

## OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



### OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday July 4, 2009

I guess I owe some of you an apology. I have been away and missed the June releases and tastings. Some of you were nice enough to email me and ask, "where in tar-nation did I disappear to". Well, I got engaged and spent some time with my bride to be – that's the best excuse I can give you. But I'm back and ready to give you the lowdown on the wines coming to the LCBO this July 4 – that is if they are open for business. Rumour has it that the LCBO will be open, but locations and hours of operation might be a bit sporadic.

This release is all about Summer Entertaining and there's also a wee release of a few Oregon wines – a state we here very little from but I know they are making some very good, and well-respected wines. So get that credit card ready, we're off to do some shopping.

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

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

*I'm always looking for good values 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.*

#### Summer Entertaining ...

We'll start this one off with one of my summertime favourites, a nice light Moscato: *Ricossa 2008 Moscato D'Asti* (\$14.95 - #072272). Now Moscato is not exciting or sexy, and it certainly won't light the world on fire. But it is a perfect summer beverage with its mix of sweet and bubbly on the tongue and its grapey, peachy, pineapple and other tropical flavours. Its light, easy and low alcohol and sometimes takes on a slightly ginger ale-like flavour. This one hits all the high notes and at a very affordable price. It's a drink all day kinda wine with none of the hangover (\*\*\*\*½). It's nice to see an Ontario wine making the scene for Summer Entertaining, and it's the [Mike Weir Estate Winery 2007 Cabernet Merlot](#) (\$18.95 - #0000109) – must be some kind of golfing tie-in with summer. Those who dig on the plummy, cherry aspect of wine will love *Corte Giara 2007 Ripasso Valpolicella* (\$17.95 - #0083964) – smooth cherry flavours, hints of chocolate, nothing complex here just a great summer backyard drinking red (\*\*\*\*). Those looking for something a little heftier to take into the backyard should look no further than the *Lan 2004 Reserva* (\$23.95 - #0042929) with its smoky black fruit and smooth licorice notes on the tongue, tannins are also present, but opening early will smooth those out (\*\*\*\*). Finally, what's summer without a couple of pink pleasers – that's where the [Featherstone Estate 2008 Rosé](#) and the [Flat Rock Cellars 2008 Pinot Noir Rosé](#) comes into play.

#### The Wines of Oregon ...

Oregon is making a name for itself with Pinot Noir, but I'm going to start my look at Oregon off with another kinda Pinot, Gris. This *Firesteed 2007 Pinot Gris* (\$19.95 - #0568071) is quite delectable; nice light fruit on the nose with lemon, lime and apple, the palate delivers definite mac apple taste and some nice pear nuances. The best part is the finish, which lingers a good long time (\*\*\*\*½). Now it's on to what has made Oregon famous, Noir. Of the three on offer two get my thumbs up of approval. *Andrew Rich 2006 Cuvee B Pinot Noir* (\$33.95 - #0127043), a delicious combination of red berries, earthiness and minerality, nice dry tannins on the finish (\*\*\*\*). But the one I gave even higher marks to is the *Maysara Jamsheed 2006 Pinot Noir* (\$36.95 - #0127035), this Pinot Noir is sweet and jammy (as the name indicates) with a cherry-raspberry nose; but the palate delivers more of what you expect from this varietal, away goes the jammy leaving behind a

friendly, easy going mouth feel. Big berries, nice minerality all play down the earthy nature of Pinot and brings out the fruit – plus there's a memorable long dry finish here (\*\*\*\*½).

**Ontario ...** full reviews can be found on my website ([www.ontariowinereview.com](http://www.ontariowinereview.com))

Dessert ... [Cave Spring 2006 Indian Summer Riesling](#) (\$24.95 - #0415901)

White ... [Cave Spring 2007 CSV Riesling](#) (\$29.95 - #0566026)

#### **Australia – Red ...**

*Chateau Reynella 2005 Basket Pressed Shiraz* (\$34.95 - #0510628) – big, black and spicy with peppery flavours that also bring plum and chocolate along for the ride. (\*\*\*\*½)

#### **France – Red ...**

**(Bordeaux)**

*Chateau Clarke 2005* (\$39.00 - #0503904) – the nose is black fruit, mocha and coffee, while the palate delivers much of the same with even bigger black fruit flavours and tannins. (\*\*\*\*)

#### **France – White ...**

**(Alsace)**

*Lucien Albrecht 2007 Reserve Gewurztraminer* (\$21.95 - #0926931) – Gewurtz lovers will dig on the rosy floral nose of this wine giving them faith in what is to come in the mouth: spicy orange peel and roses on the plate with rose-water and honey on the finish. (\*\*\*\*)

#### **Italy – Red ...**

**(Tuscany)**

*Querciabella 2006 Chianti Classico* (\$34.95 - #0728816) – lots of earthy blackberry here on the nose with a good finish in the mouth – big tannins might seem to want to overpower, but there's good fruit that balances nicely with the spice for full enjoyment. (\*\*\*\*)

*Toscolo 2006 Chianti Classico* (\$19.95 - #0019521) – it's not just the taste and smell that's appealing here, it's also the price. Herbs and cherries, good tannins, and dried black fruit on the tongue, very nice. (\*\*\*\*)

#### **Italy - Red ...**

**(Veneto)**

*Le Tobele 2005 Amarone Delle Valpolicella* (\$49.95 - #0106898) – big plum and red fruit on the nose, chocolate and black fruit on the palate - this is a great combination of aromas and flavours. This wine has nice structure, good acidity and smooth, approachable tannins. (\*\*\*\*)

#### **New Zealand – White ...**

*Sileni Cellar Selection 2008 Sauvignon Blanc* (\$16.95 - #0662882) – with its great gooseberry and grapefruit nose and pink grapefruit cocktail palate this is a tasty Savvy B that's well priced for summer – should have been part of the entertaining feature. (\*\*\*\*)

#### **Romania – Dessert ...**

*Cotnari Tamaioasa Romaneasca 2007* (\$13.95 - #0651653) – Here's a nice sweetie from a country you don't usually associate with wine making. Nice sweet apple and pear flavours. Pear aficionados will pick up Boscs. (\*\*\*\*½)

#### **Spain – Red ...**

*Celeste 2005 Crianza* (\$19.95 - #0672691) – trust on good value reds to come from Spain, and this is no exception. Nice black fruit and a touch of herbs on the nose. This follows through on the palate with dark chocolate and cinnamon. A nice pleasant sipper that has the longevity to sit for a few years. (\*\*\*\*½)

*Pares Balta Mas Petit Garnatxa/Cabernet 2006* (\$14.95 - #0114264) – I shouldn't tell you this product is organic, because you might shy away from it, but don't let that moniker change your opinion about this good value wine. Dried cherries, chocolate and some herbs ... I was surprised to find milk chocolate on the mid-palate, pleasantly surprised. (\*\*\*\*)

## United States – Red and Rosé...

(California)

*Gallo Family Frei Ranch Vineyard 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon* (\$34.95 - #0555607) – This one's got black fruit and chocolate, ripe cherries and other berries with smoothness and sweet fruit to spare on the finish. (\*\*\*\*½)

*Loredon Syrah Rosé 2008* (\$12.95 - #0120246) – recommendable for the price alone, this rosé offers up candied berries and red Jolly Rancher candies with a watermelon rind finish. (\*\*\*\*)

## Grape Guy Top 3 ... what I'll be lining up for on July 4, 2009:

*Ricossa 2008 Moscato D'Asti* (\$14.95 - #072272) – Italy

*Celeste 2005 Crianza* (\$19.95 - #0672691) - Spain

*Maysara Jamsheed 2006 Pinot Noir* (\$36.95 - #0127035) – United States

Happy Shopping.

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**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](http://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](mailto:michael@ontariowinereview.com). I look forward to hearing from you!

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