

OntarioWineReview

A bi-weekly newsletter dedicated to helping you discover Ontario's best Wines and Wineries.
Enjoyment comes from understanding - Passion comes from understanding more.



OntarioWineReview Newsletter – 175
February 9, 2012

In this Edition

- **OntarioWineReview:** *Apathetic Ontario*
 - **Grape Guy's Picks of the Bunch:** *Karlo, Pinot and Merlot + More*
 - **Bi-Weekly OWR Updates:** *Ottawa Life posts - On the Road reviews*
 - **Contest Update:** *Chateau Meroux Winners*
 - **Wine Event Spotlight:** *Cuvee is on the horizon*
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OntarioWineReview: *Apathetic Ontario*

If you like taking it and you know it welcome to Ontario
If you like taking it and you know it welcome to Ontario
If you like taking it up the rear,
And paying more, it's oh so clear,
If you like taking it and you know it welcome to Ontario

I just figured if the LCBO could change the lyrics to songs to suit their purpose, then so could I. I wrote this one on the fly as I was listening to the liquor board tell me how great they were. What am I talking about? The ad nausea (with particular emphasis on the "ad") of the LCBO commercials throughout the holiday season and now into the new year that seemed to dominate the airwaves.

Now don't get me wrong, I believe that every company has the right to advertise ... but that's usually because they are using their own money. The LCBO is wasting ours (the taxpayers) to tell us things we already know. We already know that if we want wine or spirits we have to go to the LCBO ... there's no other game in town (for beer we have a choice, theoretically). So I keep wondering who are they advertising to? Visitors to the province?

Not only are they advertising, but they are really blowing their wads by picking up the rights to popular songs to bastardize the lyrics ... take this one over the holidays for instance, to the tune of 'Sunny Side of the Street' they changed the lyric to: "the LCBO can't be beat" ... well that's an overstatement of the obvious, because 1) where else are you gonna shop and 2) there's a subliminal undertone that says: we can't be stopped; or am I just reading into this? The LCBO is bastardizing some of our most beloved tunes for the sake of marketing - not that this is the first or will it be the last (by any company) ... but the point is, they don't have to. I have made this point before when talking about the LCBO Food & Drink magazine, which competes directly with other publications in the province for advertising dollars; a magazine that is paid for by the people for the people, which sounds great and a pillar to build a country on, but not when you are competing against the very people who paid the money in the first place (magazine editors, publishers, writers, etc. are taxpayers too). One of the sad realities is that with each bottle a publisher buys they are paying to put themselves out of business.

It's bad enough that the LCBO are the only game in town to buy booze ... it's bad enough that they waste millions of dollars a year on fancy stores (when they don't have to) ... it's bad enough that a government run monopoly competes against their own populace and private enterprises for advertising revenue ... but now they have to blow dollars on advertising themselves, buying expensive jingles and song rights ... is that where you want your tax dollars to go? Could we not find

better uses for this money, seriously? And what happened to social responsibility? They are advertising so we'll buy more - does that seem counter-productive to the social responsibility pact. Heck, I don't see this many ads for Premier Liquors out of Buffalo, and they have competition.

In the coming weeks we'll look a little deeper into the LCBO, see what the Auditor General had to say, and read what the pundits are talking about. Find out why our booze prices are being raised mainly because we can't be trusted as a society to police ourselves when it comes to drinking the devil's liquid. I just can't believe that all this is going down and nobody seems to be saying anything on the subject. Over the past few weeks I have been listening to CFRB: John Tory and Jim Richards both made mention, Richards went as far as to speak with Chris Layton (media relations mouthpiece for LCBO) - while both announcers shared their outrage with listeners over various aspects of the LCBO's conduct (John: advertising; Jim: price raising), the apathetic Ontarians who bothered to call in had very little to say on the matter, many believing the LCBO is doing a bang up job.

Over the holidays a fellow by the name of Randy emailed me with the following question: "why does there seem to be no movement afoot to garner a huge mass of folks to take on the LCBO monopoly? Is it partly because folks can't afford to? [Or] Maybe it's out there and I just haven't come across it ... I can't understand why there isn't a website or whatever helping to build popular support to allow private wine sales, free of LCBO interference."

After seeing and listening to the masses over the last few weeks Randy, the only thing I can tell you is that we live in a lame-ass province where we are so used to taking it we have become lemmings in the process: I think you have your answer based on what has happened over the last two months ... there is no will and no gumption either on the part of politicians or the public to do anything in this province. The Auditor General smacked the LCBO for their pricing: nothing - the government just raised booze prices: no reaction ... apathy is the answer my friend ... apathy. So that's why the lyrics to this newest bastardize song to enter your life fits ... everybody sing along with me, to the tune of 'If You're Happy and You Know It':

If you like taking it and you know it welcome to Ontario
If you like taking it and you know it welcome to Ontario
If you like taking it up the rear,
And paying more, it's oh so clear,
If you like taking it and you know it welcome to Ontario



Grape Guy's Picks of the Bunch: *Karlo, Pinot and Merlot + More*

Karlo Estates 2010 Chardonnay CHOA - \$25.00 (W)

<http://www.karloestates.com/>

It's not often that something interesting gets done to Chardonnay, and I do mean interesting. This is an experimental wine from Richard Karlo that sees him put the wine in a mixed CHOA barrel (which is grown entirely in Prince Edward County), for 3 months. Big deal right? Chardonnay in wood for three months ... but what is this CHOA? It's a barrel made from Cherry, Hickory, Oak and Ash ... now that is truly interesting. The nose is toasty with vanilla, baked pear and cr me brule notes; the palate offers up a vanilla toastiness with lovely white fruits, that develop as the wine sits in the glass, with a clean and tasty cr me brule finish ... nice job on this one, Chardonnay with a new spin. Price: \$25.00 - Rating: *** 1/2+

Muscedere 2009 Pinot Noir - \$25.00 (W)

<http://www.muscederevineyards.com/>

There are a few grapes that you don't hear much about when discussing the Lake Erie North Shore,

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Pinot Noir is one of them ... that's because the folks in the LENS know that Pinot needs a cool climate, and even though they are in The Great White North of Ontario they are in the hottest part, and winemakers down there don't want to waste too much time on a grape that they might not get good results from. The boys at Muscedere seem to have a different philosophy, they'll give anything a go, and because of this they are one of the few growing and making Pinot Noir in the area. The nose on this wine just stinks, it was hard for me to push through - but I am a professional so I followed thru - after all we drink wine for the taste, right? Boy I am glad I did. The palate more than makes up for that stinky nose with loads of sour cherry and spice with a touch of the earthy. Really quite the palate pleaser, and hopefully with some time that nose will straighten up and fly right. Price: \$25.00 - Rating: ****

G. Marquis 2009 Merlot (Red Line) - \$N/A

<http://www.gmarquis.com/>

This is the second line of wines from a little known winery called Magnotta, maybe you've heard of them. Anyway, Magnotta has a property on Highway 55, that leads into Niagara-on-the-Lake, called the G. Marquis vineyard - and I can only suspect that this is one of the wines that comes from that property. You should start to see these wines popping up either at the LCBO or in Magnotta wine stores. The line has three faces, the blue line, the red line and the silver line ... this is from the middle tiered red line. The wine is soft and juicy with plenty of red fruit on the nose, the palate follows suit and has a real approachable red and black licorice finish. Price: \$N/A - Rating: *** 1/2+

More from the Must Pile ...

Wines tasted last year that did not make it into last year's publication ...

[13th Street 2010 June's Vineyard Riesling - \\$17.95](#)
[Closson Chase 2009 South Clos Chardonnay - \\$39.95](#)
[Erie Shore Vineyard 2010 Cabernet - \\$13.95](#)

Availability legend: W (Winery) – L (LCBO/Vintages) – WTH (Winery to Home - OL (On-Line)).



Bi-Weekly OWR Updates: *Ottawa Blog posts, On the Road reviews*

Weekly Ottawa Life Blog Entries:

[Niagara's Best Comes to Town](#)
[Wines to Look Forward to](#)
[This Port is Good for the Storm](#)

On the Road with the Grape Guy:

Trips, tours and tastings – join me as I review the highs, and sometimes, the lows

[Wrapped Up in the Valley 2011](#)
[Arrival in Verona, Italy](#)
[Verona Italy: Anteprema Amarone '08](#)
[Verona, Italy - Day 3: Winery Tours](#)
[Verona, Italy - Day 4: More Winery Tours](#)
[Verona, Italy - Day 5: Even More Winery Tours](#)
[Wines of Chile Tasting - September 2011](#)

Lost and Found (blog)

Wines that got "lost" in my cellar - some are Treasures others Trash ... Find out what happened

Nothing New This Week

[Taste it Again Grape Guy \(blog\)](#)

Find out what has happened to some of my favourites over the years

[Tawse 2006 Echos Bistro Red](#)
[Two Southbrook wines 2001 and 2002](#)

[What I'm drinking Tonight \(blog\)](#)

When it's not an Ontario wine, here's what I'm pulling out of the cellar

[Many New Posts Added](#)
including older Ontario, Chile, Australia and 12 year old Greek

[Vintages Release \(blog\)](#)

[February 4, 2012 - Vintages Release](#)

Advertisement



a red carpet
celebration of excellence
in ontario winemaking

march 2 to march 4 2012
proceeds to Niagara Community Foundation

CUVÉE
2012

GALA • AWARDS • EN ROUTE

The Event ... Cuvée En-Route ... March 2 - 4

Tour and taste along the wine route Friday, Saturday and Sunday, when the wineries roll out the red carpet to feature special tasting flights embodying the best of the best of Ontario wines, chosen by the winemakers. On Saturday and Sunday, Cuvée en Route guests have the exclusive opportunity to shop for highly prized Cuvée award winning wines direct from the wineries.

The Contest ... Ticket Giveaway ...

And we here at OntarioWineReview we have two pairs of passes to give away ... the skill testing question is as follows: To what major Hollywood event is Cuvée compared to? And, the tie breaker, in honour of the directors of winemaking who produce the wines that were judged: Name the five directors nominated at this years (above intimated) awards ...

Send your name, address with postal code and phone number to michael@ontariowinereview.com - and write Cuvée 2012 in the subject line. All emails are to be date and time stamped before Friday February 17 at 11:59pm ... Good Luck.

Advertisement



Contest Update: Chateau Meroux Winners

A big thank you to all who entered the Chateau Meroux contest ... out of the many entries received three caught our eye as having not only the correct but the best responses to the skill testing questions. If you remember the questions were:

"What futuristic series did Christopher Lloyd star in as Doc Brown?

As tie breaker: name both his co-stars - hint: one man / one machine?"

The correct answers were Back to the Future, Micheal J. Fox and a Delorean ... but some of you really let you inner geek shine on this one:

Blake Dunlop of London threw in a little Canadiana with his answer: "The Christopher Lloyd movies were the "Back to the Future" series. He starred with Canadian Michael J. Fox & a Delorean Gull-

wing automobile (that was assembled in New Brunswick, I believe). Good luck to me!"

While Lisa Liscomb at first decided she was playing Jeopardy!, "What is 'Back To The Future', Alex?" Before going all technical on us: "Technically, though, he had three co-stars - wonderful Canadian actor Michael J. Fox as Marty McFly, the DeLorean, and his other constant companion, his dog Einstein. Although, the 1955 Doc Brown's dog was Copernicus... yeah, I'm a geek."

Finally, Mark Savage gave more than enough of an answer to earn himself a copy of the movie: "In answer to your Skill Testing Question, the movie franchise that starred Christopher Lloyd as Doc Brown was "Back To The Future" (parts 1, 2 and 3), which also starred Michael J. Fox as Marty McFly, and featured a modified DeLorean DMC-12 as a plutonium-powered time machine."

Congratulations to all our winners. See above for our next contest ... tickets to Cuvee weekend's En-Route program.



Wine Event Spotlight: *Cuvee is on the horizon*

To learn about Cuvee see above for details and your chance to win passes to Cuvee En-Route ... <http://www.cuvee.ca/>

OntarioWineReview's bi-weekly newsletter is devoted to the love, enjoyment and promotion of the wines of Ontario and the wineries that make them.



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. Forward this newsletter to your mom in Mimico your uncle in Uxbridge, your great aunt in Grand Bend or any other family member or loved one that you know needs good wine advice.



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 us with feedback, article ideas, comments, concerns or questions – email michael@ontariowinereview.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

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