

CHAMBERS ROSEWOOD NV RARE MUSCADELLE



Review Summary

94 pts “From the grape known as tokay when it was harvested more than a century ago, this wine was rechristened as Muscadelle as regional names gained international trademark rights. Over the course of a month after the bottle was first opened, this wine moved from a deep, dark apricot-orange color and flavor to supple, expansive and mysterious ancient fruit depths, as if drilling deep into the earth and finding sweetness. When you open it, parse out small sips over the course of several weeks to enjoy the transformation.”

Joshua Greene, Wine & Spirits
October 2020

98 pts “Almost opaque across a hue of molasses and mahogany grand piano shades. Mind-boggling just how old the average component in this prodigious blend must be. Surely a centurion. Date, cinnamon, tomatillo. A Moroccan souk. Ethereal. Nutty rancio for lift and joy. Imperious, this. Rather than a dessert wine, I strongly suggest this elixir as a meditational sipper. Undoubtedly among the smattering of truly world class wines this country offers up.”

Ned Goodwin, Halliday Wine Companion
August 6, 2020

97 pts/CELLAR SELECTION “From over 100-year-old vines, this historic Rutherglen fortified wine is as beautiful as it is complex. Molasses-hued, the ethereal nose sings with a multitude of aromas: dark chocolate, walnut, the spine of an old book and maple syrup syphoned straight from the tree beneath dried, crunching leaves. The first sip feels as though you’re drinking satin, as all of the aromas morph into flavors slinking around the tongue. While it’s raisiny and rich, it’s far from cloying, and the finish is seemingly endless. A taste of Australian wine history.”

Christina Pickard, Wine Enthusiast
February 2019

99 pts “The dark mahogany and olive rim to the hue turns out to be a sure sign of a wine that is as magnificently complex as it ever was. It’s absolutely certain the wine is being sold in tiny quantities to protect the quality of the solera. Its viscosity as it slowly pours from the neck of the bottle is yet another sign. The explosive impact of the first taste is otherworldly as dark spices, tea, butterscotch and vibrant, mouthwatering acidity carries all the aromas and flavors that have gone before to a long, lingering finish and aftertaste. 375ml.”

James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion
2019



99 pts “Dark mahogany; the impact of the wine in the mouth is as extraordinary as that of the Rare Muscat; a micro-sip floods the senses as they go into overdrive trying to capture the myriad of interlocking flavors. The everlasting finish and aftertaste is the key to understanding this wine: it is not just the 5% of so of the oldest component (say 90 years), but the 5% of the most youthful (say 5-6 years) that, by the skill worthy of Michelangelo, has given the wine the vibrant freshness drawing you back again and again, but without diminishing its complexity. 375ml.”

**James Halliday, Australian Wine Companion
2018**

97 pts “Dark brown, almost black. Deep-pitched aromas of roasted coffee, cola, caramelized nuts, woodsmoke, toffee and burnt orange. Incredibly deep and impressively concentrated, offering sweet, palate-staining date cake, raisin, maple syrup, coffee and candied pecan flavors and a strong suggestion of dark chocolate. The orange and coffee notes dominate an endless, supple, broad finish that features an intensely sweet touch of molasses.”

**Josh Reynolds, Vinous
October 2017**

95 pts “As old as the Rare Muscat (recommended above), this is powerfully concentrated but not as super dense. It keeps juicing up with flavors, layering plum pudding, complex mineral notes, smoke and the scent of old leather. The flavors seem to last for minutes after each sip, the complexity of the scent continually shifting shape even long after the liquid is gone.”

**Joshua Greene, Wine & Spirits Magazine
October 2017**

98 pts “This deep brown wine smells like a damp, mossy cave. Then add complex rancio notes, plus maple syrup and molasses. It’s full, round and harmonious, wonderfully rich yet without any sense of heaviness and long and bright on the finish.”

**Joe Czerwinski, Wine Enthusiast
October 2016**

96 pts “Dark amber with a bright orange rim. A heady, wildly complex bouquet evokes roasted coffee, mocha, peach pit, orange marmalade and gingerbread, with honey and toffee nuances building in the glass. Utterly stains the palate with deeply concentrated spicecake, coffee, orange zest and brown sugar flavors. At once weighty and graceful, showing remarkable vivacity for its density. Closes with outstanding and resonating pit fruit liqueur and candied orange notes. This refuses to let up. The most amazing thing is that, for me at least, there’s no sense of overt thickness or treacly sweetness.”

**Josh Reynolds, Vinous
March 2016**



99 pts/Top 100 Cellar Selections 2015 - #47 “This wine is dark brown in hue with a greenish-gold tint to its rim, providing clues to its advanced age. The aromas are nutty, with mossy notes of rancio filled out by sweet flavors of dried dates and figs. It’s full bodied and unctuous in texture, without being overblown or heavy on the palate. The intense finish lingers forever—or at least until you give in and take another sip.”

**Joe Czerwinski, Wine Enthusiast
March 2015**

99 pts/Best of Fortified Wines 2015 “Dark mahogany; the impact of the wine in the mouth is as extraordinary as that of the Rare Muscat; a micro-sip floods the senses as they go into overdrive trying to capture the myriad of interlocking flavors. The everlasting finish and aftertaste is the key to understanding this wine: it is not just the 5% of so of the oldest component (say 90 years), but the 5% of the most youthful (say 5-6 years) that, by the skill worthy of Michelangelo has given the wine the vibrant freshness drawing you back again and again, but without diminishing its complexity. 375ml.”

**James Halliday, Australian Wine Companion
2015**

95 pts “Heady ginger scents drive an arrow of acidity through this remarkably rich wine. It tastes of plumped prunes and rose petals, carried along on a silken texture, a gentle sensation that lasts for minutes after a sip. Complex and beautifully balanced, this reveals layers of time, scent memories from a century in the cellar.”

**Joshua Greene, Wine & Spirits
February 2015**

95 pts “Brown with an orange rim. Intensely perfumed aromas of molasses, orange marmalade, candied fig and pungent flowers communicate an impression of density. Lush and deep in the mouth, offering powerful pit fruit and sultana flavors with notes of caramel and toasted nuts. Spice and floral qualities dominate the finish, which features a smoky nuance and lingering spiciness. Serve this one by the thimbleful.”

**Josh Reynolds, Stephen Tanzer’s International Wine Cellar
July/August 2014**

95 pts “Smooth and unctuous, with coffee, saffras and licorice notes interlaced with chocolate, prune, hay and spice flavors, coming together harmoniously on the extra-long finish.”

**Harvey Steiman, Wine Spectator Insider
April 23, 2014**



96 pts “Deep amber, with a glimmer of orange. Spice- and floral-accented aromas of toffee apple, singed orange, ginger candy and quince paste, with a smoky overtone. Intensely sweet but sharply delineated, offering palate-staining pit and citrus fruit preserve flavors and a touch of turbinado sugar. Finishes with stupendous persistence, leaving candied citrus fruit and apricot nectar notes behind.”

**Josh Reynolds, Stephen Tanzer’s International Wine Cellar
July/August 2013**

98 pts “Deep, dark burnt umber, with an olive rim; exceedingly complex, and contains some very old material contributing to the rancio characters; the wine adheres to the sides of the glass as you swirl it, but, notwithstanding its concentration, the innumerable flavors come together on an exceedingly long, yet effortless, finish.”

**James Halliday, Australian Wine Companion
2013**

95 pts “Dark amber. Intense, floral-accented aromas of pit fruit nectar, orange zest, clove and nutmeg, with anise and marzipan notes building in the glass. Sappy, palate-staining and strikingly concentrated stone fruit and orange marmalade flavors are a bottomless pit of spice and sweetness, but there’s liveliness here as well. Finishes with superb energy and cling, with lingering notes of honey and gingerbread.”

**Josh Reynolds, Stephen Tanzer’s International Wine Cellar
July/August 2012**

95 pts “Polished, unctuous and complex, layering its spice and pepper character through flavors of dried apricot, tobacco and brown sugar. Has richness, depth and deftness.”

**Harvey Steiman, Wine Spectator Insider
March 2012**

97 pts “Pure power and grace, showing surprising restraint and poise; heavily toasted nuts, and the essence of old, yet fresh material; prunes, fresh oak and very clean fortifying spirit provide the springboard for an experience that stays for minutes; suggested to be enjoyed with food, but maybe best contemplated on its own.”

**James Halliday’s Australian Wine Companion
2012**

95 pts “Dark amber. Exotic aromas of candied orange, dried fig, spices and herbs, plus hints of honey and toffee. Sweet, tactile and strikingly dense, with spicy pit and citrus fruit and gingerbread flavors. Opulent and impressively concentrated but with unlikely vivacity on the endless, spice-accented finish.”

**Josh Reynolds, Stephen Tanzer’s International Wine Cellar
September/October 2011**



97 pts/Cellar Selection “Incredibly concentrated and intense, this dark coffee- colored wine coats the glass and the palate with waves of luxuriously sweet, raisiny flavors. Layers of complexity following the form of rancio, dried fig and molasses, with a citrusy edge providing life and freshness to the nearly endless finish.”

Joe Czerwinski, Wine Enthusiast
February 2011

96 pts “Deep brown. Brooding, imploded aromas of molasses, fruitcake, chestnut honey and smoky herbs. Then surprisingly lively on the palate, offering sweet toffee nut and pit fruit flavors that reach every corner of the palate. Spicy notes of orange zest and cherry add lift to an endless, clinging finish, which leaves sappy, sweet molasses and caramel notes behind. Parcel this out by the drop.”

Josh Reynolds, Stephen Tanzer’s International Wine Cellar
July/August 2010

98 pts “The NV Rosewood Vineyards Rare Muscadelle has a deep brown color with a hint of green in the rim. The nose has a complex, oxidative, almost oloroso character giving notes of roasted walnuts, dark chocolate, burnt coffee and toffee. The palate is so crisp in acidity that the unbelievable level of sweetness and viscosity is infinitely drinkable. Layer upon layer of spice and nut flavors develop into the very long finish.”

Lisa Perrotti-Brown, Robert Parker’s The Wine Advocate
June 30, 2010

94 pts “Smells exactly like sticky toffee pudding, with molasses, date and walnut flavors, hinting at espresso as the finish rolls on. Not as sweet as the cola color and thick texture would suggest, this has richness without extra weight. Drink now.”

Harvey Steiman, Wine Spectator Insider
February 2010

99 pts “As has been noted in Issues 168 and 173, they are the product of a solera system so there is total consistency from year to year. The lower end wines are spectacular values and the Rare bottlings approach perfection. They should not be missed.”

Jay Miller, Robert Parker’s The Wine Advocate
December 2009

95 pts “Green-edged brown. Smoky, pungent and wild, like a PX sherry made in a smokehouse. Deeply concentrated pit fruit and burnt orange flavors show a strong smoky character and are enlivened by exotic Asian spice notes. Thick, syrupy and extremely sweet, with strong finishing smoke and molasses qualities leavened by zesty spices and a bitter note of blood orange. I’d serve this singular wine on its own.”

Josh Reynolds, Stephen Tanzer’s International Wine Cellar
September/October 2009



99 pts “At the top level, the Rare Muscadelle (Tokay) boasts a deep amber color along with a rich, sumptuous nose of molasses, brown sugar, and a smorgasbord of spices and flavors, a whopping, unctuous texture, amazing concentration, and a powerful, heady finish. I have cellared half bottles of these fortifieds for over 15 years, and there has been no degradation of quality during that time.”

Robert Parker Wine Advocate
February 2009

100 pts “The Rare series has achieved perfection frequently in these pages. Happily nothing has changed. The Non-Vintage Rare Muscadelle is amber/brown approaching black. It offers an ethereal perfume of fig, graham cracker, coconut, caramel, and spice box. Thick, rich, and concentrated, it goes on and on in the finish. Chambers Rosewood Vineyards makes my short list of greatest fortified wine producers.”

Robert Parker Wine Advocate
October 2007

95 pts “A walk through a forest might give the same impression as this wine, extremely old, yet exceedingly fresh. The deep tawny color is almost vampiric, a little green around the edges, as if recently stolen from the crypt. Then the extraordinary complexity, from foresty scents of honey to woodsmoke and cured meats, lasts for minutes, hovering on each breath, treaclely and savory as a Malmsey from the 19th century. A beautiful rarity.”

Wine & Spirits Magazine
February 2006

99 pts “Boasts a deep amber color along with a rich sumptuous nose of molasses, brown sugar, and a smorgasbord of spices and flavors, a whopping unctuous texture, amazing concentration, and a powerful, heady finish.”

Robert Parker Wine Advocate
October 2004

94 pts “Medium brown, less green than the Grand Muscadelle. Currant, mocha, maple syrup and coffee on the nose. Lush, sweet and thick, with powerful leavening acidity just barely keeping the wine’s extreme sweetness from cloying. Distinctly liqueur-like, dense and thick.”

Stephen Tanzer’s International Wine Cellar
July/August 2004

100 pts “The Rare Muscadelle (Tokay) is a thick, unctuous, brown sugar-imbued bomb revealing notes of balsamic vinegar intermixed with a smorgasbord of heavenly delights including caramel, melted toffee, maple syrup, and Asian spices. It must be tasted to be believed.”

Robert Parker Wine Advocate
August 2003



98 pts “Steeped in licorice, spices and leather. Unctuous, definitely oily, sweet and breathtakingly concentrated, yet manages to finish lively and fresh. Incredible, nearly perfect.”

Stephen Tanzer’s International Wine Cellar
July/August 2003

100 pts “The four other offerings range from one degree of awesome to another. In the Rare Muscadelle and Rare Muscat, some of the solera dates back to the 1890s. These are all sweet, but their extraordinary concentration of flavor, explosive aromatic fireworks, and singular characteristics make them nearly impossible to describe accurately. Aromas of caramel, toffee, fig, molasses, maple syrup, and oranges macerated in cognac emerge from all four. These change quickly in the glass, providing an orgasmic smorgasbord of flavors. They are almost unbelievable in their richness and aromatic complexity. Life’s too short not to drink at least a few glasses of William Chambers’ fortified Muscats and Tokays.”

Robert Parker Wine Advocate
October 2002

100 pts “It is amazing how many sensational efforts emerge from this country. This luxurious offering possesses such extraordinary unctuousness, thickness, complexity, and richness that it must be tasted to be believed. It is not just a big, thick sugar ball, because it has sound underlying acidity as well as remarkable complexity and freshness. A spoonful or two is enough for most non-gluttons to appreciate the riveting heights this cuvee represents. The wine possesses notes of smoke, roasted nuts, coffee, brown sugar, maple syrup, prunes, honey, fruitcake, overripe orange/apricots, and remarkable spicy characters. This is a riveting example of a fortified dessert wine that I enthusiastically recommend...In summary, life is too short not to try this wine ... a true Australian treasure.”

Robert Parker Wine Advocate
June 2001