

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday January 23, 2010

I have gone to a stars rating system which appears at the end of each review; here's the key to those stars:

5 = Outstanding ... 4.5 = Excellent ... 4 = Very Good ... 3.5 = Good ... 3 = Average

I'm always looking for good value and I'm not afraid to give or take away a half mark for it – I'll let you know when I've done so.

Robbie Burns and Argentina share the spotlight in this release at the LCBO. Not being a Scotch drinker, or fan, I will leave those picks to ones who are more expert in that field than I ... on the other hand, there are quite a few wines from Argentina you might want to put your paws on, as well as other wine from various parts of the globe.

Wines from Argentina of Note ...

Argentina is most known these days for re-introducing us to Malbec (a red grape), but they are making good wines from all the grapes you know and some you might not. Take for example this *Alamos 2008 Torrentes* (\$13.95 - #0081539) it is Argentina's white calling card. This version is dry and rather tasty, if you haven't tried *Torrentes* this might be a good inexpensive place to start (**½). On the other hand, Chardonnay, a very popular grape worldwide, does well in Argentina too. *Santa Julia 2008 Reserva Chardonnay* (\$13.95 - #0932368) is toasty with vanilla notes, nice tropical fruit, some spice and a nice acidic bite on the palate (****½), it also offers up good value. Then there is *Vina Cobos 2009 Felino Chardonnay* (\$19.95 - #0119099) from American winemaker Paul Hobbs. Lovely tropical vanilla smells, lots of lovely fresh fruit flavours like juicy kiwi, pineapple and pears. Turning our attention to the darker wines of this release, about half-a-dozen reds make the cut, like the *Kaiken 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon* (\$14.95 - #01432448) with its rich blackberry, mocha tones and sweet coffee flavours, very juicy, very delicious (****). If you like that then you might like to try the Vintages Essential *Kaiken 2008 Malbec* (\$14.95 - #0058339), a new and very welcome addition to the Essentials collection. This has blackberry, cassis and spice, juicy palate with a long tasty finish (****½). Finally, from *Kaiken*, is the *Ultra Malbec 2007* (\$19.95 - #0050849) this is the one that started my love affair with the *Kaiken* label (when it first showed up in Vintages), I just find the wines offer such value for their quality, this one is blackberry, cassis and mocha with a chocolate red fruit finish (****½). I also have a soft spot in my heart for the *Vina Cobos* line (as I showed above), there's this *Felino Cabernet Sauvignon 2008* (\$19.95 - #0132365), with its nice red fruit, juicy palate and pepper on the finish (****½); if you like their Cab you'll also enjoy their *Malbec 2008* (\$19.95 - #0118067) with its mocha and black fruit and spicy yet smooth finish, tasty (****). Finally, from the folks that brought you *FuZion* comes the *Zuccardi Q Tempranillo 2006* (\$18.95 - #0973503), the nose is full of sweet fruit while the palate is loaded with dry black fruit, quite a delicious wine full of mouth filling flavour (****).

Australia – Red ...

Gemtree Vineyards 2008 Tadpole Shiraz (\$16.95 - #0142034) – raspberry fruit flavours and aromas, very juicy and easy drinking, put simply, this is a lovely Shiaz. (****)

Australia – White ...

Yalumba 2008 Y Series Pinot Gris (\$15.95 - #0138586) – you don't see a lot of Gris from Oz, this one is lovely and fresh, peach and pear with a nice acid seam, very refreshing. (****)

Canada – Red ...

(Ontario)

[Jackson-Triggs 2007 Delaine Vineyard Cabernet-Merlot](#) (\$22.95 - #0989269)
[Le Clos Jordanne 2007 La Petite Colline Vineyard Pinot Noir](#) (\$40.00 - #0033944)

Chile – Red ...

Santa Rita 2007 Medalla Real Gran Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon (\$19.95 - #0275594) – minty nose which follows to the palate with juicy fruit and lovely flavours, there is a little heat on the palate from the alcohol, it should resolve itself with time. (****)

France – Red ...

(Bordeaux)

The Bordeauxs from this release were unavailable for tasting.

(Midi)

Chateau Dona Baissas Cuvee per Dona Cotes du Roussillon-Villages 2007 (\$15.95 - #0151365) – nice red and black fruit with fig, plums and spice; smooth and yummy. (****)

France – White ...

(Alsace)

Pierre Sparr 2008 Reserve Gewurztraminer (\$17.95 - #0747600) – the first thing I noticed about this wine was the nice finish; then there was the nose and taste that I went back for. Rose petal and dry apple, it follows in the mouth with that aforementioned really long finish. (****)

Germany – White ...

Balbach Estate 2008 Riesling Kabinett (\$16.95 - #0148825) – peach, pear and apple with a little touch of sweetness and a good finish. (****)

Greece – White ...

Nasiakos Mantinia 2008 (\$15.95 - #0143032) – Mantinia is the region, Moschofilero is the grape, this white wine has a lovely pear aroma that mixes in with other white fruits; the palate is reminiscent of juicy pineapple and yet is quite dry. (****)

Italy – Red ...

(Abruzzo)

Umani Ronchi Montipagano Montepulciano D'Abruzzo 2007 (\$11.95 - #01344585) – dark fruit, plum, spice and slightly woody, big in the mouth, excellent value. (****)

(Puglia)

Apollonio 2001 Valle Cupa (\$19.95 - #0084046) – a blend of Negromaro and Primitivo that really delivers: mocha, vanilla, dried fruits like figs, cherries and plums, lovely big taste, nice wine for being 8+ years old. (****½)

Vigne & Vini Zinfandel Primitivo del Salento 2006 (\$14.95 - #0136002) – if you love Zin this is the wine you should be buying, and it's a great price to boot. Floral, blackberry, a bit grapy with cherry and plum there's also a lovely chocolate cherry finish; this one tastes exactly like a Zinfandel from California. (****½)

(Veneto)

Masi Brolo di Campofiorin 2006 (\$24.95 - #0976092) – sweet plum and cherry fruit, nose is closed yet spicy; palate is a little more open, but this one is going to need time to come around fully, Vintages says 'drink now' but I think it needs another 2 years for full expression. (****)

Italy – White ...

(Piedmont)

Sergio Cerrano Brich Menu Moscato D'Asti 2008 (\$13.95 - #0159822) – sweet pineapple, ginger ale, tropical and tasty; simple yet delicious. (****)

(Puglia)

Surani 2008 Pietrariccia (\$16.95 - #0159582) - nose of hay and apples; pineapple, pear flavours with nice acidity. (****)

Portugal – Red ...

Quinta do Infantado Red 2007 (\$23.95 - #0095158) – lovers of Infantado's Port this is your table

wine. Deep red berry nose with milk chocolate woven in; the palate is mocha-chocolate cherry, similar to their Ruby Port, just drier; smooth, lovely and oh so tasty. (****)
San Miguel das Missoes Reserva 2008 (\$15.95 - #0155796) – nice blackberry and cherry with a touch of herbs, chocolate and black cherry round out the flavours. (****½)

Slovenia – White ...

Ptujaska Klet Pullus Yellow Muscat 2008 (\$14.95 - #0108480) – not often we go to the Eastern Block for a wine but this one is rather tasty. Sweet fruit, ginger ale notes, pear and melon, drier than the nose lets on but still has an element of sweetness; worth trying at this price. (****)

Spain – Red ...

Piedras de San Pedro Loculto Crianza 2005 (\$18.95 - #0147926) – nicely black fruited, almost sweet, with lovely spice on the finish. (****)

United States – Red ...

(California)

Blackstone 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$15.95 - #0714816) – juicy blackberry, easy on the palate, ready to drink and quite tasty. (****)

Jeriko Estate 2006 San Francisco Wine Press Syrah (\$17.95 - #0135467) – there's some elegance and finesse in the glass with this one, hints of red fruit, white pepper, along with a juicy meaty quality. (****½)

Siduri 2008 Pinot Noir (\$39.95 - #0159293) – red fruit: cherry, raspberry and quite a bit of spice, really nice flavour. (****)

The Show 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$17.95 - #0140715) – I have reviewed this wine for my "What I'm Drinking Tonight" blog, [so check out the review here](#). (****½)

United States – White ...

(California)

Fog Head Highlands 2008 Reserve Chardonnay (\$19.95 - #0158568) – nice fruit and acid mix with a bit of spiciness, mac apple leads the way to a lemon-lime finish. (****)

Grape Guy Top 3 ... what I'll be lining up for on January 23, 2010:

Vina Cobos 2009 Felino Chardonnay (\$19.95 - #0119099) – Argentina

Vina Cobos 2008 Felino Cabernet Sauvignon (\$19.95 - #0132365) – Argentina

Apollonio 2001 Valle Cupa (\$19.95 - #0084046) – Italy

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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