

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday March 17, 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 focus of this week's releases are fizzy bubbly wines (**FIZZ**) and wines from Spain (**SPAIN**) ...

Argentina ...

Manos Negras 2007 Malbec (\$14.95 - #271205) - smooth and easy drinking, with a nice chocolate seam. (** 1/2)

Australia ...

Campbell's 2010 Shiraz/Durif (\$19.95 - #271569) - tons of raspberry, black pepper and spice; there's something herbal that crosses the mid-palate to the finish. (****)

De Bortoli 2008 Nobel One Botrytis Semillon (\$29.95 / 375ml - #917252) - intense and delicious: apricot and tropical fruit with a nice balance of acidity and spice. (****+)

St. Hallett 2009 Blackwell Shiraz (\$29.95 - #535104) - lots of blackberry and cherry, juicy on the palate with gobs of chocolate and white pepper. (****)

Wakefield 2009 Shiraz (\$17.95 - #943787) - juicy, chocolatey, full of dark fruit, and hints of spice. (** 1/2+)

Yalumba 2008 Shiraz/Viognier (\$21.95 - #524926) - violets and black fruit, a pretty text book Shiraz-Vio blend with floral and spice. (** 1/2+)

Austria ...

Brundlmayer 2010 Kamptaler Terrasse Gruner Veltliner (\$19.95 - #979708) - touch of pea pod on the palate along with fresh hay; not overwhelming acidity but still clean and fresh. (** 1/2)

Canada ...

(British Columbia)

Aces Okanagan Seven Deuce Red 2009 (\$27.95 - #273631) - playful label leads to a playful wine; this is a dark fruit forward gem from BC, great for the coming BBQ season. (****)

(Ontario) - visit OntarioWineReview.com for full review

[Flat Rock 2010 The Rusty Shed Chardonnay](#) (\$24.95 - #0001552) - **** 1/2

[Flat Rock 2010 Twisted White](#) (\$9.95 / 375ml - #273292) - ****+

[Henry of Pelham 2010 Barrel Fermented Chardonnay](#) (\$19.95 - #268342) - *** 1/2+

[Hidden Bench Estate 2009 Pinot Noir](#) (\$38.20 - #274753) - **** 1/2

Chile ...

Intriga 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$21.95 - #0057901) - licorice and chocolate. (** 1/2)

France ...

(Bordeaux)

Chateau Tour Baladoz 2006 (\$28.95 - #244087) - nice fruit, balanced with wood and a dollop of spice. (** 1/2)

(Burgundy)

Domaine Chanson 2009 Savigny-Les-Beaune Hauts Marconnets 1er Cru (\$32.95 - #265033) - touch sulphury but with buttery notes intertwined to make it very palpable; nice lemon curd finish. (** 1/2)

Domaine Joannet 2009 Bourgogne Hautes-Cotes de Nuits (\$21.95 - #265009) - earthy, minerally and stony with wild cherry notes. (** 1/2+)

Domaine Rodet 2009 Chateau de Mercey Mecurey (\$22.95 - #265058) - nice perfume with floral notes which follow on the palate and adds grapefruit pith and lemon meringue. (** 1/2+)

Lefevre Remondet Brut Rosé Cremant de Bourgogne (\$15.95 - #265306) - pretty colour, deeper than your usual roseé, let's call it cranberry, which matches the flavour with cran-cherry spread on a crusty bread. (****) - **FIZZ**

(Champagne)

Hiedsiek & Co Monopole Blue Top Champagne (\$49.95 - #68288) - nothing beats the classics; delicate and toasty with great acidity and green apple on the finish. (****+) - **FIZZ**

(Midi)

Mas D'Auzieres Les Eclats 2009 (\$16.95 - #271742) - lovely cherry wafts from the glass before depositing it in the mouth on a chocolate blanket. (****)

(Rhône)

Foncalieu La Reserve du Crouzau St. Gervais Cotes du Rhone-Villages 2009 (\$14.95 - #142943) - plum, black currant, raspberry-strawberry and chocolate ... what a steal with nice spice and acidity. (** 1/2+)

Jean-Marie Arnoux Vacqueyras 2009 (\$21.95 - #172668) - licorice, spice and tobacco; smooth palate with vanilla-spiced-blackberries. (****+)

Italy ...

(Abruzzo)

Valle Reale 2007 Montepulciano D'Abruzzo (\$17.95 - #216408) - rustic cherry, raspberry and tobacco notes; quite pleasant. (** 1/2+)

New Zealand ...

Lawson's 2010 Dry Hills Sauvignon Blanc (\$17.95 - #214460) - big on grassy nose and palate, lemon pith, lime and grapefruit on the palate through the lasting finish. (****)

Pegasus Bay 2008 Pinot Noir (\$47.95 - #0031294) - earthy and dirty but in a good way; black fruit clings to the nose and palate with a touch of floral. (****)

Portugal ...

Delaforce His Eminence's Choice 10 Years Old Tawny Port (\$24.95 - #0265504) - spiced cherry, raisin, wood, hint of cherry flavoured caramel and spice; good acidity giving a nice bite on the tongue. (** 1/2+)

Medeiros 2009 (\$16.95 - #268789) - lovely fruit, vanilla, dark cherry; nice drinking beauty at a great price. (****+)

Quinta do Portal 2006 Grande Reserva (\$28.95 - #0074666) - plum, blackberry and vanilla, sharp acidity and spice on the tongue, finishes well with blackberry, cassis and plum notes. (** 1/2+)

Quinta Nova Pomares 2009 (\$16.95 - #214007) - decent, well priced, smooth, easy drinking and black fruited. (** 1/2)

South Africa ...

Graham Beck Brut Sparkling (\$18.95 - #593483) - interesting and exotic bubble with almondine in the mouth leading to a lemon biscotti finish. (** 1/2+) - **FIZZ**

Oak Valley 2009 Sauvignon Blanc (\$15.95 - #263947) - plenty of grapefruit complete with pith and rind. (** 1/2+)

Spice Route 2009 Shiraz (\$24.95 - #263657) - a real gem from South Africa lots of fruit, lots of flavour without the tar, ripe and delicious, big alcohol of 15%. (****+)

Spain ...

Atalaya Almansa 2008 (\$19.95 - #132605) - sweet plum and black cherry with hints of chocolate. (** 1/2+) - **SPAIN**

Cerro Anon Reserva 2005 (\$18.95 - #114306) - nice wine with good flavours of spiced dried black fruits; shows some real finesse. (****) - **SPAIN**

Olivares Altos de la Hoya Monastrell 2009 (\$13.95 - #163154) - juicy, plummy and creme de cacao. (** 1/2) - **SPAIN**

Pena Roble Crianza 2004 (\$18.95 - #266932) - nice dark fruit with vanilla and baking spice. (** 1/2) - **SPAIN**

Senorio Del Aguila Gran Reserva 2001 (\$19.95 - #269530) - black cherry with a hint of age that shows through, ready to drink. (** 1/2) - **SPAIN**

Vega Saucó Adoremus Tinta de Toro 2004 (\$19.95 - #268813) - dark berries with a complex nose, aged nicely and it's ready to drink; nice bite on the finish from the acidity and spice. (****) - **SPAIN**

United States ...

(California)

J. Lohr 2009 Los Osos Merlot (\$19.95 - #27516) - this is the value Merlot of this release: juicy, easy drinking with just the right amount of spice. (****)

Mumm Napa Sparkling Rosé (\$29.95 - #205641) - lovely bubble with a touch of raspberry and grapefruit, especially on the nose with lemon-lime wrapped raspberry on the palate. (****+) - **FIZZ**

Rodney Strong 2009 Chardonnay (\$20.95 - #226936) - exotic fruits on the palate, creamy mouthfeel with mac apple notes throughout. (****)

Saintsbury 2008 Pinot Noir (\$29.95 - #359265) - more Burgundy than California in style, which is good for Burg-fans but not for Cali-fans. (** 1/2)

Simi 2009 Chardonnay (\$19.95 - #673806) - butter, spice and white fruits; vanilla-butter coats the mouth all the way to the caramel finish. (****)

Treana 2008 Red (\$39.95 - #11221) - nice, juicy, big fruited blend, lush in the mouth with vanilla and black cherry; very seductive. (****+)

Truchard 2008 Zinfandel (\$25.95 - #54858) - now this is Zin with sweet chocolate, cherry, and cola notes with sweet fruit on the palate with the right amount of spicy bite back. (****)

Vila Mt. Eden 2007 Antique Vines Grand Reserve Zinfandel (\$19.95 - #256719) - great nose, decent palate: sweet with spice. (** 1/2)

Vineyard Twenty-Nine 2008 Cru Cabernet Sauvignon (\$49.95 - #212241) - big black cherry, hints of chocolate, along with raspberry and pepper notes. (** 1/2+)

(Oregon)

Cloudline 2009 Pinot Noir (\$22.95 - #159970) - mixes the earthiness of Burgundy with the juiciness of California, a nice bridge between the two with cran-cherry, mineral and earth. (****+)

(Washington)

Columbia Crest 2009 H3 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$19.95 - #210047) - lovely texture, herbal, sweet spice, with hints of chocolate. (****+)

If You Can Afford It (they're pricey but worth it) ...

Chateau de Beaucastel 2009 Chateaneuf du Pape (\$89.95 - #0711317) - lovely. (**** 1/2)

Chateau Montelena 2009 Chardonnay (\$59.95 - #701748) - nice depth and finesse. (****)

Concha y Toro 2007 Don Melchor Cabernet Sauvignon (\$79.95 - #315176) - ballsy and minty. (****+)

Opus One 2008 (\$364.95 - #158063) - big fruit, wood and spice. (****+)

Quintarelli 2002 Valpolicella Classico Superiore (\$79.95 - #986117) - seductive and tasty. (****+)

Yalumba 2007 The Menzies Cabernet Sauvignon (\$53.95 - #473645) - full of fruit. (****+)

Best Buys (wines that over-deliver for their price) ...

Las Perdices 2010 Torrontes (\$12.95 - #267823) - a toned down Gewurz. (** 1/2) - Argentina

The Ned 2011 Pinot Gris (\$14.95 - #267138) - a real beauty (****+) - New Zealand

Happy Shopping.

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