



Chianti Classico & Gran Selezione Sensational Sangiovese

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

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

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

Price (including HST) Member: \$140; Guest/Non-Member: \$180

For our April event **The Toronto Vintners Club** will be travelling to the heart of Tuscany to Chianti, one of Italy's most historic and recognizable wine regions, lying in the rolling hills between Florence and Siena. At its core is Sangiovese, a naturally high-acid, medium-bodied grape that gives Chianti its hallmark flavours of sour cherry, red plum, dried herbs and a distinctly savoury, earthy edge. The best examples combine bright, mouth-watering freshness with firm but refined tannins, making them superb food wines that shine at the table rather than on their own.

The terroir of Chianti Classico is varied and complex, yet certain themes recur. Vineyards sit mostly on hillsides at moderate to high elevations, with warm days and cool nights that help grapes ripen fully while preserving aroma and acidity. Soils often feature galestro (friable shale), alberese (hard limestone), sandstone and clay, each contributing a different texture and expression. Limestone-rich sites tend to give more linear, vertical wines with tension and mineral drive, while clay and mixed soils can deliver deeper fruit and broader structure. These combinations of altitude, aspect and soil underpin the stylistic range you'll see in tonight's line-up, from taut and mineral to rich and velvety.

Chianti is not a single, uniform wine but a family of appellations and quality levels. "Chianti" on its own generally refers to a broader, larger DOCG area with a variety of styles. "Chianti Classico" comes from the historic heartland between Florence and Siena and is indicated by the black rooster emblem on the bottle neck. Within Chianti Classico, there are three main tiers: Annata (the regular, village-level wine), Riserva, and Gran Selezione. Annata is usually released earlier, often more fruit-forward and approachable. Riserva must be aged longer and typically shows greater depth, structure and complexity.

Gran Selezione sits at the top of the pyramid. It must come from a winery's own vineyards, meet stricter quality and aging requirements, and is intended to represent the estate's most ambitious expression of Chianti Classico. These wines often come from selected parcels or single vineyards, show more concentration and length, and can age for many years. Differences in winemaking philosophy also matter: some producers favour a more traditional style, emphasizing red fruit, earth and herbal notes, while others use small oak barrels and riper fruit to craft a plusher, more modern profile.

Our event will feature nine wines, Chianti Classico and Chianti Classico Gran Selezione. As you taste, look for three key characteristics: the interplay of bright acidity and tannin that gives these wines their backbone; the spectrum of fruit from tangy red cherry to darker berries; and the subtle signatures of place—floral notes, spice, earth and minerality—that make each Chianti distinct. We hope you will join us!

The Legend of Gallo Nero



The rooster is a symbol of Chianti Classico that comes from a medieval legend about a border dispute between Florence and Siena. According to the story, each city chose a rooster to crow at dawn as the signal for a horseman to ride out; wherever the two riders met would fix the frontier between them.

Siena chose a well-fed white rooster, assuming a pampered bird would perform reliably at daybreak.

Florence chose a black rooster but kept it hungry and uncomfortable so it would crow much earlier out of agitation.

On the agreed day, the starving black rooster crowed long before dawn, letting the Florentine rider leave much earlier than his Siennese counterpart. He rode so far south that the meeting point ended up very close to Siena, giving Florence control of most of the Chianti area.

Because of this legendary cunning "victory," the black rooster (gallo nero) was later adopted as the emblem of the League of Chianti in 1384 and today is the official symbol of the Chianti Classico producers' consortium.

REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS online at [Chianti Classico April 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.



Chianti Classico & Gran Selezione

Tasting Notes and Information

(Prices are as of date of purchase)

CHIANTI CLASSICO

2018 Fontodi \$40

A concentrated yet vibrant Panzano Sangiovese, showing dark cherry, redcurrant and raspberry framed by bay leaf, spice, leather, graphite and a touch of mocha and polished oak. The palate is medium to full-bodied with a bright core of red fruit, chewy but ripe tannins and a dusty texture, combining power with freshness and a long, flavourful, tannic finish. This is serious village Chianti Classico with real depth and energy, already enjoyable but clearly built to improve with short- to mid-term cellaring. Drink: 2023-2036 Median Score: 94 pts

2017 San Giusto a Rentennano \$34

The 2017 San Giusto a Rentennano Chianti Classico is a concentrated, classically styled Sangiovese-led wine born of a hot, low-yielding vintage, combining ripe cherry and dark red fruits with floral hints, leather and plenty of savoury, earthy tones. Medium to medium-full in body, it offers excellent acidity and a core of pure, energetic fruit over dusty soil and spice notes, with firm, slightly rustic tannins that benefit from air or a few more years in bottle. The overall impression is of a beautifully honest, terroir-driven Chianti Classico that balances intensity and freshness, especially good at table with decanting. Drink: 2022-2030 Median Score: 92 pts

2017 San Giusto a Rentennano, Riserva Le Baròncole \$56

A more powerful, structured Riserva expression, typically Sangiovese with a dash of Canaiolo, delivering ripe raspberry and cherry, darker red fruits over a core of smoke, earth and savoury spice. The palate is fleshy yet tightly woven with crunchy fruit, persistent sapid freshness and firm, age-worthy tannins that give the wine a serious, austere edge in youth. This is an intense, characterful Riserva that trades some immediacy for depth and longevity, rewarding patience and generous aeration. Drink: 2023-2032 Median Score: 92 pts

2016 Brancaia, Chianti Classico Riserva \$40

Brancaia's 2016 Chianti Classico Riserva, predominantly Sangiovese with a touch of Merlot, is an intense, medium to full-bodied wine showing a long bouquet of cherry and black fruit layered with spice, leather, tar and tilled earth. On the palate it is structured yet fresh and succulent, with high-toned fruit, noticeable oak and warmth, a creamy, melted texture and a generous, lingering finish that will appeal to those who enjoy a richer, modern style. Critics describe it as recommended and characterful, if a bit warm and oaky for more traditional palates. Drink: 2023-2032 Median Score: 92 pts

CHIANTI CLASSICO GRAN SELEZIONE

2018 Castello di Ama Vigneto La Casuccia \$346

An opulent, structured single-vineyard wine that combines depth and finesse, with notable energy and serious aging potential. The nose shows black cherry, blackberry, plum, dark florals, tobacco, cedar, spice, and hints of tar, iron and wild herbs, coming across as polished yet still youthfully tight. On the palate it is deep and concentrated yet refined, with plush dark fruit, black cherry and plum layered with licorice, cocoa, tobacco and mineral tones, carried by creamy, velvety tannins and vibrant acidity into a long, persistent finish. Drink: 2024-2040 Median Score: 95 pts

2016 Capraia, Effe 55 \$102

An intense, serious expression from Castellina that emphasizes ripe red fruit, power and marked minerality, underpinned by ample structure for aging. The nose offers red berries alongside black cherry, dark plum, cocoa and vanilla from well-integrated oak, with additional notes of spice, leather and menthol. On the palate it is full-bodied, warm and powerful, driven by deep dark red and black fruits, high but balanced acidity and pronounced tannic texture, leading to a long, fresh, mineral finish. Drink: now-2030 Median Score: 94 pts

2016 Casa Emma \$77

A pure Sangiovese from high-elevation vineyards in the heart of Chianti Classico, showing both polish and muscle in a very classic profile. The nose offers pure cherry and blackberry alongside leather, menthol, wild berries, dark spice and a touch of violet, with underlying tobacco and licorice notes adding a savoury edge. On the palate it is medium-bodied but firmly structured, with refined tannins, bright acidity and a long, focused finish. Drink: now-2030 Median Score: 95 pts

2018 Ricasoli Castello Di Brollo \$50

Polished and classically framed, showing a sweet core of ripe red and black cherries, raspberry and blackcurrant, lifted by violets, herbs and floral notes, with layers of nutmeg, clove, vanilla pod, cedar, tar and a touch of hazelnut. It is medium- to full-bodied, rich and layered yet vibrant, with smooth acidity and integrated but robust tannins that give a velvety texture and a long, flavourful, slightly spicy finish, plus hints of mushroom and balsamic on the aftertaste. Drink: now-2032 Median Score: 94 pts

2018 Ricasoli Colledilà \$75

A refined Sangiovese cru from stony clay-limestone soils with intense aromas of ripe red fruit, blueberry and cranberry, with floral and herbal notes. The palate is medium in weight but wonderfully succulent and juicy, with vibrant acidity and a long, zesty, finish. Drink: 2024 2032 Median Score: 96 pts