



Eleanor Cosman, President
South African Wine Society
Box 37085 RPO, 6428 Yonge St
Willowdale ON M2M 4J8
416 402 3212
www.southafricanwinesociety.ca
sawsinfo@rogers.com

The Cab Project From BLANKBOTTLE
@ Faculty Club
Tuesday, November 8 @ 6:30 pm

A very unusual and one-off tasting — six different bottles of cabernet sauvignon 2015 from South Africa's cult winemaker plus two whites.

We are very pleased to invite you to a very special “once in a lifetime” tasting event. These wines were ordered as a one-off. **Pieter Walsler**, one of South Africa’s cult winemakers, takes a very different approach to cabernet sauvignon, as you can see from the description below.

Come out and enjoy the company of your friends at our unique BLANKBOTTLE tasting. Good friends, an exciting tapas-style menu along with exceptional wines and a very good time.

Pieter Walsler famously doesn't put any details on his bottles. Consider it a lesson in not judging a book by its cover. He once had a woman visit his garage-style winery looking for 'anything but syrah', which, as a test, is exactly what he served her out of a nondescript bottle. Spoiler alert: she loved it. The idea is to have the freedom to produce wines without restriction. Walsler says he doesn't make wine for people who are looking to get the same thing every time. Instead, his loyal fans trust him to produce balanced, compelling wines from the Western Cape that are always different, and always exciting. Pieter's wines are listed at some of the best restaurants in the world.

Read all the specific details about the wines we will be tasting on the page that follows.

When & Where

When: Tuesday, November 8 @ 6:30 pm.

Where: University of Toronto Faculty Club, 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1C7
The Spadina streetcar stops at the corner of Willcocks and Spadina. 416 978-6325

Price: \$75 members. Guests \$85. All members and guests must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Closing date: Your booking or cancellation must be received by **Tuesday, November 1**. Your booking will be confirmed.

Preferred payment method is **Interac e-transfer** to sawsinfo@rogers.com. Your cheque payable to **South African Wine Society** will also be accepted. We no longer accept credit cards.

The Menu and Wines

Tapas style plates will be served.

1. Fried prosciutto wrapped dates stuffed with stilton, blackberry jam.
2. Roasted mushroom, thyme and Oka cheese tartlet
3. Braised short rib, Irish cheddar, whipped potato, red wine au jus

We will make every effort to accommodate your food allergies or special dietary needs if requested. **Vegetarian option is available.**

Note: As a courtesy to other members, please refrain from wearing any scented products, including perfumes, colognes, after shaves or hand lotions.

Wine Notes

The Cab Project from BLANKBOTTLE

Six different bottles of cabernet sauvignon 2015 from South Africa's cult winemaker plus two whites.

BLANKBOTTLE releases over 30 wines every year, about half of which will never be repeated. In 2017, Pieter worked with 35 varietals sourced from 60 different vineyards. He's a bit of a mad scientist with the energy and imagination of a child. When we heard about his latest Cab project, we couldn't resist. He put together a mixed case with six different bottles of cabernet sauvignon from different elevations.

2015 Unity – 116 meters above sea level
2015 HBK – 215 meters above sea level
2015 Mr Villa – 310 meters above sea level
2015 Toolbag – 310 meters above sea level
2015 Leaving the Table – 754 meters above sea level
2015 BUT WHY? 755 meters above sea level

Background:

As some of you might know, at the moment Pieter makes wine from 35 varieties. Harvest 2015, Pieter thought it a bright idea to do something for the neglected, fallen-from-grace cabernet sauvignon. He subsequently identified 6 cabernet sauvignon vineyards from 3 different wine areas, at 5 different heights above sea level: 2 near Somerset West (at 116 and 215 m), 2 on the outskirts of Tulbagh (both at 310 m) and 2 in the Witzenberg's Koue Bokkeveld (Ceres Plateau) (at 734 and 755m).

When Pieter first started speaking to the masters of cabernet at the southernmost tip of Africa, the first thing mentioned by most was the dreaded greenness in cabernet sauvignon — a very unwelcome herbaceous / vegetative

character. This develops due to high levels of pyrazines present in the wine — something that's determined by the ripeness level of the grapes. The longer the grape bunches get exposed to sunlight during the growing period, the less pyrazines — resulting in less greenness in the end product, reducing herbaceousness and amplifying fruit.

In South Africa we have a unique situation: although we have plenty of sunshine, it is hot and dry. In most instances, by the time the grapes are ripe for picking, they haven't had long enough sun exposure for the pyrazines to get to an acceptable level. And if you leave them on the vine longer, the sugar level gets too high. These sugars are then transformed during fermentation into alcohol resulting in rather high alcoholic wines — commonly tagged as “overripe wines”.

So in general, cabernet creators are in fact chased by the Green Monster. Defended by some, feared by most. What confused Pieter, though, is that one could argue that this greenness is a stylistic characteristic of wines closer to the ocean, which makes it acceptable. Or does it? Where the exact point lies where herbaceousness turns into greenness — Pieter was not sure.

That's why Pieter decided to make cabernets from more than one area and different height levels. He chose the following 6 vineyards:

UNITY: Somerset West - 116 meters above sea-level.

HBK: Helderberg mountain - 215 meters above sea-level

TOOLBAG: Tulbagh - 310 meters above sea-level
Mr VILLA: Tulbagh - 310 meters above sea-level
BUT WHY?: Ceres Plateau - 734 meters above sea-level
LEAVING THE TABLE: Ceres Plateau - 755 meters above sea-level

Pieter made them all separately and aged them all in French oak for one and a half years — picked mainly when he thought the grapes tasted best. Interestingly enough, the first vineyard on the Helderberg ripened in late February whereas the last vineyard in Ceres Plateau (about 3 hours drive from the first) reached optimum ripeness on 22 April - 100 days into harvest and also the very last grapes to hit the cellar.

Pieter assumed that UNITY and HBK would be more herbaceous in character, growing so close to the ocean and at a lower sea level. He picked UNITY at a general ripeness level, keeping in mind that he wanted to end up with a balanced wine. HBK, on the other hand, he picked completely ripe.

With the 2 Tulbagh components, Pieter picked the same vineyard on the same day. He made TOOLBAG the way he usually makes his wines. No additions like yeast, enzymes etc. Au naturel. He left the wine on the skins for 3 weeks after fermentation, pressed into old oak barrels. With Mr VILLA, on the other hand, he manipulated the winemaking process by adding a bit of acid, enzymes to extract colour, 2 strains of specific yeast cultures, a limited time on the skins and aged in the newest oak he had in the cellar.

BUT WHY grows at 734 meters above sea-level and Pieter was concerned that ripening would be a challenge. His initial thoughts were that the wines would be green. BUT WHY grows on sandy soils whereas LEAVING THE TABLE grows on rocky clay soils, at the highest elevation of them all. What he did not realize at the time was that the site's radiation levels (sunlight) were off-the-charts high and the average temperature is low during summer. The grapes could therefore stay on the vines much longer, absorbing massive amounts of sunlight,

whilst growing in maturity and getting rid of greenness. Resulting in ripe grapes with lower sugar levels. Sandy soils are also famous for producing more elegant wine.

Reception Wine: A A Badenhorst Secateurs Chenin Blanc 2020

The Secateurs Chenin Blanc 2020 spent time on its lees in concrete tanks and old casks — this is an important part of the maturation and gives incredible texture and palate weight to the wine. The aromas are flinty with honey, orange blossom and white stone fruit notes. The 2020 vintage was characterised by a long ripening period in mild conditions and has the effect of good ripe flavours and fresher acidity than in previous years

THE TASTING:

Wine 1: BLANKBOTTLE Nothing to Declare 2016

Pieter Walser has a fabulous white blend called Nothing to Declare. A tribute to the vine smugglers that battled to produce the wines they wanted to in SA 'back in the day'. It is a blend of marsanne, fernão pires, viura, clairette blanche, roussanne, grenache blanc, grenache gris and viognier.

An ode to the Southern Rhône in style, but with more acidity. This is just delicious, powerful, rich and structured with layers of character. Liquorice, fennel and fynbos dance with lemons and pear again with a lovely salty finish. There's very little primary fruit on the nose or palate but it has lovely presence and coated acidity. It's oxidative but not overtly nutty or honeyed, rich but not unctuous. A wonderfully seamless, balanced wine.

Wines 2 to 7: BLANKBOTTLE Cabernet Sauvignon 2015

UNITY: Somerset West - 116 meters above sea-level.

HBK: Helderberg mountain - 215 meters above sea-level

TOOLBAG: Tulbagh - 310 meters above sea-level

Mr VILLA: Tulbagh - 310 meters above sea-level

BUT WHY?: Ceres Plateau - 734 meters above sea-level

LEAVING THE TABLE: Ceres Plateau - 755 meters above sea-level

Event Registration

(if paying by cheque)

The Cab Project From BLANKBOTTLE

@ Faculty Club

Tuesday, November 8 @ 6:30 pm

When registering by mail, please phone or email to let us confirm your booking promptly.

Mail to:

SAWS

BOX 37085 RPO, 6428 YONGE ST

WILLOWDALE ON M2M 4J8

My *Interac* e-payment has been forwarded along with registration information **OR** enclosed is a cheque payable to *South African Wine Society* for ____ members \$75 & ____ guests @ \$85.

Name(s) _____

Guest name(s) _____

Phone _____

WAIVER, RELEASE AND INDEMNIT I am participating in South African Wine Society (SAWS) events voluntarily and at my own risk. In consideration of my participation, I, for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, hereby waive, release and forever discharge and indemnify SAWS, its organizers, volunteers, members, and the Executive Committee from any and all damages, claims and actions for any loss, liability, claim, action, costs, expenses, physical or emotional injury or death to me arising out of my participation in SAWS functions or on society grounds, howsoever caused. I am aware that SAWS does not carry any liability insurance. This waiver applies to all guests who I may bring and for whom I accept complete responsibility. I also certify that I, and my guests are 19 years of age or older. I also consent to the use of my/our name(s) and/or likeness through photographs or other images which SAWS may post on its website or other media. We/I have read and understand and agree to this waiver.