



Alsace Grand Cru Tasting

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February 1, 2005

Dear Member:

Your Wine Committee has arranged for the most extraordinary tasting of wines from Alsace that you are ever likely to experience!

The genius of French wine is the concept of *terroir*, the idea that the geographical location in which the grapes are grown imparts a distinctive quality to the wine. Alsace, with its Germanic heritage and geographic proximity, comes from a different wine tradition. But the times, they are a-changing. The clearest indication of this is the designation in recent years of 50 *Grand Cru* vineyards in Alsace, about 12% of the vineyard area, comprising sites that have been singled out for their history of excellence and the distinctive character of their wines. Production from these vineyards is further enhanced by tighter regulation, including reduced yields, and the pride of the vintners who lavish special attention on grapes from those locations. The grapes themselves can only be from Alsace's "noble" varieties, Riesling, Gewürztraminer, Pinot Gris and Muscat.

The *Grands Crus* of Domaines Schlumberger are the focus of this wine tasting for the Society. The Domaines Schlumberger estate has been in the hands of the same family since the French Revolution, and the property's vineyards were first planted by the Romans. Domaines Schlumberger possesses the largest vineyard area in Alsace, as well as the largest acreage of *Grand Cru* vineyards. Much of their vineyard area is at high elevation on steep hills inaccessible to modern machinery (draught horses, specially bred for balance and unaffected by vertigo, are used); hence Domaines Schlumberger's considerable reputation is due to the low yields of grapes from those properties and the exceptional concentration and balance of flavors of their wines.

Our speaker will be the charming Séverine Beydon-Schlumberger who, along with her uncle Alain, has taken over management of the estate. She is lavishly supplying us with six grand cru wines, as well as a Vendange Tardive and a Sélection de Grains Nobles. Please join chair Jeffrey Postman and me in attending this exciting tasting.

Sincerely,

Ivan Thornton
President

Date: Thursday, March 3, 2005

Time: Reception 6:00 PM, Tasting: 6:30 PM

Location: **The Union League Club**, 38 East 37th Street (just west of Park Ave.)

Contribution: Members \$60, Guests \$65

Dress: Business attire (coat and tie *required* by The Union League Club)