

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday May 28, 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*

Today's release looks at wine from California (**CALI**) and some interesting stuff from the region of Alsace (**AL**) in France ... I have also added a feature for you bargain seekers: Best Buys ...

Argentina ...

Red -

Kaiken 2007 Ultra Cabernet Sauvignon (\$19.95 - #0135202) – year in year out I love this wine, and yet again it's a must purchase. (****+)

Santa Julia 2009 Magna (\$14.95 - #0218974) – smooth chocolate and blackberry; simple yet good. (** ½)

Australia ...

Red –

Henry's Drive 2008 Pillar Box Red (\$14.95 - #0685941) – always tasty and a good value red bruiser Aussie blend, not as good as in some years but still quite good. (** ½)

Plunkett Fowles 2008 Stone Dwellers Merlot (\$19.95 - #0221838) – smooth and supple, not blow-you-away fantastic but worth the money, spiced through mid-palate. (** ½)

Rockbore 2008 Shiraz (\$24.95 - #0661991) – good black fruit Shiraz with quite a hunk of chocolate in the middle. (****)

Zonte's 2008 Footstep Baron Von Nemesis Shiraz (\$15.95 - #0212936) – eucalyptus and black fruit, soft supple tannins and well priced. (** ½+)

Sparkling –

The Black Chook Sparkling Shiraz (\$17.95 - #0221986) – lots of dark berry flavour with a hint of spice and leather, interesting wine to pour, not what you expect in a bubbly. (****+)

Canada ...

Rosé

(Ontario)

[Cattail Creek 2010 Serendipity Rosé](#) (\$14.95 - #0118059)

[Featherstone Estate 2010 Rosé](#) (\$14.95 - #0117861)

[Kacaba 2010 Summertime Series Rebecca Rosé](#) (\$14.95 - #0227025)

[Southbrook 2010 Connect Organic Rosé](#) (\$18.95 - #0168492)

White –

(Ontario)

[Mike Weir 2008 Riesling](#) (\$14.95 - #0229286)

Chile ...

Red -

Emiliana 2009 Winemaker's Selection Syrah (\$18.95 - #0212407) – blackberry and mint with a touch of smoked mint on the finish; good price for this one. (****)

France ...

Red –

(Alsace)

Joseph Cattin 2009 Pinot Noir (\$14.95 - #0224618) – if you've never had the chance to try at

Alsatian Pinot Noir now's your chance, a decent price for a decent wine. (** ½)

(Beaujolais)

Domaine de Saint Ennemond Vieilles Vignes Moulin-a-Vent (\$17.95 - #0207910) – black cherry, vanilla-cinnamon, anise, has real presence warm, but might I suggest chilling it down for summer.

(****)

(Midi)

Domaine Lacroix-Vanel Cuvee Melanie 2005 (\$24.95 - #0221978) – sweet blackberry nose with cassis, chocolate, blackberry palate. (****)

Sparkling –

(Burgundy)

Veuve Ambal Brut Cremant de Bourgogne (\$15.95 - #0209619) – apple, vanilla and really quite creamy but with a nice balance of acidity. (****)

White –

(Alsace)

Faller Geisberg 2007 Riesling (\$20.95 - #0225169) – sweet apple juice nose though drier than expected on the palate with a nice apple finish. (***+) – **AL**

Heimberger 2009 Les Origines Vieilles Vignes Gewurztraminer (\$17.95 - #0223933) – nice restraint shown on the nose and palate, the flavours are there though the nose is shy, tasty with some spice on the finish. (****) – **AL**

Joseph Cattin 2009 Muscat (\$14.95 - #0224634) – nice apple nose that leads you to believe it'll be sweet but it shows nice restraint on the palate. (***+) – **AL**

(Burgundy)

Louis Robin 2009 Chablis (\$19.95 - #0210831) – this one shows some real finesse in Chardonnay-ville with mineral notes that are the stand out here. (****)

(Loire)

Domaine Sylvain Bailly 2009 Terroirs Sancerre (\$24.95 - #0223859) – very refreshing with fruit and citrus, but not too much, enough to make it interesting. (** ½+)

Henri Bourgeois 2009 Petit Bourgeois Sauvignon (\$14.95 - #0672345) – only on the finish does it finally hit you that this is Sauvignon Blanc; light, easy and refreshing. (** ½+)

Germany ...

White –

C.H. Berres 2007 Riesling Kabinett (\$18.95 - #0207274) – it starts off with pear delivers good acidity on the finish along with limeade and peach. (****)

Gunderloch 2009 Fritz's Riesling (\$13.95 - #0216366) – pleasant, lovely and inexpensive; a nice beginners Riesling. (** ½)

Greece ...

Red -

Domaine Mercouri 2008 Red (\$18.95 - #0652874) – quite chunky but with nice fruit. (** ½)

Italy ...

Red –

(Emilia-Romagna)

Drei Dona-Tenuta la Palazza Notturmo Sangiovese 2008 (\$17.95 - #0039958) – rustic spice and fruit with grit and guile, nice mouth presence. (** ½+)

(Tuscany)

Barone Ricasoli 2006 Casalferro (\$39.95 - #0092973) – rich dark fruit nose with blackberry, cassis and cardamom; the palate is spiced- dark berry with lots of tannin grit. (****+)

La Castellina Squarcialupi Chianti Classico Riserva 2006 (\$27.95 - #0214627) – coffee, dark chocolate with sour cherry; chalky yet elegant finish. (****+)

(Veneto)

Antiche Terre Ripasso Valpolicella (\$14.95 - #0178459) – dark fruit and black cherry with lots of tannins to make this one good for the long haul. (** ½+)

New Zealand ...

Red –

Wild Rock 2008 Cupid's Arrow Pinot Noir (\$21.95 - #0061242) – flavours of spiced fruit. (** ½+)

White -

Lawson's 2009 Dry Hills Sauvignon Blanc (\$16.95 - #0214460) – gooseberry and lime steal the show here. (** ½)

Nobilo 2010 Icon Sauvignon Blanc (\$24.95 - #0912337) – this is everything you think of when you think of New Zealand Savvy B all kicked into overdrive. (** ½)

Portugal ...

Dessert -

Warre's Otima 20-Year-Old Port (\$39.95 / 500ml - #0682716) – dried apricot, orange zest, loads of spice, nutty notes and dried cherry; a new side of Otima Port. (****)

Red -

R de Romaneira 2007 (\$19.95 - #0214288) – inky with charm, sweet red fruit entry, plum and chocolate; lovely, simply lovely with black cherry, boysenberry, it has a playful side yet its serious. (**** ½)

White -

Quinta de Linhares 2009 Azal Branco Vinho Verde (\$14.95 - #0218222) – biting acidity is the first thing you'll notice but there is also lovely pear and lemonade nuances; quite refreshing. (** ½)

Spain ...

Red -

Almira Los Dos Old Vines Grenache / Syrah (\$12.95 - #0173120) – a pure pleasure sipper loaded with red berries, some spice and nice tannins. (****+)

Alvaro Palacios Camins del Priorat 2008 (\$22.95 - #0216291) – violets, chocolate, and sweet cherry; pretty wine. (****+)

Ardal 2005 Crianza (\$16.95 - #0167601) – black cherry, chocolate, firm yet fleshy, there's some vanilla that adds depth. (****)

Etim 2005 Old Vines Seleccion Grenache (\$19.95 - #0214304) – black cherry and licorice, lots of spice, herbs and cedar notes. (****+)

United States ...

Red -

(California)

7 Deadly Zins 2008 Old Vines Zinfandel (\$24.95 - #0059311) – lots of sweet plum, vanilla and a touch of cherry. (** ½) - **CALI**

Bommarito 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$18.95 - #0213918) – sweet, smooth and easy drinking; a Cab without complication. (** ½) - **CALI**

Duckhorn 2008 Merlot (\$54.95 - #0992529) – loads of chocolate on this one. (****) - **CALI**

Freemark Abbey 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$29.95 - #0238758) – good fruit and good flavour, if just a little bit tired. (** ½) - **CALI**

J. Lohr 2009 (\$18.95 - #0948240) – blackberry and black cherry, supple and smooth almost jammy. (** ½+) - **CALI**

Pahlmeyer 2008 Pinot Noir (\$79.95 - #0148536) – lovely rich red berry nose but a leathery wrapped raspberry palate. (** ½) - **CALI**

Predator 2008 Old Vines Zinfandel (\$17.95 - #0219485) – this one had interesting Zin flavour (though it may have been a touch corked) this is something worth tasting and talking about. (** ½) - **CALI**

Ridge 2008 Lytton Springs (\$43.95 - #0982413) – plum, red cherry, blackberry with a nice sweetness of fruit with supple tannins. (****) - **CALI**

Stanza 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$16.95 - #0232363) – not gonna blow you away but it won't disappoint, easy wine to have around. (****+) - **CALI**

Westside Red Troublemaker Blend 1 (\$19.95 - #0682831) – spiced black cherry and plum notes, nice ballsy finish. (****) - **CALI**

(Oregon)

Aubichon 2007 Reserve Pinot Noir (\$47.95 - #0220442) – black cherry and floral aromas, good smooth black cherry flavours, touch of cigar box to spice things up; good finish. (****+)

Sparkling –

Mumm Napa Rosé (\$29.95 - #0205641) – pretty colour, nice mousse and light raspberry flavour.
(*** ½) - **CALI**

White –

(California)

Kenneth Volk 2007 Santa Maria Cuvee Chardonnay (\$19.95 - #0233981) – good fruit to oak ratio here, a touch more oak than fruit but nicely so. (***) - **CALI**

Sanford 2008 Chardonnay (\$26.95 - #0956003) – this one is more fruit than wood, which is also nice, so in this release you have your pick. (***) - **CALI**

Best Buys (wine(s) that over deliver at their price) ...

Almira Los Dos Old Vines Grenache / Syrah (\$12.95 - #0173120)

Grape Guy Top 3 ... what I'll be lining up for on May 28, 2011:

Kaiken 2007 Ultra Cabernet Sauvignon (\$19.95 - #0135202) – Argentina

R de Romaneira 2007 (\$19.95 - #0214288) – Portugal

Etim 2005 Old Vines Seleccion Grenache (\$19.95 - #0214304) – Spain

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.



Socially Speaking ...

Follow Michael Pinkus, the Grape Guy's (almost) daily **Tweets** at <http://twitter.com/TheGrapeGuy>. You can become a friend on **facebook**: <http://www.facebook.com/?ref=home#!/mepinkus>.

"Linked In" folks can find Michael at <http://ca.linkedin.com/pub/michael-pinkus/14/704/4b8>

To contact me with feedback, article ideas, comments, concerns or questions – email michael@ontariowinereview.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

© OntarioWineReview.com 2011. All rights reserved.

You may use the content of this newsletter by including full credit to Michael Pinkus, Grape Guy and a link to www.ontariowinereview.com