 45.00 each _____

Yes, I wish to sit at a New Members Table with an expert to answer my questions.

Total _____

