

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

A bi-weekly report about the upcoming wines being released through LCBO's Vintages program.



OntarioWineReview: LCBO Holiday Gift Guide 2007 – Part 2

This is the second part of my holiday gift guide; the LCBO spread the wealth out over 2 viewings – and while the first batch had some nice stuff that tasted good for the discriminating palate on your list; this second crop is all about the packaging and the “giveaways” than what’s in the bottle.

Let's Give 'em Something to Wine About ...

We'll start the SWAG giveaway with Inniskillin's VQA wine tote gift set (#8623 - \$29.95) a neoprene bag with a bottle of '06 Pinot Noir and '06 Chardonnay. Not to be outdone Jackson-Triggs goes one better with their faux-leather insulated zip-up bag complete with stopper and embossed with the JT logo (#594002 - \$25.15) ... the wine inside: '04 Meritage and '06 Chardonnay – both, thankfully, VQA.

Out of province, we have the cellared in Canada XOXO Chocolate Fondue Set (#49528 - \$24.95) ... this one's all about the fondue set: four skewers, bowl and holder, candle for heat and the Belgian chocolate are all included – pair this with something interesting, like port, and keep the XO wine for marinade.

Thinking of taking your money out of country, like say Australia, you might think about picking up the Banrock Station Christmas Gift pack (#328880 - \$23.45) – the real winner in this one is the 2006 Unwooded Chardonnay (probably one of my all-time favourite whites), there is also a bottle of '06 Cabernet Sauvignon, but the real winner in this pack is the Chard, you'll be remembered for introducing your giftee to it. Sticking with Australia, there's the Jacob's Creek Mixed triple pack (#49718 - \$34.95), which any Aussie wine fan on your list would be thrilled to receive. A bottle of 2005 Shiraz / Cabernet, 2004 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon and 2006 Chardonnay; the reds are the stars of this show here. Finally from Oz, the Wyndham Estate Duo Pack (#49692 - \$35.95) has the right idea, stick with what Aussies do best: Bin 555 2004 Shiraz and 2003 Shaw Reserve Shiraz.

Just in it for the kitsch? Kittling Ridge delivers. Their white Zinfandel/Vidal blend comes loaded in a cool single bottle tote bag, complete with corkscrew – great for picnics and bike rides (#699173 - \$17.95) - the bag is anyway; while their Chardonnay/Vidal is packed up with a wine chiller (#6775 - \$19.95). You're paying for the extras here because these wines certainly aren't worth that much on their own.

For My Brother, the Beer Drinker ...

I bring wine over every time I'm invited over to my brother's house, and each time my brother looks at the bottle, gives me that “hmm”-face, then goes downstairs and gets a beer – thank goodness his wife has taste, in wine anyway, so these gifts are for him (at least dedicated with him in mind).

The Corona Extra Gift Pack (#579300 - \$10.95), a good deal for Corona lovers because the glasses would cost that much just on their own. Stella's home pouring kit (#50260 - \$24.95) gives you two Stella Artois', two glasses, coasters, opener and other Stella-phanalia in a metal suitcase presentation. Big Rock slips you a holiday gift pack (#676502 - \$14.95) giving you two thin beer glasses and 4 beer: two Grasshopper wheats and two English brown ales. Sweet.

Those looking to ring in the new year with a beer might want to haul out the Heineken decorative Magnum (#685636 - \$14.95) – now that's festive.

Other Gimmicks and Gimmes ...

John Daniel's (who-ah), you know him as Jack, gives you dice and recipe/playing cards along with his traditional no.7 in a 375ml bottle (#502070 - \$19.95).

Bacardi wants you to decant your 8-year-old rum (750ml) in their stylish decanter (#2741 - \$39.95).

I once had a friend who would swear Tequila Rose was the best drink on the planet ... here they offer their

Strawberry Cream with two nifty shot-glasses with black-spotted based (#3236 - \$29.95).

Bailey's lovers will like the new flavours: Caramel and Mint in their very own Bailey's glass (\$33.95 – caramel #49437 / mint #49445).

Feeling lazy about spiking the eggnog this year, then pick up the tasty egg noggy cinnamony libation: Phillips Original Holiday Nog (#49239 - \$17.95).

Finally, Voyant Chai Cream Liqueur gift pack (#49502 - \$32.95) comes with an enormous mug and recipe book ... lovers of chai flavouring should be all over this one.

The Real Gift ...

I go back to my first gift release to give another plug for the Polish Cherry Port-style wine (Nalewka Babuni #589333 – now \$15.55 – up from \$13.60 ... too much good press) still a steal at that price; you should be stocking up for yourself, as well as for others ... and if you run out of ideas or time, give them a bottle of that cherry stuff you're hoarding ... they'll love you for it, and it give you a reason to go over for a visit.

About OntarioWineReview: a website devoted to the love, enjoyment and promotion of Ontario's wines, wineries and lots more wine related issues – visit www.ontariowinereview.com to sign up for the free bi-weekly newsletter and feel free to browse around a little while you're there.



What can the Grape Guy do for you ... Michael Pinkus (Grape Guy) provides a variety of wine related services that you might be interested in taking advantage of: he gives lectures, leads seminars, conducts tastings, sets up tours; consults, selects and judges. He also gives interviews, broadcasts, podcasts and writes. [Contact the Grape Guy if you require any of these services or have any questions.](#)



Psst, Pass It On ... keep the good wine flowing. Pass this report onto to friends, family members, loved ones, or any other wine lover on your list of contacts.

To contact me with feedback, article ideas, comments, concerns or questions – email michael@ontariowinereview.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

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