

OntarioWineReview: Vintages Release Saturday September 27, 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

Wine colour indicators - Red, White, etc.

The Foci … Thanksgiving (**TG**), New World Ground Breakers (**NWGB**) and Portugal (**PO**)
The Skinny … It's a crazy mishmash of subjects this time round. I have to be honest I have no idea what makes up a Thanksgiving wine, so please don't ask; as for the rest of the wines, there are some good ones to choose from and the LCBO is ramping up for the holidays and some of the big priced bottles are starting to make an appearance.

Argentina …
Catena Alta 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon ($45.95 - #959965) – great fruit, mostly red with a touch of vanilla smokiness. (****) – **NWGB**
Trivento 2012 Reserve Syrah/Malbec ($13.95 - #492702) – good spice and plenty of meaty-cassis. (*** ½+)

Australia …
All Saints Muscat ($20.95 - #382127) – raisiny sweet goodness in every glass all with nice balancing acidity. (****+)
Holm Oak 2012 Pinot Noir ($28.95 - #376863) – nicely spiced, cran-cherry, plum and herbal. (****)
Jim Barry 2012 The Lodge Hill Shiraz ($26.95 - #998476) – this one delivers on what Shiraz form Australia has always promised. (*** ½+)
John Duval Plexus 2009 Shiraz/Grenache/Mourvedre ($49.95 - #73049) – thick and deliciously rich, lots of dark berries, rich plum, chocolate and black tea notes. (****)
The Lackey 2012 Shiraz ($17.95 - #5199) – eucalyptus, white pepper and gentle plum. (*** ½+)
Two Hands 2012 Angels' Share Shiraz ($25.95 - #9480) – meaty with plum, blackberry and spice. (****) – **NWGB**
Two Hands 2012 Lily's Garden Shiraz ($56.95 - #683086) – if you're looking to get me something for my birthday in December this'll do the trick nicely: lots of character and depth of flavour, on second thought better get me two. (**** ½) - **NWGB**
Willow Bridge 2012 Bookends Fume Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon ($24.95 - #380162) – nice balance of fruit to oak without going over the top on either. (*** ½+)
Yalumba 2011 Patchwork Shiraz ($23.95 - #98392) – backs off the rich and overly extracted fruit for something a little more spicy and peppery with blueberry on the finish. (****+)

Austria …
Tegernseerhof 2012 Smaragd Bergdistel Gruner Veltliner ($24.95 - #377606) – not like any Gruner I've had lately – and I've been to Austria this year – I really liked the subtle pea pod on the finish. (*** ½+)

Canada *(British Columbia) …*
Burrowing Owl 2012 Chardonnay ($33.95 - #208694) – delightfully fruit-driven with apricot, peach, pear along with some almond notes and a subtle creaminess. (****) - **NWGB**
Canada *(Ontario) … click on wine name for full review*
Chateau des Charmes 2012 Paul Bosc Estate Chardonnay ($21.95 - #287268) - ****+
Flat Rock Cellars 2013 Good Kharma Chardonnay ($16.95 - #356873) - *** ½+ (TG)
Rockway Estate 2011 Small Lot Meritage ($19.95 - #388264) - ****+ (**NWGB**)

Chile …
*Canepa Finisimo 2012 Gran Reserva Cabernet Sau*vignon ($17.95 - #211920) – rich with dark fruit and mocha. (*** ½+) – TG
Errazuriz 2011 Single Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon ($23.95 - #203364) – minty and fruit driven wine with hints of herbal. (****) – **NWGB**
Ventisquero 2011 Grey Single Block Carmenere ($19.95 - #325415) – there's a sweet vanilla not upfront then delivers on the blueberry, cassis and spice with a hint of mint on the finish. (****+)

France *(Beaujolais) …*
Vignerons de Bel-Air Hiver Gourmand Morgon 2012 ($17.95 - #383778) – good dark cherry fruit with a touch of cranberry skin. (*** ½+) - **TG**
France *(Bordeaux) …*
Chateau D'Aiguilhe 2010 ($42.85 - #257600) – blueberry, blackberry, cassis, mocha, anise; quite sensual. (**** ½)
Chateau Fonreaud 2010 ($30.95 - #243311) – exceedingly woody but there is quite a bit of black fruit and smokiness. (*** ½)
Chateau St. Georges 2010 ($39.95 - #960310) – nicely textured dark fruit, mocha, coffee and a real depth of flavour. (****)
Chateau Vrai Caillou 2009 ($15.95 - #348292) – dusty, smoky with good dark fruit. (*** ½)
France *(Loire) …*
Clos le Vigneau 2012 Vouvray ($19.95 - #318840) – pleasant with nice sweetness to dry ratio of pear and green apple … pricy but tasty. (*** ½+)
France *(Midi) …*
Domaine Lafage 2011 Vignes Magiques Grenache/Syrah ($17.95 - #383752) – nice fruit / spice mix. (*** ½+)
France *(Rhone) …*
Domaine Brusset 2012 Tradition le Grand Montmirail Gigondas ($29.95 - #960104) – hints of mint hit the nose while on the palate dark berries, plum and pepper. (****)
Domaine des Andrines 2012 Cotes du Rhone ($17.95 - #380592) – fully fruited, mainly blueberry and raspberry and vanilla; good value. (****)

Germany …
Wegeler Rudesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling Kabinett 2012 ($25.95 - #378083) – first the sweetness hits you, then comes the talc/mineral on the mid-palate then it's the dry-like finish; this one has real depth of character. (****) - **TG**

Italy *(Alto Adige) …*
Nals Margreid 2012 Pinot Grigio ($16.95 - #290924) – easy drinking Grigio with a certain amount of citrus rind to give it bite. (*** ½+) – **TG**
Italy *(Campania) …*
La Guardiense Janare Senete Falanghina 2012 ($14.95 - #387647) – honeysuckle and dried rose petals on the nose, then there is some good melon rind, acidity and floral on the palate that seems to linger pleasantly. (*** ½)
Italy *(Piedmont) …*
Castello di Nieve 2012 Montebertotto Arneis ($18.95 - #378018) – melon, peach, grapefruit cocktail and subtly spiced. (*** ½)
Italy *(Puglia) …*
Giordano 2011 Ricarico ($19.95 - #230581) – leather, coffee bean, vanilla and cherry. (*** ½+)
Italy *(Tuscany) …*
Badia a Coltibuono 2010 Chianti Classico ($24.95 - #295964) – nice spice and dried cherry fruit, this one is in a more rustic style but it delivers. (****)
Marchesi de'Frescobaldi 2011 Tenuta di Castiglioni ($21.95 - #145920) – blueberry, black currant, smoked-cherry and vanilla. (****+)

New Zealand …
Babich 2013 Black Label Sauvignon Blanc ($17.95 - #009142) – this one is very subtle for a New Zealand Savvy B, gentle flavours with touches of lemon/grapefruit pith, dried grass and acidity that just balances the whole lot out … a real beauty. (****+) – **TG**

Kim Crawford 2012 Small Parcels Rise & Shine Pinot Noir ($29.95 - #35337) – intense cherry leads the charge here. (****)

Portugal …
Quinta de Pancas 2010 Seleccao do Enologo ($18.95 - #380931) – nose may not impress but the palate doth deliver subtle spice with plum, raspberry and strawberry fruit. (*** ½+) – **PO**
Quinta Do Coa 2012 Vinho Tinto ($21.95 - #182295) – plum and vanilla with Zinfandel-like sweetness before floral components take over. (*** ½+) – **PO**
Terra D'Alter 2011 Reserva ($17.95 - #266916) – plum, cherry, vanilla and anise. (*** ½+) - **PO**

South Africa …
Meerlust 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon ($29.95 - #283390) – stinky yes but the palate is what really delivers here. (*** ½)

Spain …
Alto Moncayo 2011 Veraton ($29.95 - #173211) – hedonistically delicious, full of ripe red and black fruit with vanilla backing; good acidity and spiced finish. (****+)
Bodegas Vizcarra 2010 JC Vizcarra ($30.95 - #214650) – full of rich dark fruit and a spicy finish. (****)

United States *(California) …*
Belle Glos 2012 Las Alturas Vineyard Pinot Noir ($44.95 - #212076) – here's a Zinfandel-style Pinot that's big, rich and fruity with black plum and cherry. (****) – **NWGB**
Buena Vista 2012 The Count Founder's Red ($24.95 - #382267) – great sweet fruit from beginning to end. (*** ½+)
Gloria Ferrer Blanc de Noirs ($28.95 - #925735) – nice acidity, a little floral, some biscuit notes along with lemon rind and crisp finish. (****)
Gloria Ferrer 2011 Chardonnay ($24.95 - #83345) – pear and apricot take center stage with nice crispness to the finish; looking above crisp seems to be a thing with Gloria. (*** ½+)
Guenoc 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon ($19.95 - #104240) – nice balance of acid with dark mocha and dark fruit and a spice finish. ($19.95 - #104240)
Napa Cellars 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon ($25.95 - #135145) – a nice Cab that delivers on exactly what people want: good fruit and drinkability by the glassful. (*** ½+)
Seghesio 2011 Old Vine Zinfandel ($49.95 - #56879) – always good this time with spiced plum, cherry cola, anise and ripe cherry. (****+)
United States *(Oregon) …*
Plowbuster 2012 Pinot Noir ($25.95 - #387019) – pretty vanilla, dusky cherry and hints of plum. (****) - **TG**
United States *(Washington) …*
Charles Smith 2013 Boom Boom! Syrah ($21.95 - #301499) – has a sweetness to the fruit on the front palate and develops some nice meatiness on the finish. (*** ½+) - **NWGB**

In-Store Discoveries – wines that appear on the shelves of your local Vintages outlet …
Domaine des Malandes 2012 Cotes de Lechet Chablis 1er Cru ($35.95 - #384214) – Burgundy (****)
Domaine Grand Nicolet 2012 Les Esqueyrons Rasteau ($35.95 - #163105) – Rhone (****+)
Domaine Les Aphillanthes 2012 1921 Rasteau ($37.95 - #332064) – Rhone (****)

If You Can Afford It – wines worth their high price …
Chateau Leoville-Las Cases 2006 ($299.00 - #566679) – Bordeaux (****+)
Domaine Marchand-Grillot 2012 Morey-Saint Denis ($54.95 - #210906) – Burgundy (****+)
Kistler 2012 Les Noisetiers Chardonnay ($75.95 - #251223) – California (*** ½+)
Faust 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon ($59.95 - #238261) – California (****)
Marchesi de'Frescobaldi 2010 Mormoreto ($63.95 - #951210) – Tuscany (****+)
Shafer 2011 One Point Five Cabernet Sauvignon ($93.95 - #45476) – California (****+) – **NWGB**
Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 2011 Artemis Cabernet Sauvignon ($64.95 - #708982) – California (****+)

What I'll Be Lining Up For – September 27, 2014 …
Babich 2013 Black Label Sauvignon Blanc ($17.95 - #009142) – New Zealand
Domaine des Andrines 2012 Cotes du Rhone ($17.95 - #380592) – Rhone, France
Marchesi de'Frescobaldi 2011 Tenuta di Castiglioni ($21.95 - #145920) – Tuscany, Italy
Ventisquero 2011 Grey Single Block Carmenere ($19.95 - #325415) – Chile

Happy Shopping

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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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