

## OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



### OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday November 7, 2009

*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.*

This is the annual "Affordable Party Wines" edition of the LCBO's Vintages release ... I think some of the best values aren't part of the focus. But let's take a look ...

#### Affordable Party Wines ...

Well boys and girls, when I hear the word affordable I think of wines under \$20 that taste far beyond their price point. I found four that deliver in that department, 2 whites and 2 reds: [Flat Rock Cellars 2007 Chardonnay](#) (\$16.95 - #0681247) ... Louis Hauller 2008 Gewurztraminer (\$16.95 - #0141754) from Alsace with its light rose petal nose and palate with just a touch of sweetness and a mandarin orange finish (\*\*\*\*). In reds, we look to one of the best value regions, Chile: the Montes Alpha Cabernet Sauvignon 2007 (\$19.95 - #0322586) is smooth blackberry jam at its core; its mint, chocolate, juicy and jammy (\*\*\*\*). The best value in the spotlight is from the Rhone (France), Les Vignerons du Castelas 2007 Cotes du Rhone (\$13.95 - #0142125) red licorice, black cherry, juicy red and black fruits with easy tannins, give it two years in bottle to settle and it'll be even better – and the best part is the price, but a bunch (\*\*\*\*½).

#### Argentina – Red ...

Bodega Francois Lurton 2007 Reserva Malbec (\$17.95 - #0903153) – here's a well made Malbec, black fruit, smoky, touch of spice and white pepper. (\*\*\*\*)

Vina Cobos Felino 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$19.95 - #0132365) – blackberry, chocolate, lots of juiciness here, rich and supple, succulent in the mouth. (\*\*\*\*½)

#### Australia – Red ...

Gemtree Vineyards 2008 Bloodstone Shiraz-Viognier (\$17.95 - #0022111) – nice minerality with vanilla, violet and spice. (\*\*\*\*)

Grant Burge 2007 Filsell Old Vine Shiraz (\$29.95 - #0987453) – sweet smells while the palate is black fruited with mineral notes. (\*\*\*\*)

Thorn-Clarke 2007 Shotfire Quartage (\$23.95 - #0024091) – black licorice, tootsie roll, sweet vanilla and black fruit, chocolate with big alcohol (14.5%), the palate is full of sweet fruit and quite juicy. (\*\*\*\*½)

Thorn-Clarke 2007 Terra Barossa Cuvee (\$14.95 - #0684357) – black fruit and white pepper nose, black fruit and pepper on the palate with a nice acid-tannin balance, easy drinking, delicious and great price, this is a multiple purchase wine. (\*\*\*\*½)

#### Austria – White ...

Loimer 2007 Gruner Veltliner (\$16.95 - 0142240) – full of fresh lime notes and some real finesse; if you have never tried a Gruner here's a good one to get you going, without breaking the bank. (\*\*\*\*)

#### Canada – Red ...

(Ontario)

[Wildass 2006 Red](#) (\$19.95 - #0086363)

### **Canada – White ...**

(Ontario)

[Malivoire 2008 Gewurztraminer](#) (\$24.95 - #0542522)

### **Chile – Red ...**

Concha Y Toro 2007 Winemaker's Lot 115 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$17.95 - #0030965) – minty blackfruit and juicy blackberries. (\*\*\*\*)

### **France – Red ...**

(Bordeaux)

*Ailes de Paloumey 2005* (\$26.95 - #0138826) – black fruit nose, nice flavours of black licorice, smoke and spice, good tannins. (\*\*\*\*)

(Midi)

Chateau de Fontenelles 2007 Cuvee Notre Dame (\$16.95 - #0106518) – sweet plum nose with a touch of raspberry, the palate is juicy with gritty bits of black raspberry and black cherry; a nice spice, herb and tannin blend on the finish. (\*\*\*\*)

(Rhône)

Chateau Val Joanis Tradition Syrah 2006 (\$15.95 - #0965616) – plum, violet and black cherry, tasty and pleasant wine at a very good price. (\*\*\*\*)

Pierre Amadiou 2007 La Grangeliere Vacqueyras (\$21.95 - #0076398) – a black and red fruit mix on the nose, graphite, red fruit, berries and a hint of chocolate; very juicy, a great sipper and lots of fun. (\*\*\*\*½)

### **France – White ...**

(Loire)

Jean-Michel Sorbe Quincy 2008 (\$18.95 - #0608877) – lots of new world grapefruit, gooseberry and grassiness, totally delicious ... one to enjoy in your motor home outside the hospital where you work (\*\*\*\*½)

(Midi)

Laurent Miquel Nord Sud Viognier 2008 (\$16.95 - #0673236) – a Viognier with subtle signs of Sauvignon Blanc. Grapefruit, vanilla, citrus, honey and floral – this wine is light and lively on the palate with a nice white fruit finish. (\*\*\*\*½)

### **France – Sparkling ...**

(Champagne)

Bollinger Special Cuvee Brut Champagne (\$79.95 – 0384529) – toasted almond, crisp apple, yeasty and slightly sweet with a nice finish. (\*\*\*\*½)

### **Italy – Red ...**

(Tuscany)

Antinori 2004 Pian Delle Vigne Brunello di Montalcino (\$67.95 - #0651141) – lots of black fruit, most notably black cherry, big tannins, big wine, big price, with plenty of time for a lie down; there's a reason you'll find this wine in the cellar of many collectors. (\*\*\*\*)

La Braccasca Vino Nobile di Montepulciano 2006 (\$27.95 - #0566216) – dark fruit, graphite and herbs, tannins are bold, fruit is big and black – lots of heft for ageing. (\*\*\*\*)

Renzo Masi Chianti 2007 (\$13.95 - #0134767) – Nice soft red fruit notes; lots of juicy fruit here, easy drinking quaffer, great price, extra mark for value. (\*\*\*\*½)

### **Portugal – Dessert ...**

*Offley 2004 Late Bottled Vintage Port* (18.95 - #0070086) – LBV is one of the great values in the Port world and a great way to introduce someone to Port. Black cherry, chocolate, nice acidity and tannins structure, delicious. LBV always offers great value especially for under \$20 (\*\*\*\*½)

### **Spain – Red ...**

*Castell Del Remei Gotim Bru 2006* (\$19.95 - #0982736) – there's a sweetness to the fruit on the palate: cherry, milk chocolate with hints of caramel. This wine is delicious and easy drinking,

muted nose but delicious in the mouth. The back palate is where this wine really shines with good acidity and tannin balance. (\*\*\*\*\*)

Escondido 2006 Tempranillo (\$14.95 - #0132597) – lots of black fruit and subtle spice on both the nose and flavours. (\*\*\*\*)

Marques de Valcarlos Reserva 2000 Tempranillo – Cabernet Sauvignon (\$17.95 #0928853) – Nice black fruit/red fruit combo held together by tannins and herbs. (\*\*\*\*)

### **United States – White ...**

(California)

Rutherford Ranch 2008 Chardonnay (\$19.95 - #0136382) – vibrant fruit nose, lemony, apple, pear, quite juicy with nice acidity, the only drawback in the medium finish, I wanted this one to last longer. (\*\*\*\*½)

### **Grape Guy Top 3 ... what I'll be lining up for on November 7, 2009:**

Castell Del Remei Gotim Bru 2006 (\$19.95 - #0982736) – Spain

Thorn-Clarke 2007 Shottfire Quartage (\$23.95 - #0024091) – Australia

Les Vignerons du Castelas 2007 Cotes du Rhone (\$13.95 - #0142125) – France

Happy Shopping.

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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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