

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday February 1, 2014

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

Key: Wine colour indicators - Red are red wines, Yellow are whites, etc.

The Foci ... Australia (**OZ**), Hidden Gems (**HG**) and Wines for Valentine's Day (**WVD**); also look for the In-Store Discoveries, now part of the general Vintages tasting.

The Skinny ... There is a dismal selection of white wines this time out and some of the "hidden Gems" should have remained hidden – I weed through to give you my take on what to buy this weekend. Plus 12 of the Ontario wines in this release were not available for tasting; more than any other region.

Argentina ...

Alamos 2013 Chardonnay (\$13.95 - #801571) – one of the better Chards in this release: apple and pineapple notes with hints of spiced vanilla; good value. (** ½+)

Zuccardi 2011 Serie A Bonarda (\$15.95 - #355560) – nice juicy cherry with peppery/spicy kick. (****) - HD

Australia ...

Dandelion 2011 Lioness of McLaren Vale Shiraz (\$19.95 - #357475) – rich black cherry, raspberry and cocoa. (** ½+) – **OZ**

Devil's Corner 2012 Pinot Noir (\$23.95 - #317966) – nice kick of acidity among the cranberry-strawberry cocktail. (****) – **OZ**

Katnook Estate 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$29.95 - #590471) – eucalyptus, vanilla and cherry lead the charge here backed by spices and nice peppery goodness. (****) – **OZ**

Robert Oatley 2012 Signature Series Pinot Noir (\$18.95 - #357491) – has elements of sweet fruit among the chalky tannins and acidity; but what really stands out is the nice cranberry. (****) - **OZ**

Schild Estate 2011 Old Bush Vine GMS Grenache/Mourvedre/Shiraz (\$19.95 - #108183) – nice depth of pepper and herbal complexity, fruit is dark and dried; quite tasty. (** ½+) - **OZ**

Canada (British Columbia) ...

See Ya Later Ranch Brut (\$22.95 - #271049) – yeasty with pear, peach pit and a mineral chalkiness that grows on you with each sip. (****)

Canada (Ontario) ... *click on wine name for full review*

[Featherstone 2012 Black Sheep Riesling](#) (\$16.95 - #080234)

[Flat Rock 2012 Nadja's Vineyard Riesling](#) (\$19.95 - #578625) - **WVD**

[Henry of Pelham 2012 Cabernet Icewine](#) (\$39.95 / 200ml - #672402) – **WVD**

[KEW Vineyards 2011 Soldier's Grant](#) (\$18.95 - #367318) – **HG**

[Oxley 2011 Cabernet Franc](#) (\$18.95 - #368837) - **HG**

Chile ...

Quasar 2011 Limited Edition Pinot Noir (\$17.95 - #366526) – spicy black cherry with herbal notes and a pseudo-prickly finish from the acidity. (** ½+) - **HG**

France (Bordeaux) ...

Chateau Tour Saint Bonnet 2009 (\$29.95 - #349282) – nice spice and dark fruit blend with mocha leaning more on the coffee/licorice side on the finish. (****)

France (Champagne) ...

Chateau de Bligny Grande Reserve Brut Rosé (\$49.95 - #352161) – nice strawberry, raspberry and lemon peel all with balancing acidity. (****+) - WVD

France (Loire) ...

Roland Tissier & Fils 2012 Sancerre (\$21.95 - #108514) – nice grapefruit pith and rind; a real zesty wine. (** ½+)

France (Rhône) ...

Domaine Les Grands Bois 2011 Cuvée Maximilien Cotes du Rhône-Villages Cairanne (\$22.95 - #286336) – blackberry and cassis with black cherry and gentle spice. (** ½+)

France (Southwest) ...

Syrousse 2011 (\$16.95 - #357343) – nice mix of black cherry and white pepper. (** ½+) - HG

Greece ...

Thymiopoulos Vineyards 2010 YN Kai Oupavos Xinomavro (\$19.95 - #360750) – roasted meat, black cherry and cassis. (** ½+)

Italy (Piedmont) ...

Luca Bosio 2009 Barolo (\$33.95 - #365197) – nice acidity with mineral chalkiness along with dried cherry and strawberry. (** ½+)

Italy (Tuscany) ...

Nozzole La Forra 2009 Chianti Classico Riserva (\$23.95 - #362731) – licorice and mocha are the biggest players here, and they know how to lure and keep you. (****)

Italy (Umbria) ...

Villa Mora 2006 Montefalco Rosso Riserva (\$19.95 - #357079) – black cherry with hints of chocolate. (** ½+)

Italy (Veneto) ...

Speri 2011 Pigaro Ripasso Valpolicella Classico Superiore (\$18.95 - #205286) – sweet cherry on the fore-palate but it's the white pepper that keeps the juiciness from running away with this wine. (** ½+)

Villa Girardi 2009 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico (\$41.95 - #159913) – lush spiced cherry and chocolate finish that really worth getting to. (****)

New Zealand ...

Akarua 2011 Pinot Noir (\$37.95 - #079541) – pretty blackberry and cedar with spicy nuances. (** ½+)

The Ned 2012 Pinot Noir (\$19.95 - #361261) – this is a hybrid between California and Burgundy Pinot; juicy cranberry, rhubarb, cherry that's nicely spiced with white pepper and plenty of acidity on the finish. (****)

Sophora Sparkling Rosé (\$19.95 - #353664) – entry is almost sweet with raspberry but has a nice lemon curd backing. (** ½+)

Portugal ...

Bulas 2009 Vintage Port (\$49.95 - #363119) – delivers on all accounts, and if you like Port you know what I mean. (****+)

Herdade do Arrepiado Velho Red 2012 (\$19.95 - #295337) – smooth plum and blackberry. (** ½+)

South Africa ...

Glen Carlou 2009 Petit Verdot/Tannat (\$21.95 - #363440) – nice hit of chocolate and black cherry, dark and brooding. (** ½+)

United States (California) ...

Alouette 2012 Pinot Noir (\$29.95 - #353631) – juicy wine with vanilla and laid back cherry. (** ½+)

Duckhorn 2012 Decoy Chardonnay (\$24.95 - #311555) – nice easy drinking Chardonnay with a lovely finish of considerable length. (****)

Freemark Abbey 2010 Merlot (\$29.95 - #001602) – blackberry and cassis notes with spice, violets and blueberry skin. (****)

Powder Keg 2011 Demolition Red (\$22.95 - #353649) – a pure patio pleaser that's sure to please right now: black cherry, blackberry, cloves and smoky vanilla. (****)

Ravenswood 2010 Old Vine Zinfandel (\$21.95 - #673798) – beautiful smoky vanilla, plum, spiced cola, red licorice and anise. (****+)

In-Store Discoveries – these are wines that just appear on the shelves of your local Vintages outlet ...

Tablas Creek 2010 Esprit de Beaucastel (\$54.95 - #735654) - ****+ ... **ISD**

If You Can Afford It – wines worth their high price ...

Nickel & Nickel 2009 Kelham Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (\$119.95 - #361725) - ****

What I'll Be Lining Up For – February 1, 2014 ...

Ravenswood 2010 Old Vine Zinfandel (\$21.95 - #673798) – USA

The Ned 2012 Pinot Noir (\$19.95 - #361261) – New Zealand

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.



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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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