

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday November 22, 2008

The holidays must be around the corner, because the LCBO is parading out their "Premium Products" – those products that you'll want to buy for folks as gifts ... folks you really, really like because with premium products come premium prices ... below is a list of those that I liked and seem worth the money.

From there we'll move on to my recommendations from the rest of the world. As usual full Ontario reviews are linked back to my website (www.ontariowinereview.com), they appear first – then the rest of the world is alphabetized.

Premium Products ...

I'll start with a collection of *Taylor Fladgate 2005 Vintage Ports* (\$82.95 - #0088195) – these two 375ml bottles come from different estates (Vargellas and Feita) and are incredibly juicy and completely different ... Vargellas is very smooth and fruit driven, while Feita is more spice driven. If you like Port these are worth your money to try and buy. It's nice to see a homegrown product amongst the premiums, [Cave Spring 2006 CSV Riesling](#) (\$29.95 - #0566026). Looking for a fine Burgundian Chardonnay? This is it: *Bouchard Pere & Fils 2006 Meursault Les Clous* (\$52.95 - #0661322), great fruit, great wood, nice vanilla and it's got some heft and power for longevity.

Now It's time to look at the premium reds, and there are quite a bit more of these, so stay with me. From California, home of many cult-wineries, comes *Duckhorn 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon* (\$78.95 - #0024190), big blackberry, cassis and licorice – right now it's pretty tannic but the potential for juiciness in later life is there. Argentina is making some great wines and this *Catena Alta 2005 Malbec* (\$60.95 - #0982355) is loaded with violets and blackberry on the nose, lots of herbs and ripe tannins in the mouth. Also from Argentina comes this Masi (yes the Italian Masi) *Tunpungato Corbec Covina/Malbec Appassimento 2006* (\$29.95 - #0079095), this wine is so tasty it should be illegal. Blackberries and plums, cherries and licorice, allspice, cinnamon, cedar with firm tannins and an ageing potential of 5-plus years. Australia is no stranger to premium wines, the *Hazyblur 2005 Shiraz* (\$77.95 - # 0076141) has enough alcohol to make your night a hazy blur, but it's also loaded with spices, plum, cherry, blueberry and chocolate while it ends with a nice spicy finish.

France is where you expect these high-priced premiums to come from, and Burgundy especially. *Domaine de la Vougeraie 2005 Gevrey-Chambertin La Justice* (\$61.95 - #0088740) is an old world wine in a new world style. Soft fruit, raspberry, cherry, cranberry with silkier than expected tannins. *Domaine de la Vougeraie 2005 Gevrey-Chambertin Les Evovelles* (\$63.95 - #0088732) has violets on the nose, and a sour cherry-cranberry cocktail in the mouth there's also a silky smooth roundness to it. And *Domaine Taupenot-Merme 2005 Gevrey-Chambertin* (\$66.95 - #0087023) has a nice cherry and cedar nose with big tannins – there's also a complexity here that is quite inviting: spice, herbs sour cherry and woody tannins. All three of these wines are holders and keepers. Sticking with the old world we go into Italy for another four wines: *Cordero di Montezemolo 2004 Barolo Manfallelletto* (\$51.95 - #0707364) with good fruit and mouthfeel – nice spices and herbs with plenty of acidity. *Isole E Olena 2004 Cepparello* (\$78.95 - #025650) a wonderful Sangiovese with sweet fruit of cherry and blueberry, chocolate covered cherries in liqueur and a nice balance of alcohol-tannins and acidity. *Brigaldara 2005 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico* (\$50.95 - #0716050) big plum, chocolate and cherry notes, big 16% alcohol that doesn't overpower and an ageing potential that makes it seem it would last forever. *Masi 2005 Serego Aligheri Valpolicella Dell'Anniversario 650* (\$31.95 - #0661306) has sweet cherry and blackfruit with a bittersweet chocolate finish. Finishing off the old world premiums with two from Spain, the *Alion 2004* (\$80.95 - #0707166) with some dried cherry and cranberry along with a touch of chocolate. Finally, *Descendientes de J. Palacios Petalos 2006* (\$25.95 - #0675207), an economical premium, nice fruit and floral notes, good flavours of both red and black fruit along with a spicy finish that zaps the tongue.

That wraps up my look at the wine spotlight for this release, if you have any money left, here we go with the rest of the world:

Ontario ... Red ...

[Mike Weir 2006 Pinot Noir](#) (\$22.20 - #0000075)

[Stratus 2005 Red](#) (\$44.00 - #0085092)

[Wildass 2005 Red](#) (\$19.00 - #0086363)

Ontario ... White ...

[Flat Rock Cellars 2007 Nadja Vineyard Riesling](#) (\$19.95 - #0578625)

[Stratus 2005 White](#) (\$44.00 - #0660704)

[Wildass 2005 White](#) (\$19.00 - #0085100)

Australia ... Red ...

Virgana Wines 2004 Shiraz (\$29.95 - #0072991) – pepper and spice, juicy black fruits with interesting and appealing flavours. Good balance.

Chile ... White ...

Montes Alpha 2006 Chardonnay (\$21.95 - #0390203) – vanilla, butterscotch, apple, white tree fruit with a nice Bosc pear in light syrup finish.

France ... Red ...

(*Bordeaux*) – Many of the Bordeaux reds were not even close to being ready. Great potential for the future though, especially the 2005's (they were all 2005).

(*Beaujolais*) – *Dame de Briante Brouilly 2006* (\$19.95 - #0087429) – sweet cherry and raspberry, a bit of tannin keeps this one dry in the mouth and a little staying power, 2-3 years.

(*Rhone*) – *Patrick Lesec Selections Chateauneuf-du-Pape Pierres Dorees 2005* (\$46.95 - #0079749) – this is a tasty wine with lots going for it: blackberry, black cherry, licorice, all-spice and a touch earthy on the finish.

(*Rhone*) – *Vignerons D'Estezargues la Granacha Signargues 2006* (\$21.95 - #0082560) – great value with sweet fruit, most notable plum along with cedar and chocolate notes.

France ... White ...

(*Alsace*) – *Louis Sipp 2005 Pinot Gris* (\$19.95 - #0731471) – nice pear, pineapple, peach and tropical nuances ... sweetish in the mouth with a creamy texture.

(*Alsace*) – *Rene Mure 2006 Gewurztraminer* (\$16.95 - #0061218) – pretty rose petal nose, oily and flowery in the mouth, very tasty with a medium length finish, there's also a touch of peach.

Germany ... White ...

Lingenfelder 2007 Riesling Kabinett (\$18.95 - #0087593) – lovely palate with a touch of sweetness, your typical appealing German Riesling nose.

Italy ... Red ...

(*Tuscany*) – *Campomaggio 2004 Chianti Classico* (\$21.95 - #0085027) – cherry and raspberry, a little dirty strawberry and cedar ... on the palate you can pick up some dried fruit too.

(*Tuscany*) – *La Colombina 2003 Brunello di Montalcino* (\$61.95 - #0085506) – dried cranberry and cherry, cedar and cinnamon, good tannin structure, nice acidity.

(*Tuscany*) – *La Vite Lucente 2005* (\$39.95 - #0747030) – licorice, cedar and blackberry ... tannins are big and thick.

(*Veneto*) – *Torre del Falasco 2006 Valpolicella Ripasso* (\$18.95 - #064242) – ripe cherries with chocolate, plum and firm yet approachable tannins.

Italy ... Sparkling ...

Foss Marai Prosecco Extra Dry 2007 (\$21.95 - #0729392) – dry and crisp with a sweet apple beginning and Granny Smith finish – comes in a pretty blue bottle.

Italy ... White ...

(*Veneto*) – *Anselmi Capitel Croce 2005* (\$25.95 - #0966655) – I had no idea the Italians were such big Bad Bad Leroy Brown fans, but seriously, this wine is all tropical fruit with a hint of pear – rich, thick and full in the mouth.

Spain ... Red ...

Juan Gil 2006 Monastrell (\$16.95 - #0013656) – one of my favourite Spanish producers comes out with this

bargain. Cherry, plum, chocolate, along with rum and cola notes – there almost seems to be a Zin-like flavour to this wine and there's also a raspberry finish.
Montecastro Llanahermosa 2005 (\$43.95 - #0015016) – big black jammy fruit with a hint of floral on the nose.

USA ... Red ...

(California) – *Van Ruiten 2006 Old Vines Zinfandel* (\$18.95 - #0058685) – typical but tasty Zin, vanilla, cherry, sweet fruit, plum, rum and lots of yum. This is a Zin lovers Zin.

USA ... White ...

(California) – *Simi 2006 Chardonnay* (\$23.95 - #0673806) – more fruit than expected on the nose, more wood than expect on the palate ... a little catch-22 of a wine here: do you like ti for the fruit or do you like it for the wood?

Ports and Sherries ...

Fonseca 2003 Late Bottled Vintage Port (\$22.95 - #0087551) – smooth cherries, licorice and spice, bittersweet chocolate, plum, black and red fruits, ripe tannins that will smooth when opened for a week or more ... this is the complete Late-Bottled package at a decent price for what you get.

Take a Chance on Me ...

You have got to try this if you like cherries: *Cherry Marnier Liqueur* (\$47.95 - #0047894). Loaded with cherry and chocolate taste with hints of orange and maple syrup. Not exactly cheap, but something that should win you lots of friends over the holidays.

Grape Guy Top 3 ... what I'll be lining up for on November 22, 2008:

Masi Tumpangato Corbec Covina/Malbec Appassimento 2006 (\$29.95 - #0079095) - Argentina

Van Ruiten 2006 Old Vines Zinfandel (\$18.95 - #0058685) – USA, California

Juan Gil 2006 Monastrell (\$16.95 - #0013656) – 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.

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

© OntarioWineReview.com 2008. 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