

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday February 28, 2009

This week's release will take us to the South of France: Midi and Provence, where there are quite a few wines that should be of interest, at good prices ... so make sure you have a few dollars for these cellar additions. There is also a minor Sicilian release – some of these wines will make your palate an offer it can't refuse.

Southern France ...

There's only one Southern France white wine featured in this entire release, good thing it's worth a taste, *Laurent Miquel Nord Sud Viognier 2007* (\$17.95 - #0673236) a lovely melon, peach, citrus, pear and apple concoction in the mouth that has a nice mouthfeel and a medium-short finish.

From Midi comes the *Abbaye de Sylva Plana la Closeraie 2005* (\$19.95 - #0104737) with its nice cherry and blackberry flavours and a good seam of sweet oak. The *Camplazens 2006 Syrah* (\$14.95 – 0104752) has great smoked meat qualities with herbs and spices encrusting the meat, its fairly light bodied in the mouth with a bit of pepper and easy tannins. The *Cazes L'Excellence de Triniac 2005* (\$16.95 – 0103689) has one of those great sniff-all-day cherry nose, ripe with plum and chocolate, blackberry and cassis and some sweet red licorice with great tannins on the finish. *Domaines des Aires Hautes les Combelles 2005* (\$13.95 – 0701706) is cheap as chips and yet delivers a wines that boasts yummy fruit, cinnamon and vanilla; this is one you can enjoy now or in a few years to come. Two more from Midi, *Le Grand Penchant Rouge 2007* (\$17.95 - #0061267) has chocolate, cherry, plum, blackberry and cassis. While the *Terrasses de la Mouline Rouge 2007* (\$13.95 - #0103648) is spicy with nice black fruit and tannins ... an easy pairing with your favourite meat.

From Provence there is one wine of note, *Caves Saint-Pierre Preference Cotes-du-Rhone 2007* (\$14.95 – 0103622) a nice spice and herb quality, sweet black fruit with touches of licorice and sweet oak.

Sicily ...

We start our time in Sicily with this *Ajello Majus Grillo/Catarratto 2007* (\$16.95 - #0670844), it's crisp and refreshing with citrus, melon and peach. Or you can go for the *Cusumano 2007 Insolia* (\$14.95 - #0606350) with its great pineapple notes on the palate – I found the nose not as forthcoming, but as we all know it's what we taste that matters most. My one red selection is also by *Ajello, Majus Nero D'Avola 2006* (\$16.95 - #0100545), herbs and black fruit on the nose, the palate had good flavours and it's just a whole lotta fun.

Argentina – Red ...

Vina Cobos Felino Malbec 2007 (\$19.95 – 0118067) – very nice black cherry, plum, chocolate and lots of fruit.

Australia – Red ...

Elderton 2006 Friends Vineyard Series Cabernet Sauvignon (\$18.95 - #0595389) – sweet nose, sweet fruit and a good peppery finish.

Elderton 2006 Friends Vineyard Series Shiraz (\$18.95 - #0660480) – here's one to share with – well, just read the label to figure out that one: vanilla, blackberries and a bit of spice ... very nice ... should makes friends all its own even if you don't buy it.

Kilikanoon 2006 Covenant Shiraz (\$49.95 - #0674747) – inky black colour, sweet blackberries and spice on the finish, which lingers for a good long while.

Mitolo 2007 Jester Cabernet Sauvignon (\$22.95 - #0043224) – lovely sweet oak, sweet fruit, white pepper, milk chocolate and tasty; here there's a big dollop of jamminess upfront.

Canada – Red ...

(British Columbia)

Osoyoos-Larose 2005 Le Grand Vin (\$44.95 - #0626325) – floral, blackberry, cassis, vanilla, cedar and a whole lot more ... needs time to open up fully, say 3-4 years, and when it does it's going to be gorgeous.

Chile - Red ...

Gracia de Chile 2007 Reserva Superiore Pinot Noir (\$16.95 - #0090027) – a sour cherry nose that follows on the palate along with ripe tannins and woody-earthy notes.

Chile - White ...

Casa Lapostolle 2007 Chardonnay (\$15.95 - #0396986) – lots of vanilla and white tree fruits (apples, pears, etc.), cellaring for 2-3 years could prove rewarding.

Leyda 2006 Single Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc (\$18.95 - #0099309) – there's lovely grapefruit all over this one, with a fair bit of minerality also. Good acid and a lemon-melon rind finish makes this one very enjoyable.

Italy - Red ...

(Tuscany)

Il Borro Rosso 2005 (\$59.95 - #0661769) – this one's big with spicy black fruit and herbs – needs time to sit to come into it's own ... it's close but I'd still give it two years before I even thought about drinking it.

Rocco Delle Macie Chianti Reserva 2005 (\$15.00 - #0111641) – very red berry with a variety of cherries dominating, succulent in the mouth with plenty of tannin bite – very nice.

Italy – Sparkling ...

Villa Sandi Cuvee Prosecco di Valdobbiadene (\$18.95 - #0738542) – a light, crisp bubbly with apple and lemon that's very pleasant with just a bit of yeastiness on the palate.

Italy – White ...

(Marche)

Marchetti Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico 2007 (\$15.95 - #0104869) – not everyone likes a Verdicchio but this one has everything you should: tropical, melon, and orange all make a refreshing sipper for spring/summer.

New Zealand – Red ...

Sileni Cellar Selection 2006 Pinot Noir (\$15.00 - #0694901) – good price for a decent Pinot Noir, light cherry and cranberry greet the nose, same on the palate, along with sour cherry and a touch of vanilla.

Portugal – Red ...

Quinta do Infantado Red 2006 (\$23.95 - #0095158) – this one smells and looks like Port in the glass: cherry, plum, chocolate, cassis with a mixture of red and black fruit throughout. The taste does not disappoint. I've tried their Port and loved it, now I can recommend their table wine with the same fervor.

USA ... Red ...

(California)

Bridlewood 2004 Reserve Syrah (\$27.95 - #0090084) – funny wine with a very inviting nose full of red fruit; the palate is just so-so, but then on the finish it does a complete 180 and does the hokey-pokey (it turns itself around) with sweet spice, pepper and lovely fruit that lingers a long time on

the tongue.

Paul Dolan Vineyards 2006 Zinfandel (\$21.95 - #0046342) – a light weight Zin, or at least that's the impression it gives, nice vanilla, cola and cherry, along with touches of plum. I said light weight, but that's because the 14.5% is well integrated so as not to be noticeable.

Seghesio 2006 Home Ranch Zinfandel (\$46.95 - #0070391) – an absolute beauty with plum, cherry, chocolate, white pepper, red berries and a sweet mid-palate before it turns dry on the finish – a whopping 15.7% alcohol, but good intensity and integration makes the booze a background issue, that is, until it hits you tomorrow morning.

Sherries and Port ...

They can't call it Port anymore, because true Port can only come from Portugal – so this *Angove's 2005 Premium Vintage Fortified Shiraz* (\$18.95 - #0141697) can only be called a "fortified wine", but it tastes like really good Port. Spicy, plummy, sweet cherries – for drinking now or lying down in the cellar for, say, 30-years.

Grape Guy Top 3 ... what I'll be lining up for on February 28, 2009:

Chateau de Fontenelles Cuvee Notre Dame 2005 (\$16.95 – 0103689) - France
Angove's 2005 Premium Vintage Fortified Shiraz (\$18.95 - #0141697) - Australia
Quinta do Infantado Red 2006 (\$23.95 - #0095158)– Portugal

Happy Shopping.

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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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