

## 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 – 22**  
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#### OntarioWineReview: *WINERY REVIEW - Lakeview Cellars Estate Winery*

*Our winery reviews are done blindly – the wineries have no prior knowledge of our visit and are not made aware until just before we leave their premises that they have been “spot-checked” – this ensures that we get the same level of service that anybody walking off the street would get.*

Driving up the hill to Lakeview Cellars, which appears, without fanfare, on your left when you reach the top of the hill, you notice that Lakeview has a very unpretentious nature about it, in fact, it doesn't look like much at all: a little brick building, seemingly no more than one story high, located on a hill overlooking the Vineland countryside. Approaching the front door, the first thing you'll see is the face of “old man winter” blowing out his puffed cheeks, guarding the threshold, or maybe it's a prediction - “what's inside will blow you away”. Once inside there's a selection of fabulous wines that should be shouted from the rooftops and praised to the hilt ... and the best thing is, there's something for every budget and taste – old man winter just might be on to something.

This little brick building of a winery, in the middle of nowhere, was started in 1991, and since then, has produced some pretty tasty product – including the now defunct 'Autumn Leaves' dessert wine (a mistake in the production of ice wine/late harvest wine that yielded one of the most exceptional dessert wines I have ever tasted); if Lakeview ever wanted to re-create that mistake, they could sign me up for a case!

These days, Lakeview boasts a portfolio of approximately 25 wines, ranging from dry Gerwurztraminers and Rieslings to sweet Riesling, Vidal and Cab Franc icewines. During our samplings, we found great quality in both their reds and whites, with major differences between regular and reserve wines (sometimes such differences are hard to determine – leading one to believe that the only difference is the label on the bottle). In this case: both the Pinot and Pinot Reserve, as well as Cab Franc and Franc Reserve showed definite and pronounced differences in both flavours and smells.

Plenty of staff was on-hand both at the tasting bar and behind the scenes, helping to usher in bus tours and other large groups that would otherwise be milling about aimlessly. A friendly, knowledgeable staff that was willing to pour and chat no matter how busy it got, without making you feel rushed or like an inconvenience. On the busy Saturday of our visit, during the Niagara Wine Festival, 2 bus tours and a room full of visitors did not faze the staff ... they went from person to person able to give the same level of service with a smile, an anecdote about themselves or the wine and other personal comments making everyone feel welcome. The place never seemed over-crowded or the staff, over-whelmed; and while looking out the big bay windows of the store, I could see how the bus-touring groups were being handled with seamless proficiency.

Of course it all comes down to the wine, and whether it's worth the visit; and Lakeview has lots of choices to please the palate. So take a trip down to Niagara and belly up to their tasting bar, enjoy the warm friendly atmosphere and the wine. Lakeview has plenty of both: and we're sure you'll find something you like. Old man winter was right on with his prediction.

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**Grape Guy's Pick of the Bunch : *The Brave and The Bubbly***  
Visit [www.lakeviewcellars.on.ca](http://www.lakeviewcellars.on.ca) for more details or to purchase these great wines.

Lakeview Cellars 2002 Cabernet Franc - \$14.95

A little kick, a little jump, a little bite – a little time. Sounds like a review for the latest Jean-Claude Van Damme film, but it's actually an able description of this wine. Still a little closed, it shows signs of black cherry and blackberry on the nose ... the taste, once you get past the thick tannin grip, is black – as in berry and raspberry; but there is an underlying sweetness that is apparent right at the tail-end in the back palate. Given some time, this is going to be a dazzler of a wine. I would recommend another 2 to 5 years of ageing, and then it'll be smooth as silk and mighty tasty too because there's lots of promise in this bottle right now.

Lakeview Cellars 2003 Blanc de Blanc - \$8.95

A semi-sweet sparkler that goes well on its own or with appetizers, heck I would even put it in with your orange juice for a tasty "Morning Glory" – weekends only. Great citrus and cotton candy nose with the taste of grapefruit cocktail juice. There are lots of bubbles here, but refreshing and a pleasure to drink. Quick word of warning: be careful opening this one or you'll be wearing a quarter of the bottle ... but at least you'll smell nice, trust me.

These wines are only available at the winery,  
or by calling the wine store for shipping information.



**The Grape Vine :** *Submit your opinion and become a part of the OWR tasters circle.*  
**Should either of these wines be a candidate for our Ontario Wine Review Crystal Cork Awards? Chime In!**

Contact us at [michael@ontariowinereview.com](mailto:michael@ontariowinereview.com)



**The Wow Factor :**

*Every winery has a uniqueness to it ... be it the tasting bar, the barrel cellar, the gift shop ... something besides just the wine – it is here where we highlight another reason you should visit.*

It's not called Lakeview for nothing. When standing in the parking lot, orient yourself north towards the lake. On a clear day, you can see clear across to Toronto and the focal point, of course, the CN Tower. The incline of the hill upon which Lakeview is situated is just enough to make the view pretty impressive as you look down upon Vineland and the surrounding area. Now look to your right and you'll see the lush greenery of Lakeview's vineyards. The building may not be much to look at, but why spoil beautiful scenery like this with an overblown pretentious building. Keeping it sedate was Lakeview's best idea and part of its charm. Let the view speak for itself.



**Wine Event Spotlight :** *London's first ever wine show*

What are you doing this weekend? Maybe you should take a little trek to London for the first ever (and hopefully annual) London Wine and Food Show taking place in the Progress Building at the Western Fairgrounds January 20-22 ... Doors open at noon on the Friday and close Sunday at 6pm. Admission is only \$8.00 and the guest and exhibitors list looks pretty impressive.

For more information visit <http://www.westernfair.com/shows/winefood.html>



## Contact Michael Pinkus Grape Guy

**OntarioWineReview's** Newsletter is designed to enhance the appreciation of wine, in particular Ontario's wines and wineries and to develop a better understanding about how best to enjoy both.

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to other wine lovers!

To contact us with feedback, article ideas, comments, concerns or questions – email [michael@ontariowinereview.com](mailto:michael@ontariowinereview.com) We look forward to hearing from you!

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