

## **Salon of 15 Tasting August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

On Monday, August 30<sup>th</sup> fifteen top wine tasting professionals gathered at Quince Restaurant in San Francisco to participate in a Blind Tasting Event sponsored by the Henry Wine Group. Among the attendees were three Master Sommeliers, a number of Wine Directors from some of the region's top wine merchants, and respected sommeliers from the Bay Area and as far away as Los Angeles. The event was hosted by Peter Neptune MS, Senior VP of the Henry Wine Group.

Eight wines were poured blind for the tasters. The wines were decanted one hour before the event and poured 15 minutes before the tasting began. The panelists were told that they were tasting a selection of some of the great crus of the world, and asked to rate each wine using a 100 point scale. The tasting took forty five minutes.

The wines tasted were all from the 2006 vintage. They were not identified in any way and were poured out of neutral decanters with no tasters in the room. They were poured in order A through H, and were (with retail prices added in parenthesis), Tenuta dell' Ornellaia Ornellaia (\$160), Chateau Pavie (\$284), Tolaini Picconero (\$130), Antinori Solaia (\$350), Tolaini Valdisanti (\$49.99), Tenuta San Guido Sassicaia (\$230), Chateau Latour (\$625), and Colgin IX Estate (\$394). Mr. Neptune chose these wines to demonstrate, hopefully, that the wines of Louis Tolaini in Tuscany were of world class quality and that they could hold their own in a tasting with this level of professional, highly trained and respected tasters.

The results were tabulated by taking the average of the totals of three considerations: total points, most frequent score, and average score. The highest and lowest taster's scores were discarded, and the remaining 13 taster's scores were tabulated. The results were unequivocal. First place went to Antinori Solaia (\$350). Second place went to Tolaini Picconero (\$130), at \$220 less per bottle. Third place was a tie between Tolaini Valdisanti (\$49.99) and Chateau Latour (\$625). The difference between the retail price of the Valdisanti and Chateau Latour is \$575.

The Picconero received comments praising its "smooth, ripe tannins, lovely combination of fruit and floral components, and keen balance", while the Valdisanti was praised for its "drinkability, seamlessness, and high quality."

Peter Neptune MS said "That the Tolaini wines took second and third at a blind tasting of this quality level is astounding. It shows that these wines deserve to be included in any discussion of

world-class wines. Congratulations to Louis Tolaini and his team for the dedication and effort that it takes to grow and make wines of this quality.”

The full list of attendees is:

1. David Lynch, Quince
2. Gianpaolo Paterlini, Acquerello
3. Tim Gaiser, MS
4. David Rosoff, Osteria Mozza
5. Jeff Porter, Osteria Mozza
6. Emily Wines, MS, Kimpton Group
7. Geoff Kruth, MS, Farmhouse & Guild of Sommeliers
8. Alder Yarrow, Vinography
9. Marcus Garcia, Fleur de Lys
10. Kris Margerum, Auberge du Soleil
11. Jack Moore, Metro Lafayette
12. Jordan Mackay (author), SF Magazine
13. Floribeth Schumacher, Jug Shop
14. Bill Traverso, Traverso's
15. Susan Thornett, K&L Wine Merchants

The Final Rankings of the Wines:

1. Antinori Solaia
2. Tolaini Picconero
3. (Tie) Tolaini Valdisanti, Chateau Latour
4. Tenuta San Guido Sassicaia
5. (Tie) Ornellaia, Chateau Pavie
6. Colgin IX Estate