

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday January 4, 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 ... Smart Buys (SB)

The Skinny ... This is the annual LCBO Crap-a-Thon, the traditional dumping ground for wines that didn't make it through the rest of the year – there are some good values to be had for decent prices, and not all of them are part of the focus; which makes me wonder: what constitutes a “Smart Buy”?

Argentina ...

Valle Las Acequias Oak Malbec 2007 (\$16.95 - #138412) – slight bit of everything here: spice, red and dark fruit, vanilla and some toasted notes. (**¹/₂+) – **SB**

Yauquen 2012 Bonarda (\$14.95 - #360115) – soft and juicy, worth trying if you've never had Bonarda before. (**¹/₂+) – **SB**

Australia ...

Domaine Tournon Mathilda Shiraz 2011 (\$19.95 - #327395) – Shiraz by way of the Rhone valley, more pepper and smoked meat than jammy ripe fruit. (****) – **SB**

Magpie Estate 2009 The Call Bag (\$21.95 - #203067) vanilla, spiced-plum and raspberry; quite tasty. (****)

Austria ...

Rabl 2011 Kittmanberg Gruner Veltliner (\$14.95 - #346007) – pea pod and sweet lemon citrus with a touch of something stony and even a little melon rind. (**¹/₂+) – **SB**

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

[13th Street 2012 Merlot](#) (\$17.95 - #270504)

[Flat Rock 2012 Riesling](#) (\$16.95 - #043281) – **SB**

Chile ...

Casas del Bosque 2012 Reserva Sauvignon Blanc (\$13.95 - #374717) – tropically tinged with plenty of grassy notes and a long finish. (**¹/₂+) – **SB**

Estampa 2010 Assemblage Reserve Syrah/Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot (\$14.95 - #350082) – hello mint, dark fruit and chocolate; hello Chile. (****)

France (Bordeaux) ...

Chateau Caronne Ste. Gemme 2009 (\$25.85 - #191460) – nice coffee bean nose leads to a mocha, vanilla, spice and dark fruited palate; nice balance of acidity and tannins. (****)

Chateau Haut Beyzac Cuvee O'Peyrat 2009 (\$22.95 - #362020) – pleasant vanilla and cinnamon mixes with mocha and dark fruit. (**¹/₂+) – **SB**

France (Burgundy) ...

Maison Roche de Bellene 2011 Cuvee Reserve Bourgogne Pinot Noir (\$17.95 - #299859) – nice spice, earthy, sour cherry and strawberry; nice Pinot Noir especially for the price. (****+) – **SB**

France (Loire) ...

Domaine Bonnard 2012 Sancerre (\$22.95 - #140525) – elements of grass, gooseberry and stony; very pleasant. (**¹/₂+) – **SB**

Domaine Jacky Marteau 2012 Sauvignon Touraine (\$13.95 - #745349) – green pear, lime skin and citrus pith. (** ½+)

France (Midi) ...

Chateau La Bastide 2010 (\$13.95 - #360487) – dark fruit and gentle spice mix. (** ½+)

Domaine de l'Arjolle 2011 Z de L'Arjolle Zinfandel (\$19.95 - #346072) – yes, a Zinfandel from France: smoky, tar, vanilla, blackberry, well-balanced, smooth and supple, really interesting and quite complex definitely one for the curious. (****)

France (Rhône) ...

Pierre Amadieu 2011 La Grangeliere Vacqueyras (\$21.95 - #076398) – raspberry and cassis on the palate with a nice cherry presence and acid kick. (****) – **SB**

Germany ...

Bischofliche Weinguter Trier Dom Riesling 2011 (\$16.95 - #359596) – has the right mix of stony talc, apple and peach pits with nice acidity for balance. (****) - **SB**

Italy (Piedmont) ...

La Pieve 2009 Barolo (\$29.95 - #213132) – sweet strawberry nose, gentle herbs and sweet dried fruit, good acidity and hints of tannin. (****) - **SB**

Italy (Sicily) ...

Cusumano 2010 Noa (\$19.95 - #109512) – rich black fruit with touches of cocoa, chocolate-mocha on the palate, a little vanilla and leather; quite robust. (****) – **SB**

Italy (Tuscany) ...

Geografico Montegiachi Chianti Classico Riserva 2009 (\$24.95 - #962142) – rustic and smoky, earthy, herbal and good tannins backbone. (** ½+)

New Zealand ...

Clifford Bay 2011 Pinot Noir (\$19.95 - #309500) – lifted fruit with good acidity and an intense finish. (****)

Portugal ...

Agua Moura em Vinhas Velhas Reserva Tinto 2008 (\$16.95 - #354738) – soft, supple and juicy with nice black cherry and plum. (****)

Calem Special Reserve Tawny Port (\$17.95 - #349365) – spiced orange peel and hazelnuts: nutty, spicy with good acidity and orange-caramel on the finish. (****)

Spain ...

Adaro 2009 (\$29.95 - #345686) – chocolaty notes that make the wine quite appealing. (** ½+)

Olivares Altos de la Hoya Monastrell 2011 (\$13.95 - #163154) – raspberry and plum with intermingling of cherry; a real pleasant sipper. (** ½+)

United States (California) ...

Beaulieu Vineyard 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$34.95 - #203828) – plenty of chocolate and blackberry with black cherry and spice. (****)

Ca'Momi 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$21.95 - #315002) – mocha and chocolate, cassis and vanilla; interesting and atypical but tasty and worth it. (****) - **SB**

Cline 2012 Viognier (\$17.95 - #128421) – melon and pineapple with hints of peach skin and some strong ginger notes. (** ½+)

Kendall-Jackson 2010 Avant Cabernet Sauvignon (\$19.95 - #353060) – big hit of cherry and ripe blackberry greet the nose and then follow on the palate. (****)

Ravenswood 2011 Vintners Blend Petite Sirah (\$18.95 - #161554) – brambly and blackberry with black cherry and a nice touch of peppered-plums. (** ½+)

What I'll Be Lining Up For – January 4, 2014 ...

Bischofliche Weinguter Trier Dom Riesling 2011 (\$16.95 - #359596) – Germany

Ca'Momi 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$21.95 - #315002) – United States

Domaine de l'Arjolle 2011 Z de L'Arjolle Zinfandel (\$19.95 - #346072) - France

Maison Roche de Bellene 2011 Cuvée Reserve Bourgogne Pinot Noir (\$17.95 - #299859) – France

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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