

OntarioWineReview Vintages Release Guide

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



OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday November 24, 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

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

Foci ... Premium Spirits (PS) and Our Finest (OF)

The Skinny ... "Our Finest" means "really pricey", but these wines can also be really good; so the If You Can Afford It section is larger than usual - but think about it.

Australia ...

Ballast Stone 2009 Shiraz (\$18.95 - #167064) - chocolate, licorice stand out amongst the dried fruit nuances and white pepper, raspberry lingers on the finish with big 15% alcohol. (****+)

Dutschke 2009 Willow Bend Shiraz/Cabernet/Merlot (\$21.95 - #285445) - plenty of supple dark fruit, blueberry, jammy and sexy; nice bite on the finish. (** 1/2+)

Massena 2006 The Eleventh Hour Shiraz (\$48.95 - #39073) - big, robust and flavourful; spicy mid shows amidst the fruit and chocolate. (****)

Mount Langi 2006 Ghiran Cliff Edge Shiraz (\$28.95 - #287235) - chunky, chewy, dark fruited and spicy with black pepper and baking chocolate. (****+)

Peter Lehmann 2008 The Futures Shiraz (\$24.95 - #606780) - quite a bit of plum, mocha and raspberry. (** 1/2+)

Taltarni 2008 Pyrenees Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (\$24.95 - #940692) - fig and blackberry, chalky tannins with nice spice to the finish. (** 1/2+)

Canada - Ontario ... (click on wine for full review)

[Featherstone 2011 Rose](#) (\$14.95 - #117861) - ** 1/2+

[Henry of Pelham 2011 Cabernet Icewine](#) (\$39.95 - #672402) - ****+

[Konzelmann 2009 Vidal Icewine](#) (\$24.95 - #167866) - ** 1/2

[Malivoire 2009 Moira Chardonnay](#) (\$39.95 - #243113) - ****+

[Stratus 2009 Red](#) (\$44.20 - #131037) - ** 1/2+ (OF)

[Stratus 2009 White](#) (\$44.20 - #660704) - ****

Chile ...

Arboleda 2010 Carmenere (\$19.95 - #46284) - big minty note, blackberry jam with an element of cassis and cocoa. (** 1/2+)

Santa Carolina 2009 Specialties Dry Farming Carignan (\$15.95 - #213520) - chocolate, raspberries, fine tannins and a mineral stoniness. (****)

France - Alsace ...

Pierre Sparr 2011 Reserve Gewurztraminer (\$17.95 - #747600) - rose petal, spicy, lychee, nice sweet-ish finish. (** 1/2+)

France - Beaujolais ...

Villa Ponciago 2011 La Reserve Fleurie (\$21.95 - #299917) - cherry and spice with delicate herbal notes and nice tannins. (** 1/2+)

France - Bordeaux ...

Chateau Haut-Bertinerie 2009 Elegance Merlot/Cabernet (\$18.95 - #295857) - soft, supple with cassis, coffee and a nice tannin balance. (** 1/2)

France - Burgundy ...

Maison Roche de Bellene 2010 Cuvée Reserve Bourgogne (\$16.95 - #299859) - pretty nice ripe

cherry fruit on the nose while the palate dials back the fruit and adds some spice and tannins to the mix. (****)

Maison Roche de Bellene 2010 Vieilles Vignes Volnay (\$39.95 - #299875) - decent amount of spice to fruit ratio with the right oak/tannin/acid mix. (****)

France - Champagne ...

Charles de Cazanove 1er Cru Brut Champagne (\$43.95 - #299750) - creamy, almond butter and lemon crisp; yum. (****+)

Charles Mignon Premier Cru Grande Reserve Brut Champagne (\$47.95 - #173484) - biscotti, almond, tangerine and dried apple skin. (****)

France - Rhone ...

Domaine Grand Veneur 2010 Clos de Sixte Lirac (\$22.95 - #76349) - plum, cherry, chocolate with hints of vanilla and floral notes, shows a nice dusty-minerality. (**** 1/2)

Domaine la Roquette 2009 Chateauneuf-du-Pape (\$46.95 - #70862) - leaner than expect but with good raspberry / smoky notes and a good plum finish. (****+)

Germany ...

C.H. Berres 2009 Urziger Wurzgarten Riesling Kabinett (\$19.95 - #207274) - sweet, talcy and laden with peach. (** 1/2)

Greece ...

Domaine Spiropoulos 2011 Mantinia (\$14.95 - #710970) - nice citrus and apple tones but lacks complexity. (** 1/2)

Italy - Friuli ...

Torre Rosazza Friulano 2010 (\$19.95 - #289520) - nice apple with pear skin aromas, nice clean finish with hints of baked fruit. (** 1/2+)

Italy - Piedmont ...

Filippino 2011 Moscato D'Asti (\$17.95 - #729160) - it's Moscato, it's lovely and delicate and fun. (** 1/2)

Italy - Tuscany ...

Canonica a Cerreto 2007 Chianti Classico Riserva (\$18.95 - #275867) - has nice stuffing of dark fruit and mocha notes. (****)

Volpaia 2009 Chianti Classico (\$23.95 - #953828) - has real charm and approachability, blackberry, cassis and spice. (****+)

Italy - Veneto ...

Musella 2009 Vigne Nuove Valpolicella Superiore (\$15.95 - #205757) - pleasant fruit, spice, herbs, good acidity and tannins; one of the better straight Valpol's I've had in awhile. (****)

New Zealand ...

Framingham 2010 Pinot Gris (\$19.95 - #981803) - nice balance, apple and pear with a tang of citrus zest. (** 1/2)

Oyster Bay 2011 Pinot Noir (\$19.95 - #590414) - spiced cherry with raspberry and cigar smoke. (** 1/2)

Thornbury 2011 Sauvignon Blanc (\$18.95 - #734798) - full on grapefruit aromas with a pith palate with hints of fresh grass; nice minerality, melon and pith on the finish. (****)

Wither Hills 2011 Pinot Gris (\$19.95 - #214999) - refreshing with citrus zing, hint of ginger-beer and delicate sweetness. (** 1/2+)

Portugal ...

Cortes de Cima Red 2009 (\$21.95 - #677971) - plum and dark cherry with impressive vanilla laced tannins. (** 1/2+)

Messias 2007 Late Bottled Vintage Port (\$16.95 - #140863) - we're robbing the house of Messias at this price; spicy, cherry, cassis, blackberry which follow on the palate with a slight orange peel note. (****)

South Africa ...

Mulderbosch 2011 Sauvignon Blanc (\$18.95 - #933424) - light lemony-grapefruit with a grassy note; tasty. (** 1/2+)

United States - California ...

First Press 2010 Chardonnay (\$19.95 - #199810) - nice bright fruit freshness, quite tasty with a fine finish with good acidity. (****)

Fog Crest 2010 Laguna West Pinot Noir (\$46.95 - #294835) - really ripe cherries, sweet spices-cinnamon and long spicy finish. (****)

Gnarly Head 2010 Old Vine Zin Zinfandel (\$17.95 - #678698) - cherry cola and vanilla, simple but tasty for Zin fans. (** 1/2+)

Kenneth Volk 2008 Santa Maria Cuvee Pinot Noir (\$36.95 - #291039) - sweet red fruit, a cherry, rose petal nose on a spiced-strawberry palate; nice white pepper finish. (****)

Paul Hobbs 2008 Crossbar Cabernet Sauvignon (\$38.95 - #118695) - cherry, currants, chocolate, vanilla; smooth on the mid-palate with a spiced-up finish. (****+)

Rodney Strong 2009 Reserve Chardonnay (\$34.95 - #210039) - very vanilla with lots of lovely butter. (** 1/2)

United States - Washington ...

Columbia Crest 2009 Grand Reserve Chardonnay (\$14.95 - #366542) - gentler, kinder version of Chardonnay, showing a light hand with oak. (** 1/2)

If You Can Afford It - wines worthy of their high price ...

Beringer 2009 Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (\$119.95 - #149955) - **** (OF)

Chateau de Beaucastel 2010 Chateauneuf du Pape (\$89.95 - #711317) - **** 1/2 (OF)

Concha y Toro 2008 Don Melchor Cabernet Sauvignon (\$79.95 - #315176) - **** (OF)

Dom Perignon Brut Rose Champagne (\$299.95 - #91777) - **** (OF)

Elderton 2008 Command Single Vineyard Shiraz (\$89.95 - #716142) - ****+ (OF)

Far Niente Estate 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$139.95 - #539098) - ****+ (OF)

Grand Marnier Cuvee du Cent Cinquantenaire (\$239.95 - #94649) - **** (PS)

Joseph Phelps 2008 Insignia (\$224.95 - #710400) - **** 1/2 (OF)

Kilikanoon 2009 Green's Vineyard Shiraz (\$74.95 - #0006007) - **** (OF)

Kistler 2010 Sonoma Mountain Chardonnay (\$85.95 - #183921) - **** (OF)

Le Clos Jordanne 2009 Le Grand Clos Chardonnay (\$65.00 - #34561) - *** 1/2 (OF)

Ornellaia 2009 (\$189.95 - #722470) - **** 1/2+ (OF)

Philippe Colin 2008 Chassagne-Montrachet Les Chaumees 1er Cru (\$69.95 - #299933) - **** (OF)

Sassicaia 2009 (\$179.95 - #480533) - *** 1/2+ (OF)

Shafer 2010 Red Shoulder Ranch Chardonnay (\$62.95 - #45583) - **** (OF)

Smith Woodhouse 2000 Vintage Port (\$79.95 - #140277) - ****+ (OF)

Tommasi 2008 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico (\$99.95 - #297994) - ****+ (OF)

What I'll Be Lining Up For - November 24, 2012 ...

Ballast Stone 2009 Shiraz (\$18.95 - #167064) - Australia

Domaine Grand Veneur 2010 Clos de Sixte Lirac (\$22.95 - #76349) - France

Maison Roche de Bellene 2010 Cuvee Reserve Bourgogne (\$16.95 - #299859) - France

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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michael@ontariowinereview.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

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