

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~
Saturday, January 5th, 2013

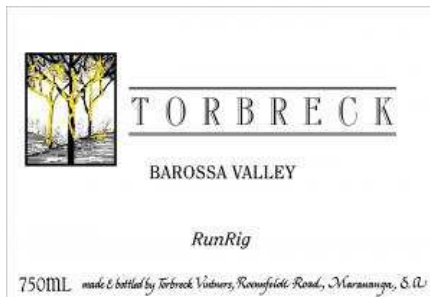
1

The fruits of labour:

Outside of the winery's interiors, no time of the year is more important than the moment when the grapes are harvested in the vineyards. For everyone involved in the winegrowing process, especially when premium winemaking is the objective, there is no margin for error. Once the decision has been made to bring in the grapes, they must be brought in carefully, opportunely, and in the most optimal state.



The reasons are obvious. Great wine is *always* made in the vineyard. Despite all the gizmos and gadgets found in any modern winemaking facility, exceptional wine simply cannot be produced without outstanding grapes; and the decisions the winegrower makes will reflect this during the most important stages of the harvesting process.



The first of these is when exactly to pick, the moment when the winegrower believes his or her grapes will be the most capable of producing the best possible wine. Picked too early, and the wine will likely taste underripe (often 'green') and excessively astringent and/or acidic. Picked too late and the wine will probably retain stewed fruit characteristics (most common in reds), disadvantageously lower acidity, and excessive alcohol. Then there is matter of ensuring the grapes are picked in good weather. Any precipitation will dilute the grapes and exacerbate any fungal diseases. Outdoor temperatures are also a concern. If the weather is too hot, the grapes may begin to stew in the sun, resulting in oxidation and premature fermentation. This is why many winegrowers, especially in hot climates, often opt to harvest early in the morning or during the night. This is also why many winegrowers will often douse the grapes with low quantities of sulphur dioxide (SO²), to prevent oxidation at some point during the harvesting process.

At the same time, winegrowers must decide on the method(s) by which the grapes are to be harvested. Of picking, there are but two options: persons or machines. In most parts of the world

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

2

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

nowadays, an ever-increasing percentage of grapes are picked by machine, due to a combination of cost factors and labour shortages. From a standpoint of quality, however, few would deny that experienced manual harvesters are vastly superior to machines. While great strides have been



made in improving the intuitiveness and precision of mechanical apparatuses, veteran pickers will invariably bring in better grapes, because they can snip precise clusters as well as handle the grapes with greater individual care.

Just as important, in many of the best vineyards throughout the world (especially Europe), mechanical harvesters aren't just undesirable, they're effectively *unusable*, particularly in areas where steep slopes are the norm—think Côte-Rôtie (Rhône), Wehlener Sonnenuhr (Mosel), Priorat (Spain), and many parts of the Douro (Portugal).

Attention to detail is critical. At the best wineries in the world, where supreme quality is the objective, manual pickers are not only responsible for procuring the best possible grapes, they must also ensure their precious cargo reaches the winery in top-notch condition. Communication is key. Once the grapes have



been collected and carefully deposited into small baskets (nowadays usually plastic), they must be transported to the winery without delay, where they will be placed on conveyer belts and sorted. At each stage, there must be enough skilled people on hand to carry out all the directives necessary to ensure each step is accomplished with ease. Any mistake could result in a loss in potential productivity and quality.

Whenever it comes to great winegrowing, compromise is never an option.

A few gems for collectors:

White Wines:

Joh. Jos. Christoffel 1989 Riesling Spätlese, Wehlener Sonnenuhr QmP, Mosel-Saar-Ruwer, Germany: Examined at the auctioneer's table at a high-profile wine tasting, the incredible 1989 Wehlener Sonnenuhr-sourced Riesling Spätlese remains perplexingly youthful. Pale-light green in colour with golden highlights, it displays remarkable scents of spicy lemon and lime; switching to white peach kernels, 'icy' green

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

3

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

grapes, melon, and petrol traces. Complex, delivering excellent mineral fruit, pitch-perfect acidity, and a wonderful hint of spicy lemon/lime and green grapes on the finish. Brilliantly executed, this must have been cellared in unusually optimal conditions. Now-2018+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2010)

92++ Price Unavailable Private Collection

Hardys 2006 Eileen Hardy Chardonnay, SE Australia, Australia: Flagship Chardonnay of Hardys, the 2006 Eileen possesses a remarkably upbeat personality and delectable style. Light lime in colour, it presents intense scents of nutted oatmeal at the outset; giving way to pears, dried apricots, butterscotch, lemon, quince, and vanilla. Complex, boasting fulsome forward fruit, balanced acidity, and an elegant, lasting hint of pears, quince, and nuts on the finish. Terrific power (quite positive), density, and expression, the Burgundian influence becomes more noticeable after additional time in the glass. Now-2015++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2009)

92 \$62.35 (Private Order) Raffles Liquor Merchant

Hidden Bench 2006 Tête de Cuvée Chardonnay, VQA Beamsville Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Proprietor Harold Thiel's top Chardonnay, there is little mistaking the brazen superiority of the 2006 Tête de Cuvée. Pale-light lime in colour, the wine is finely toasted, showcasing inviting, elegant scents of poached pears and quince; switching to moderate butterscotch, baked lemon meringue, lime, and a hint of apricots, vanilla, and nuts. Complex, exuding exemplary fruit, balanced acidity, and a lingering, upstanding hint of poached pears and nuts on the finish. Excellent character, balance, and style. Now-2015++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2010)

91++ \$45.00 (Private Order) Hidden Bench Vineyards & Winery

Le Clos Jordanne 2008 Le Grand Clos Chardonnay, VQA Twenty Mile Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Flagship Chardonnay of an operation that has taken the Canadian winegrowing scene by storm, the 2008 Le Grand Clos sets a different standard. Pale lime in colour with a touch of straw, the wine is finely toasted, detailing engaging, attractive aromas of pears (slightly nutted), green apples, dried apricots, stone fruit, lemon drops, and a hint of orange peel and vanillin. Complex, with very fine, elegant fruit, balanced acidity, and a beautiful hint of pears, quince, and mild toasted oak on the finish. Delicious, balanced, and polished. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

91 \$65.00 (#34561) Vintages 27 November 2010 Release

Château Latour-Martillac Blanc 2010, Pessac-Léognan AOC, Bordeaux, France: Excellent white from this slowly-improving estate, the 2010 Latour-Martillac Blanc is all balance and class. Pale-light lime in colour, it exhibits marvellous scents of pure lemon citrus, pears, starfruit, moderate green apples, and a hint of almonds and floral elements. Complex, possessing vibrant fruit, balanced acidity, and an elegant, mineral hint of lemon citrus and pears on the finish. Commendable style and purity, this will certainly open up over the next several years. 62% Sauvignon Blanc and 38% Sémillon. Now-2023+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

91 \$49.00 (#259036) Vintages 2010 Bordeaux Futures

Closson Chase 2007 S. Kocsis Vineyard Chardonnay, VQA Beamsville Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Though based out of Prince Edward County,

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

4

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

viticulturist Deborah Paskus sources grapes for specific bottlings from optimal sites throughout southern Ontario. Pale light greenish-lime in colour with a touch of straw, the 2007 S. Kocsis Chardonnay reveals enticing, intricately layered scents of hazelnutted pears, green apples, apricots, quince, toasted oak (properly integrated), caramel, and a hint of green grapes and vanillin. Very complex, with superb fruit, balanced acidity, and a polished hint of pears, roasted hazelnuts, and quince on the finish. Excellently done. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

90++ \$45.95 (#184291) Vintages Shop Online

Henry of Pelham 2007 Speck Family Reserve Chardonnay, VQA Short Hills Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Probably the best Chardonnay I have ever tasted from Henry of Pelham, the 2007 Speck Family Reserve, pale-light lime in colour, offers beautiful scents of fresh pears (slightly nutted), lemon, green apples, cream crackers, and a hint of hazelnuts, minerals, and delicate toasted oak. Complex, with very fine fruit, balanced acidity, and a truly lovely hint of nutted pears and lemon citrus on the finish. Highly impressive, boasting great balance, restraint, and character. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, February 2010)

90 \$35.00 (#616466) Vintages Archives

Hidden Bench 2008 Estate Chardonnay, VQA Beamsville Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: For an entry-range wine, the 2008 Estate Chardonnay is meant to be taken seriously. Pale lime in colour, proprietor Harold Thiel's latest vintage is delicately toasted, displaying attractive scents of lemon citrus, pears, green apples, minerals, and hint of caramel and orange peel. Quite complex, retaining exceptionally subtle, finely textured fruit, balanced acidity, and a great hint of 'icy' pears and moderate toasted oak on the finish. Marvellous purity, balance, and scope. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

90 \$32.20 (#243709) Vintages Special Offer

Laroche 2005, Chablis Grand Cru Les Blanchots AOC, Burgundy, France: Exceptional Chablis, the 2005 Les Blanchots manages to capture the essence of this lovely Grand Cru with little fuss. Light greenish-straw in colour, the wine displays beautiful scents of seasalty yellow plums at the outset; giving way to creamy pears, green apples, quince, minerals, and a delicate hint of spice. Complex, possessing lovely fruit, balanced acidity, and an elegant hint of minerally pears and teensy strawy elements on the finish. Marvellous refinement and balance. Screwcap closure. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2010)

90 \$79.00 (#69211) Vintages March 2008 Classics Collection

Tawse 2007 Quarry Road Chardonnay, VQA Vinemount Ridge, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: With clear Burgundian inclinations, the 2007 Quarry Road Chardonnay reflects the sort of direction more wineries in Niagara should be taking. Light lime in colour, it is lightly toasted, offering alluring scents of hazelnutted pears, quince, lemon/lime citrus, marzipan, and minerals. Complex, featuring very fine fruit, balanced acidity, and a lingering, elegant hint of nutted pears, lemon, and minerals on the finish. Beautifully balanced, focused, and pronounced. Now-2015++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2010)

90 \$34.95 (#111989) Vintages Archives

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

5

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

Tawse 2008 Robyn's Block Chardonnay, VQA Twenty Mile Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Top white of Tawse Winery, compared to past vintages the 2008 Robyn's Block Chardonnay is arguably the most delicate to date. Pale lime in colour, the wine reveals sincerely lovely scents of fresh pears, green apples, lemon/lime citrus, nectarines, brioche, and a hint of vanillin. Complex, retaining beautiful fruit, balanced acidity, and a splendid hint of pears, quince, and mild toasted oak on the finish. Excellent bottling, winemaker Paul Pender should be very proud of all he's achieved. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

90 \$41.95 (#2937) Vintages Archives

Davis Bynum 2007 Chardonnay, Russian River Valley (Sonoma County), California: A tribute to the North American palate, the 2007 Russian River Valley Chardonnay, pale-light green in colour, is heavily toasted, featuring engaging scents of butterscotch and slightly tropical pears; giving way to apricots, oatmeal cookies, vanilla, and nuts. Complex, with very fine fruit, balanced acidity, high alcohol (14.9%), and a lingering hint of apricots, butterscotch, and toasted oak on the finish. Very satisfying and fulsome—if this is your preferred style. Now-2013+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

89+ \$24.95 (#205815) Vintages 9 July 2011 Release

Kendall-Jackson 2007 Grand Reserve Chardonnay, Santa Barbara/Monterey Counties, California: Light-medium green in colour with a touch of yellow, the 2007 Grand Reserve Chardonnay is intensely toasted, giving way to impressive scents of ripe pears and apricots; again switching to quince, white flowers, vanillin, and nuts. Complex, with fine fruit, milder acidity, and a surprisingly restrained, even elegant hint of pears and toasted oak on the finish. Finely crafted, careful grape-sourcing seems to have significantly paid off here; this should keep for the short term. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

89+ \$29.95 (#59576) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release

Domaine Jean Collet & Fils 2007, Chablis Premier Cru Vaillons AOC, Burgundy, France: My first recorded note from this winery, the 2007 Vaillons gives rise to lovely approachability and vibrancy. Light straw-lime in colour, it displays splendid scents of schisty green apples and lemon; switching to white flowers, delicate seasalt, and a hint of dried pears and minerals. Complex, with fine fruit, balanced acidity, and a hint of green apples and seasalt on the finish. Crisp, balanced, and very refreshing. Now-2013+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2010)

89 \$27.95 (#650804) Vintages 27 November 2010 Release

Luis Felipe Edwards 2010 Gran Reserva Roussanne, Colchagua Valley, Chile: Representing exceptional value for money, the 2010 Gran Reserva is likely the only 100% Roussanne I have tasted from Chile to date. Pale-light straw-lime in colour, it reveals fresh, well-established scents of waxy pears, apricots, dried honeysuckle, jasmine, and nuts. Complex, with fine fruit, milder acidity, and a lingering, engaging hint of ripe melon-laced pears on the finish. Ideal freshness, balance, and character. Screwcap closure. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

89 \$16.95 (#309740) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

6

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

Lawson's Dry Hills 2011 Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough, South Island, New Zealand: Wonderful value as far as I'm concerned, the 2011 Sauvignon Blanc should be procured by the case. Very pale lime with a touch of straw, it displays delicate scents of grassy gooseberries (slightly honeyed), lemon, pears, white flowers, and minerals. On the palate: zesty fruit showing, with vibrant acidity, and a lovely hint of gooseberries, lemon, and almond extract on the finish. Impressive delicateness, balance, and character. Screwcap closure. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

89 \$16.95 (#214460) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Closson Chase 2009 Sans Chêne Chardonnay, VQA Prince Edward County, Ontario, Canada: Sourced from young vines, the 2009 Sans Chêne Chardonnay, pale lime in colour, offers lovely notes of green apple-infused lime cordial; switching to lemon, woodsmoke (with moderate sawdust traces), pears, and stony beach pebbles. On the palate: delightful crisp fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a nervy/steely hint of green apples and pears on the finish. Very fine. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

88++ \$25.20 (#120337) Vintages Shop Online

Laroche 2008 Saint Martin, Chablis AOC, Burgundy, France: Pale straw-lime in colour, the 2008 Saint Martin reveals lovely notes of schist-based dried green fruits, lemon, and a hint of sea salt and minerals. On the palate: fine fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of dried green apples and sea salt on the finish. Nicely crafted and balanced. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2010)

88+ \$24.95 (Private Order) Select Wines & Spirits

Franciscan 2007 Chardonnay, Napa Valley, California: Light lime in colour with a touch of straw, the 2007 Chardonnay is intensely oaky, with accompanying notes of apricots, pears, dried honeysuckle, butterscotch, vanillin, and nuts. On the palate: fine fruit showing, with milder acidity, and a lengthy hint of butterscotch and apricots on the finish. Large-scale, oak-driven wine—not to my taste, though plenty will like this just the way it is. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, February 2010)

88 \$24.95 (#496125) Vintages 17 April 2010 Release

Henry of Pelham 2007 Speck Family Reserve Riesling, VQA Short Hills Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Pale lime in colour, the 2007 Speck Family Reserve Riesling is intensely lemony, revealing lovely notes of 'icy' lime, pears, melon, green apples, and a hint of spice. Complex, with fine fruit, balanced acidity (a little dry), and a hint of lemon citrus and minerals on the finish. Delightful youthfulness and balance. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, February 2010)

88 \$30.00 (#643361) Vintages Archives

Hidden Bench 2008 Estate Riesling, VQA Beamsville Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Entry-range Riesling from one of my favourite Niagara operations, the 2008 Estate, very pale lime in colour, displays lovely notes of sweet lemon blossom intermixed with green apples, lime, beach pebbles, and petrol. On the palate: delightful lemony fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of lemon citrus (not surprising) on the finish. Very refreshing and balanced. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

7

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

88 \$19.95 (#183491) Vintages 26 June 2010 Release

Penfolds 2007 Thomas Hyland Chardonnay, Adelaide Hills, South Australia, Australia: Pale-light lime in colour, the 2007 Thomas Hyland Chardonnay sports delicate notes of lemony pears, quince, dried nuts, and a hint of apricots and toasted oak. On the palate: good fruit showing, with slightly milder acidity, and a splendid hint of lemony pears on the finish. Crisp, balanced, and refreshing. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, October 2010)

88 \$19.95 (#611228) Vintages 5 December 2009 Release

Yealands Estate 2008 Seaview Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough, South Island, New Zealand: Pale lime in colour with a touch of straw, the 2008 Seaview Sauvignon Blanc boasts intense asparagus at the outset; accompanied by pleasant notes of grassy pears, green apples, and a hint of white pepper and minerals. On the palate: very good fruit showing, with zesty acidity, and a lingering hint of asparagus and gooseberries on the finish. Distinct flavour profile, with good freshness and balance. Screwcap closure. Now-2011. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

88 \$18.95 (#172346) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Domaine du Chardonnay 2008, Chablis AOC, Burgundy, France: Pale straw-lime in colour, the 2008 Chablis reveals subtle notes of minerally green apples, pears, lemon, and a hint of flint. On the palate: lovely steely fruit showing, with fairly aggressive acidity (not displeasing), and a hint of green apples and lemon on the finish. Very fresh and balanced. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

87++ \$18.95 (#183574) Vintages 30 October 2010 Release

Alain Geoffroy 2008 Domaine Le Verger, Chablis AOC, Burgundy, France: Pale straw-lime in colour, the 2008 Domaine Le Verger offers extremely delicate notes of seasalty lemon, green apples, and a hint of floral nuances and stony beach pebbles. On the palate: good fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of seasalty lemon and green apples (slightly baked) on the finish. Traditional steely/nervy style of Chablis. Now-2010+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87++ \$18.95 (#181289) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Rodney Strong 2008 Chardonnay, Sonoma County, California: Light green in colour, the 2008 Chardonnay is finely toasted, with intense notes of pears, apricots, butterscotch, green apples, popcorn, and vanilla. On the palate: good forward fruit showing, with milder acidity, and a lingering hint of pears and toasted oak on the finish. Fresh, oak-driven, and lengthy—a fair example of the style. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87++ \$18.95 (#226936) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release

François Lurton 2008 Les Fumées Blanches Sauvignon Blanc, Vin de Pays du Comté Tolosan, France: Pale lime in colour, the 2008 Les Fumées Blanches Sauvignon Blanc displays crisp notes of minerally lemon/lime, accompanied by hints of grassy gooseberries and stony beach pebbles. On the palate: reasonably zesty fruit showing, with vibrant acidity, and a hint of lemon and gooseberries on the finish. Good freshness and balance—excellent value. Screwcap closure. Now-2009. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2009)

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

8

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

87+ \$11.95 (#472555) LCBO General List

Allendorf 2008 Terroir Riesling Kabinett, Winkeler Hasensprung QmP, Rheingau, Germany: Pale straw-lime in colour with yellow highlights, the 2008 Terroir Riesling Kabinett displays delicate sweet lemon notes intermixed with grapefruit, white peaches, and a hint of kerosene and spice. Palate: good soft fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of lemon blossom and residual sugar deposits on the finish. Tasty and approachable. Screwcap closure. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87 \$14.20 (#160747) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Geysler Peak 2008 Chardonnay, Alexander Valley (Sonoma County), California: Light-medium green in colour, the 2008 Chardonnay is lightly toasted, with notes of ripe pears, apricots, dried butterscotch, and stone fruit. On the palate: good fresh fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of ripe apricots on the finish. Good balance and fruit orientation. Screwcap closure. Now-2011. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87 \$16.95 (#343475) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release

Leth 2011 Klassik Grüner Veltliner, Wagram, Niederösterreich, Austria: Pale lime in colour, the 2011 Klassik Grüner Veltliner displays neatly assembled notes of green fruits, white lentils, leafy nuances, and minerals. On the palate: light dry fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of leafy green apples on the finish. Fresh, balanced, and clear-cut. Screwcap closure. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

87 \$14.95 (#297192) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Muralhas de Monção 2011, Vinho Verde DOC, Portugal: Pale lime in colour with a touch of straw, the 2011 Vinho Verde features subtle notes of green apples, herbs, and lemony nuances. On the palate: crisp, dry fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of green apples and a little spritz on the finish. Clean, basic, and fresh—good value white. Mostly Alvarinho and Trajadura. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

87 \$14.95 (#80374) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Ormarine 2009 Carte Noire, Picpoul de Pinet AOC, Midi, France: Very pale lime in colour, the 2009 Carte Noire reveals leafy green fruits, lemon, and a hint of cream and stony beach pebbles. On the palate: crisp fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of leafy green apples on the finish. Light and refreshing. Screwcap closure. Now-2010. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2010)

87 \$12.95 (#525287) Vintages 30 October 2010 Release

Yering Station 2008 Little Yering Chardonnay, Yarra Valley, Victoria, Australia: Pale lime in colour with a touch of straw, the 2008 Little Yering Chardonnay is lightly toasted, with fresh notes of pears (slightly nutted), dried apricots, and a hint of green apples. Palate: good fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of dried pears on the finish. Solid and fresh. Screwcap closure. Now-2010+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, February 2010)

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

9

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

87 \$14.95 (#145318) **LCBO General List**

Skuttlebutt 2008 Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon, Margaret River, Western Australia, Australia: Pale lime in colour with a touch of straw, the 2008 Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon displays dried lime-infused green apples and lemongrass, plus a hint of kiwi and mineral elements. Palate: light crisp fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of green apples and lemongrass on the finish. Refreshing and balanced. Screwcap closure. Now-2010. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, February 2010)

86++ \$14.95 (#157867) **LCBO General List**

Ducourt 2008 Réserve de Famille Sauvignon Gris, Bordeaux AOC, Bordeaux, France: Very pale straw-lime in colour, the 2008 Réserve de Famille Sauvignon Gris reveals sweet-like green apples and Bosc pears, along with a hint of lemon and white flowers. Palate: basic decent fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of green apples on the finish. Simple and fresh. Now-2010. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

86+ \$12.95 (#171108) **Vintages 21 August 2010 Release**

Red Wines:

Château Montrose 2009, St-Estèphe AOC, Bordeaux, France: A legend of the making, the 2009 Château Montrose is, without a shred of reservation, the greatest wine this estate has ever created. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, this larger-than-life offering reveals indulgent, elegant aromas of blackberry compote, crème de cassis, currants, dried blueberries, licorice, spring flowers, forest floor, crushed rocks, vanilla, and spice. Immensely complex, possessing substantial yet entirely elegant fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an uncharacteristically decadent, finesse-driven hint of blackberry compote, dried blueberries, and spring flowers on the finish. Powerful, pristine, and almost surreal. 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Petit Verdot. Now-2050+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

97 \$249.00 (#200980) **Vintages 2009 Bordeaux Futures**

Château Le Dôme 2009, St-Emilion AOC, Bordeaux, France: The culmination of perfectionist winegrowing derived from a fantastical year, the 2009 Château Le Dôme is a must-have. Opaque ruby in colour, this elegant blockbuster is beautifully toasted, exuding near-addictive, multilayered aromas of mocha, blackberry treacle, crème de cassis, blueberries, licorice, forest floor, minerals, pain grille, spring flowers, vanilla, and spice. Truly complex, wielding unbelievably rich, well-structured fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a long-lasting, decadent hint of crème de cassis, mocha, and mineral composites on the finish. Magnificent abundance, balance, and elegance. This shall easily keep for the next thirty years, though many collectors will have trouble waiting. 80% Cabernet Franc and 20% Merlot. Now-2042++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

96++ \$229.00 (#204735) **Vintages 2009 Bordeaux Futures**

Château Angélu 2006, St-Emilion Premier Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux, France: One of the top three notes I have from this immaculate estate, the 2006 Château Angélu is a *tour de force* of stunning energy, finesse, and layering. Dark-opaque ruby, the wine remains exceedingly youthful, delivering captivating aromas of

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

1

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

currants, plums, blackberries, spring flowers, espresso, licorice, pain grille, forest floor, crushed rocks, charcoal, vanilla, and spice. Extremely complex, retaining fantastical fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a magnificent, ultra-polished hint of blackberries, licorice, and minerals on the finish. Unbelievable texture, elegance, and completeness. 62% Merlot and 38% Cabernet Franc. Now-2035++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

95++ \$292.55 (#567065) Vintages 2006 Bordeaux Futures

Beringer 2007 Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, California:

Prodigious offering from a fabulous vintage, the 2007 Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon is all that it should be—and just a little more. Opaque ruby in colour, this beauty is finely toasted, showcasing delectable aromas of currants, blueberries, mocha, charcoal embers, pain grille, forest floor, incense, tar, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, delivering fantastic, appropriately structured forward fruit, firm tannins, slightly milder acidity, and a superlative, polished hint of mocha shavings and currants on the finish. Classic outing, one of the best this behemoth winery has ever produced. Also contains 3% Cabernet Franc. Now-2028++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2011)

94++ \$111.79 (Private Order) Morrell & Company (USA)

Jonata 2008 Sangre, Santa Ynez Valley (Santa Barbara County), California:

A personal favourite of mine, the 2008 Sangre is one riveting proposition. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is beautifully toasted, revealing amazing, uplifting aromas of fragrant currants, black fruits, blackberry compote, blueberries, licorice, pipe tobacco, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, carrying unbelievably sumptuous fruit, very firm tannins, milder acidity, and an extremely lengthy, fantastical hint of pure, slightly mineral-constituted blackberry compote, blueberries, and pipe tobacco on the finish. Classic concentration and intensity, with substantial finesse and harmony. 98% Syrah and 2% Viognier. Now-2028. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

94++ \$150.00 (#220517) Vintages October 2012 Classics Collection

Domaine de Chevalier 2009, Pessac-Léognan AOC, Bordeaux, France:

A new standard of excellence at this already-remarkable property, the 2009 Domaine de Chevalier is easily the greatest red this estate has ever created. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine reveals inescapably elegant, enthralling aromas of fragrant currants and plums; switching to 'crunchy' blackberries, raspberries, spring flowers, underbrush, minerals, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, with impeccable fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an inspirational hint of currants, minerals, and floral elements on the finish. Exquisite design, finesse, and depth. 64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, and 6% Petit Verdot. Now-2036++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

94 \$109.00 (#201350) Vintages 2009 Bordeaux Futures

Bruno Giacosa 2005 Falletto, Barolo DOCG, Piedmont, Italy:

Exceptional Barolo from a very challenging vintage, the 2005 Falletto would make a fabulous addition to any well-rounded cellar. Medium red-garnet in colour, the wine is very lightly toasted, demonstrating extraordinary, elegant aromas of dried cherries and alternate red fruits; switching to chestnuts, tealeaves, tar, leather, licorice, white truffles, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, possessing exemplary, finesse-driven fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a superb hint of cherries, leather, and chestnuts on the finish. Medium-

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

1

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

weight as a whole, still outstandingly styled, balanced, and focused. Now-2025+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2010)

94 \$199.00 (#92130) Vintages May 2010 Classics Collection

Jonata 2008 El Desafio, Santa Ynez Valley (Santa Barbara County), California: The closest thing to a Left Bank blend at Jonata, the sumptuous 2008 El Desafio is clearly crafted along dissimilar lines to its Napa/Sonoma equivalents. Opaque ruby in colour, it offers rich, 'cooler' aromas of slightly fragrant currants and black fruits; switching to cherries, licorice, kirsch liqueur, dark mocha, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, delivering deliciously textured fruit, very firm tannins, milder acidity, and a long-lasting, stupendous hint of currants, dark mocha, and forest floor on the finish. Powerful, lengthy, and immensely characterful. 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Petit Verdot, 4% Cabernet Franc, and 2% Merlot. Now-2026+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

94 \$145.00 (#218933) Vintages March 2013 Classics Collection

Jonata 2006 La Fuerza, Santa Ynez Valley (Santa Barbara County), California: The most sublime Petit Verdot (100%) I have ever tasted, the 2006 La Fuerza has opened up my eyes as to the possibilities of this wonderful grape. Extremely dense black-ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, providing opulent, original aromas of blackberry treacle, crème de cassis, chocolate, licorice-infused spring flowers, bay leaves, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, with well-structured, extraordinarily textured fruit, very firm tannins, milder acidity, and an extremely long hint of 'dusty' chocolate and crème de cassis on the finish. Wonderfully attractive, balanced, and harmonious—a champion. Now-2025. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

94 \$95.00 (#221168) Vintages May 2011 Classics Collection

Lapostolle 2007 Clos Apalta, Colchagua Valley, Chile: Consistently in a league of its own, the flagship wine of Lapostolle has never failed to knock me off my feet. Opaque ruby in colour with a touch of purple, this monumental Bordeaux-blend exhibits sensational aromas of dark chocolate-covered cherries and currants; switching to plums, blueberries, white pepper, espresso, leather, crushed rocks, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, wielding sumptuous, exceptional multilayered fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lengthy hint of 'dusty' cherried black currants and dark mocha on the finish. Simply gorgeous, powerful, and polished. 61% Carmenère, 24% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, and 3% Petit Verdot. Now-2024+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, October 2010)

93++ \$109.95 (Private Order) Diageo

Jonata 2007 El Desafio, Santa Ynez Valley (Santa Barbara County), California: Tasted alongside the '08, the delectable 2007 El Desafio reflects a more chocolaty, oak-driven approach. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is beautifully toasted, offering copious aromas of chocolate, currants, blackberry treacle, kirsch, crème brûlée, licorice, nitted brownies, forest floor traces, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, possessing extremely concentrated velvety fruit, very firm tannins, milder acidity, and a persistent, extravagant hint of chocolate and currants on the finish. Powerful, tempting, and bold. 95% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Merlot/Cabernet Franc/Petit Verdot. Now-2024++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

93+ \$145.00 (#218993) Vintages October 2011 Classics Collection

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

1

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

Jonata 2007 Fenix, Santa Ynez Valley (Santa Barbara County), California: About as decadent as winegrowing gets, the 2007 Fenix is unfathomably tempting. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, displaying provocative aromas of milk chocolate (slightly fragrant), 'dusty' plummy currants, crème de cassis, blackberry compote, kirsch, charcoal, damp earth, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, boasting sumptuous, outstanding fruit, very firm tannins, milder acidity, and a long, abundantly saturated hint of chocolate and plummy currants on the finish. Rich, concentrated, and Parkerized. 84% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 6% Petit Verdot. Now-2026+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

93+ \$95.00 (#253237) Vintages May 2012 Classics Collection

Jonata 2008 El Alma, Santa Ynez Valley (Santa Barbara County), California: Opaque ruby in colour, the showstopping 2008 El Ama is finely toasted, bestowing inviting aromas of fragrant wild flowers, currants, plums, blueberries, strawberries, 'dusty' mocha, minerals, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, exuding impeccable, well-structured fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a long, abundant hint of black fruits, damp earth, and wild flower traces on the finish. Powerful, exacting, and full of life. 75% Cabernet Franc, 10% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 5% Petit Verdot. Now-2024+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

93 \$149.00 (#218925) Vintages May 2012 Classics Collection

Château Malartic-Lagravière 2009, Pessac-Léognan AOC, Bordeaux, France: Excepting Smith Haut Lafitte, few other châteaux in Pessac-Léognan have improved as much (or as fast) as Malartic-Lagravière. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, featuring elegant, premier aromas of black currants, dark cherries, espresso, forest floor, minerals, cookie crumble, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, retaining refined fruit, firm tannins (a little chewy), balanced acidity, and a lifted, concentrated hint of currants, espresso, and mineral components on the finish. Extraordinary style, body, and focus. 59% Cabernet Sauvignon, 38% Merlot, and 3% Petit Verdot. Now-2032++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

93 \$85.00 (#201087) Vintages 2009 Bordeaux Futures

Château Montrose 2008, St-Estèphe AOC, Bordeaux, France: Extraordinary follow-up to the overachieving '07, the 2008 Château Montrose is unwaveringly, spot-on exceptional. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine delivers enticing, spirited aromas of currants, plums, blackberries, mildly fragrant cherries, espresso, licorice, underbrush, graphite/minerals, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, retaining elegant 'claret' fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an inescapably refined, enduring hint of currants, graphite, and atypical floral notes on the finish. Brilliantly crafted, this will keep for well over a quarter of a century. 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Petit Verdot. Now-2040++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

93 \$129.00 (#137232) Vintages 14 April 2012 In-Store Discoveries

Château Beaugard 2009, Pomerol AOC, Bordeaux, France: Owned by Crédit Foncière since 1991, Château Beaugard has experienced several giant leaps forward in quality over the last several years. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the glorious '09 is finely toasted, delivering enticing aromas of plummy currants, mocha/espresso, licorice, underbrush, crushed rocks, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, retaining excellent fruit,

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

1

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a concentrated, elegant hint of plums, licorice, and espresso on the finish. Outstandingly delicious, balanced, and polished. 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc. Now-2034. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

92++ \$41.82 (Private Order) Bootle (France)

Château Branaire-Ducru 2008, St-Julien AOC, Bordeaux, France: Along strikingly similar lines as the '05, proprietor Patrick Maroteaux's 2008 Branaire-Ducru is one for the highlight reel. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is lightly yet finely toasted, demonstrating enticing, elegant aromas of delicate currants, blackberries, black cherries, espresso, crushed rocks, scorched earth, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with impeccable fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a delicious, supple hint of currants, black cherries, and pencil lead on the finish. Fantastic integration, structure, and breed. 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, and 2% Cabernet Franc. Now-2026+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

92++ \$63.00 (#137273) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures

Jonata 2008 La Tierra, Santa Ynez Valley (Santa Barbara County), California: Even better than the '07, the colossal 2008 Jonata La Tierra basks in incredible potency, style, and intensity of flavour. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, providing exciting aromas of wild game-infused cherries, strawberries, currants, kirsch, licorice, pain grille, and a hint of grilled herbs, vanilla, and spice. Complex, featuring exquisite fruit, very firm tannins, milder acidity, and a long, finely textured hint of curranted strawberries and tobacco elements on the finish. Remarkably assembled, this beauty will keep for at least a decade. 94% Sangiovese and 6% Syrah. Now-2022++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

92++ \$89.00 (#221150) Vintages May 2012 Classics Collection

Bixio Poderi 2007, Amarone della Valpolicella Classico DOC, Veneto, Italy: Examined at the annual Amarone extravaganza in Verona, the 2007 Bixio Poderi is not to be taken lightly. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, showcasing powerful, youthful aromas of Baker's Chocolate®, dark plums, currants, dried cherries, tar, forest floor, abundant sinewy nuances, vanilla, and spice. Complex, boasting smooth/velvety fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a long, delicious hint of dark plums and underbrush (appassimento style) on the finish. Bold, fulsome, and built for the long haul. Now-2021++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, February 2011)

92+ Price Unavailable Private Collection

Bonazzi & Boscaini 2007, Amarone della Valpolicella Classico DOC, Veneto, Italy: Located in the heart of Valpolicella, the Bonazzi & Boscaini company has been making wine for over forty years. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2007 Amarone Classico is finely toasted, expressing elegant, intrinsically inviting aromas of wild black cherries and mocha; switching to strawberries, leather, tar, cloves, forest floor, and a hint of dates, vanilla, and spice. Complex, retaining delicious, refined fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lasting hint of velvety plums on the finish. Beautiful, finely interwoven, and very powerful. Now-2019++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, February 2011)

92+ Price Unavailable Private Collection

Château Clerc Milon 2009, Pauillac AOC, Bordeaux, France: When all is said and done, the 2009 Clerc Milon is unquestionably managing/technical director Patrick Léon's

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

1

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

best vintage to date. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, it offers gorgeous, slightly floral aromas of currants, plums, blackberries, cherries, licorice, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with excellent, well-structured fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a delicious, 'compact' hint of currants, blackberries, and pain grille on the finish. Superlative character, balance, and elegance. 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot, and 1% Carmenère. Now-2032++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

92+ \$89.00 (#197806) Vintages 2009 Bordeaux Futures

Château Cos Labory 2009, St-Estèphe AOC, Bordeaux, France: From the smallest St-Estèphe in the 1855 Classification, the gloriously crafted 2009 Cos Labory sure packs a punch. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, it displays inviting, almost 'excitable' aromas of slightly fragrant currants, plums, dried blueberries, kirsch liqueur, licorice, vanilla, and spice. Complex and very concentrated, sporting exceptional, finely textured fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, exquisite hint of currants, blackberries, and licorice on the finish. Superb heft, structure, and style. 57% Cabernet Sauvignon and 43% Merlot. Now-2035+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

92+ \$56.00 (#197525) Vintages 2009 Bordeaux Futures

Hidden Bench 2007 La Brunante, VQA Beamsville Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Flagship label from one of the greatest wineries in Ontario, the 2007 La Brunante is likely the best Bordeaux-blend I have ever tasted from my home province. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine reveals incredible aromas of well-proportioned black mocha and currants; shortly giving way to blackberry compote, black raspberries, espresso, pencil lead, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, sporting deliciously supple fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a terrific hint of black mocha/espresso and currants on the finish. Outstanding, alluring wine. 53% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Malbec, and 11% Cabernet Franc. Now-2018++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

92+ \$85.00 (Private Order) Hidden Bench Vineyards & Winery

Keenan 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, California: Colossal proposition at 15.5% alcohol, the massive 2008 Keenan is one of muscular, acutely layered Cabernet. Opaque black-ruby in colour with purple highlights, the wine is beautifully toasted, displaying copious aromas of dark crème de cassis, currants, black mocha, Linzertorte, crushed rocks, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Complex, featuring powerful, finely textured fruit, very firm tannins, milder acidity, and a long-lasting, exceptional hint of 'purple' crème de cassis and crushed rocks on the finish. Impeccable structure, sumptuousness, and length. Now-2028+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

92+ \$60.95 (#685685) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Lapostolle 2007 Borobo, Colchagua Valley, Chile: An unusual blend of grapes sourced from various winegrowing regions, the 2007 Borobo is an incredible success. Opaque purple-ruby in colour, this absurd offering is finely toasted, presenting alluring aromas of milk chocolate and white pepper; quickly giving way to currants, crème de cassis, black cherries, plums, leather, graphite, vanilla, and spice. Complex, boasting deliciously supple fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a superb, lingering hint of currants, mocha, and saddle leather on the finish. Excellent character, balance, and

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

1

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

breadth. 67% Carmenère, 17% Pinot Noir, 13% Syrah, and 3% Petit Verdot. Now-2018+. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, October 2010)

92+ \$94.00 (#39263) Vintages October 2010 Classics Collection

Domaine Cazes 2007 Le Credo, Côte du Roussillon Villages AOC, Midi, France:

Top red of Domaine Cazes, the 2007 Le Credo, opaque ruby in colour, delivers immensely alluring aromas of dark mocha and baked black plums; giving way to currants, blueberries, dark raspberries, leather, scorched earth, toasted oak, and a hint of herbs, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with deliciously smooth fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lengthy hint of baked black fruits, mocha extract, and lavender on the finish. Sumptuous with clear Roussillon inclinations. 40% Grenache, 30% Syrah, and 30% Mourvèdre. Now-2019+. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, May 2010)

92 \$74.95 (Private Order) Select Wines & Spirits

L'Excellence du Château Gouprie 2009, Pomerol AOC, Bordeaux, France:

Flagship wine of the estate, the 2009 l'Excellence du Château Gouprie acquits itself along similar lines as many of the more established names in Pomerol. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, it is beautifully toasted, showcasing enticing aromas of mocha, blackberry compote, spring flowers, graham crackers, forest floor, asphalt, vanilla, and spice. Complex, possessing sincerely delicious, full-bodied fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an exemplary, polished hint of plums, blackberries, and licorice on the finish. Quite rich, poignant, and excellently crafted. 100% Merlot. Now-2032+. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, June 2012)

92 Price Unavailable Private Collection

Hardys 2002 Thomas Hardy Cabernet Sauvignon, Australia:

Sourced from two-thirds Margaret River and one-third McLaren Vale vines, the 2002 Thomas Hardy Cabernet Sauvignon is one hefty, seriously crafted specimen. Opaque ruby-red currant in colour, it reveals intense aromas of baked mint-infused eucalyptus and currants; switching to stewed leather, dried black fruits, roasted coffee beans, cedarwood traces, vanilla, and spice. Complex, delivering delicious, powerful forward fruit, supple tannins, mild acidity, and a long-lasting, copious hint of baked eucalyptus, plums, and freshly brewed coffee on the finish. Mammoth, beautifully aged, and characterful. Now-2017++. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, May 2009)

92 \$89.95 (#464461) Vintages 25 October 2008 In-Store Discovery

Hidden Bench 2007 Locust Lane Vineyard Pinot Noir, VQA Beamsville Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada:

Unequivocally the greatest Ontarian Pinot Noir I have examined to date, the 2007 Locust Lane Vineyard is a must-have. Dark ruby in colour, the wine is very lightly toasted, delivering superlative aromas of cherries and red currants; switching to crème brûlée, raspberries, blackberries, Chinese black tea, pipe tobacco, and a hint of exotic spices. Very complex, wielding exceptional fruit, fine-firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, remarkable hint of pure black raspberries and alternate 'Pinot' fruits on the finish. Gorgeous wine—bravo! Now-2016++. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, September 2010)

92 \$65.00 (Private Order) Hidden Bench Vineyards & Winery

Niebaum-Coppola 1999 Rubicon, Napa Valley, California: Examined alongside the infantile '06, the 1999 Rubicon ably demonstrates the uncanny ageability of Coppola's

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

1

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

top label. Opaque (faded) red currant in colour, it remains lightly toasted, revealing an invigorating bouquet of dried red currants and plums; switching to cedarwood, cigarbox, forest floor, and a hint of white pepper and exotic spices. Complex, retaining beautiful vibrant fruit, well-structured yet accessible tannins, balanced acidity, and a lovely, elegant hint of red plums and light mocha on the finish. Winning balance, style, and maturity. Now-2014++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2010)

92 \$88.44 (Private Order) The Old & Rare Wine Company (USA)

Château La Pointe 2009, Pomerol AOC, Bordeaux, France: Large-scale property by Pomerol standards (22ha), the d'Arfeuille family sold La Pointe in 2007 to insurer Generali France. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the stellar '09 is beautifully toasted, with enticing aromas of dark mocha, currants, black fruits, licorice, spring flowers, delicate cookie crumble, subtle underbrush, graphite, vanilla, and spice. Complex, wielding deliciously concentrated, finely structured fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a brilliant hint of currants, dried black cherries, and mineral traces on the finish. Medium-rich, opulent approach; delicious claret. 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc. Now-2032+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

92 \$33.39 (Private Order) Fine & Rare Wines (UK)

Guerrieri Rizzardi 2007 Villa Rizzardi, Amarone della Valpolicella Classico DOC, Veneto, Italy: Compelling and powerful (logging in at 16% alcohol), the 2007 Villa Rizzardi puts on an excellent show. Opaque faded red currant in colour, it exhibits enticing aromas of intensely savoury plums, dried cherries, subtle cedarwood, Baker's Chocolate®, sinewy nuances, roasted meats, undergrowth, vanilla, and spice. Complex, retaining beautiful, well-developed chewy fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, poignant hint of savoury plums, undergrowth, and mild sinewy chocolate on the finish. Truly delicious and characterful. Corvina Veronese, Corvinone, Rondinella, and Barbera (percentages unknown). Now-2020+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

92 \$46.95 (#302836) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Brio de Cantenac Brown 2009, Margaux AOC, Bordeaux, France: As hard as it is to believe, the 2009 Brio de Cantenac Brown surpasses a host of more famous growths from alternate vintages. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 'second wine' Château Cantenac Brown reveals plentiful aromas of fragrant currants, blackberries, black raspberries, violets, dried cherries, minerals, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Complex, wielding elegant, surprisingly concentrated fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a remarkable hint of currants, blackberries, and violets on the finish. Exquisite overachiever. 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, and 10% Cabernet Franc. Now-2024++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

91++ \$22.26 (Private Order) Fine & Rare Wines (UK)

Château Fonplégade 2009, St-Emilion Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux, France: While I prefer the '08, the sheer power of the 2009 Château Fonplégade will elicit a fierce group of admirers. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, featuring youthfully alluring aromas of moderate mocha, currants, crème de cassis (liqueur format), blackberry compote, licorice, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with excellent, indulgent fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a powerful yet elegant hint of generous blackberry compote, licorice, and mineral composites on the finish. Formidable

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

1

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

and concentrated, yet generally well-balanced on the whole. 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. Now-2030++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

91++ \$44.71 (Private Order) JJ Buckley Fine Wines (USA)

Viu Manent 2008 Viu 1, Colchagua Valley, Chile: Top wine of the establishment, the 2008 Viu 1 is certainly a force to be reckoned with. Opaque ruby in colour, it features beautiful, up-tempo aromas of dark 'dusty' violet cherries and currants; switching to blackberries, leather, forest floor, white pepper, vanilla, and spice. Complex, boasting delicious, finely textured fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lasting, elegantly supple hint of violet-driven currants and black fruits on the finish. Exceptional, marvellously executed red. Predominantly Malbec. Now-2018++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, October 2010)

91+ \$70.00 (Private Order) Churchill Cellars

Henry of Pelham 2007 Speck Family Reserve Cabernet/Merlot, VQA Short Hills Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Truly the finest red Henry of Pelham has ever produced, the 2007 Cabernet-Merlot might never be surpassed by future vintages. Dark ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, exhibiting inviting aromas of fresh mocha (slightly peppery), currants, black cherries, blackberries, scorched earth, vanilla, and spice. Complex, delivering superlative, elegant fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lovely, Bordelaise-style hint of currants, red fruits, and graphite on the finish. Beautiful structure, balance, and harmony. Now-2015++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, February 2010)

91+ \$50.00 (#616433) Vintages Archives

Terre Andina 2007 Suyai, Colchagua Valley, Chile: Flagship label of Terre Andina, the 2007 Suyai is a delicious, robust proposition. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, exhibiting inviting aromas of semi-fragrant currants, mocha, dark cherries, leather, white pepper, roasted meats (very subtle), cedarwood, vanilla, and spice. Complex, carrying sumptuous fruit, very firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lengthy, focused hint of currants, mocha, and red fruits on the finish. Powerful, balanced, and polished. 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Cabernet Franc, 13% Carignan, and 7% Carmenère. Now-2018+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, October 2010)

91 \$59.95 (Private Order) Mark Anthony Brands

Château Brane-Cantenac 2006, Margaux AOC, Bordeaux, France: As Second Growths go, Château Brane-Cantenac always does well in the best vintages, though continues to underperform in second-tier ones; yet the '06 may indicate a change in direction. Dark ruby-red currant in colour, it offers attractive aromas of fragrant currants, plums, wild flowers, pain grille, forest floor, and a hint of minerals and spice. Complex, retaining superbly elegant fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a sophisticated hint of currants and plums (slightly savoury) on the finish. Great refinement, structure, and balance. 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36% Merlot, and 4% Cabernet Franc. Now-2022+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

91 \$85.00 (#235408) Vintages October 2011 Classics Collection

Château La Fleur de Boüard 2009, Lalande-de-Pomerol AOC, Bordeaux, France: Standard-bearer estate of Lalande-de-Pomerol, La Fleur de Boüard is owned by the same family as Château Angélus. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the impeccable '09

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

1

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

reveals exciting, slightly 'brooding' aromas of dark plums, blackberries, red cherries, forest floor, asphalt, wild game, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with excellent fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a poised, concentrated hint of currants and asphalt on the finish. Delicious, full-bodied, and balanced—this should keep for a very long time. 80% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc, and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2030+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

91 \$50.00 (#196014) Vintages 2009 Bordeaux Futures

Jordan 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon, Alexander Valley (Sonoma County), California:

One of very few notes I have from this winery, winemaker Rob Davis' 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon hits many high notes. Dark-opaque ruby in colour and toasted, it presents beautiful aromas of moderate mocha, 'dusty' currants and plums, red cherries, licorice, graphite, vanilla, and spice. Complex, boasting great fruit, firm tannins, slightly milder acidity, and a marvellous, almost refined hint of currants (slightly floral) on the finish. Superb structure, balance, and mood. Also contains 19.5% Merlot, 4.5% Petit Verdot, and 1% Malbec. Now-2018++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2011)

91 \$59.95 (#932434) Vintages Shop Online

Clos de l'Oratoire des Papes 2007, Châteauneuf-du-Pape AOC, Rhône, France:

Marked by great structure and freshness, the 2007 Châteauneuf-du-Pape hardly misses a beat. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is lightly toasted, featuring inviting, engaging aromas of black cherries and raspberries; switching to fragrant plums and alternate red fruits, blackberries, leather, Provençal herbs, scorched earth, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with seriously fine fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering hint of cherried red plums and dark raspberries on the finish. Superb fruit-oriented Rhône-blend. 80% Grenache, 8% Syrah, 75 Mourvèdre, and 5% Cinsault. Now-20121++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2010)

91 \$39.95 (#993279) Vintages 7 August 2010 Release

Château Daugay 2009, St-Emilion Grand Cru AOC, Bordeaux, France:

Polished, supple St-Emilion, the 2009 Château Daugay has a very confident, satisfying aura about it. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, delivering beautiful, delicate yet appropriately rounded aromas of currants, black cherries, red/black fruits, licorice, underbrush, forest floor, mocha, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with delicious, accessible fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a velvety hint of plummy currants and licorice on the finish. Great balance and concentration. 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Franc. Now-2022+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

90++ \$27.83 (Private Order) MacArthur Beverages (USA)

Château Gouprie 2009, Pomerol AOC, Bordeaux, France:

One of two notes I recently collected from here, the 2009 Château Gouprie has all the makings of an attractive mid-weight Pomerol. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, offering refined aromas of plums, black cherries, red fruits, licorice, pain grille, mocha, vanilla, and spice. Complex, featuring a very beautiful, fruit-driven mouthfeel, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an elegant, supple hint of plummy currants and red licorice on the finish. Lovely finesse, full-bodiedness, and flavour. 75% Merlot and 25% Cabernet Franc. Now-2025+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

90++ \$27.15 (Private Order) Vins Ducamin (France)

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

1

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

Château Beauregard 2000, Pomerol AOC, Bordeaux, France: My oldest note from this estate, compared to more recent vintages I've tasted, the 2000 Château Beauregard suggests a more 'seasoned,' leaner approach. Dark-opaque (faded) ruby-red currant in colour, it boasts a beautiful bouquet of dried black fruits, scorched earth, pain grille, tobacco, cedary/savoury nuances, and spice. Complex, with marvellous mature fruit, still-firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a sophisticated hint of plums, wild game, and underbrush on the finish. Aging superbly. 75% Merlot and 25% Cabernet Franc. Now-2017+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

90+ \$52.47 (Private Order) Fine & Rare Wines (UK)

Thomas George Estates 2008 Pinot Noir, Pomerol AOC, Bordeaux, France: Medium ruby in colour, the 2008 Pinot Noir reveals beautiful, fragrant aromas of cinnamon-laced plums, raspberries, violets, strawberries, mild incense, and a hint of spice. Complex, carrying very pure fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, high alcohol (14.7%), and a lasting, elegant hint of cherries, violets, and cinnamon sticks on the finish. Marvellously crafted, stylish, and surprisingly well-balanced—the alcohol is very finely masked for the most part. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, October 2010)

90+ \$40.00 (Private Order) B & W Wines

Chateau St Jean 2008 Benoist Ranch Pinot Noir, Sonoma Coast (Sonoma County), California: Relatively recent addition to the significant St Jean portfolio, Pinot Noir has only been bottled from the Benoist Ranch vineyard since 2005. Medium-dark ruby in colour, the '08 offers beautifully perfumed aromas of raspberries, plums, delicate strawberries, pink flowers (roses in particular), and a hint of rhubarb and spice. Complex, with generous silky fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, high alcohol (14.9%), and a refined, polished hint of raspberries and plums on the finish. Tempting and unmistakably Californian. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, February 2012)

90 \$54.95 (Private Order) Treasury Wine Estates

Selection Laurence Féraud 2007, Châteauneuf-du-Pape AOC, Rhône, France: To be sure, the 2007 Châteauneuf-du-Pape strongly benefits from a real sense of uniqueness, expression, and 'rustic' disposition. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, it reveals plentiful aromas of fragrant garrigue; quickly subsiding to red fruits and black raspberries, leather, roasted meats, Provençal herbs, and spice. Complex, retaining beautiful fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, characterful hint of red fruits and roasted meats on the finish. Superb individualism; though for shorter term keeping. Now-2016++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

90 \$42.95 (#211474) Vintages 5 March 2011 Release

Ferraton Père & Fils 2007 l'Eglantine, Côte-Rôtie AOC, Rhône, France: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the beautiful 2007 l'Eglantine offers intense, well-defined aromas of black pepper-infused brambleberries and black fruits; giving way to currants, leather, dried herbs, and spice. Complex, retaining great fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a truly lovely, almost graceful hint of white/black pepper, brambleberries, and plums on the finish. Superb offering; ideal as an introduction to the appellation. 100% Syrah. Now-2017+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2011)

90 \$74.00 (#206144) Vintages Shop Online

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

2

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

Henry of Pelham 2007 Speck Family Reserve Pinot Noir, VQA Short Hills Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: As with most other wines from this much-heralded vintage, the 2007 Speck Family Reserve Pinot Noir is likely the best the winery's ever made. Medium ruby in colour, it is lightly toasted, detailing very lovely aromas of fresh cherries, plums, raspberries, sweet rhubarb, violets, light white mocha, and a hint of vanilla and spice. Complex, with beautiful fruit, well-integrated tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, elegant hint of fresh cherries and raspberries on the finish. Superb expression and style. Now-2012++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, February 2010)

90 \$40.00 (#657874) Vintages Archives

Quinta do Malh  2007, Douro DOC, Portugal: From Franois Lurton's Douro outpost, the 2007 Quinta do Malh  shows remarkable potential. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, offering youthful, expressive aromas of fresh mocha, plummy currants, dark blueberries, scorched earth, vanilla, and spice. Complex, retaining great fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, fulsome yet elegant hint of dried currants, blueberries, and mocha extract on the finish. Superbly structured, balanced, and styled. Sourced partially from pre-phylloxera vines, included in the blend are Touriga Franca, Sous o, and Tinta Amarela. Now-2017++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2009)

90 \$50.00 (Private Order) Diamond Estates Wines & Spirits

Muga 2006 Reserva, Rioja DOCa, Spain: Likely the freshest Muga I've ever tasted, the 2006 Reserva shows much improvement over many past vintages. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely (if not more delicately) toasted, displaying lovely aromas of dark 'rugged' currants and cherries; giving way to licorice, black mocha shavings, fresh leather, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with beautiful fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an elegant hint of cherried currants on the finish. Truly well done. 70% Tempranillo, 20% Garnacha, the rest Mazuelo and Graciano. Now-2017+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2011)

90 \$23.95 (#177345) Vintages Essentials

Remoissenet P re & Fils 2007, Chambolle-Musigny AOC, Burgundy, France: Surprisingly first-rate from one of the most underperforming operations in Burgundy, the 2007 Chambolle-Musigny is quite a beautiful village wine. Medium-dark ruby in colour, it displays intense Chambolle-style aromas of cherries and raspberries; switching to rhubarb, 'darkened' cinnamon sticks, and a very delicate hint of toasted oak, white earth, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with really lovely fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, and an elegant hint of cherries and spice elements on the finish. Great purity, focus, and flavour. Now-2015++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2010)

90 \$59.95 (#113621) Vintages 27 November 2010 Release

Casa Silva 2006 Microterroir de los Lingues Carmen re, Colchagua Valley, Chile: Top Carmen re bottling of the winery, the 2006 Microterroir de los Lingues is acutely oak-driven and opulent. Opaque ruby in colour, it details attractive, archetypal aromas of black currants and red fruits; giving way to mocha, cherries, leather, rose petals, bonbons, vanilla, and spice. Complex, featuring very beautiful fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lengthy hint of black cherried cassis and toasted oak on the finish.

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

2

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

Delicious, powerful, and Parkerized. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, October 2010)

90 \$48.99 (Private Order) Churchill Cellars

Southbrook 2007 Poetica Cabernet/Merlot, VQA Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Top Bordeaux-blend from one Niagara's fastest-improving wineries, the 2007 Poetica is unusually decadent by Ontario standards. Dark ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, exhibiting superb aromas of dark berry-infused currants and mocha; switching to blueberries, black plums, espresso, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with great fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an elegant, engaging hint of currants, espresso, and red fruits on the finish. Opulent, fulsome style. 46% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Cabernet Franc, and 23% Merlot. Now-2015++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

90 \$60.00 (#149203) Vintages Special Offer

Tawse 2009 Laundry Vineyard Cabernet Franc, VQA Lincoln Lakeshore, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Once again, proprietor Maury Tawse's Laundry Vineyard Cabernet Franc stands out as one of the best of its kind in Niagara. Dark ruby in colour, the first-rate '09 reveals very lovely, gracious aromas of dark cherry-driven red fruits, switching to dried currants, scorched earth, moderate toasted oak, underbrush, and a hint of vanilla and spice. Complex, boasting beautiful, elegant fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a refined, poised hint of red fruits (slightly claret-like) on the finish. Superb balance, structure, and finesse. Now-2017. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

90 \$31.95 (#130997) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Taz 2007 Pinot Noir, Santa Barbara County, California: My only note from here, winemaker Natasha Boffman's 2007 Pinot Noir suggests this Treasury-owned operation takes its wines seriously. Medium ruby in colour, it is finely toasted, offering lovely aromas of cherries, violet-infused raspberries, blackberries, rhubarb, and a hint of vanilla and spice. Complex, retaining very fine fruit, approachable tannins, milder acidity, and a lingering, polished hint of red cherries on the finish. Beautifully flavoured, balanced, and fresh—great stuff. Now-2013+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, February 2010)

90 \$29.95 (Private Order) Treasury Wine Estates

Amayna 2008 Pinot Noir, Leyda Valley, Chile: While popularly known for its full-bodied reds, the 2008 Amayna suggests Pinot Noir also has a bright future in Chile. Medium-dark ruby in colour, the wine is lightly toasted, possessing beautiful aromas of dark rhubarb-infused cherries, raspberries, blackberries, plums, graphite, roasted coffee beans (without the Brettanomyces), and a hint of vanilla and spice. Complex, with lovely fruit expression, fine tannins, milder acidity, and a lingering hint of dark raspberries and cherries on the finish. Powerful, fresh, and delicious. Now-2013++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, October 2010)

89++ \$28.95 (Private Order) Whitehall Agencies

Château Andron Blanquet 2009, St-Estèphe AOC, Bordeaux, France: My only note from here, the 2009 Andron Blanquet (made at Fifth Growth Cos Labory) is quite rich and satisfying. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, it boasts generous, characterful aromas of currants, plums, blueberries, licorice, mild bonbons, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

2

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

beautiful fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, 'coated' hint of sweet blackberries, currants, and licorice on the finish. 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, and 15% Cabernet Franc. Full-bodied, confident, and desirably fat; albeit a little confectioned. Now-2024. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

89++ \$29.80 (Private Order) Total Wine & More (USA)

Cloudy Bay 2007 Pinot Noir, Marlborough, South Island, New Zealand: Though best known for its Sauvignon Blanc, the 2007 Pinot Noir suggests Cloudy Bay also has a knack for cool-climate reds. Medium ruby-red currant in colour, the wine reveals 'seasoned,' accessible aromas of dried cherries, strawberries, and red fruits; switching to rhubarb, wild game, and spice. Complex, boasting delicious, easily appreciable fruit, soft tannins, balanced acidity, and a delightful hint of cherries and strawberries on the finish. Certainly impressive, opting for first-rate balance and focus. Screwcap closure. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2011)

89++ \$38.00 (#598813) Vintages Shop Online

Beringer 2006 Merlot, Napa Valley, California: Overpriced in this market, the 2006 Merlot is fairly delectable and polished. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, revealing attractive, 'standardized' aromas of black mocha, currants, plums, dark cherries, vanilla, and spice. Complex, retaining appetizing fruit, firm yet accessible tannins, milder acidity, and a lingering hint of baked mocha and currants on the finish. Easily enjoyable, balanced, and supple; though not exactly brimming with flair. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2010)

89+ \$29.95 (#919647) Vintages 27 November 2010 Release

Arnaldo Caprai 2009, Montefalco Rosso DOC, Umbria, Italy: Good value from one of the top producers in Umbria, the 2009 Montefalco Rosso is well balanced and very satisfying. Dark ruby in colour, the wine is lightly toasted, sporting lovely aromas of slightly 'rugged' cherries, plums, dried black fruits, forest floor, and a hint of vanilla and spice. Complex, with very fine fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a refined, well-structured hint of plums and forest floor elements on the finish. Tight at present, this will easily keep for the next five years. Typically 70% Sangiovese, 15% Sagrantino, and 15% Merlot. Now-2018+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

89 \$19.95 (#303065) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Château de Fontenelles 2007 Cuvée Renaissance, Corbières AOC, Midi, France: Opaque purple-ruby in colour, the 2007 Cuvée Renaissance offers impressive aromas of dark currants (slightly baked) and espresso; switching to plums, kirsch, leather, violets, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with very satisfying fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a very flavourful, well-structured hint of spiced plums and cloves on the finish. Delicious, balanced, and chewy. 55% Syrah, 30% Grenache, the rest Carignan and Mourvèdre. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

89 \$18.95 (#148692) Vintages 30 April 2011 Release

M. Gassier 2010 Nostre Pais, Costières de Nîmes AOC, Rhône, France: From one of the most improved appellations in the Southern Rhône, the 2010 Nostre Pais performs admirably. Opaque purple-ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, with impressive pseudo-saturated aromas of blackberries, brambleberries, dried cherries, black raspberries, incense, white pepper, and a hint of tobacco and spice. Complex, with

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

2

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

robust fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a satisfying hint of blackberries and subtle tobacco on the finish. Impressive balance, structure, and regional character. 35% Grenache, 25% Carignan, 20% Mourvèdre, 15% Cinsault, and 5% Syrah. Now-2017+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

89 \$18.95 (#295410) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Henry of Pelham 2007 Reserve Baco Noir, VQA Ontario, Canada: Easily the finest producer of this passable hybrid, the 2007 Reserve Baco Noir is probably as good as this grape gets. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is lightly toasted, offering pleasant aromas of 'rustic' black currants, leather, tar, wild game elements, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with fine fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of red currants on the finish. Finely crafted, with impressive balance and flavour. Now-2011+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

89 \$24.95 (#461699) Vintages Special Offer

Mitolo 2009 Jester Shiraz, McLaren Vale, South Australia, Australia: Opaque ruby in colour, the 2009 Jester is quite the minty Shiraz, offering lovely aromas of black mocha, currants, blackberries, licorice, 'darkened' incense, leather, vanilla, and spice. Complex, carrying very satisfying forward fruit, supple tannins, mild acidity, and a lingering hint of smooth plums and licorice on the finish. Full-bodied, appetizing, and balanced. Screwcap closure. Now-2016++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2011)

89 \$21.95 (#659607) Vintages Essentials

Château de Monturon 2010, St-Emilion Grand Cru AOC, Bordeaux, France: Good follow-up to the '09, the 2010 Château de Monturon is finely flavoured and fruit-oriented. Dark ruby in colour, it details lovely aromas of sweet red fruits, black cherries, moderate mocha extract, licorice, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with fine fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a splendid hint of red fruits and currants (plus toasted oak) on the finish. Delightful balance and disposition. Now-2018. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

89 \$23.95 (#171017) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Domaine Vincent Paris 2009, St-Joseph AOC, Rhône, France: Dark purple-ruby in colour, the 2009 St-Joseph reveals lovely aromas of brambling plums, violets, and slightly peppery currants; switching to cherry compote, leather, and spice. Complex, retaining very fine fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an admirable, elegant hint of slightly brambling plums and cherry-violet compote on the finish. Youthful, balanced, and uncannily impressive. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2011)

89 \$28.95 (#239053) Vintages 9 July 2011 Release

Torbreck 2008 Woodcutter's Shiraz, Barossa Valley, South Australia, Australia: Opaque purple-ruby in colour, the 2008 Woodcutter's Shiraz reveals intense, inviting aromas of toasted oak and fresh mocha; giving way to eucalyptus-infused currants, blueberries, violets, leather, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with forward sinewy fruit, supple tannins, mild acidity, and a lengthy hint of eucalyptus, figs, and plums on the finish. Heavily saturated, yet the whole concept seems to work rather well. Screwcap closure. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

89 \$27.95 (#927533) Vintages 8 January 2011 Release

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

2

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

Domaine Grand Veneur 2009 Les Champavins, Côtes du Rhône-Villages AOC, Rhône, France: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2009 Les Champavins reveals spritely, fruit-driven aromas of ripe plums, blueberries, kirsch, incense, lavender, and spice. Complex, boasting highly satisfying, rounder-style fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering hint of ripe plums, blueberries, and blackberries on the finish. Concentrated, full-flavoured Côtes du Rhône-Villages. 70% Grenache, 20% Syrah, and 10% Mourvèdre. Now-2017+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2011)

88++ \$18.95 (#76331) Vintages 15 October 2011 Release

Thorn-Clarke 2010 Shottfire Cabernet Sauvignon/Shiraz, Barossa Valley, South Australia, Australia: Extremely dense black-ruby in colour, the 2010 Shottfire Cabernet Sauvignon/Shiraz is finely toasted, offering potent aromas of blackberry compote, plums, eucalyptus, mint, and a hint of purple fruits, vanilla, and spice. Complex, boasting powerful, flavourful fruit, firm yet supple tannins, mild acidity, and a lengthy hint of thick plummy blackberries on the finish. Saturated, endearing, and long-lasting. 56% Cabernet Sauvignon and 44% Shiraz. Screwcap closure. Now-2019. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

88++ \$24.95 (#296582) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Finca Amalia 2005 Reserva, Rioja DOPa, Spain: Dark ruby in colour, the 2005 Reserva is finely toasted, exhibiting attractive notes of cherries (slightly baked), plums, moderate coconut, and a hint of dates, mocha, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with fine fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of plums and figs on the finish. Delightful sinewy elements and balance. Tempranillo and Garnacha. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

88+ \$19.95 (#194738) Vintages 8 January 2011 Release

Casas del Bosque 2007 Gran Reserva Syrah, Casablanca Valley, Chile: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2007 Gran Reserva Syrah displays textbook notes of plummy currants, leather, white pepper, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, milder acidity, and a solid, satisfying hint of peppery plums on the finish. Well-built, balanced, and easy to enjoy. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2009)

88+ \$23.95 (Private Order) Kylix Wines

Château Haut-Badette 2006, St-Emilion Grand Cru AOC, Bordeaux, France: Dark red-garnet in colour, the 2006 Haut-Badette seems to be maturing very fast, displaying attractive aromas of cedar-infused plums, dried cherries (slightly earthy), wild game, and a hint of savoury cigarbox and spice. Complex, with fine fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an elegant hint of cedary red fruits on the finish. Lovely approachability and roundness; but drink fast. The vineyard is planted to 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2011)

88+ \$29.00 (#246934) Vintages Shop Online

Haywood 2006 Los Chamizal Vineyard Zinfandel, Sonoma County, California: Dark ruby in colour, the 2006 Los Chamizal Vineyard Zinfandel is finely toasted, offering distinctive notes of cherry compote that quickly switches to plums, red currants, raisined fruits, and plenty of vanilla and spice. On the palate: appealing juicier-styled fruit showing, with fine tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of cherries and figs on the finish.

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

2

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

Full-bodied, tasty, and easy to enjoy; for the short term. Now-2014+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

88+ \$29.95 (#949255) Vintages 30 October 2010 Release

François Lurton 2006 Gran Lurton Cabernet Sauvignon, Uco Valley (Mendoza), Argentina: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2006 Gran Lurton Cabernet Sauvignon is finely toasted, presenting amenable notes of dark currants, red plums, 'blackened' violets, leather, scorched earth, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: good, tight fruit showing, with firm tannins, slightly milder acidity, and a lovely hint of currants on the finish. Delightful structure, balance, and medium-term keeping power. Also contains 15% Malbec. Now-2014. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2009)

88+ \$24.95 (#980334) Vintages 6 November 2009 Release

Antoine Moueix 2007, St-Emilion Grand Cru AOC, Bordeaux, France: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2007 Antoine Moueix is lightly toasted, revealing fairly developed notes of red fruits, blackberries, wild game, earth, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: good accessible fruit showing, with fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of red fruits (plus a trace of cedarwood) on the finish. Nicely crafted, fast-maturing claret; for early drinking. 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. Now-2014+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2010)

88+ \$27.95 (Private Order) Select Wines & Spirits

7 Deadly Zins 2007 Old Vine Zinfandel, Lodi, California: Opaque purple in colour, the 2007 Old Vine Zinfandel is finely toasted, detailing engaging notes of baked dark mocha, leathery currants, plums, scorched earth, and a hint of savoury herbs, incense, vanilla, and spice. Reasonably complex, boasting fine forward fruit, firm yet accessible tannins, milder acidity, and a lingering hint of baked leathery plums on the finish. Open and appealing. Now-2014+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

88+ \$24.95 (#59311) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Vignamaggio 2009 Terre di Prenzano, Chianti Classico DOCG, Tuscany, Italy: Dark ruby in colour, the 2009 Terre di Prenzano offers delightful notes of wild cherries, plums, licorice, and a hint of herbs, black tea, and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lovely hint of wild plums on the finish. Fresh, balanced, and finely crafted. Their website suggests 100% Sangiovese. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

88+ \$17.95 (#164822) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Château de Beaucastel 2008 Coudoulet de Beaucastel, Côtes du Rhône AOC, Rhône, France: Dark ruby in colour, the 2008 Coudoulet de Beaucastel reveals Provençal herb-driven notes of red fruits, blackberries, deli meats, leather, and spice. On the palate: very good fruit showing, with fairly firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of lavender and red fruits on the finish. Lovely effort and balance, though not of the same calibre as other vintages I've examined—overpriced in this market. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

88 \$29.95 (#48884) Vintages 30 October 2010 Release

Domaine Boudau 2009 Le Clos, Côtes de Roussillon AOC, Midi, France: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2009 Le Clos reveals outgoing notes of baked plums and

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

2

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

blueberries; switching to violets, leather, and a hint of Provençal herbs and spice. Palate: fine forward fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a splendid hint of plummy blueberries and incense on the finish. Very tasty and appealing. 80% Grenache and 20% Syrah. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2011)

88 \$16.95 (#149989) Vintages 9 July 2011 Release

Domaine Cazes 2007 Alter de Cazes, Côte du Roussillon Villages AOC, Midi, France: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2007 Alter de Cazes is lightly toasted, with delightful notes of dark leathery blackberries and plums, black cherries, herbal elements, and spice. On the palate: very good fruit on display, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering hint of black plums and red fruit traces on the finish. Nicely done. 40% Syrah, 30% Grenache, and 30% Mourvèdre. Now-2014+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2010)

88 \$24.95 (Private Order) Select Wines & Spirits

Concha y Toro 2007 Maycas del Limarí Reserva Syrah, Limarí Valley, Chile: Dark purple-ruby in colour, the 2007 Maycas del Limarí Reserva Syrah features lovely notes of light mocha at the outset; making way for 'purple' plums, currants, scorched earth, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of dark leathery 'purple' plums on the finish. Very fine structure and power. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2009)

88 \$16.95 (Private Order) Select Wine Merchants

DeLoach 2008 Pinot Noir, Russian River Valley (Sonoma County), California: Medium-dark ruby in colour, the 2008 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir displays lovely notes of cherried red plums, strawberries, licorice, and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with soft tannins, milder acidity, high alcohol (14.5%), and a hint of cherries on the finish. Appealing, tasty North American style. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2010)

88 \$28.95 (#119024) Vintages 27 November 2010 Release

Cave Saint Desirat 2007, St-Joseph AOC, Rhône, France: Dark ruby in colour, the 2007 Cave Saint Desirat reveals lovely notes of fresh currants and white pepper; giving way to brambleberries, plums, and a hint of saddle leather and spice. On the palate: sound fruit showing, with fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of currants and white pepper on the finish. Not showy, still of fine quality and balance. Now-2014+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

88 \$19.95 (#219378) Vintages 30 April 2011 Release

Elderton 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon, Barossa, South Australia, Australia: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon is finely toasted, displaying intense notes of roasted/cedary eucalyptus and plums; switching to mocha, currants, leather, grilled herbs, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with fine forward fruit, fairly firm tannins, mild acidity, and a lingering hint of cedar-laced eucalyptus and plums on the finish. Nicely executed, though maturing quickly. Now-2014. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2010)

88 \$29.95 (#9175) Vintages 27 November 2010 Release

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

2

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

Ben Glaetzer 2008 Heartland Cabernet Sauvignon, Langhorne Creek/Limestone Coast, South Australia, Australia: Extremely dense ruby-red currant in colour, the 2008 Heartland Cabernet Sauvignon is finely toasted, with intense notes of eucalyptus and red fruits; switching to currants, plums, mint, spicebox, and vanillin. Complex, with very supple forward fruit and tannins, mild acidity, and a long hint of currants and eucalyptus on the finish. Powerful, softly textured, and lengthy. Screwcap closure. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

88 \$19.95 (#58099) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Lammershoek 2007 Pinotage, Swartland WO, South Africa: Opaque ruby in colour, the 2007 Pinotage offers intense notes of 'rustic' black mocha and toasted oak; making way for plums, currants, leather, stewed violets (if such a thing was possible), vanilla, and spice. Complex, with fine fruit, firm yet well-integrated tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of black plums and roasted coffee beans on the finish. Lovely individualism, flavour, and balance. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

88 \$18.95 (#954594) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Poole's Rock 2006 Cockfighter's Ghost Cabernet Sauvignon, Langhorne Creek, South Australia, Australia: Opaque garnet in colour, the 2006 Cockfighter's Ghost Cabernet Sauvignon is intensely cedary, with accompanying notes of baked currants and eucalyptus; switching to tobacco, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: supple fruit and tannins showing, with mild acidity, and a hint of cedary plums on the finish. Aging fast, yet nicely assembled and forgivably mellow. Screwcap closure. Now-2013+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

88 \$21.95 (#672550) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Silvern 2010 Greenock Shiraz, Barossa Valley, South Australia, Australia: Extremely dense black-ruby in colour, the 2010 Greenock Shiraz displays 'brooding' notes of leathery blackberries, currants, dried blueberries, eucalyptus, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with flavourful forward fruit, supple tannins, mild acidity, and a lasting hint of black plums and eucalyptus on the finish. Powerful, polished, and appealing. Screwcap closure. Now-2018+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

88 \$16.95 (#289959) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Tawse 2008 Laundry Vineyard Cabernet Franc, VQA Lincoln Lakeshore, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario, Canada: Dark ruby in colour, the 2008 Laundry Vineyard Cabernet Franc reveals lovely notes of floral berries, red plums, and a hint of green pepper (not overbearing) and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of floral plums on the finish. Definitely not the equivalent of the outstanding '07, still respectably crafted. Now-2011++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

88 \$29.95 (Private Order) Tawse Winery

Volpaia 2008, Chianti Classico DOCG, Tuscany, Italy: Dark ruby in colour, the 2008 Chianti Classico offers lovely notes of fragrant cherries, red plums, crushed flowers, graphite, and a hint of cedarwood and spice. Complex, possessing very good fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a delightful hint of fresh cherries on the finish. Admirable focus and balance. Typically 90% Sangiovese and 10% Merlot/Syrah. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2011)

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

2

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

88 \$21.95 (#953828) **Vintages 15 October 2011 Release**

Buil & Giné 2007 Giné Giné, Priorat DOCa, Spain: Dark ruby in colour, the 2007 Giné Giné is finely toasted, with baked, slightly funky (not unattractive) notes of dark raspberries and plums; switching to leather, thyme, and a hint of white pepper, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: lovely accessible fruit and tannins showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of dark raspberries and plums on the finish. Appealing and balanced. 50% Garnacha and 50% Cariñena. Screwcap closure. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

87++ \$17.95 (#67843) **Vintages 22 January 2011 Release**

Hedges Cellars 2008 CMS, Columbia Valley, Washington State, USA: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2008 CMS is finely toasted, delivering 'dusty' notes of violet currants, plums, cherries, leather, cocoa beans, incense, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with good fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of plummy currants and dried blueberries on the finish. Fresh, sturdy, and very tasty. 48% Merlot, 46% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 6% Syrah. Now-2014++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

87++ \$17.95 (#948992) **Vintages 30 October 2010 Release**

Howling Moon 2007 Old Vine Zinfandel, Lodi, California: Dark ruby in colour, the 2007 Old Vine Zinfandel is heavily toasted, boasting notes of baked mocha and plums; switching to sweet leathery blueberries, granola, incense, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: tasty forward fruit showing, with approachable tannins, milder acidity, and a lasting hint of baked plums and granola on the finish. Flavourful, acceptably balanced, and notably American oak-driven. Now-2013+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87++ \$18.95 (#57356) **Vintages 21 August 2010 Release**

Pirramimma 2006 Katunga Grenache/Tannat/Shiraz, McLaren Vale, South Australia, Australia: Dark-opaque red currant in colour, the 2006 Katunga Grenache/Tannat/Shiraz is lightly toasted, offering semi-baked notes of cedar-infused eucalyptus and plums; switching to currants, berries, leather, scorched earth, and spice. Reasonably complex, with good forward fruit, approachable tannins, mild acidity, and a lasting hint of baked eucalyptus and plums on the finish. Interesting, fairly fruity blend. Screwcap closure. Now-2014+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

87++ \$23.95 (#203174) **Vintages 22 January 2011 Release**

Torres 2006 Celeste, Ribera del Duero DO, Spain: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2006 Celeste is finely toasted, with appealing notes of mocha and baked plums; switching to sweet currants, coconut, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: good forward fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of baked coconut-infused mocha and plums on the finish. Flavourful, outgoing style, with plenty of American oak. 100% Tinto Fino (Tempranillo). Now-2014. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87++ \$19.95 (#672691) **Vintages 4 September 2010 Release**

Villa Trasqua 2008, Chianti Classico DOCG, Tuscany, Italy: Medium-dark ruby-red currant in colour, the 2008 Chianti Classico reveals pleasant, straightforward notes of wild cherries and red plums; switching to fresh herbs, cedarwood, underbrush, and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with approachable tannins, balanced acidity,

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

2

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

and a solid hint of wild cherries and herbs on the finish. Decent freshness, balance, and gentle flavouring. 95% Sangiovese, the rest Colorino and Malvasia Nera. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2012)

87++ \$17.95 (#121160) Vintages 4 February 2012 Release

Terre D'Alter 2009 Aragonês, VR Alentejano, Portugal: Opaque ruby in colour, the 2009 Aragonês (the same grape as Tempranillo) is finely toasted, with engaging notes of ripe plummy strawberries, mocha, wild flowers, meaty elements, vanilla, and spice. Palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering hint of concentrated black fruits (a little wild) on the finish. Full-bodied, balanced, and tasty. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

87+ \$14.95 (#292045) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

L'Excellence du Château Blandinières 2006, Cahors AOC, Southwest, France: Opaque ruby in colour, the 2006 L'Excellence du Château Blandinières reveals reserved notes of currants, 'dusty' blackberries, dark leather, and a trace of asphalt and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a neat hint of black plums on the finish. Solid, fresh Cahors. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2012)

87+ \$16.95 (#264671) Vintages 4 February 2012 Release

Maipo 2008 Reserva Syrah, Maipo Valley, Chile: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2008 Reserva Syrah offers notes of toasted-oak driven mocha and plums; switching to leather, violets, scorched earth, vanilla, and spice. Palate: tasty smooth fruit showing, with firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lingering hint of plummy currants on the finish. Forward and balanced. Screwcap closure. Now-2011. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2009)

87+ \$13.95 (Private Order) Select Wine Merchants

Navajas 2005 Reserva, Rioja DOCa, Spain: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2005 Reserva displays American-oak driven notes of milk chocolate, cherries, plums, granola, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering hint of toasted American oak on the finish. Assertive style, yet certainly tasty enough. Now-2014+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

87+ \$16.95 (#194811) Vintages 5 March 2011 Release

Vinos Sin-Ley 2008 Traza Gra 2 Graciano, Rioja DOCa, Spain: Dark-opaque purple-ruby in colour, the 2008 Traza Gra 2 reveals abundant notes of baked currants and raspberries; giving way to leather, seaweed, damson, and spice. On the palate: appealing round showing, with near-firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering hint of raspberried plums and damson on the finish. Solid and tasty. 100% Graciano. Now-2013+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

87+ \$16.95 (#190819) Vintages 22 January 2011 Release

Tabalí 2008 Reserva Carmenère, Limarí Valley, Chile: Opaque purple-ruby in colour, the 2008 Reserva Carmenère is finely toasted, with appealing notes of mocha and currants; switching to blackberries, plums, coffee beans, and a streak of green pepper, vanilla, and spice. Palate: fairly smooth fruit showing, with firm tannins, milder acidity,

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

3

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

and a hint of currants on the finish. Sturdy and tasty. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

87+ \$14.95 (#44008) Vintages 22 January 2011 Release

Tamburlaine 2008 Shiraz/Cabernet, Orange, New South Wales, Australia: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2008 Shiraz/Cabernet reveals intense black peppery plums, currants, raspberries, roasted meats, and spice. On the palate: lovely peppery fruit showing, with approachable tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of berries (unsurprisingly peppery) on the finish. Lean, fresh, and balanced; though the style will not appeal to all. Screwcap closure. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87+ \$16.95 (#178699) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release

Domaine des Ailes 2009, Moulin-à-Vent AOC, Beaujolais, France: Dark purple in colour, the 2009 Moulin-à-Vent displays archetypal bubblegum-driven notes of plums, dried violets, bonbons, and a hint of damson and spice. On the palate: decent fruit showing, with accessible tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of damson-laced plums on the finish. Solid, balanced, and tasty. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2010)

87 \$15.95 (#183442) Vintages 27 November 2010 Release

Parés Baltà 2008 Mas Petit Garnatxa/Cabernet, Penedès DO, Spain: Dark ruby in colour, the 2008 Mas Petit Garnatxa/Cabernet reveals raspberried plums, cherries, and a hint of leather and spice. Palate: nice fruit showing, with accessible tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of juicy raspberries and plums on the finish. Fruity and fresh. 84% Cabernet Sauvignon and 16% Garnacha. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

87 \$13.95 (#114264) Vintages 8 January 2011 Release

Chakana 2009 Reserva Malbec, Mendoza, Argentina: Opaque purple-ruby in colour, the 2009 Reserva Malbec is moderately toasted, sporting notes of black currants, plums, violets, mild mocha, tar, and a hint of vanilla and spice. Palate: tasty forward fruit showing, with firm tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of currants on the finish. Pleasing and balanced. Now-2014. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2010)

87 \$14.95 (#18671) Vintages 30 April 2011 Release

Viña Chocalán 2007 Reserva Syrah, Maipo Valley, Chile: Opaque purple in colour, the 2007 Reserva Syrah is heavily toasted, displaying notes of 'purple' cassis, currants, plums, leathery white pepper, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: tasty forward fruit showing, with firm tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of baked 'purple' currants on the finish. Hearty, full-bodied, and standardized. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87 \$14.95 (#38513) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Luis Felipe Edwards 2007 Gran Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon, Colchagua Valley, Chile: Dark ruby in colour, the 2007 Gran Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon is noticeably toasted, with notes of red currants, plums, berries, and a hint of vanilla and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of red currants on the finish. Satisfactory, balanced outing. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2010)

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

3

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

87 \$16.95 (#169847) Vintages 30 October 2010 Release

Luis Felipe Edwards 2008 Reserva Shiraz, Colchagua Valley, Chile: Dark ruby in colour, the 2007 Reserva Shiraz reveals moderate toasted oak, red plums, dark strawberry jam, and spice. Palate: decent fruit showing, with approachable tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of red plums and jammy strawberries on the finish. Basic yet fairly tasty; crafted to mimic the generic Aussie style? Now-2011. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2009)

87 \$12.95 (Private Order) Noble Estates Wines & Spirits

Château Famaey 2008 Tradition, Cahors AOC, Southwest, France: Opaque purple in colour, the 2008 Tradition is lightly toasted, providing notes of dark 'purple' currants and plums; switching to blackberries, leathery nuances, and spice. On the palate: good tight fruit showing, with very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and hint of blackberries on the finish. Lean, standard, ageworthy Cahors. Typically 100% Malbec. Now-2014+-. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87 \$12.95 (#177212) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

O. Fournier 2011 Urban Uco Malbec, Uco Valley (Mendoza), Argentina: Opaque ruby in colour, the 2011 Urban Uco Malbec reveals notes of plums and mildly 'forested' black fruits, plus a hint of pepper and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, milder acidity, and a decent hint of plums on the finish. Fresh, balanced, and tasty. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

87 \$14.95 (#166371) Vintages 5 January 2013 Release

Montaribaldi 2008 Tre Stelle, Langhe DOC, Piedmont, Italy: Dark ruby in colour, the 2008 Tre Stelle (a tad closed when examined), offers subtle hints of plummy cherries, red currants, herbs, and spice. Palate: solid fruit showing, with fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of red plums on the finish. Appropriate and fresh. Nebbiolo, Barbera, and Dolcetto. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

87 \$14.95 (#192435) Vintages 8 January 2011 Release

Montes 2008 Limited Selection Cabernet Sauvignon/Carmenère, Apalta Vineyard (Colchagua Valley), Chile: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2008 Limited Selection Cabernet Sauvignon/Carmenère displays 'rugged' notes of earthy black plums, mild bell pepper, vanilla, and spice. Palate: good tasty fruit showing, with firm tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of 'dusty' currants on the finish. Nice density and overall flavour. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

87 \$14.95 (#16071) Vintages 8 January 2011 Release

Mount Langi Ghiran 2005 Billi Billi Shiraz, Victoria, Australia: Opaque red currant in colour, the 2005 Billi Billi Shiraz reveals notes of cedar-laced mocha, currants, eucalyptus, wild game, lavender, and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with supple tannins, mild acidity, and a hint of plums, eucalyptus, and cedarwood on the finish. Nice and fruity. Screwcap closure. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87 \$16.95 (#719575) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

3

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

Domaine des Pentelins 2008, Côtes du Rhône-Villages AOC, Rhône, France: Dark ruby in colour, the 2008 Côtes du Rhône-Villages displays notes of leathery currants and plums, shortbread, herbs, and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of leathery plums on the finish. Fruity and accessible. Grenache, Carignan, and Syrah. Now-2011+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87 \$12.95 (#175679) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

La Posta 2008 Pizzella Family Vineyard Malbec, Uco Valley (Mendoza), Argentina: Opaque purple in colour, the 2008 Pizzella Family Vineyard Malbec is moderately toasted, displaying notes of currants, plums, violets, and a hint of white pepper and spice. Palate: good fruit showing, with firm yet accessible tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of currants on the finish. Integrated and fresh. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

87 \$15.00 (#166298) Vintages 8 January 2011 Release

Rustenberg 2007 Brampton Shiraz, Coastal Region WO, South Africa: Opaque ruby in colour, the 2007 Brampton Shiraz displays slightly 'rustic' plums, currants, roasted coffee beans, and a hint of violets, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: neat fruit showing, with near-firm tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of peppery plums on the finish. Reasonably sturdy and fresh. Screwcap closure. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87 \$15.95 (#674523) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release

Skuttlebutt 2007 Shiraz/Cabernet, Margaret River, Western Australia, Australia: Opaque ruby in colour, the 2007 Shiraz/Cabernet is lightly toasted, displaying restrained notes of currants, plums, eucalyptus, white pepper, and spice. Palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of black plums (laced with a speck of cedarwood) on the finish. Solid structure and flavour. Screwcap closure. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87 \$15.95 (#58131) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Thorn-Clarke 2008 Terras Barossa Cabernet Sauvignon, Barossa, South Australia, Australia: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2008 Terra Barossa Cabernet Sauvignon is nicely toasted, displaying red currants and eucalyptus; giving way to plums, mild leather, mint, vanilla, and spice. Palate: approachable, juicier-styled fruit showing, with soft tannins, mild acidity, and a hint of eucalyptus and red currants on the finish. Good fruitiness and balance. Screwcap closure. Now-2014. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

87 \$14.95 (#203158) Vintages 8 January 2011 Release

Zenato 2008, Valpolicella Superiore DOC, Veneto, Italy: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2008 Valpolicella Superiore is very mildly toasted, revealing notes of dark earthy/savoury plums, wild cherries, and a hint of cedarwood and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of wild cherries and plums on the finish. Notable balance and accessibility. Typically 80% Corvina, 10% Rondinella, and 10% Sangiovese. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

3

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

87 \$15.00 (#995704) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release

Tenuta Il Corno 2007, Chianti Colli Fiorentini DOCG, Tuscany, Italy: Dark red currant in colour, the 2007 Chianti Colli Fiorentini displays cedary/savoury notes of dried red plums, white peppery cherries, and spice. On the palate: approachable fruit and tannins showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of cedary plums on the finish. Basic, straightforward Chianti; nice and fresh. Sangiovese, Colorino, and Canaiolo. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

86++ \$14.95 (#123752) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Gemma 2009 Madonna della Neve, Dolcetto d'Alba DOC, Piedmont, Italy: Dark purple in colour, the 2009 Madonna della Neve offers wild plums and blackberries; matched by a few herbs and spice. Palate: good fruit showing, with fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of wild plums on the finish. Nice, balanced, and entirely uncomplicated. Now-2011+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2010)

86++ \$13.95 (#185017) Vintages 27 November 2010 Release

Château St-Maurice 2007 Les Grès, Côtes du Rhône-Villages Laudun AOC, Rhône, France: Dark ruby in colour, the 2007 Les Grès is very lightly toasted, with notes of baked red plums, wild cherries, white pepper, and a hint of cedarwood and spice. Palate: good fruit showing, with near-firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of baked red plums on the finish. Tasty and balanced. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

86++ \$14.95 (#177576) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release

Terres d'Avignon 2007 Réserve des Armoiries, Côtes du Rhône AOC, Rhône, France: Dark ruby in colour, the 2007 Réserve des Armoiries offers red plums accompanied by baked dark cranberries, earth elements, and spice. Palate: nice fruit showing, with approachable tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of red plums on the finish. Decent basic Rhône. Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault, and Carignan. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

86 \$12.95 (#175653) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release

Casal Da Coelheira 2008 Tinto, Ribatejo DOC, Portugal: Dark ruby in colour, the 2008 Tinto displays plums, lightly toasted oak (a little sweet), and a hint of herbs and spice. Palate: juicy fruit showing, with soft tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of 'fleshy' plums on the finish. Basic, crowd-pleasing bottling. Alicante Bouschet, Touriga Nacional, and Touriga Franca. Now-2011. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

86 \$12.95 (#168831) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Château La Grave 2008 Tristan & Julien, Minervois AOC, Midi, France: Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2008 Tristan & Julien reveals baked currants and plums; switching to stewed berries, some leather, and spice. Palate: juicy forward fruit showing, with approachable tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of baked plummy currants on the finish. Tasty and uncomplicated. Grenache and Syrah. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

86 \$12.95 (#170373) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

3

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

Los Rosales 2008 Chapel Vineyard Reserva Carmenère, Rapel Valley, Chile:

Opaque purple-ruby in colour, the 2008 Reserva Carmenère is heavily toasted, with moderate violet currants/blackberries, purple plums, vanilla, and spice. Palate: tasty forward fruit showing, with approachable tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of purple plums on the finish. Soft, tasty, and very simple. Now-2011+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

86 \$12.95 (#169490) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Sparkling Wine:

André Clouet NV Cuvée 1911 Brut, Champagne, France: Sourced from the best plots of the house and hailing from three different vintages, the Cuvée 1911 is a particularly stellar, distinctive conception. Light golden-straw in colour, it features amazing scents of French toast/brioche, hazelnuts (slightly honeyed), lemon, sugar powder, ginger, tree bark, and exotic spices. Complex, delivering excellent frothy fruit, balanced acidity, and an impeccable, well-evolved hint of brioche, lemon, and nutted elements on the finish. Superbly balanced, well-structured, and harmonious. 100% Pinot Noir. Now-2017. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

91++ \$95.00 (Private Order) Groupe Soleil

André Clouet NV Brut Rosé, Champagne, France: Tasted alongside several other wines from this well-regarded small grower, the André Clouet NV Rosé is a delicate, upbeat champagne. Light pink in colour, it displays beautifully subtle scents of pink cherries, ruby-red grapefruit, yeasty biscuits, wild flowers, lemon, and spice. Complex, retaining crisp, agile fruit, balanced acidity, and a great hint of yeasty biscuits and ruby-red grapefruit on the finish. Stylish, elegant, with a trace of the exotic about it. 100% Pinot Noir. Now-2017. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

91 \$59.95 (Private Order) Groupe Soleil

Laherte Frères NV Les 7 Brut Extra, Champagne, France: Grower's champagne incarnate, the NV Les Clos is all originality and qualitative fascination. Pale straw-lime in colour, it offers intriguing scents of biscuits, green fruits, lemon, herbs, white flowers, minerals, and spice. Complex, with very fine fruit, balanced acidity, and a stylish, contemplative hint of green fruits and lemony/herbal overtures on the finish. Beautiful uniqueness, balance, and grace. 18% Chardonnay, 18% Pinot Meunier, 17% Pinot Blanc, 15% Petit Meslier, 14% Pinot Noir, 10% Fromenteau, and 8% Arbanne. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

90+ \$78.00 (Private Order) Groupe Soleil

Bérêche NV Réserve Brut, Champagne, France: My only note from this small-scale grower, the NV Réserve makes me glad to have finally tasted something from the Bérêche arsenal. Pale straw in colour, it revels more fruit-driven scents of yeasty biscuits, yellow pears, ginger, white flowers, lemon, cream, and spice. Complex, possessing round frothy fruit, balanced acidity, and a beautiful hint of lemon citrus on the finish. Marvellous correctness, approachability, and balance. 35% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Meunier, and 30% Pinot Noir. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

90 \$49.95 (Private Order) Groupe Soleil

The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

3

~ Wine education for us all – harvesting grapes ~

Saturday, January 5th, 2013

André Clouet NV Silver Brut Nature, Champagne, France: While I have never been a fan of the bone-dry approach, the NV Silver Brut Nature makes a strong case for opinionative revision. Pale straw in colour, it is intensely yeasty, with inviting scents of brioche (a little meaty), lemon, ginger, buttercups, and a hint of green fruits and spice. Complex, with exceptionally crisp, dry frothy fruit, balanced acidity, and a lifted, pick-me-up hint of lemony biscuits on the finish. Positively lively, balanced, and stylish. 100% Pinot Noir. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2012)

90 \$49.95 (Private Order) Groupe Soleil

Roederer Estate NV Brut, Anderson Valley, California: Pale-light straw-lime in colour, the consistently impressive Roederer NV Brut is surprisingly delicate, displaying lovely, subtle scents of fresh biscuits and lemon; switching to white grapefruit, ginger, mineral elements, and spice. Complex, featuring very fine fruit, balanced acidity, and a delightful hint of biscuits and lemon citrus on the finish. Not as assertive as previous batches I've tasted, still one of the best bubbling bets in California. Roughly 60% Chardonnay and 40% Pinot Noir. Now-2013+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

89+ \$27.95 (#294181) Vintages 9 July 2011 Release

Louis Bouillot NV Perle d'Aurore Brut Rosé, Crémant de Bourgogne AOC, Burgundy, France: Pale-light pink-salmon in colour, the NV Perle d'Aurore reveals lovely notes of dried red grapefruit, cranberried cherries, and a hint of herbs and spice. On the palate: good crisp fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of red grapefruit and dried cherries on the finish. Satisfying, balanced, and generally well-assembled. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

87++ \$18.95 (#48793) Vintages 9 July 2011 Release

Bernard-Massard NV Cuvée de l'Écusson Brut, Luxembourg: Pale straw in colour, the NV Cuvée de l'Écusson displays pleasant, slightly 'muted' notes of baked lemon, green apples, cream crackers, and a hint of candlewax and spice. On the palate: good crisp fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of lemon and dried pears on the finish. Nice balance and crispness. Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, Riesling, and Pinot Noir. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

87 \$16.95 (#970970) Vintages 21 August 2010 Release

Fortified Wine:

Domaine Cazes 1978 Cuvée Aimé Cazes, Rivesaltes AOC, Midi, France: One of few notes I've been able to collect on old Rivesaltes over the years, the 1978 Cuvée Aimee Cazes has reached a stage of exciting, easygoing mellowness and grace. Medium maple-orange in colour, it delivers intense aromas of dried red and black fruits, maple amber, brown sugar, almonds, dried caramel, toffee, and a hint of white pepper and spice. Complex, carrying extremely beautiful 'fortified' fruit, fully integrated tannins, balanced acidity, and a lengthy hint of dried sweet fruits and almonds on the finish. Exceptional polish, elegance, and length. 80% Grenache Blanc and 20% Grenache Noir. Now-2035++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2010)

92++ \$154.95 (Private Order) Select Wines & Spirits

Dessert Wine:

Kracher 2007 Cuvée Beerenauslese, Burgenland, Austria (375 mL): Representing astonishing value for money, the 2007 Cuvée Beerenauslese emphatically illustrates the enormous talents of winemaker/proprietor Alois Kracher. Pale-light golden-yellow in colour, the wine exhibits beautiful, stylish scents of sweet yellow plums, lemon blossom, brioche, melon, and spice. Complex, featuring incredible, superbly inlaid 'sticky' fruit, balanced acidity, and an elegant, lingering hint of lemon blossom and melon on the finish. Marvellous execution, balance, and character. 60% Welschriesling and 40% Chardonnay. Now-2022+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2010)

91 \$18.65 (#209668) Vintages 14 May 2011 Release

Lenz Moser 2007 Prestige Trockenbeerenauslese, Burgenland, Austria (375 mL): Light yellow-gold in colour, the 2007 Prestige Trockenbeerenauslese is intensely nutted at the outset, revealing lovely scents of marmalade, ripe apricots, brioche, orange blossom, and a hint of spice. Complex, with splendid sweet fruit, balanced acidity, and a lingering hint of nutted lemon blossom and marmalade on the finish. Very satisfying, if not a tad one-dimensional; though my score might be little low. Now-2018++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

88 \$18.95 (#729657) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release