

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 – 50
February 15, 2007

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OntarioWineReview: *WINERY REVIEW – Colchester Ridge 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.

Just up the road, (a little to the west, to be more specific) from Lake Erie North Shore's (LENS) planned-to-be premier wine destination (Viewpointe), is Colchester Ridge Estate Winery (CREW). They may not have the selection of their bigger and more impressive neighbour, the view, or even the fancy digs, but they do have somethings that will definitely make them stand out in the region ... great wine, a passion for the art of making it, and owners that are dedicated to making their winery dreams a reality.

CREW is located at 108 County Road 50 in Harrow, and as you travel down their driveway you pass through their vineyard, at the end of which you'll find their small wine store, production area, and parking lot. Disembark from your vehicle and look around – you'll notice you are surrounded by vineyards and at the height of the growing season lush green is about all you can see from this vantage point. You can actually walk right up to the vines because they are just steps away from where you park. You can also wonder around unhindered amongst the machinery and buildings that house the production area, getting a full feel for this small but impressive upstart winery. Walking into the wine store you find yourself in the middle of some very small surroundings and sparse shelving (most of the wine is housed in the back – there is just enough shelf space for a case or two of each wine – currently 3 in total). A small 5-foot long tasting bar and a four foot long check out desk is about all the furnishing the room can handle. But the wines you are about to taste are excellent, there's not a bad bottle in the place: Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer, and a delicious Cabernet-Merlot blend.

CREW is owned and operated by Bernard and Nancy Gorski. I met Bernard, for the first time, at the Southwestern Ontario Vintners Association (SWOVA) vintage tasting at Viewpointe in August, 2006; where he informed me that his winery was indeed open and just a stone's throw from where we stood. Bernard also proudly holds the position of president of SWOVA – an organization that brings the grape growers and winery owners in the area together to help promote their wines and to organize more wine related events for the region. The first time I met his wife, Nancy, was that very same day, though a few hours later, at the wine store. She flew into the tasting room wearing a large floppy hat and dressed to the nines. There was about half a dozen people in the room (the tasting room can hold maybe 8-10 comfortably), with more coming up the drive. She apologized to the lone girl working the room; plucked the hat from her head (hat-head be damned) and began pouring samples and greeting people with her bright, charming smile and warm, welcoming nature. Turns out she had just come from a relative's wedding at which she had the honour of singing. Talk about dedication to ones work and craft, she barely had time to take her accolades for her performance before she jumped into her car and whisked herself back to the hustle and bustle of her burgeoning wine business. And Bernard, obviously, never even attended the wedding, nor did he hear his wife sing, choosing instead to promote his wines at the tasting event. It's this dedication that will make the Gorski's winery flourish and adds passion to their impressive wines. Combine that with their beautiful surroundings and positive attitude and the Gorski's have all the makings of another must-visit in the LENS area.



Grape Guy's Picks of the Bunch: Two Outta Three

For directions and more information visit www.colchesterridge.com

Colchester Ridge Estate Winery 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot - \$13.95

It's at a time like this that I wish I could put a glass of wine in your hand and tell you what's going on inside and see if you agree ... but because I can't, I'll ask you to grab yourself a bottle of this wine and follow along. Colchester Ridge may be one of the newest wineries in the Lake Erie North Shore area, but Brian Gorski shows a deft touch in crafting this lovely red. Notes of licorice, cassis, blackberry, vanilla, oak and coffee on the nose. The taste is just as lovely, lots of black fruit and oak, some raspberry and a café mocha finish. Plenty of zip, from the acidity, and some tannin bite, that suggests some good ageability for this wine. Honestly, if could put a glass of this wine in your hand right now I would – but then you would just crave your own bottle, so let's just cut out the middleman (the glass) and go pick one up.

Colchester Ridge Estate Winery 2005 Gewurztraminer - \$ 12.95

A simple yet delicious Gewurztraminer, the nose is floral scented with some well integrated citrus; the taste is totally in sync with the nose: floral and lime tastes, hints of typical Gewurztraminer spiciness also find their way through on the tongue; making this one heck of a wonderful yet elegant sipper.

These wines are available at the winery only.



Weekly Wine Notes and More

The Grape Guy presents "Weekly Wine Notes"! A savoury selection of Ontario wines to impress, enjoy, or just plain drink! A NEW Wine Selection is added to the Wine Review Section every Tuesday!

Here are this week's Weekly Wine Notes – which are posted on the website every Tuesday:

[Ridgepoint Wines 2004 Meritage](#) and [Pelee Island Winery 2005 Zweigelt-Gamay Noir](#)

There are also two additional articles in the [On the Road with the Grape Guy](#) section:

Reports from [The 2005 Vintage Sneak Peak Winemaker's Dinner at Stoney Ridge](#) – proving that the 2005 reds are shaping up to be awesome; and [This year's Niagara Icewine Festival](#)



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.

For me clutching a fully ripened bunch of grapes sends chills down my spine, maybe I should have gone with the moniker "The Grape Geek", but CREW gives all who visit the opportunity to get up close and personal with the grape. Not 20 feet from where you disembark from your car lies the vineyard and you can leisurely walk around them, check out pruning technique and vine development and depending on the season, clutch grapes. For wine fans this truly is a thrill.



Wine Event Spotlight: Ontario's Wine Oscars – Cuvee March 2-4, 2007

Cuvee is fast approaching and it's an event that has been kept kinda under wraps for some time now, but it's time it comes out of the closet and becomes the showcase event that it was meant to be and truly is. Cuvee is the awards event where Ontario salutes its own. "By its own" I mean Ontario winemakers getting together and they choose the best of the best from Ontario. Think of it as the Ontario Winemakers peer awards, which they like to think of as the "Oscars" of Ontario winemaking. Of course you benefit with a number of events to attend and enjoy a wine soaked weekend while hob-nobbing with the who's who and the upcoming of the Ontario wine industry. The best way to do that is at the Gala dinner; or you can tour the wineries and taste the wines by purchasing an "enroute" passport that will get you into some special tasting held at various wineries – some even showcase past winners, upcoming releases, and other star vintages/wines. Get all the details by visiting

www.cuvee.ca.

Passport Giveaway: Once again this year OntarioWineReview has secured a few “en-route” passports to giveaway. Send your email to michael@ontariowinereview.com with “Cuvee Giveaway” in the subject line – don’t forget to include your name, address (with postal code) and phone number. Deadline for entries is 11:59pm Wednesday February 21, 2007. Please be aware that we do pass your information along to the folks at Cuvee so they can keep you abreast of next year’s event.

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



Psst, Pass It On ... keep the good wine flowing. Forward this newsletter to your mom in Milton, your son in Smith Falls, any other family member or loved one that you know needs good wine advice.

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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