

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday March 14, 2009

With St. Patrick's Day approaching the LCBO parades out the Whiskeys. In all the years I've enjoyed alcoholic beverages I have never been fond of whiskey – and this year is no exception ... so if you're looking for whiskey reviews best go elsewhere, I'm not your guy. Check back next year, maybe I'll have acquired the taste by then, not likely but you never know.

The other focus is Ontario whites ... I'm glad to see the LCBO embracing their province, I just wish they would do it more often, and learn to stock shelves properly, but that's a different topic for another day. Oh, and there is a tiny Kosher release, I have to admit I make your choice even tinier – Kosher wines have never been known for their value and good taste - at the same time is almost unheard of.

Full Ontario reviews can be found on my website (www.ontariowinereview.com) - the rest can be found right here – starting with the focuses: Ontario, Kosher and then the rest of the world in alphabetical order.

You'll notice I have gone to a stars rating system at the end of each review. Top score for an outstanding wine is 5-stars, followed by excellent (4.5), very good (4), good (3.5) and average (3). As always I am looking for good values and I'm not afraid to give or take away a half mark for it.

Ontario Whites ...

[Cave Spring 2007 Estate Riesling](#) (\$17.95 - #0286377) - [Weekly Wine Note 03/10/09](#)

[Colio 2006 CEV Sauvignon Blanc](#) (\$15.95 - #0500462)

[Daniel Lenko 2006 Unoaked Chardonnay](#) (\$19.95 - #0091173)

[Featherstone 2007 Old Vines Riesling](#) (\$18.95 - #0064584)

[Fielding Estate 2006 Dry Riesling](#) (\$16.00 - #0090993)

[Hillebrand 2007 Trius White](#) (\$18.95 - #0054957)

Jackson-Triggs 2007 Proprietors' Grand Reserve White Meritage (\$24.95 - #0109371) – [Weekly Wine Note 03/17/2009](#)

[Kacaba Vineyards 2006 Horizon Ridge Sur Lie Chardonnay](#) (\$15.95 – 0116392)

[Malivoire 2006 Chardonnay](#) (\$22.00 - #0573147)

Kosher ...

Hold onto your kippas folks I might have found your Passover wine. Those looking to keep costs low and still have a decent glass of the Kosher stuff might want to look into the *Beckett's Flat* range of Kosher wines called Five Stones. The *2008 Sauvignon Blanc / Semillon* (\$18.95 - #0108001) has a crisp start and a full finish with lime, grapefruit and plenty of other citrus notes. Smooth and refreshing (***/2). Those looking for something red will want to try the *2007 Cabernet/Shiraz* (\$19.95 - #0058693) with blackberry and sweet spices (***/2). Both wines are under twenty-bucks and will make sure Elijah stops by for a visit, cause he too likes the good dry stuff over the sweet Mad Dog (Manechewitz).

Two Israeli reds that find the Kosher mark are also being released – but don't expect to pay a value price for them: *Ella Valley Vineyards Merlot 2004* (\$43.95 - #0058891), with plum, blackberries, spice, herbs, chocolate and a nice fruit and spice finish; despite it's price it still rates 4-and-a-half stars. While the *Yarden 2004 Pinot Noir* (\$36.95 - #0060756) has big drying tannins

with an earthy, strawberry/raspberry component – heavy on the dirt. (****)

Argentina – Red ...

Caitec 2006 Pinot Noir (\$15.95 - #0109025) – soft palate with strawberry, black cherry, spice and some cinnamon. (***1/2)

Australia – Red ...

Elderton Ode to Lorraine 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon/Shiraz/Merlot (\$37.95 - #0976423) – plum, chocolate, spice, herbs, cherry, strawberry with a good plum-cinnamon finish. (****1/2)

Grant Burge 2006 Cameron Vale Cabernet Sauvignon (\$20.95 - #0937276) – elegant and easy drinking, lots of white pepper and blackberry. (****)

Wakefield 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$15.95 - #0744235) – if something can smell smooth this one does with a very pleasant blackberry smell and taste, good value. (****)

Water Wheel 2006 Shiraz (\$18.95 - #0700815) – here's another well priced wine; good fruit (black), good pepper (white and black) with a plum back up. (****)

Australia – White ...

Richard Hamilton 2008 Almond Grove Chardonnay (\$16.95 - #0741009) – slight hint of almond on the palate with vanilla, butter, toffee/butterscotch – juicy tree fruit and pineapple/tropical notes ... all at an excellent price. (****1/2)

Chile - Red ...

Mayu Reserva Carmenere 2005 (\$17.95 - #0090035) – minty black fruit nose; smooth on the palate with blackberries, plum and hints of herbs. (****)

Tricyclo 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot/Cabernet Franc (\$15.95 - #0027474) – pleasant and nice, cherries, tobacco, chocolate with a plethora of other red berries and a touch of herbs. (****1/2)

Chile - White ...

Kankura Fleurs Blanches Chardonnay 2007 (\$12.95 - #0096297) – there's a hint of sweetness on this Chardonnay, and it seems to mimic Sauvignon Blanc in the flavour with lots of citrus in the back with apple up front. (***1/2)

France – Red ...

(Loire)

Laurent Mabileau St-Nicolas-de-Bourgeil 2006 (\$15.95 - #0061192) – tasty, with tobacco and raspberry dominating; good cedar with herbs and spice. (****)

(Rhône)

Castel Oualou Cotes du Rhône 2007 (\$13.95 - #0104893) cherry aromas and flavours, lots of plum and very, very good value. (****1/2)

Domaine de la Pequelette Cuvee Emile 2005 (\$17.95 - #0104950) – licorice, plum and blackberry on the nose; chocolate on the palate with an amazing smoothness. (****)

(Southwest)

Chateau St Didier Parnac Prestige 2005 (\$16.95 - #0303529) – another Cahors biggie here; spicy, black fruit, licorice, leather and spicy. Good price for a 10 year cellar dweller. (****1/2)

France – Sparkling ...

(Champagne)

G.H. Martel & Co. Prestige Brut Champagne (\$47.95 - #0087485) – pleasant and toasty with apple-y yeasty notes; there's even a touch of sweetness on the finish. (****)

(Burgundy)

Bailly Lapierre Cremant de Bourgogne Reserve Brut (\$19.95 - #0991562) – crisp, pleasant citrus and dry – there's a bit of biting acidity too. Nice price for a good bubbly. (****)

France – White ...

(Alsace)

Domaine Saint-Remy Vieilles Vignes Gewurztraminer 2007 (\$19.95 - #0106872) – spicy orangey with a little oiliness on the spicy palate, there's a hint of sweetness and a long finish. (****1/2)

Pierre Sparr 2006 Pinot Gris Reserve (\$18.95 - #0983395) – this is a ready for spring wine with a great nose and good palate. (****)

(Loire)

Chateau de Tracy Mademoiselle de T Pouilly-Fume 2007 (\$25.95 - #0106773) – great Sauvignon Blanc nose and the palate follows right along; nice lingering citrus/grapefruit finish makes this wine last an extra long time. (***1/2)

Italy - Red ...

(Tuscany)

Santa Margherita 2006 Chianti Classico (\$19.95 - #0091694) – pleasant and easy drinking with herbs, spice and dried red fruit. (****)

New Zealand – White ...

Soljans Estate 2007 Sauvignon Blanc (\$17.95 - #0091223) – this one is typical Savvy B from New Zealand, but at a very affordable price, lots of citrus and gooseberry on both the nose and palate. (***1/2)

Portugal – White ...

Varanda do Conde Alvarinho/Trajadura 2007 (\$14.95 - #0966663) – crisp lemon/lime and a good mineral quality – there also seemed to be a little bit of banana chip in there. (***1/2)

Spain – Red ...

Bodegas Ateca Atteca Old Vines 2006 (\$22.95 - #0103473) – minty, plum and black fruit (mainly cherry) with a great smoothness on the palate. (****1/2)

Les Mines Priorat 2005 (\$25.95 - #0103481) – rich with red and black fruit, robust and lush – plush in the mouth, dry with tons of spice. (****)

Grape Guy Top 3 ... what I'll be lining up for on March 14, 2009:

Castel Oualou Cotes du Rhone 2007 (\$13.95 - #0104893) - France

Tricyclo 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot/Cabernet Franc (\$15.95 - #0027474) - Chile

Richard Hamilton 2008 Almond Grove Chardonnay (\$16.95 - #0741009) – Australia

Happy Shopping.

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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