



AURIC PACIFIC

*“selling wine with passion!”*

## Auric Pacific Fine Wines

Annual Sale Issue 29

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Written by Andy Tan

Hi winos,

### **Australia**

As the festive is near the corner and most hotels and shopping malls along Orchard Road have already dressed up for Xmas. The mood for holiday is high and so does the spirit of most wine merchant and hamper company. As this is the final two months, and perhaps the last opportunity for us to give our best and final shots to push our sale for 2006. So, do expect some huge discount and also do take the advantage to stock up your favorite wines for the coming festive.

Parker has completed his "company" reshuffling and the new team look to be more convincing than ever (at least, the number of "employee" has increased). The new issue of **The Wine Advocate** has return on it's review on downunder - Australia.

So, what's new? Not much actually. Parker continues with his pursue for "size", and if anyone out there enjoy drinking wine of the following concoctions (**caution**: those descriptions are exclusively from those Aussie rated by Parker 95 points and above). You will have no problem appreciating those "turbo-charged" juice.

**Size** - "Blockbuster, extravagant, enormously, full-throttle, incense, massive, monumental, moster".

**Texture** - "Magnificently rich, multilayered, saturates palate, stunning concentration, unbelievably dense, unctuously".

**Oak's effect** - "Camphor, chocolate, espresso, graphite, melted road tar, roasted coffee beans".

**Sur-maturite** (hyper-ripeness fruit) - " crème de casis, licorice, blackberries, blackrasberries, pen-ink, a la Amarone (last two are latest phases)".

By the way, Parker favorite winemakers, Sarah and Sparky Marquis is back with their new wine - **Mollydooker**. Amazingly, they turned a few years old young vines to what was generously given by Parker for their **Enchanted Path** (96 points for this Shiraz Cabernet blend) and 99 points for their **Carnival of Love** (100% Syrah). To all the old-world vintners - "why waste time on "old vines"? Are we even talking about terroir??? or simply, superman returns (is this case, super-winemaker)?

Nevertheless, of all avant gard Aussie, I enjoy wine from **Kevin Mitchell's** Kilikanoon, which despite making outside, early accessible wine. His wine retained a good sense of balance and is less freakish or more civilized than most of his peers. Thanks to his old vine fruit sourced and well buffered acidity from the cool-climate of Clare Valley.

24 bts. 2004 Shiraz Oracle, Clare Valley at 71.00 nett each (rated Parker's 97 points - from 40 year-old vines)

Along with **Troy Kalleske**, which is my most admirable winemaker of Australia. His wine has this striking bright fruit, combined lush, sexy fruits (violet and candied cherry) that come close in resembling the style of Stephane Ogier's Cote Rotie. For me, his winemaking style are so atypical for Australia. There is this

sense of purity underneath those unctuous, concentrated palate. One would likely think it was from Rhone, in the like of 2003 vintage.

- 24 bts. 2004 Grenache Old Vines at 65.00 nett each (rated Parker's 92 points - from 69 year-old vines)
- 22 bts. 2004 Shiraz Greenock at 68.00 nett each (rated Parker's 94 points)
- 24 bts. 2003 Shiraz Johann Georg at 128.00 nett each (rated Parker's 97-100 points - from 129 year-old vines)
- 14 bts. 2004 Massena Shiraz by Kalleske at 36.50 nett each (rated Parker's 91 points)

Other high Parkerized Aussie in stock also includes,

- 22 bts. 2004 Burge Family Premium Shiraz Draycott at 76.00 nett each (rated Parker's 95 points - from 45 year-old vines)
- 40 bts. 2004 Parson's Flat Cabernet Shiraz at 56.50 nett each (rated Parker's 93 points)

## **California**

For those who have visited my office will realize that my personal collection is actually in my storage facility. As sentimental as I am, and despite my currently passion for Burgundy, northern Rhone. I continue my collection for rare, limited released Californian. I am grateful, it was through my earlier days involving in judging wine in Sonoma harvest fair that taught me how to taste wine (how can anyone after tasting some 200 wines a day, 700 wines after three days marathon tasting and not leaning anything?). I continue to love the beautiful countryside and the people that I have the privilege to associate over the decade.

In the past, for those garage-size producers, where their limited production make little sense for me to represent. I have instead been buying their wines from their private mailing list for my own consumption. However, this little side hobby has overtime accumulated quite a sizeable collection of wines (guess, I am not drinking fast enough), in which, I would like to take this opportunity to sell part of that. I have applied a small margin (10% + 5% GST charges) to what I have paid from the winery for the following collection. Hope u will find them interesting. - AT

- 3 x 2003 **Adrian** Fog Pinot Noir Savoy Vineyard, Anderson Valley at 175.00 nett each (Parker's 94 points)
- 3 x 2003 **Amuse Bouche** Proprietary Red (97% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc), Napa at 442.50 nett each (Wine Spectator's 93 points)
- 3 x 2001 **Arcadian** Chardonnay Sleepy Hollow Vineyard at 75.00 nett each (Parker's 90 points)
- 3 x 2001 **Arcadian** Pinot Noir Gary's Vineyard Monterey at 105.00 nett each (Tanzer's 92 points)
- 3 x 2001 **Arcadian** Pinot Noir Pisoni Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands at 155.00 nett each (Tanzer's 88+ points)
- 3 x 2002 **Blankiet** Merlot Paradise Hill Vineyard Napa Valley at 215.00 nett each (Tanzer's 95 points)
- 3 x 2003 **Blankiet** Merlot Paradise Hill Vineyard Napa Valley at 215.00 nett each (Parker's 96 points)
- 3 x 2003 **Blankiet** Cabernet Sauvignon Paradise Hills Vineyard Napa Valley at 305.00 nett each (Parker's 95 points)
- 3 x 2001 **Clos Mimi** Syrah Bunny Slope Paso Robles at 128.00 nett each (Parker's 89 points)
- 3 x 2003 **Clos Mimi** Syrah Petite Rousse Paso Robles at 176.00 nett each (Parker's 92 points)
- 3 x 2002 **Jones Family** Vineyard The Sisters Proprietary Red at 120.00 nett each (Parker's 89 points)
- 3 x 2002 **Jones Family** Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa at 210.00 nett each (Parker's 92 points)
- 2 x 2001 **Kistler** Pinot Noir Kistler Vineyard Russian River Valley at 335.00 nett each (Tanzer's 92+ points)
- 3 x 2003 **Peter Michael** Sauvignon Blanc L'Apres-Midi, Sonoma at 105.00 nett each (Tanzer's 93 points)
- 6 x 2004 **Peter Michael** Sauvignon Blanc L'Apres-Midi, Sonoma at 115.00 nett each (Tanzer's 94 points)
- 3 x 2003 **Peter Michael** Chardonnay Belle Cote, Sonoma at 163.00 nett each (Parker's 94 points)
- 3 x 2003 **Peter Michael** Chardonnay Ma Belle Fille, Sonoma at 182.00 nett each (Parker's 93 points)
- 3 x 2000 **Peter Michael** Pinot Noir Le Moulin Rouge Pisoni, Santa Lucia Highlands at 265.00 nett each (Tanzer's 92 points)
- 1 x 1999 **Peter Michael** Pinot Noir Le Moulin Rouge Pisoni, Santa Lucia Highlands at 258.00 nett each (Parker's 90-93 points)

3 x 1998 Peter Michael Pinot Noir Le Moulin Rouge Pisoni, Santa Lucia Highlands at 250.00 nett each (Tanzer's 89+ points)  
 3 x 1997 Peter Michael Pinot Noir Le Moulin Rouge Pisoni, Santa Lucia Highlands at 250.00 nett each (Parker's 88-90 points)  
 3 x 2003 Peter Michael Les Pavots Proprietary Red Wine, Knight Valley at 350.00 nett each (Parker's 94 points)  
 6 x 2004 Radio Coteau Pinot Noir Savoy Vineyard Anderson Valley at 120.00 nett each (Tanzer's 92 points)  
 3 x 2004 Radio Coteau Pinot Noir Alberigi Russian River Valley at 105.00 nett each (Tanzer's 90 points)  
 2 x 2004 Radio Coteau Pinot Noir Terra Neuma Sonoma at 120.00 nett each (Parker's 91-93 points)  
 3 x 2004 Radio Coteau Pinot Noir La Neblina Sonoma Coast at 100.00 nett each (Tanzer's 89 points)  
 10 x 2004 Radio Coteau Syrah Timbervine Russian River Valley at 110.00 nett each (Tanzer's 92+ points)  
 11 x 2004 Radio Coteau Syrah Cherry Camp Sonoma Coast at 118.00 nett each (Tanzer's 92 points)  
 20 x 2004 Radio Coteau Syrah Las Colinas Sonoma Coast at 88.00 nett each (Tanzer's 90 points)  
 6 x 2001 Sine Qua Non Mr. K The Nobleman (Chardonnay) at 175.00 nett each (Parker's 97 points)  
 4 x 2002 Sine Qua Non Mr. K The Iceman Eiswein (Gewurztraminer) at 175.00 nett each (Parker's 96 points)  
 3 x 2002 Sine Qua Non White Whisperin'E (Roussanne/Viognier/Chardonnay) at 210.00 nett each (Parker's 95 points)

## French

I must admit, I am not always prepared for "intellectual" questions during my tasting event. I need to occasionally switch-off my brain and purely indulge in a sole appreciation of drinking. When I was asked to explain during the last office-gathering of my 2nd half central Otago Pinot Noir tasting on how one define sappiness in wine. For that second, I was speechless. Not because I was unable to tackle the question, but more so, is the question involved complex issues on; an individual-ability to perceive sappiness in wine; a personal preference for greatness. It's like asking me to explain the subject of *terroir*. My simpler explanation is, "if you sense and understand the important of *terroir*, then, is significant. Otherwise, is meaningless to discuss".

During the discussion, one of the attendee was so helpful to reply to the query. "Sappiness, is like when you're drinking a Chinese tea, in the like of **Tie Guan Yin**, which gave off some sweet, honey tone, yet the astringent finish creating the co-existent of sweetness/acidity cleansing finish". Bravo! However, I would rather quote **Long Jing** instead, as Tie Guan Yin (or Ti Kuan Yin) is part of **Oolong** tea family and is partially-fermented. Unlike Long Jing, from the green tea family (fresh tea leaves), which has less of those fermented tea tartness. Sorry, are we even talking about tea now?

Today wine world could largely be divided into two very distinctive group of disciples (which is villain dark force? u decide) ; those who celebrate richness, weight and obviousness in wine and those who look upon subtlety, elegant, vibrancy and balancing in wine. To simplify this, there are school of acid precluded versus school of acid preserved. The iconic leader for the school of precluded must land on the shoulder of Bob Parker, who he has openly supported and encourage the promotion of surmaturite (hyper ripeness), new oak laden, where alcohol and glycerol was the answers to the best kept secret of wine. On the opposite side, which was previously led by Clive Coates and currently well succeeded by Allen Meadow's Burghound that embraced the important of acidity, which on the physical side, give wine the stability (inhibiting the growth of microbes like brettanomyces, volatile acidity, which is commonly found on wine that belong to school of acid precluded, with wine generally high in pH in addition to the excessive of oxygen contact during the wine upbringing without properly combat by sulphur dioxide), color redden and in the perceive of taste, give wine the freshness, purity, elegant, delineation and the exclusive, "sappiness".

Despite Parker has continue his emphasis on his belief of physiologically ripeness. However, much of his favorite wines tend to head towards dehydrated ripeness rather than phenolical ripeness. His description such as Amarone-like, port-like are the living prove of his preference. Those sweetness one detect from dehydrated ripeness can be very appealing, however, it was not the real "ripe fruit sweetness" but rather coming from alcohol, glycerin and residual sugar (the balance grape sugar that has not been metabolized by yeast. It is very common with high-alcoholic wine, where function of yeast was ended by the risen of alcohol during fermentation - yeast cannot survive in a alcohol level much higher than 13/14°). Quoted

from **Benjamin Leroux** of Comte Armand, "the real fruit-ripeness, are sweetness with sappiness. Sweetness than finish with cleansing acidity rather than palate staining, syrup-like stickiness".

Parker often referenced such legendary Bordeaux vintages like 1947, 1949 as his quality yardstick, which was in fact, all coming from an extreme heat-wave, water-stressed, drought years. Especially during the harvest months of August/September, with such scorching heat could effortlessly burn all the natural tartaric acid through rapid respiration. Such extreme heat years also pushes the vegetative circle (often resulting earlier than usual harvest), preventing the accumulation of natural acidity in grape. Those wines frequently marked by high alcohol and frightfully low acidity. Occasionally, when the grape suffered from skin burned or baked, a more exotic, raisiny, pruney characters will be results and made rather blurry wine (terroir indistinctive).

I have recently read about a viticultural technique called **PRD (partial root drying)** and some of Parker's favorite winemakers at downunder has already adopted such hi-tech practices. Like most of the dehydrated sweetness wine favorite by Parker. They are mostly coming from stressed vine. PRD uses the drip-irrigation to manipulate the water-stressed in vine. All plants have their natural self protection against water stresses. When the roots signal the drought, it will alert aerial bits of plant that hard times are on the way and they stop growing, closing stomata (small pores) in the leaves (stopping photosynthesis) and keeping canopy growth restricted in order to prevent further risk of water loss. PRD enable to give such false signal to the plant by using dual-drip system that vine vigor is reduced and thus, potential grape quality is enhanced. Sparky Marquis once told me, such PRD system enable him to produce high quality grape from young vine with economically viable production size. His belief has totally defeated the traditional logic of all great wines are made out of old vine, low yield vineyards. What do I think of such steroid enhanced technique? While, try decant those new sensational for 2-3 hours and see, if there is anything left beside those sticky, mouth coating sweet-oak and alcohol. The truth lies beneath.

Like minerality in wine, **sappiness** is underpinned by natural acidity (malic or tartaric). However, those acidity has nothing in common with those acidified (mostly citric & tartaric) practiced mostly by the new-world or warmer wine growing region. Many of those acidified reds does not have the cleansing finish, but instead showing ripeness, sweetness on one end, with sharp grapefruit-like acid on another. They are less harmony on the palate.

Sappiness is almost exclusively used in describing red rather than white (to me, it required certain outline dryness from tannin) and generally refer to red grapes that having sounding acidity. Like Pinot Noir, Barbera, Sangiovese, Nebbiolo...etc. Grape alone, does not contribute to sappiness, very often or so, we need the climate, or vintage, like the classical Burgundy vintages such as 2001, 2004, or even 2002, where the vegetative circle is prolong and better natural acidity is preserve. When the weather is extreme, or grape suffering from drought, like the case of 2003, sappiness will be as rare as a winter white truffle. The skillful winemaker in this case also play an crucial role. He can either amplify the present of sappiness or simply demolish them. Excessive contact of oxygen during elevage, or lavish used of new wooded treatment are the case.

This coming **Friday (November 24th), from 5.30 to 7.30 pm**. Please join us at our office, 50 Kallang Avenue, #06-06 Noel Corporate Building, S'pore 339505. We will be featuring the following selection of Burgundy for tasting (**your best opportunity to find out how sappiness taste like?**). Admission for this tasting is S\$30.00 nett each. However, if you purchase six bottles or the same equivalent of S\$350 from our sale item. Your tasting will be free. To enroll, please contact us at **6291 1947** or simply reply this message. Hope to see u all. - AT

### **White Burgundy**

2003 *Henri Boillot* Chassagne-Montrachet, 1er Cru Les Embrazees (**Burghound's 91 points**)

2004 *Sylvie Boyer* Auxey-Duresses Les Clous

2003 *Boyer-Martenot* Meursault Les Narvaux (**Burghound's 87 points**)

2004 *Philippe Pacalet* Puligny Montrachet

2003 *Guy Roulot* Meursault Les Tillets (**Tanzer's 89 points**)

## Red Burgundy

- 2004 *Robert Arnoux* Vosne-Romanee (Burghound's 86-89 points)  
2003 *Robert Chevillon* Nuits St.-George 1er Cru Les Chaignots (Burghound's 87-89 points)  
2004 *Geantet-Pansiot* Gevrey-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes (Tanzer's 89+ points)  
2001 *Humbert Freres* Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru Les Poissenots (Burghound's 90 points)  
2003 *Cecil Tremblay* Chambolle-Musigny 1er Cru Feusselottes (Burghound's 87 points)  
2002 *Philippe Roty* Marsannay Champs St. Etienne (Burghound's 88 points)  
2004 *Aubert et P De Villaine* Mercurey Les Montots (Burghound's 86-88 points)

## My Favorite Restaurant – Sage at Robertson Walk

Our final part of Bordeaux 2000 tasting took place in the newly renovated Sage Restaurant at Robertson Walk (off Mohamed Sultan). For those who are unfamiliar with this eatery. Allow me to introduce you the husband and wife team of Kimberly and Jusman. Chef Jusman SO previously worked at **Au Jardine** and **Hilton's Harbor Grill** prior to starting his own restaurant. The food here is contemporary French with a twist of that somewhat, San Franciscan, modern Aussie (in the like of those restaurants in Sydney) use of fresh ingredient. However, what impressed me with this outlet is the creativeness of Jusman's cooking. The differences between an innovative dish versus experimental dish is, the later, is on the expense of the consumers. That is what happen to so many so-called, modern, cutting-edge restaurant in town. Their creativeness occasionally work, but mostly, fail to live up to their hype. I have been returning to Sage, three times this month. That says a lot about my confidence over Sage.

My last meal of Mille feuille of slow baked pigeon is almost cooked with perfection (I often think, the best way to test the skill of a chef, is to see how he/she handle his pigeon). I particularly enjoy the way the walnut salad that is mixed with apple puree, which gives both crunchiness and sweetness. I also like their signature dish of Duck Confit, which was interestingly prepared with shredded duck confit wrapped in cooked cabbage, and the heavenly, sinful, to die for - crispy tulle of duck skin (as good as a suckling pig skin, if not better) at the side, which you can enjoyed mixing both the meat and the skin. Since duck confit can be fairly dry, and the sauce can easily run out. Do ask for more sauce from Kimberly. Of-course, no extra charge. Meal prices at Saga is very affordable, for a good four-course dinner will cost you S\$65++ (better than many fancy restaurants in town that will slam you with a S\$100 menu and you still need to rush-off to Newton Circle to fill the gap of your hunger). I often get away with the corkage, however, you need to prove to Kimberly that you poses the same typical Singaporean bargain ability. By the way, I have kept my large Bordeaux glasses with them, and reader of this mailer. Feel free to use those glasses (however, do replace them if you have accidentally broken them).

All prices quoted for per bottle in Singapore dollar. Prices indicated "in red" are inclusive of 5% GST.  
Free delivery for purchases of S\$350 and above, otherwise S\$15 per delivery will apply.

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