

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday April 16, 2011

*I am using a 5-star rating system, which appears at the end of each review; here's the key to the stars:
5 = Outstanding ... 4.5 = Excellent ... 4 = Very Good ... 3.5 = Good ... 3 = Average*

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We got another two things to focus on in this release: Wines for Easter (Easter) and Wines from New Zealand (NZ) ... The wines that are part of the spotlight are labeled as such:

Argentina ...

Red -

Passion 2008 Reserve Malbec (\$14.95 - #0191775) – a crowd pleaser for sure, flavourful and at a good price; good wine to find out why people are talking about Malbec. (**½)

Urraca 2008 Malbec (\$19.95 - #0214379) – this is a more serious Malbec than above with spice cocoa, plum, fig, vanilla and slightly smoky. (****)

Australia ...

Red –

Josef Chromy 2009 Pinot Noir (\$27.95 - #0163022) – I really enjoy Tasmanian Pinot Noir, this one has raspberry and cherry fruit with spice and slightly woody nuances; the fruit really lingers on. (****) – **Easter**

Kilikanoon 2007 Covenant Shiraz (\$39.95 - #0674747) – always a winner, this fruit bomb keeps you coming back for more: plummy, jammy and flavourful. (****+)

Thorn-Clarke 2008 Shottfire Quartage (\$21.95 - #0024091) – I continue to love TC wines, love the spice, chocolate, pepper, plum and the other multitude of flavours. (****½)

Wolf Blass 2008 Gold Label Shiraz (\$27.95 - #0590273) – Wolf continues to deliver pleasure in the glass. (****+)

White -

Rolling 2009 Sauvignon Blanc / Semillon (\$14.95 - #0678821) – great flavours of melon, grass and citrus ... summer in a glass for a really good price. (****)

Canada ...

Rosé – (Ontario)

[*Tawse 2010 Sketches of Niagara Rosé*](#) – (\$14.95 - #0172643) - **Easter**

White – (Ontario)

[*Featherstone 2010 Black Sheep Riesling*](#) (\$16.95 - #0080234)

[*Malivoire 2009 Gewurztraminer*](#) (\$24.95 - #0542522) – **Easter**

Chile ...

Red -

Casas del Bosque 2009 Reserva Carmenere (\$13.95 - #0205872) – cherry and blueberry; this is Chile's answer to the Passion Malbec: a chance to learn about Carmenere. (**½)

Caliterra 2009 Tributo Carmenere (\$14.95 - #0056630) – a more serious Carmenere; fruit and smoky vanilla, blackberry, blueberry skin, lovely black cherry beginning with a spiced-peppered

finish. (**** +)

France ...

Red - (Bordeaux)

Chateau Chantemerle 2006 (\$21.95 - #0198986) – this is good value for a wine you will be drinking next Easter; spicy, coffee and leathery, should develop nicely over the next couple of years. (** ½+) - **Easter**

(Midi)

Domaine la Casenove 2006 Le Garrigue (\$17.95 - #0956888) – smoky, plummy, black cherry; good value red that could sit in your cellar another couple of years plus. (****)

(Rhône)

Cave de Rasteau 2009 La Domeliere Rasteau Cotes du Rhone Villages (\$15.00 - #0222927) – cherry and plum, simple yet supple. (** ½)

Perrin & Fils 2008 L'Andeol Rasteau (\$19.95 - #0976845) – floral and fruity, plum and fig, aromas lure you in, flavours keep you coming back. (**** ½)

White – (Alsace)

Pierre Sparr 2008 Reserve Gewurztraminer (\$17.95 - #0747600) – this is the wine that I believe Alsacians do so well, but you have to like the sweeter side of Gewurtz. (** ½+)

(Loire)

Andre & Edmond Figeat Les Chaumiennes Pouilly-Fume 2009 (\$21.95 - #0196659) – creamy grapefruit and grassy, not incredibly lively but worth checking out, acidity really carries the finish. (** ½)

Domaine Cordailat 2009 Reuilly (\$17.95 - #0202432) – pink grapefruit and lots of it. (** ½+)

(Midi)

Les Piliers 2009 Viognier (\$15.95 - #0669531) – tropical fruit driven nose with a citrus driven palate. (** ½)

Italy ...

Red - (Piedmont)

Ca'del Baio Asili Barbaresco 2007 (\$44.95 - #0213066) – smooth and elegant, fresh and sour cherry, spice, a little wood and with a touch of an herbal note. (****+)

(Umbria)

Falesco 2008 Vitiano (\$15.95 - #0950204) – cherry fruit with vanilla, spiced plum and pepper; nicely spiced raspberry finish. (** ½+) - **Easter**

(Veneto)

Allegrini 2006 La Grola (\$27.95 - #0476598) – spiced plum, red currant, cinnamon on the nose; the palate is less elegant and more down to business but still carries an impact. (** ½+)

White - (Veneto)

Dal Cero 2009 Pinot Grigio (\$13.95 - #0161661) – lemony with good acidity; a really good patio sipper for sure. (** ½+)

New Zealand ...

Red –

Amisfield 2008 Pinot Noir (\$44.95 - #0179754) – black cherry, earthy with some vanilla and plum flavours, full-bodied and enjoyable. (****+) – **NZ**

Ant Moore 2009 Pinot Noir (\$24.95 - #0220657) – black and sour cherry mix with good tannins and a nice mineral note; this is one Ant you want at the picnic. (** ½+) – **NZ**

Craggy Range 2009 Te Kahu Gimblett Gravels Vineyard (\$27.95 - #0163584) – nice Bordeaux style blend with sweet fruit, good acid backbone and some tannic bite. (** ½+) - **NZ**

Kim Crawford 2009 Merlot (\$19.95 - #0680967) – blackberry, black currant and mocha, good pleasant finish. (** ½+) – **NZ**

Lone Kauri 2009 Reserve Pinot Noir (\$16.95 - #0214858) – nice introductory New Zealand Pinot for those wanting to get acquainted with this country's red of choice. (** ½) - **NZ**

White -

Eradus 2009 Sauvignon Blanc (\$17.95 - #0225557) – very New Zealand in style which hits the mark: grassy, gooseberry, grapefruit and passion-fruit on the palate; long finish, very summer ready. (****) - **NZ**

Momo 2009 Sauvignon Blanc (\$18.95 - #0009167) – soft and supple with lots of tropical fruits, melon and pear along with gooseberry and flint; interesting, atypical, but nice. (*** ½+) - **NZ**

Portugal ...

Dessert -

Messias 2005 Late Bottled Vintage Port (\$16.95 - #0140863) – I continue my love affair with Messias and combine it with my on-going love affair with LBV Port ... raisin, dark chocolate and plum; good acidity here keeps the sweetness in check alongside the hints of spice keeps the fruit from overwhelming. Delightful. (****+)

Red -

Quinta da Ponte Pedrinha (\$15.95 - #0219188) – this one is simple really: take cherries and plums, add raspberry and fig, kick in some vanilla and voila, you have really tasty wine. (*** ½+)

South Africa ...

White –

Dornier Donatus White 2009 (\$18.95 - #0597278) – there is some real pleasantness in the glass worth a sip or two. (*** ½) - **Easter**

Spain ...

Red -

Vinas Elias Mora 2008 (\$18.95 - #0209650) – palate delivers chocolate and black cherry with hints of spice and something nice. (*** ½) - **Easter**

United States ...

Red – (California)

Cambria 2008 Julia's Vineyard Pinot Noir (\$29.95 - #0980482) – fat and fruity Pinot Noir with plum and cherry with a touch of vanilla and smoke. (*** ½+) – **Easter**

Caymus 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$69.95 - #0222877) – chocolate, plum, blackberry and sweet licorice, finish is long and persistent; delicious and decadent. (**** ½)

Ironstone 2009 Old Vine Zinfandel (\$16.95 - #0951889) – pour this one for your friends who think Zin is pink and watch their eyes bug out of their head. This should open a few minds about Zins other side. (*** ½+)

Kendall-Jackson 2008 Vintner's Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (\$21.95 - #0331603) – smooth supple with almost sweet, fruit of cherry throughout with hints of cocoa. (*** ½+)

Napa Ridge 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$19.95 - #0067934) – nose of sweet plum, vanilla and cherry, these move to the palate and replay on the tongue; summer BBQ red. (****)

Robert Mondavi 2006 Merlot (\$29.95 - #0953562) – smooth supple and black cherry, plum and vanilla, very tasty. (****)

Rodney Strong 2008 Knotty Vines Zinfandel (\$22.95 - #0363358) – cola, cherry nose with vanilla, plum, sweet flavours, nicely balanced and easy to enjoy. (****)

White - (California)

Blackstone 2007 Sonoma Reserve Chardonnay (\$22.95 - #0128926) – this has the goods, but what are these goods? Buttery caramel, baked apple, caramel apple ... yup that's it, really mouth-filling ... a real bruiser at 14.5%. (****)

Grape Guy Top 3 ... what I'll be lining up for on April 16, 2011:

Thorn-Clarke 2008 Shottfire Quartage (\$21.95 - #0024091) – Australia

Perrin & Fils 2008 L'Andeol Rasteau (\$19.95 - #0976845) – France

Messias 2005 Late Bottled Vintage Port (\$16.95 - #0140863) – Portugal

Happy Shopping.

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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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