

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday April 28, 2012

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

The Skinny: lots of good values, but very few outstanding wines.

This week's two releases focus is New Zealand whites (NZW), mostly Sauvignon Blanc, and Veneto (VEN) ... I have - and always have had - a special place in my heart for the wines of the region.

Argentina ...

Mendel 2009 Malbec (\$24.95 - #108225) - cocoa, black cherry and spice; shows some elegance in the mouth and on the finish. (****)

Australia ...

Majella 2008 Shiraz (\$29.95 - #269308) - chocolaty, blackberry and a shot of mocha-espresso; nice finish of spice and good acidity. (****)

Saltram 2008 Mamre Brook Cabernet Sauvignon (\$24.95 - #0048579) - lots of blackberry along with some red berries and chocolate. (** 1/2)

Sister's Run 2008 Epiphany Shiraz (\$15.95 - #269464) - good value in a juicy jammy Aussie Shiraz, full of fruit and flavour, nicely spiced-pepper finish. (** 1/2+)

St. Hallett 2009 Gamekeeper's Shiraz (\$15.95 - #166991) - another good value in what is basically raspberry jam boozy juice. (** 1/2)

Two Hands 2010 Gnarly Dudes Shiraz (\$29.95 - #660043) - the quintessential Aussie Shiraz. (**** 1/2)

Canada ...

(Ontario)

Colchester Ridge 2007 CREW Meritage (\$19.95 - #280990) - *** 1/2

Equifera 2009 Riesling Icewine (\$59.95 / 375ml - #274472) - *** 1/2

Flat Rock Cellars 2010 Riesling (\$16.95 - #0043281) - ****

Le Clos Jordanne 2009 Le Clos Jordanne Vineyard Chardonnay (\$40.00 - #0033910) - ****

Malivoire 2010 Riesling (\$15.95 - #277483) - ****

Pondview 2010 Chardonnay (\$16.95 - #271155)

Chile ...

Calina 2010 Chardonnay (\$14.95 - #640912) - tropically tinged, very vanilla with hints of pineapple core and peach pit. (** 1/2+)

Ninquen Antu 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon / Carmenere (\$16.95 - #0059329) - mint, cassis, black fruit with nice sweet fruit and a little spice; great BBQ red. (****)

France ...

(Bordeaux)

Chateau Bertin 2006 (\$17.95 - #244046) - ready to drink; soft cassis, blackberry, touch of bittersweet chocolate and spice on the finish. (** 1/2+)

Chateau Fonreaud 2005 (\$29.95 - #243311) - licorice, earth, strawberry, blackberry and cassis. (** 1/2+)

Chateau Sainte Barbe 2008 Les Arglies (\$14.95 - #244681) - a well-priced basic Bordeaux. (** 1/2)

Esprit de Pavie (\$32.95 - #244020 ... **pictured**) - pretty cherry and violet notes on the nose; with coffee, vanilla and cocoa powder through the palate. (****+) (Loire)



Chavet & Fils 2010 La Dame de Jacques Coeur Menetou Salon Blanc (\$19.95 - #525048) - citrus, gooseberry, melon and a touch of tangerine. (** 1/2+)

Henri Bourgeois 2010 Petit Bourgeois Sauvignon Blanc (\$14.95 - #672345) - grassy and fresh with nice acidity and a hint of asparagus. (** 1/2) (Midi)

Chateau des Aladeres 2008 Corbieres (\$16.95 - #276063) - black fruit, black spice along with licorice notes. (** 1/2) (Rhône)

Arnoux & Fils 2009 Vacqueyras (\$19.95 - #264663) - ripe fruit jumps out of the glass, juicy red fruits with the right amount of peppery spice and acidity ... a lovely BBQ wine. (****+)

Chateau Signac 2009 Cuvee Tradition Chusclan Cotes du Rhone Villages (\$16.95 - #252288) - lots of lifted red and black fruit, quite fruit-driven. (** 1/2+)

Le Gravillas 2009 Plan de Dieu Cotes du Rhone Villages (\$14.95 - #264648) - good dark fruit in this drink now style wine. (** 1/2)

Perrin 2011 Reserve Rosé (\$15.95 - #719062) - a dry rosé with strawberry pith and raspberry nuances; perfect for those patio lunches. (** 1/2)

Germany ...

Winzergenossenschaft Konigschaffhausen 2011 Pinot Noir Rosé Trocken (\$11.95 - #168237) - big strawberry, hint of cherry on both the nose and flavour; this is a berry bowl turned liquid form with an almost sweet finish. (** 1/2+)

Greece ...

Tselepos Driopi Agiorgitiko 2008 (\$18.95 - #269043) - soft red and black fruit, smooth with good spice on the lingering finish; drink now. (** 1/2)

Italy ...

(Piedmont)

Marziano Abbona Terlo Ravera Barolo 2006 (\$42.95 - #0067918) - the spices aren't overpowering, it's smooth and elegant with a great mouth-feel. (****+)

(Tuscany)

Canonica a Cerreto 2007 Chianti Classico Riserva (\$17.00 - #275867) - chocolate, strawberry, hints of herbs and spice, approachable and elegant. (****+)

Isole e Olena 2008 Chianti Classico (\$26.95 - #704346) - nice sweet fruit, cherry liqueur, spices, violets and cinnamon; nice balance between the rustic and modern. (****)

(Veneto)

Brigaldara 2010 Valpolicella (\$14.95 - #917864) - best described as wood smoked cherries. (** 1/2+) - **VEN**

Farina 2008 Amarone Della Valpolicella Classico (\$34.95 - #995910) - cherry, plum, chocolate and spice; sweet fruit on the palate. (** 1/2+) - **VEN**

Nino Franco Rustico Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore (\$17.95 - #277574) - deliciously fresh-fruited with apple and a hint of lemon, a nice hot day sipper. (** 1/2+) - **VEN**

San Cassiano 2009 Valpolicella (\$14.95 - #277509) - sweet and tart cherry liqueur with good acidity. (** 1/2) - **VEN**

Tommasi 2008 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico (\$49.95 - #356220) - sweet fruit, delicate spice: plum, cherry, blackberry with hints of blueberry and spice cake. (****) - **VEN**

Vinea 2010 Garganega (\$13.95 - #230656) - nice peach linger to this wine and that makes it quite approachable. (** 1/2) - **VEN**

New Zealand ...

Dog Point 2009 Chardonnay (\$39.95 - #238568) - Chardonnay-esque nose with a creamy mouthfeel and big acidity on the finish, creamed grapefruit rind. (** 1/2+) - **NZW**

Eradus 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (\$17.95 - #225557) - full on grapefruit in all its glory. (** 1/2) - **NZW**
Momo 2009 Pinot Noir (\$19.95 - #163972) - delicate baking spice with nutmeg and cinnamon with the right amount of dirty strawberry and acidity. (****+)

Spy Valley 2011 Pinot Gris (\$19.95 - #277723) - here's a grape variety that New Zealand is doing well with, there's a little sweetness and good fruit with a hint of ginger spice to round it out. (****) - **NZW**

Two Rivers of Marlborough 2011 Convergence Sauvignon Blanc (\$29.95 - #277707 ... **pictured**) - this high-end Sauv Blanc shows that its not all about grapefruit and over the top grass, sure it's here but it's delicate and delicious with a hint of mineral and spice. (****+) - **NZW**



Portugal ...

Quinta do Ataíde 2008 Altano Reserva (\$28.95 - #273573) - plummy dark fruit, back cherry and chocolate. (** 1/2+)

Spain ...

Allende 2006 (\$24.95 - #954560) - it has some age and yet shows lots of life; lifted raspberry and cherry rise to the surface with hints of smoke and milk chocolate. (** 1/2+)

Bodegas Olarra Anares Reserva 2005 (\$17.95 - #244723) - licorice, dried leaves, cassis and some spice (** 1/2)

Borsao 2009 Tres Picos Garnacha (\$19.95 - #273748 ... **pictured**) - lovely fruit here, black cherry, blackberry, boysenberry, spice with hints of mineral; has memories of Australia in the glass. (**** 1/2)

Torres 2010 Vina Esmeralda (\$13.95 - #113696) - fresher, more vibrant fruit than expected from a Spanish white; refreshing, clean with a little sweetness, very sippable. (** 1/2)



United States ...

(California)

Beringer 2009 Merlot (\$29.95 - #919647) - black fruit with chocolate and cherry. (** 1/2)

Cuvaison 2009 Chardonnay (\$29.95 - #988261) - this almost bland wine, upon entry, pulled off a nice lingering mouthfeel in the late stages, adding vanilla cream, caramel and good acidity. (** 1/2+)

Folie a Deux 2010 Menage a Trois Red (\$17.95 - #665158) - still lots of fun, still over-priced here in Ontario. (****+)

Ghost Pines 2008 Winemaker's Blend Zinfandel (\$19.95 - #269373) - jammy with cherry and vanilla notes. (** 1/2)

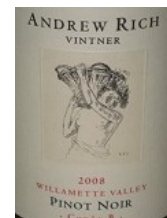
Irony 2009 Merlot (\$17.00 - #183186) - blueberry and chocolate, very fruit driven; a Cali-Merlot that is right on target. (** 1/2+)

(Oregon)

Andrew Rich 2008 Cuvee B Pinot Noir (\$29.95 - #127043 ... **pictured**) - deeply coloured and rich flavour: black cherry, nice spice with a hint of earth, needs a little chill. (****+)

(Washington)

Hogue 2009 Genesis Syrah (\$19.95 - #687822) - chocolate, plum, white pepper, black cherry, with creamy dark chocolate on the finish. (****+)



Best Buys ... over deliver for the price

Casa Montes 2008 Don Baltazar Cabernet Franc (\$12.95 - #261909) - interesting offering from Argentina ... Argentina - (** 1/2)

Finca el Origen 2010 Reserva Torrontes (\$14.95 - #262089) - floral, sweet grapefruit and orange peel ... Argentina - (** 1/2)

Monte del Fra 2008 Tenute Lena di Mezzo Valpolicella Classico Superiore (\$15.95 - #272500) - smoky, fruity and delicious ... Veneto, Italy. (****)

What I'll Be Lining Up For ... April 28, 2012

Momo 2009 Pinot Noir (\$19.95 - #163972 ... **pictured**) - New Zealand
Arnoux & Fils 2009 Vacqueyras (\$19.95 - #264663) - Rhone, France
Borsao 2009 Tres Picos Garnacha (\$19.95 - #273748) - 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 2012. 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