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Cabernet celebrations are under way

BY KIMBERLY LIFTON • FREE PRESS SPECIAL WRITER • OCTOBER 19, 2008

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California cabernet sauvignon is all the rage during red wine season. Rare releases are hard to nab and selling for up to \$4,000 (Screaming Eagle 1997 vintage) -- if you can find it. It's not uncommon to pay several hundred dollars for a 750-ml bottle of the good stuff.

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The rich, full-bodied cab boasts big style, structure and long-term aging potential. It's also the most expensive variety released from southern California's wine country.

"It's like liquid cashmere," says Brian Croze, Royal Oak Holiday Market's wine consultant. "The cab is a transitional grape from warm weather into cooler days and nights that gives a lush, decadent feeling in



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your mouth."

LURE OF THE VINES: Napa winemakers have become more adept over the years at harvesting and aging the cabernets in oak barrels. Among them are Detroit's Joe Antonini (former Kmart chairman) of Andretti Winery and Vineyards; Fred Fisher (grandson of the Fisher Body Corp. founder) of Fisher Winery and entrepreneur Tom Celani of Celani Family Vineyards.

TASTE OF LUXURY: Upscale restaurants, country clubs and wine shops have been offering sips of some of the best stuff harvested during tastings throughout metro Detroit. Celani's newest variety, a proprietary red variety named Tenacious, will be unveiled Oct. 29 at Andiamo Warren during a benefit for the Capuchin Soup Kitchen.

CAB FARE: Holiday Market carries a 9-liter bottle of Darioush cabernet for \$2,500. Celani's Ardore sells for \$200 to \$250 a bottle in local wine shops. Fisher's 1997 Coach Insignia can fetch upward of \$350. A 2001 bottle of Fisher Lamb was selling online for \$1,400. A 2000 Bryant Family Cab and 1996 Caymus Special Selection were listed at \$1,000. Need help selecting a California cab? Contact Croze at 248-541-1414 or visit your nearest wine shop.

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