MichaelPinkusWineReview's Vintages Release Report

An easy to understand, unpretentious view of this week's Vintages release.

Vintages Release: Saturday February 7, 2015

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 … South of the Equator (**SoE**), Italy's Native Varietals (**IGV**) and Valentine's Day (**V**)
The Skinny … The South of the Equator focus is just another way to get the popular Chile and Argentina into the mix, while the Native Varieties of Italy is a real bust because there is just nothing new from any new producers – this is a real bust, as my colleague John Szabo says, " ... I can't shake the feeling that this is a hopelessly corporate release, playing it ultra, ultra-safe. To build a feature around barely ten grapes, all of which Ontarians have seen countless times before, and from producers already well drilled on the LCBO shipping and payment process (there's not a single new producer included in the feature) seems to me a huge opportunity lost …" – once again it's the same old stuff; very disappointing. Can someone also explain to me why the wines that are coming from the least distance (ie: Ontario) aren't represented in full at the tasting the media was at? I call that straight laziness.

Argentina …
Fabre Montmayou 2011 Gran Reserva Malbec ($22.95 - #279802) – black cherry, blackberry, blueberry, full of fruit with just enough spice and tannin to keep it so very honest. (****) – **SoE**
La Posta 2013 Pizzella Family Vineyard Malbec ($16.95 - #166298) – approachable and fruity style; foregoes complexity for family friendliness. (*** ½+)

Australia …
Rolf Binder 2010 Heinrich Shiraz/Mataro/Grenache ($24.95 - #90258) – has some jammy qualities but there's enough in the tank to make it more than its fruit: spice, white pepper and vanilla. (****)
Thorn-Clarke 2012 Shotfire Shiraz ($21.95 - #18796) – nice dark fruit, smoke, spice, good complexity of tannins and fruit; better with each sip. (****)

Canada *(Ontario) … click on wine name for full review*
Burnt Ship Bay 2013 Pinot Grigio ($14.95 - #404939) - *** ½+
Coyote's Run 2012 Red Paw Vineyard Pinot Noir ($24.95 - #79228) - ****+
Featherstone 2011 Select Late Harvest Cabernet Franc ($19.95/375ml - #210757) - *** ½+
Henry of Pelham 2013 Cabernet Icewine ($39.95/200ml - #672402) – *** ½+
Henry of Pelham 2012 Reserve Baco Noir ($24.95 - #461699) - ****
Kacaba 2013 Riesling Reserve ($17.95 - #404087) - *** ½+
Redstone 2011 Chardonnay ($18.95 - #398966) - ****

Chile …
Concha y Toro 2011 Terrunyo Peumo Vineyard Block 27 Carmenere ($29.95 - #562892) – mint, blackberry, black cherry, hint of herbal; rich and mouthfilling. (*** ½+) - **SoE**

France *(Bordeaux) …*
Chateau Marjosse 2010 ($21.95 - #404459) – blueberry skin with nice tannins and sour black cherry; there's even a smokiness and spice on the finish. (*** ½+)
Mission St. Vincent 2013 Sauvignon Blanc ($14.95 - #403030) – nice bit of grassy and lime juice with touches of apple and pear. (*** ½+)

France *(Burgundy) …*
Faiveley 2012 Mercurey ($24.95 - #341925) – black cherry with mineral and acid to balance. (****)
Herve Azo Beauroy 2012 Chablis 1er Cru ($29.95 - #276451) – lime meringue, mineral along with hints of dried apple. (*** ½+)
France *(Loire) …*
Domaine de Saint-Pierre 2013 Sancerre ($26.95 - #170258) – mineral, racy acidity, apple skin and tangerine. (*** ½+)
France *(Midi) …*
Saint-Roch 2012 Vieilles Vignes Cotes du Rousillon ($15.95 - #195107) – there's something here that's quite appealing: strawberry, mocha, vanilla, plum … or is it the price. (*** ½+)
France *(Rhone) …*
Delas Saint-Esprit 2012 Cotes du Rhone ($15.95 - #729962) – full-on red fruit and spice nicely mingles with pepper notes; long finish with good tannins. (****+)
Les Grandes Serres 2011 La Cour des Papes Chateauneuf-du-Pape ($44.95 - #651661) – chocolate, cherry and mocha. (*** ½+)

Germany …
Reichsgraf Von Kesselstatt 2008 RK Riesling ($15.95 - #733295) – sweetness and acidity in spades with mineral up the yin-yang, fruit is peach and pear nectar and a long finish. (****+)

Italy *(Piedmont) …*
Abbazia 2013 Moscato D'Asti ($14.95 - #265397) – pineapple galore with lovely light fizz and sweetness; makes me think 'summer bring it on'. (*** ½+)
Italy *(Puglia) …*
Feudi Salentini 2012 125 Negroamaro del Salento ($14.95 - #395350) – lovely red fruit with black cherry, smooth and silky. (*** ½+) – **IGV**
Italy *(Tuscany) …*
Argentiera 2011 Poggio Al Ginepri ($23.95 - #394957) – smooth dark fruit and spice with a little chocolate. (*** ½+)
Fattoi 2009 Brunello di Montalcino ($39.95 - #33498) – depth of character with cherry, mocha, tobacco and spice. (****) – **IGV**
Poggio Al Tesoro 2010 Sondraia ($49.95 - #292391) – big fruited, dark and full of spice with a touch of cassis and mocha which rounds out the finish. (****)
Salchetto 2011 Vino Nobile di Montepulciano ($29.95 - #685180) – cherry and sour cherry with spice yet pleasantly smooth. (*** ½+) – **IGV**
Villa Cafaccio 2011 Chianti Classico ($19.95 - #176776) – nicely spiced with a rustic finish. (*** ½+) – **IGV**
Volpaia 2011 Chianti Classico ($27.95 - #953828) – cedar, cherry, black plum, spice and acidity. (*** ½+)

New Zealand …
Eradus 2013 Sauvignon Blanc ($18.95 - #225557) – big grass and grapefruit with floral and green apple. (****)
Giessen 2012 The Brothers Pinot Noir ($29.95 - #402685) – dark, brooding fruit but subtle Pinot character makes this a welcome wine to put on your table with a good spice finish. (****) - **SoE**

Portugal …
Montefino 2005 Tinto Reserva ($17.95 - #165159) – pretty with lots of nice fruit and spice like plum and white pepper; a sweet yet balanced finish. (*** ½+)

South Africa …
Rustenberg 2011 Shiraz ($19.95 - #399246) – dark fruit, smoke, clove, well-spiced and good tannins. (*** ½+) – SoE
Simonsig 2012 Chenin avec Chene Chenin Blanc ($25.95 - #282772) – nice creamy texture with beeswax and pineapple, really pretty with hints of vanilla on the finish. (****) - **SoE**

Spain …
Lacrimus 2009 Crianza ($17.95 - #359968) – savoury with meat pie and licorice, hints of herbal on mid-palate and spiced cherry. (*** ½+)

Pinyolet 2010 Seleccion ($26.95 - #338897) – good fruit but not overpowering; raspberry, currant, white pepper and a nice minerality that steps in on the finish; this one shows some elegance. (****)
Vinas Elias Mora 2011 Tinta de Toro ($17.95 - #209650) – baked cherry and plum. (*** ½+)

United States *(California) …*
Angeline 2013 Signature Reserve Pinot Noir ($19.95 - #396143) – quite the out-pouring of dirty cherry, raspberry, strawberry and delicate spice. (*** ½+)
Carmel Road 2012 Pinot Noir ($26.95 - #37986) – fruit driven Monterey Pinot Noir, typically Cali in nature but it shows restraint. (*** ½+)
Chandon Rosé Sparkling ($33.95 - #405555) – a nice strawberry-lime breadiness; pretty in pink and rather tasty. (****) – **V**
Cosentino 2012 CigarZin Old Vine Zinfandel ($21.95 - #269340) – sweet bacon and spice with cherry-cola and plum. (*** ½)
Girard 2012 Chardonnay ($26.95 - #276675) – creamy vanilla, apple butter and cinnamon with some praline notes for a finish; pure California Chardonnay. (****+)
Lander-Jenkins 2012 Spirit Hawk Cabernet Sauvignon ($17.95 - #161398) – a boat full of raspberry with a vanilla-cola note to the finish. (*** ½+)
Wheelhouse 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon ($24.95 - #396176) – full of dark fruit at a medium bodies level, cherry and smoke, spice and herbal notes with a finish that bites back. (****)
United States *(Washington) …*
Columbia Crest 2012 H3 Les Cheveux Red ($19.95 - #287425) – nice blueberry and cherry with blackberry and subtle spice. (*** ½+)

In-Store Discoveries – wines that appear on the shelves of your local Vintages outlet …
Domaine Jean-Marc Morey 2011 Chassagne-Montrachet Les Caillerets 1er Cru ($85.95 - #205955) - ****+
Domaine Pinson Freres 2012 Montmain Chablis 1er Cru ($46.95 - #340240) - ****
Huff 2012 Cuvee Janine Sparkling Wine ($29.95 - #405035) - ****+
Louis Jadot 2009 Beaune Bressandes 1er Cru ($67.95 - #403097) - *** ½+
Poplar Grove 2012 Chardonnay ($29.95 - #338434) - ****
Robert Craig 2011 Affinity Cabernet Sauvignon ($74.95 - #71175) - *** ½+
Tabarrini Colle Grimaldesco 2009 Montefalco Sagrantino ($49.95 - #403139) - ****+

What I'll Be Lining Up For – February 7, 2015 …
Delas Saint-Esprit 2012 Cotes du Rhone ($15.95 - #729962) – France
Reichsgraf Von Kesselstatt 2008 RK Riesling ($15.95 - #733295) – Germany

Happy Shopping

About MichaelPinkusWineReview: a website devoted to the love, enjoyment and promotion of wines, wineries and lots more wine related issues – visit **www.michaelpinkuswinereview.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 …
Follow Michael Pinkus, the Grape Guy's (almost) daily ***Tweets*** at **http://twitter.com/TheGrapeGuy**.
You can become a friend on ***facebook***: **http://www.facebook.com/?ref=home#!/mepinkus**.

"**Linked In**" folks can find Michael at **http://ca.linkedin.com/pub/michael-pinkus/14/704/4b8**

To contact me with feedback, article ideas, comments, concerns or questions – email **michael@ontariowinereview.com**. I look forward to hearing from you!

© OntarioWineReview.com 2013. All rights reserved.
You may use the content of this newsletter by including full credit to Michael Pinkus, Grape Guy and a link to **www.ontariowinereview.com**