

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday March 29, 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 ... Welcome to Vintages (**WtV**)

The Skinny ... The highlight is "30 reasons to love Vintages" – a self-congratulatory nod to the "world's best purveyor of liquor" ... while I disagree with that last statement the release is not a bad one and there are six must gets aside from the usual good stuff to try.

Argentina ...

Casarena Sinergy Reserva Red 2011 (\$18.95 - #366104) – sweet red fruit with a coffee middle. (** ½+)

Colonia Las Liebres 2012 Bonarda (\$14.95 - #219303) – Bonarda is Argentina's answer to a juicy Cali-Merlot and this one delivers. (** ½+)

Las Moras 2010 Black Label Cabernet/Cabernet (\$15.95 - #357921) – blackberry, tobacco and tea leaf. (** ½+) - **WtF**

Australia ...

D'Arenberg 2012 The Hermit Crab Viognier / Marsanne (\$19.95 - #662775) – Bosc pear, lemongrass and pineapple core. (** ½+)

Evans & Tate 2010 Metricup Road Shiraz (\$22.95 - #606905) – nice flavour with a raspberry-plum core. (****)

The Black Chook 2012 Shiraz/Viognier (\$17.95 - #66738) – best Chook I've tried since the very first one I've tried; nice balance of dark fruit, touches of floral and a nice whack of spice on the finish. (****) – **WtV**

Yalumba 2011 The Strapper GSM (\$19.95 - #295873) – nice blend with fruit that stays and plays with nice herbal and spice notes instead of going out on its own to overpower the wine with a nice finish. (****+)

Canada (British Columbia) ...

Gray Monk 2011 Pinot Noir (\$19.95 - #251835) – definitely earthy, smoky with smoked cherry and violets. (** ½+) - **WtV**

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

[Coyote's Run 2012 Red Paw Vineyard Chardonnay](#) (\$21.95 - #336115) – **** ½ (**WtV**)

[Featherstone 2011 Four Feathers](#) (\$14.95 - #341586) - ** ½+

[Featherstone 2011 Red Tail Merlot](#) (\$19.95 - #131540) - ** ½+

[Fielding Estate 2013 Rosé](#) (\$15.95 - #53421) - ** ½+ (**WtV**)

[Rockway Vineyards 2011 Small Lot Reserve Red Assemblage](#) (\$16.95 - #321893) - ** ½+

[Tawse 2012 Gamay Noir](#) (\$18.95 - #322545) - ****

Chile ...

Vina Tarapaca 2011 Gran Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon (\$17.95 - #018721) – there's the mint I'm looking for mixed with black fruit and spice; here's a typical, good Chilean Cab. (** ½+)

France (Alsace) ...

Joseph Cattin 2011 Hatschbourg Pinot Gris (\$20.95 - #260240) – while not a fan of Alsatian Riesling their Pinot Gris and Gewurtraminers do float my boat; this shows a thickness and

sweetness that only Alsace can do, and do it with balance. (** ½+)

France (Bordeaux) ...

Chateau Fleur de Jean Gue 2010 (\$24.95 - #729137) – spiced-cocoa and anise with black cherry, blackberry and oak. (** ½+) – **WtV**

Clos Lunelles 2010 (\$49.85 - #258053) – heavy smoke and coffee notes with anise and pumped up tannins. (** ½+)

France (Burgundy) ...

Louis Michel & Fils 2012 Chablis (\$25.95 - #356758) – pretty with apple, citrus and mineral, not as expressive on the palate, but plenty pleasing. (** ½+)

Maison Roche de Bellene 2011 Vieilles Vignes Chassagne-Montrachet (\$49.95 - #241158) – has lots of character, good intensity and nice weight. (** ½+)

France (Loire) ...

Cave du Haut-Poitou 2012 Vallee Loire Sauvignon Blanc (\$16.95 - #357293) – New Zealand like nose but with restraint shown on the palate with grapefruit pith and grassy notes and a long finish. (****)

France (Rhone) ...

Domaine la Guintrandy 2009 Vieilles Vignes Cairanne (\$19.95 - #362624) – savoury and juicy with raspberry, black cherry and some fine herbal and spice notes. (****+) - **WtV**

Italy (Marche) ...

Casal di Serra 2011 Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico Superiore (\$17.95 - #268169) – fresh and lively with grapefruit pith and zest, a touch of floral, and there's a pseudo thickness here that's pleasantly welcome. (****)

Italy (Piedmont) ...

Gemma Giblin 2006 Riserva Barolo (\$40.95 - #185025) – has an unexpected sweetness especially for a Barolo, there's cran-raspberry elements with a beauty of a spice character. (****)

Italy (Tuscany) ...

Assolati Montecucco Sangiovese 2008 (\$26.95 - #369405) – sweet red fruit core backed by a nice spice and touch of floral. (****)

Dievole 2010 La Vendemmia Chianti Classico (\$19.95 - #283101) – nice hit of strawberry-plum jam at its core. (** ½+) – **WtV**

Giordano 2010 Chianti Riserva (\$17.95 - #366971) – shows some elegance of cassis, plum and black raspberry. (** ½+)

New Zealand ...

Cloudy Bay 2012 Pinot Noir (\$39.95 - #598813) – big flavour and juicy core, earthy, cranberry, hint of spiced plum and black cherry. (** ½+)

Coopers Creek 2012 Select Vineyards Dillons Point Sauvignon Blanc (\$19.95 - #066092) – typically tinged with the usual Sauv Blanc character plus grapefruit blossom; this is a lively one and pretty at that. (** ½+) – **WtV**

Invivo 2012 Pinot Gris (\$18.95 - #367771) – shows some interesting Gewurztraminer character which is unexpected in Pinot Gris; pretty floral and spiced orange, weird yet wonderful. (****)

Kim Crawford 2013 Pansy! Rosé (\$17.95 - #650325) – lots of strawberry and cherry with some bubblegummy notes to the nose, but finishes drier than expected. (** ½+)

Omaka Springs 2010 Falveys Vineyard Pinot Noir (\$24.95 - #367714) – much more toned down and elegant, shows depth with spice, gentle fruit and good acidity. (****)

Portugal ...

Dalva 1997 Colheita Port (\$30.95 - #169045) – hazelnut, fig, dried cherry and spice; all make for a tasty treat. (****)

Lua Nova Em Vinhas Velhas 2010 (\$15.95 - #266882) – silky smooth with lots of plum; easy to drink. (** ½+)

South Africa ...

Bayten 2012 Chardonnay (\$17.95 - #269084) – plump white fruit with apple, pear and peach adding vanilla and hints of butterscotch for good measure all with a spicy finish; nice weight without the weighted price, this is good value Chard. (****)

Spain ...

Aljibes 2007 Red (\$20.95 - #359976) – pleasant and silky smooth. (** ½+)
Barahonda 2011 Sin Madera Monastrell (\$15.95 - #366823) – juicy, choco-blackberry, black cherry, blueberry and sweet tobacco; this one has great value in the bottle. (****) - **WtV**

United States (California) ...

Carol Shelton 2010 Monga Zin Old Vine Zinfandel (\$25.95 - #282525) – surprisingly delicious: cola-spice-vanilla, oddly approachable. (****+)
Chateau St. Jean 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$29.95 - #977173) – nice balance of fruit and spice along with vanilla, black cherry and spice. (** ½+)
Rutherford Ranch 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$21.95 - #73817) – black and blue fruit with a chocolate core. (** ½+) - **WtV**

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

Blindfold 2012 (\$39.95 - #374207) – California, USA - ****+
Bonaccorsi 2010 Sebastiano Vineyard Pinot Noir (\$51.95 - #368225) – California, USA - ****+
Chateau Calon-Segur 2010 (\$149.85 - #259010) – Bordeaux, France - ****
Chateau Giscours 2010 (\$124.85 - #259093) – Bordeaux, France - ** ½+
Chateau Lafon-Rochet 2010 (\$84.85 - #257295) – Bordeaux, France - ** ½+
Le Clos Jordanne 2011 LCJ Vineyard Pinot Noir (\$45.00 - #33902) – Ontario, Canada - ****+
Les Hauts de Pontet-Canet 2010 (\$62.85 - #258491) – Bordeaux, France (****+)
Tawse 2010 Robyn's Block Chardonnay (\$45.95 - #662841) – Ontario, Canada - ****+

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

Andretta 2007 Brunello di Montalcino (\$53.95 - #367367) – Tuscany, Italy ****
Chateau Batailley 2010 (\$68.95 - #259218) – Bordeaux, France ****
Rodney Strong 2010 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (\$59.95 - #382325) – California, USA ****+

What I'll Be Lining Up For – March 29, 2014 ...

Barahonda 2011 Sin Madera Monastrell (\$15.95 - #366823) – Spain
Bayten 2012 Chardonnay (\$17.95 - #269084) – South Africa
Carol Shelton 2010 Monga Zin Old Vine Zinfandel (\$25.95 - #282525) – California
Domaine la Guinrandy 2009 Vieilles Vignes Cairanne (\$19.95 - #362624) – France
The Black Chook 2012 Shiraz/Viognier (\$17.95 - #66738) – Australia
Yalumba 2011 The Strapper GSM (\$19.95 - #295873) – Australia

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 ...

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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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