

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday October 25, 2008

Another two-fer release at the LCBO this Saturday (October 25). The annual "Party Wines" or "Entertaining" release, which gets you ready for the upcoming holiday season – and speaking of something to celebrate, there's a bunch of Amarones and Ripassos (Italy – Veneto) coming in – and some of them are too darn tasty for words

Following the spotlights I'll look at the other parts of the globe starting with Ontario and then I'll go alphabetically from there. As usual the full review of Ontario wines are linked back to my website (www.ontariowinereview.com).

Entertaining ...

I don't always agree with the wines that the LCBO call their "Party Wines", because in this release alone I could pick you out at least 3 wines that aren't part of the spotlight and yet I would definitely serve them at a party. But it's the LCBO's party so will let them pick what they want to.

White wines for you party start in the USA (California) with the *Ferrari-Carano 2005 Chardonnay* (\$38.95 - #0295055) with its peachy, appley, vanilla and some oak flavours; though nothing overpowering in the oak department, I found this one really very pleasant and mouth-filling ... pretty big alcohol too at 14.4%. New Zealand is not just a nation of sheep, they too have their share of party animals, like this *Dog Point Vineyard 2007 Sauvignon Blanc* (\$21.95 - #0677450), it's lively, and what I'd call typical for a Kiwi Savvy B right down to the cat peeing in your mouth – and that's a good thing when it comes to Sauvignon Blanc. Wrapping up the whites is the *Michel Delorme 2006 Pouilly-Fuisse sur la Roche* (\$29.95 - #0087460), this one's all minerally and dry with a touch of fruit, rounded and very balanced in the acidity department. You'll also find it to be a little stony with a touch of apple core on the finish.

I found less to be festive about in the LCBO's selection of reds, the only two of interest were the following: *Beaulieu Vineyard 2005 Zinfandel* (\$25.95 - #0080242) one of those textbook Zins with everything you expect, black and red fruit, plum and chocolate. Speaking of textbook, the *Two Hands 2006 Lucky Country Shiraz* (\$17.95 - #0077883) is just what you'd expect from an Aussie Shiraz, minty/eucalyptus, chocolate, pepper, blackberry and a touch of black cherry.

Amarone and Ripasso ...

Amarone is expensive, but oh-so good, so if you wanna get a taste of what this Italian icon wine is all about here's the one to get: *Zenato 2004 Amarone Della Valpolicella Classico* (\$52.95 - #0413179), great chocolate, blackberry, plum, black cherry and dried cranberries ... fantastic, best of the lot.

As for the Ripassos, they offer great taste and great value – the flavours and smells of Amarone without the hefty price tag. Starting with the *Corte Majoli Valpolicella Superiore 2003* (\$19.95 - #0084061) – cherries, plums and a touch of pepperiness. Ripe round mouthfeel that's dry and delicious. *Stefano Accordini 2005 Valpolicella Classico Superiore Acinatico Ripasso* (\$28.95 - #0085159) with its sweet red fruit, plum and cherry, smooth and enjoyable. *Tedeschi Capitel Dei Nicalo Valpolicella Classico Superiore 2006* (\$18.95 - #0984997) more cherries and black fruit, good mouthfeel and excellent finish. *Tezza 2005 Ripasso Valpolicella la ma Roat* (\$17.95 - #0084053) another beauty with dried black cherries, dark chocolate and rough tannins that will smooth with some time. Finally, for my money the *Zonin 2006 Ripasso Valpolicella Superiore* (\$19.95 - #0084798) is the deal in this category; it brings everything above altogether in a delicious package: cherries, plum and chocolate, stunningly shippable, sweet mouthfeel, yet a pleasantly dry finish – this one's got it all for under \$20.

That wraps up my look at the spotlights for this release and here we go with the rest of the world:

Ontario ... Dessert ...

[Chateau des Charmes 2006 Vidal Icewine](#) (\$25.95 - #0565861 – 200ml)
[Coyote's Run 2006 Riesling Icewine](#) (\$55.00 - #0012658 – 375ml)
[Wayne Gretzky Estate No.99 2006 Shiraz Icewine](#) (\$54.95 - #0086348 – 375ml)

Ontario ... Reds ...

[Jackson-Triggs 2005 Proprietors' Grand Reserve Meritage](#) (\$24.95 - #0594002)
[Mike Weir Estate 2005 Cabernet Shiraz](#) (\$25.20 - #0081638)

Argentina ... Red ...

Lurton 2006 Reserva Malbec (\$13.95 - #0903153) – cheap as chips, easy drinking, chocolate notes ... what more is there to say.

Australia ... Dessert ...

Lillypilly 2006 Noble Blend (\$24.95 - #0015255 – 375ml) – I bought a few of the previous vintage, this is a beautiful sweetie with honeyed tropical fruit and sweet delicious apples – it will age 10 years or more.

Australia ... Red ...

Wakefield 2006 Shiraz (\$18.95 - #0943787) – an easy going Shiraz with spice and pepper, good black fruit too.

Chile ... Red ...

Casa Silva 2006 Reserva Carmenere (\$14.95 - #0024679) – spices, herbs and black fruit with a little mint and dark chocolate – best Carm of the release.

Santa Ema 2005 Amplus Cabernet Sauvignon (\$22.95 - #0076307) – robust with big black fruit, chocolate, spices, herbs and cinnamon.

France ... Red ...

(Beaujolais) – *Colin-Bouriset 2006 Cote de Brouilly les Terres Bleues* (\$17.95 - #0590521) – very cherry, and very chillable.

(Rhône) – *Chateau la Nerthe 2005 Chateauneuf-du-Pape* (\$59.95 - #0735407) – a wine with a well deserved reputation, good fruit, robust and complex.

(Southwest) – *Chapelle 2003 Lenclos Madiran* (\$25.95 - #0076356) – sweet cherry, licorice, smoky, and blueberries with a dry tannic finish.

Chateau Pinerai 2005 Cahors (\$17.95 - #0078725) – dark, almost violet in colour rich fruit, plums, black cherry and medium tannins, a 5+ year cellar dweller.

France ... Sparkling ...

Louis Bouillot Perle Divoire Blanc de Blanc Brut (\$19.95 - #0048801) – with a pleasant nose and taste this wine is an excellent deal for a bubbly; touch of tart, citrus and a creamy mouthfeel.

France ... White ...

(Alsace) – *Domaine Fernand Engel 2005 Gewurztraminer Reserve* (\$22.95 - #0080481) – peachy and exotic with sweet taste and pleasantly smooth.

Italy ... Red ...

(Tuscany) – *Le Serre Nuovo Dell'Ornellaia 2006* (\$59.95 - #0606194) – chocolate, black cherry, tobacco and pepper.

New Zealand ... Red ...

Sileni 2006 The Triangle Merlot (\$18.95 - #0586081) – this one's very cherry: choke, dried, and sour, with a complement of vanilla-spice on the palate.

Spain ... Red ...

Capcanes 2005 Costers del Gravet (\$25.95 - #0707059) – dusty, plum and cherries ... nice smoothness through the mouth.

USA ... Red ...

(California) - *Bonterra 2005 Zinfandel* (\$19.95 - #0530139) – this bio-dynamic wine is getting a lot of good press and I can taste why: cherry-cola, pepper, ripe plum, a bit jammy; succulent in the mouth, almost sweet-like.

Edward Sellers 2005 Vertigo (\$38.95 - #0077875) – this is a “wow” wine with big fruit and big alcohol and great flavours – looking for chocolate and black fruit, this is your wine.

Red Truck 2006 (\$16.95 - #0693903) – this is one of your for sure party wines with red and black fruit with chocolate notes on the finish.

Seghesio 2006 Zinfandel (\$24.95 - #0942151) – a big 15.4% alcohol, lots of plum, black cherry, licorice and raspberry jam, there’s even a little spice on the tongue.

(Washington) – *Hedges Cellars 2006 CMS* (\$17.95 - #0948992) – this Cabernet, Merlot and Syrah blend is a smooth easy going wine that has an aging potential of about 7 years. Black fruit, nice spice, lightly herbed, chocolate and berries. Lovely.

Take a Chance on Me ...

Made from the Alicante grape this Portuguese wine – *Grand’Arte 2005 Alicante Bousche* (\$14.95 - #0080614) – is worth its minimal price tag. Full and fruity with ballsy tannins that dry out the tongue ... give it a go, you won’t be disappointed.

Grape Guy Top 3 ... what I’ll be lining up for on October 25, 2008:

Edward Sellers 2005 Vertigo (\$38.95 - #0077875) – USA, California

Hedges Cellars 2006 CMS (\$17.95 - #0948992) – USA, Washington

Zonin 2006 Ripasso Valpolicella Superiore (\$19.95 - #0084798) – Italy - Veneto

Happy Shopping.

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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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