

April is a good time to try new things, make this tasting is one of them... I am very excited about the wines I was able to find from South Africa! Make your plans to be here.

- When: Friday, April 12th
- Time: 4-8 pm
- Where: Santiam Wine & Bistro
- Cost: Full Pour \$20 1/2 pour \$12

The Wines:

2009 Glen Carlou Grand Classique, Paarl, Western Cape, South Africa \$16

The 2009 Grand Classique is a blend of 43% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Petit Verdot, 16% Malbec, 16% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Franc aged in new and used barrel for 18 months. It has a lifted bouquet of raspberry and dark plum aromas that needs to develop more complexity. The palate is medium-bodied with a sweet, kirsch-tinged entry. The acidity is very well entwined with the bright redcurrant and strawberry fruit that leads to a bright, vibrant finish. Perhaps not a long term Grand Classique, but this is well crafted. Drink now-2017. **90 Points Robert Parker**

2009 Glenelly Cabernet Sauvignon Glass Collection South Africa \$19

The 2009 The Glass Collection Cabernet Sauvignon is matured for 12 months in oak with racking every four. It has a lifted, slightly "briny" bouquet with good definition. The palate is full-bodied with firm tannins, a grainy texture with a dry, quite austere tobacco-laced finish. Showing impressive grip and persistence, I suggest leaving this for another 12 months in bottle. Drink 2013-2020. **90 Points Robert Parker**

When the indefatigable May-Elaine de Lencquesaing purchased the 128-hectare Glenelly Estate in 2003, a new chapter opened up for her upon the slopes of the Simonsberg Mountain. The following year, 60-hectares of red and 5-hectares of white grape varieties were planted, although it was not until 2009 that the state-of-the-art winery became operational. The first release was a Cape Blend from imported grapes and, to be honest, I remember the quality not being up to standard. However, the appointment of Luke O'Cuinneagain, who had worked at Chateau Angelus, Screaming Eagle and Rustenberg, plus the consultancy of Adi Badenhorst has had an immediate impact, and I was very impressed by these wines. She will be giving her old Deuxieme Cru a run for its money soon (and let's not even think about comparing prices!)

2009 L'Avenir Pinotage Stellenbosch \$30

A dark, lightly chewy style, with plum, blackberry, licorice and coffee notes and a solid toasty edge on the finish. Drink now. 300 cases imported. **87 Wine Spectator**

2009 Raats Family Cabernet Franc Stellenbosch \$32 Chronic...

The 2010 Cabernet Franc has an intense bouquet of blackberry, scorched earth, clove a touch of "Marmite" and soy that is very well defined and focused. The palate is has an understated entry with supple tannins: plenty of peppery fruit and a sense of linearity and poise on the finish. There is just a hint of green bell pepper on the finish that lends it so much character. I agree, less structured than the 2009 but still very well crafted. Drink 2013-2020. **92 Points Robert Parker**

2006 Thelema Shiraz Stellenbosch \$35

Superripe and lush, but with ample drive, as the licorice, mocha and fig paste notes glide along while hints of bittersweet ganache and freshly brewed espresso weave in through the finish. An unabashed style, but deftly balanced. Drink now through 2012. 56 cases imported. **92 Points Wine Spectator**

2010 Boekenhoutskloof Chocolate Block Western Cape, South Africa \$33

The 2010 The Chocolate Block is a blend of 72% Syrah, 7% Grenache, 13% Cabernet Sauvignon, plus Cinsault and Viognier that is raised in French oak for 18 months of which 13% new. It has a rustic blackberry and tar-scented nose with touches of undergrowth. The palate is medium-bodied with chunky ripe tannins and spicy black fruit tinged with (of course) a titular tincture of dark chocolate. This commercial stalwart is still doing the business. Drink now-2015.

It may still be difficult to pronounce but Boekenhoutskloof continues to affirm itself as one of South Africa's leading estates. Mark Kent is an astute helmsman, branching out to regions beyond his base in Franschhoek, for example, into Swartland for his Syrah. I still feel that he could rein in the new oak a little, but otherwise this is another set of superb South African wines.

See you here!

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