



Cabernet Franc Unblended *The World Tour*

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Registration: 6:00 PM, Tasting: 6:30 PM

Faculty Club, Univ. of Toronto, 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto

Price (including HST) Member: \$125; Guest/Non-Member: \$155

For our March tasting, **The Toronto Vintners Club** will be taking a global tour of Cabernet Franc, a versatile but often overlooked grape. Cabernet Franc is still widely thought of as a “supporting actor” in Bordeaux-style blends, but that perception is starting to shift, and it is increasingly being treated as a leading grape in its own right.

Cabernet Franc tends to be a medium-bodied red with vibrant acidity, red-fruited flavours, and a distinctive herbal edge. It often shows aromas of red cherry, raspberry and plum alongside notes of bell pepper, dried herbs, graphite or pencil shavings, and floral tones like violets, especially in cooler climates. Structurally it usually has moderate tannins (softer than Cabernet Sauvignon), balanced alcohol, and good but not extreme aging potential, with many quality examples evolving well for 5–10 years. In cooler sites its tart red fruit and herbal/peppery notes are more pronounced, while warmer regions bring riper, sometimes jammier fruit and less overt greenness.

Our tasting will explore 100% Cabernet Franc wines from eight regions:

France (Central Loire) is the grape’s classic home for varietal reds: medium-bodied, high-acid wines with red-berry fruit, leafy/herbal nuances and chalky or earthy minerality. Styles range from juicy and fresh to more structured and age worthy, but always with purity and lift.

Italy (Coastal Tuscany) Cabernet Franc is ripe, polished and powerful, with dark berries, sweet spice and supple tannins, usually around 14% alcohol. It shows less overt greenness than in cooler climates but keeps linear structure and savoury herb notes.

Chile (Maule Valley) Cabernet Franc can be surprisingly restrained and “Atlantic” in style: moderate alcohol, sharp acidity, redcurrant fruit, and pronounced herbal, leafy and spicy notes. It leans savoury and structural rather than lush.

Argentina (Mendoza) High-altitude Gualtallary produces intense, structured Cabernet Franc with cool-climate freshness: dark fruit, black pepper, herbal and sometimes eucalyptus tones, plus marked minerality. The style combines Andean tension with Mendoza richness and oak.

South Africa (Western Cape) Cabernet Franc is diverse but at the top end tends to show ripe black cherry, cassis, graphite and savoury tobacco or coffee notes. It often marries New-World ripeness and oak polish with the grape’s floral and leafy character.

USA (Lake County) High-elevation gives riper, more generous Cabernet Franc, with juicier red and dark fruit, some mocha or chocolate notes, and firmer alcohol and tannin. Cool nights still preserve acidity, so the wines feel lively.

Canada (Niagara) excels with cool-climate Cabernet Franc: aromatic, red-fruited and fresh, with fine, often “Pinot-like” tannins and minimal greenness when well ripened. The wines emphasise elegance and balance over sheer weight.

Hungary (Villány) has positioned itself as a modern stronghold (“Villányi Franc”), making full-bodied, concentrated wines with ripe dark fruit, warm spice and substantial tannins. Oak aging is common, giving a glossy, powerful but still refined expression of the grape.

There are clear signs that Cabernet Franc is “having a moment.” Here is a great opportunity to get your Inner Wine Geek out and get to know why Cabernet Franc deserves a place at the table with the world’s great wine varieties!

REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS online at [World Cabernet Franc March 2026](#) pay by e-transfer, credit card (via PayPal) or by cheque. E-transfer & credit card payments must be received within 48 hours of signing up to secure your reservation. You will be sent an automated email confirmation from our online reservation system, Jotform, after submitting your registration. If you did not receive your confirmation, please contact winetastings@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.

Cancellation Policy: We will provide a full refund for any cancellations up to 7 days prior to an event and 50% refund for cancellations between 7-3 days prior to an event. There is no refund for cancellations 3 days or less prior to an event, unless the event is sold out and the tickets can be sold to someone on the waitlist.



World Cabernet Franc
Tasting Notes and Information
(Prices are as of date of purchase)

2018 Le Macchiole Paleo

Tuscany Italy

\$152

Paleo is widely cited as the benchmark pure Cabernet Franc of the Tuscan coast, often described as the prototype of coastal Tuscany's varietal Cab Franc. It typically shows ripe black and red berries, spice, dark chocolate and herbal notes with full body, polished tannins and ~14% alcohol, reflecting the warmth and sun of Bolgheri while still keeping Cab Franc's aromatic lift. That combination of richness, ripe fruit and savoury herb/pepper character is very characteristic of high-end coastal Tuscan Cab Franc.

Drink: 2022-2040 Median Score: 96 pts

**2019 Garage Wine Co. Los Higueros Vineyard,
Maule Valley, Chile**

\$47

From old bush-trained vines, Los Higueros is explicitly framed as an "atypical new-world Cab Franc," with classic herbal aromas, leafy and spicy character, graphite and tomato-leaf notes over fine tannins and lively acidity at just 12.8% alcohol. Critics describe recent vintages as lean, energetic reds with redcurrant, pepper, ash and licorice notes, again with modest alcohol and sharp, long-carrying acidity. That makes it very representative of the new, fresher, old-vine Maule style: savoury, structured, and more Atlantic than opulent. *Drink: 2022-2029 Median Score: 95 pts*

**2018 Gran Enemigo Gualtallary Vineyard,
Mendoza, Argentina**

\$103

A high-altitude Andean field blend where Cabernet Franc leads and is blended with a smaller portion of Malbec, consciously styled after old-school Pomerol. Tasting notes highlight deep purple colour, intense aromas, sweet spices, black pepper, eucalyptus and thyme from the Cab Franc, plus ripe black fruits (blackberries and black cherries) from the Malbec, all framed by chocolate and vanilla from oak. The result is complex, powerful and long on the palate, capturing Gualtallary's combination of cool-climate freshness and Mendoza richness.. *Drink: 2023-2034 Median Score: 97 pts*

2018 Malatinszky Kuria

Vilány, Hungary

\$73

Malatinszky is one of Villány's reference estates, and the Kúria Cabernet Franc is regularly cited as ripe, rich and dense, with bold, spicy, sweet berry fruit and notable structure. Villány as a region pushes for concentrated, full-bodied "Villányi Franc" with warm spice and generous berry fruit, often with firm tannins underneath. Malatinszky's style fits that template well, so this bottle should show the region's hallmark combination of richness, warmth and serious structure. *Drink: 2023-2032 Median Score: 93 pts*

2021 Domaine des Roches Neuves Les Memoires

Loire Valley, France

\$102

A classic biodynamic, limestone-driven Sautum-Champigny: pure Cabernet Franc, intense ruby colour, with wild strawberry, red-fruit liqueur and fine minty or menthol notes on the nose. In the mouth it is described as straight and precise, with pure fruit and pronounced minerality, a poised, medium-bodied profile that is very much what you'd expect from top central-Loire Cab Franc. This wine is an excellent example of the cooler, mineral, red-fruited style of the region. *Drink: 2025-2041 Median Score: 95 pts*

2017 Joubert-Tradauw Reserve

Western Cape South Africa

\$63

Joubert-Tradauw's Reserve Cabernet Franc, from the Klein Karoo's Tradouw area, is singled out as one of South Africa's best Cab Francs, which already says something about typicity at a high level. Descriptions emphasise a smooth, floral and refined profile, with graphite, black cherry and vanilla, and very well-handled new oak. That mix of ripe dark fruit, floral notes, graphite and polished oak over a medium- to full-bodied frame is quite characteristic of top Cape Cab Franc from cooler inland pockets, where you get both ripeness and finesse. *Drink: 2022-2029 Median Score: 94 pts*

2017 Sol Rouge Lake County Cabernet Franc

California, USA

\$64

Consistently one of the producer's most reliable wines, with a rich red colour, aromas of crushed cranberries, pine needles, forest floor and mocha. On the palate it is full-bodied and silky, with dark-chocolate flavours, a subtle herbal note in the mid-palate and a long finish carried by dark tannins. That combination of high-elevation California fruit (ripe, concentrated, a bit of mocha) and the grape's herbal/forest nuance is very representative of serious Lake County Cab Franc. *Drink: 2022-2029 Median Score: 93 pts*

2020 Domaine Queylus Cabernet Franc Reserve

Niagara, Canada

\$49

A Decanter note on an earlier vintage of Queylus Réserve Cabernet Franc describes it as poised, full and resonant, combining Cabernet depth and flavour refinement with textures "more akin to those of a Pinot," mellow yet vivid and warm, with only light oak. That profile – medium body, finely knit tannins, ripe but not jammy fruit and gentle oak – matches what Niagara does best with Cab Franc: elegance, freshness and savoury complexity rather than sheer power. *Drink: 2023-2030 Median Score: 92 pts*