

cellar Journal

exceptionally fine Virginia wines



Welcome

to the Fifth Shipment of The Cellar Reserve. This shipment epitomizes our goals when we first launched this club. We wanted to bring you highly selective wines in a unique format. A vertical of Octagon, one of Virginia's flagship wines, fulfills those goals perfectly.

The weather has been hot, so we waited for the cooler days to bring this Bordeaux Style blend. Thanks for your patience. Have a wonderful summer; as you can see little Mary Neville is enjoying her summer outside. We thank you for your support.

Cheers to our Nation's Birthday - Willis Logan

P.S. We want to keep the Cellar Reserve small and intimate, but we are ready to take on new members and we want your help. Refer a new member and receive TWO extra bottles in your next shipment. Just have them call 800.826.0534 and mention your name when signing up.



From
Barboursville

Octagon
2004

Octagon
2005

Octagon
2006



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From the Tasting Panel

When we founded the Cellar Reserve Club we designed it to be a limited membership. Our goal in limiting the membership was not to be an exclusive bastion of Virginia Wine snobs but to be small enough to capitalize on unique opportunities when they arose. The enclosed Barboursville vertical is one of these opportunities. As one who has been in the industry for over a decade, this shipment is most exciting.

The latest iteration of the Tasting Panel was expanded to include a couple club members as guest panelists. Anthony and Stephanie Herring were most impressed with the depth and cascading flavors in each edition of Octagon. Comparing vintages of such a well structured red blend helps consumers understand the impact of weather and how the blend and the winemaking process may be altered to deal with Mother Nature.

As we pack the wines for shipment, I can't help but wonder exactly how these wines will be enjoyed.

The wine purist in me wants everyone to have the experience of opening and decanting each of the bottles at the same time and tasting them side by side in a somewhat sterile vertical tasting, but the realist knows these wines are too fantastic to be limited to such as a clinical tasting.

The wine scribe/miser in me wants to lay down all three bottles for another 60 months or so, deep in the wine cellar anticipating increased complexity and depth, but I fear I do not have the patience.

The good son-in-law knows if I bring the 2004 Octagon to Thanksgiving dinner, I will get loads of in-law points. If I were to share the vertical with the entire family as a part of our autumnal celebration, I might just regain my place at the grown up table (long story).

The romantic in me remembers that later this year my wife and I will celebrate our 20th anniversary; any one (or all) of these wines would be great travel companions for our long planned anniversary getaway.

All these options for three exceptional bottles of wine, what a great problem to have!

As members of the Cellar Reserve Club you are part of a very select group of Virginia wine lovers. How will you enjoy these wines? What event will you celebrate with one of Virginia's best red blends? Please let us know editor@vawineclub.com

As always, thank you for including me on your Virginia wine journey

Respectfully submitted,

Neil Williamson, Chairman, Tasting Panel

2004 OCTAGON



As the oldest child in this vertical, this wine is the most complex of the shipment. Tasting this vintage in three different settings, my notes are consistent regarding the cascade of flavors that fill the supple mid palate.

A deep ruby color fills the glass from rim to rim. The dark center is more of a deep purple or maroon rather than the more typical garnet found in such blends. In the glass this heart of darkness seems to hint it has secrets to hide.

The nose is refined and subtle; opening nicely after ninety minutes of decanting. Dark plum, cocoa bean and tobacco notes round out the aromatics of this well aged vintage.

The wine's attack is quite subdued sneaking up the mid palate with only the slightest plum and raspberry undertones leading to a supple mid palate filled with a waterfall of complexity that includes dark cherry, anise and dark chocolate. The finish is round with black cherry and silky smooth tannins that linger dancing on the back of your tongue.

A wine of this caliber deserves a meal of equal stature. My pairing is with braised lamb. The gentle tannins would pair exceedingly well with the spicy sweetness and texture of such a dish. This wine is drinking quite well now and I perceive it is near its flavor

apex. As regular readers know the decline from the red wine flavor apex is significantly lower slope than the improvement curve. I encourage Cellar Club members to Drink Now – Spring 2012

Octagon Vertical

Barbooursville's Octagon, which takes its name from the Thomas Jefferson designed octagonal dining room that served as the social center of Governor James Barbour's mansion, is at the center of this quarter's Cellar Reserve shipment.

In many critics' eyes, the integrity of any wine region goes hand and hand with the quality and consistency of their blended red wine program. The character, terrior and winemaking expertise are each expressed in the growing of a great red blend program.

No discussion of Virginia wine's rise to national prominence is complete without discussing Barbooursville's flagship red "Octagon". Produced only in the best vintage years, Octagon traditionally is a Merlot dominated Bordeaux style blend featuring Cabernet Franc (up to 4 clones), Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot.

In a recent newsletter Barbooursville compared the changes in a bottle of Octagon as it ages to music, "Each of these "choristers" will present its own voice extended across its own arc of time, so that whenever a collector of Octagon opens his favorite vintages, he will recognize the song immediately, but the chorus will have gained greater harmony, depth, complexity and reverberation".

The Barbooursville Estate has been making history since the 1800s when its owner James Barbour was appointed Governor of the state by the General Assembly. The

mansion, designed by Thomas Jefferson, burned down on Christmas Day 1884 (The ruins remain on the estate).

After the estate changed hands several times, the Zonin family from Italy acquired the property in 1976, with intentions of founding an estate winery. Originally from Piemonte region of Italy, Winemaker and General Manager Luca Paschina has provided visionary leadership since 1991.

Even with their commercial and critical success, Barbooursville always seems to be striving to reach the next level. Producing approximately 35,000 cases annually, the winery has a well established and well distributed brand throughout the Commonwealth and the Eastern half of the United States. Paschina continues to experiment with different estate grown varietals and winery methods while staying true to his northern Italian roots.

Nothing speaks more to their commitment to high quality Virginia wine than their stated vision for Octagon. According to Octagon's tasting notes:

"Octagon became, thereby, the authentic extraction of its time as well as of its place, one of the most rewarding proofs of the vitality of the Bordeaux style in the New World. The privilege of crafting this wine can be sensed each time one of its vintages is tasted, over a long and rewarding shelf life."

2005 OCTAGON

The Octagon Room:
Every Barboursville Vineyard tour ends in an expansive temperature/humidity controlled room that has a very small number of barrels resting comfortably on custom designed gravel beds. The Octagon Room is where the best fruit of the vintage goes to age for potential inclusion in Barboursville's flagship red. Encircled by press clippings of Barboursville's storied history, the wine is surrounded by the greatness that came before. Resting in customized Gamba [an exclusive Italian cooperage] French oak barrels, these wines are developing the character and the complexity that will continue the rich tradition of Octagon.

With the 2005 edition, Barboursville's Octagon program really seemed to take off. Always a favorite of the select few that could acquire a bottle, 2005 marked the release of enough Octagon that the masses might actually be able to acquire a bottle. The increase in volume can be tied directly to new high quality vineyards coming online.

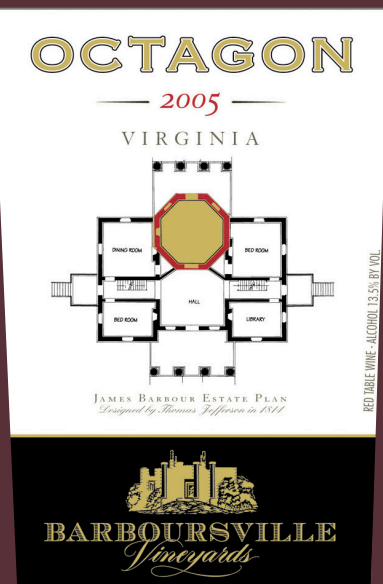
With its proud heritage, the 2005 Octagon does not disappoint. Leading with a brighter appearance than either the '04 or the '06, the center core is just as deep and dark as its siblings. Swirling in the glass, the legs on the '05 are demonstrably more viscose than the other wines hinting at its extensive barrel aging and alcohol content.

After macerating up to twenty days the components of the 2005 edition spent twelve to fourteen months aging in new French oak. The staves in these Gamba barrels were air dried for a minimum of thirty six months prior to coopering.

Licorice and black cherry are predominant on the nose while the slightly tannic attack is fruit-filled with dark cherry tones. Even brighter fruit tones are found in the front of the mid palate which expands greatly exposing layers of strawberry, licorice and plum. The finish, while well integrated, is a touch hotter than anticipated with silky round tannins.

The fruit in this wine I believe will continue to become more complex and subtle with additional bottle aging. If served in the next 12 months, I would recommend pairing with grilled beef with a peppercorn sauce. Patience will be rewarded for I believe this wine after 18 to 24 months will pair exceedingly well with a medium rare prime rib.

Tasting this wine at the winery last November, my notes anticipated significant aging would result in significant rewards. While the winery indicates this vintage will be reaching its full potential in 2012, I am recommending patient Cellar Club members cellar this bottle properly and Hold until Winter 2012-Winter 2014.



Much of the notes have focused on holding Octagon for later consumption. It is important to note these wines may be consumed now with great enjoyment. As the winery notes:

"We say, an Octagon "comes together," or knits together in time. But rather than speaking of peaks or pinnacles, in a wine of such extravagant latent complexity, we speak of periods or epochs in its bottle life, with food pairings changing as the wine evolves always toward greater complexity and eloquence of palate experience. The wine is not two-dimensional, as even this expressive architectural model is. As these arcs rotate in 3 dimensions, the 4th dimension - time - renews their character with each passing year. Yet, in its early years of utterly alluring drinkability, it is still not too soon to enjoy it as the achieved and exciting concert that it is."

rare, aged Virginia
wines for you

2006 OCTAGON

The youngest of the vintages shipped, this wine is, as anticipated, the brashiest. Bold in its youth, the future is quite bright for this wine. The full deep dark garnet swirls in the glass with a depth of potential that can not be over sated. As with each of these well integrated wines the dark, dense center core seems to be filled with mystery and intrigue.

The somewhat forward nose is plum dominated with a hint of strawberry and ever so subtle black pepper. The attack, at this early stage of the wine's life, has a tannic start with rhubarb & plum on the front end. The mid palate has yet to fully evolve but now includes strawberry and fresh baked strawberry tart.

It is very early to speak of the finish of this wine which will increase dramatically in complexity over the next thirty-six months but it is already smooth with well integrated tannins that will only become more refined with more time in the bottle.

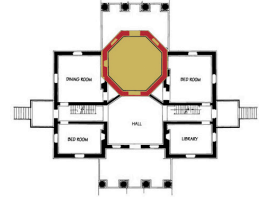
When opened, the 2006 edition would pair exceedingly well with rich red meats such as filet mignon, pasta with grilled red peppers or eggplant parmesan.

While this wine tastes very nice now, to drink this in the next year would be to miss out on a chance to enjoy a champion in their prime. I strongly encourage proper cellaring for a minimum of twelve months to allow some of the more delicate features to develop. For optimum enjoyment lay this bottle down and HOLD until Fall 2013-Winter 2015.

OCTAGON

2006

VIRGINIA



JAMES BARBOUR ESTATE PLAN

Designed by Thomas Jefferson in 1771



BARBOURVILLE
Vineyards

The next shipment of The Cellar Reserve will take place in late September. We have a few ideas on features, but nothing committed yet. Have an idea? Email us at wlogan@thecellarreserve.com

Summer Splurge With Octagon

Loin Lamb Chops Grilled in Thyme & Garlic

Roast New Potatoes with Sweet 100 Tomatoes

Salad of Fresh Pea Shoots

The Lamb

1. Ask your butcher for locally farm raised lamb loin chops. The night before, marinate lamb in a mix of Feudo Principi di Butera Extra Virgin Olive Oil from Sicily (available through Barbourville Vineyards' Tasting Room) with 1 tbsp thyme leaves de-stemmed and 1 mashed clove of garlic for each chop, plus a generous grinding of Telicherry or other aromatic black pepper. Place chops in zip-seal bags and refrigerate. Reserve stripped thyme stems for grilling.
2. One hour before grilling, remove lamb to countertop and season with a small pinch of Kosher or Sea Salt, each side, and allow to come to room temperature.
3. Use a grille elevated approximately 3-4 inches over natural hardwood charcoal, spreading coals uniformly white. Heat grille, scatter stripped thyme stems 1/2 inch apart and lay chops above. Sear for 2 minutes and turn, sear for 1.5 minutes, removing chops to warm platter for rare, cooking an additional 20 seconds for medium rare. Discard any charred thyme stems. The chops will continue to cook.

Salad of Fresh Pea Shoots for Two

In a large mixing bowl, ceramic or stainless steel, prepare a vinaigrette of 8 parts Feudo Principi di Butera Extra Virgin Olive Oil to 1 part 6-year-old Balsamic vinegar, a pinch of Kosher or Sea Salt and fine grindings of white pepper. Gather 2-3 cups fresh Pea Shoots and lightly toss by hand, plating salad immediately before serving.

The Roast Vegetables

1. Brush and rinse local new potatoes and allow to dry on towel. Place on bottom of an open roasting pan, lightly oiled with grapeseed oil of high smoke point, scattering Kosher or Sea Salt and several coarse grindings of white pepper, and place into the center of an oven pre-heated to 400 degrees F.
2. After 15 minutes, remove from oven and stir potatoes in the pan, lightly renewing oil if needed. Add whole Sweet 100 cherry tomatoes and allow to roast 20 minutes.

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