

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 – 55
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News ... *We start this newsletter off with some news about OntarioWineReview and the website:*

The Weekly Wine Note and On the Road with the Grape Guy have a new home, in blog format.

Check them out at <http://ontariowinereviews.blogspot.com> and <http://ontheroadwithgrapeguy.blogspot.com> and see these newest additions to the OntarioWineReview world of wine. You can also access these new sections directly from the newsletter and read up on what has been added in the past two weeks. You also have the option of subscribing to the Weekly Wine Note by going to the bottom of the blog page and clicking on "Subscribe to: Posts (Atom)" that way you will be updated every Tuesday when the Weekly Wine Note is published.



OntarioWineReview: *WINERY REVIEW – Angels Gate 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.

While traveling south on Mountain View Road, you'll feel the rolling and rising of the country side, and as you come over one of the many crests, you'll see Angels Gate Winery at the top of a hill on your right (just across from [Thirty Bench](#)); a picturesque white building that whispers calm and a stately charm ... it actually looks more monastic than winery-astic (then again, weren't some of the first winemakers monks?). You'll drive through the gates and down the long driveway that cuts through the vineyard and into the parking lot, which is situated below the winery building; you'll have to hike along a little path to get up there (would this be what those monks would have considered a pilgrimage, minus the car of course?). On your way up, you pass a pond on your left, whose claim to fame (according to the sign), is being home to turtles (which I have been fortunate enough to see) and lots of small-eyed frogs (again I know this because I have spied them, as they were spying me). As you walk along the pathway, be sure to also focus some attention to your right, where large stones and a hill were formed to create a creek and a small waterfall (this is your moment of zen-like appreciation before going in to worship at the alter of Dionysus). Finally, you arrive at the landing and encounter the large heavy entry doors that lead into the winery; give a good pull and you're in the lobby. Welcome to the wine monastery called Angels Gate.

To your right, is the stairway to heaven – actually I have no idea where these stairs go, (I have never been up there) but the analogy would make sense. To your left, lies the wide open wine store with its' shelving along the walls and bunk-style wine racks placed, seemingly, haphazardly throughout the store, though I am sure nothing here is accidentally placed. At the back left hand side, you'll find the knick-knack corner filled with games, napkins and other paraphernalia. Stone tiles with insights painted on them like "I like cooking with wine, sometimes I even put it in the food." And napkins with more pearls of wisdom "Here we only drink fine wines, did you bring any?"

Shift your gaze to the back right-hand corner and you'll see the doors that lead outside to the patio where during spring, summer and fall, Angels Gate serves light lunches and snacks on the verandah that overlooks

the property, the vineyard, the creek and stone-works. On a clear day, you can see clean across lake Ontario and over to Toronto. The food, as described on the menu, sounds wonderful and the food coming out smells great. One of these days, I plan to take the time to stop for lunch. On a bright, sunny, summer Niagara afternoon, while overlooking the peaceful countryside, the pairing of Angels Gate wines with these tapas and light meals must be a beautiful experience. But let's step back inside and peruse more of the wine store shall we?

The tasting bar takes up most of the rear of the store. A long bar, the colour of oak, can easily accommodate a dozen or so guests comfortably, maybe more. Glasses line the shelves behind the bar, while on the counter immediately behind, a sink holds the bottles of whites and rose with a cooling blanket cover laid over top to help keep them chilled.

On this chilly winter's day, Candace proved to be a breath of fresh air with her playful banter, disarmingly friendly nature and warm smile. There's a point of view in the winery visiting world that I ascribe to: the wine is important, but it's the pourer (the person you are sharing the experience with) that makes it fun and brings it to life – this philosophy is much along the same line as: "it's all about the company you keep or the situation you're in that makes the wine taste better ... no matter what the wine." Occasionally, this kind of situation can cause you to buy a questionable bottle – just because it reminds you of a good time.

Angels Gate is a pleasure to visit: a beautiful location, friendly staff and good wines make for a visit that revitalizes your faith in the wine region as respite from the hectic nature of every day life. And now Angels Gate is making a big turn in its' history with a new winemaker, the delicate hand of Natalie Spykowski is gone and now the wines are in the veteran hands of Philip Dowell, formerly of [Inniskillin](#). I look forward, as you should, to this new direction.



Grape Guy's Picks of the Bunch: *Whites that are just this side of heaven*

For directions and more information visit www.angelsgatewinery.com.

Angels Gate 2005 Single Vineyard Gewurztraminer - \$18.95

Gewurztraminer was one of my first wine loves. It's duality of spicy and fruity made it an interesting and tasty wine for a budding young wine lover; it also helped bridge the gap between sweet fruit wines and dry whites. This wonderful Gewurztraminer does exactly what I remember Gewurztraminers being able to do: the potential of turning a sweet fruit wine lover into a grape wine lover. But this wine goes even further, because it'll turn even die-hard red drinkers back to whites, if only for the afternoon, or for a few glasses, at the very least (it will remind them of the complexity which whites can show). Sourcing the grapes from the much ballyhooed Wismer Vineyard in Beamsville, this wine starts off with a spice and lime nose, then moves easily into lychee, mango, honeydew, apple and some subtle perfumeyness. Then it's time for the sippin'. This wine produces a plethora of great flavours in the mouth, including (but not exclusively): peach, lychee, pear, cantaloupe and hints of spiciness. Finally, after I had made my notes, I read the back of the bottle (as I am sometimes apt to do) – here it made mention of "rose water" – I sniffed and sipped again ... I'll give them the rose part (I called it perfumey); but anyway you slice it, this is one delicious wine.

Angels Gate 2006 Sussreserve Riesling - \$13.95

Angels Gate has made this wine for as long as I can remember, though the past few vintages have not lived up to what I remember it being the first time I tried it; thankfully, this one brings me back to those good old days when the mere mention of this wine got my heart all aflutter, and my salivary glands working overtime. This one is a very palate friendly white that is ripe for the summer months ahead, made in a low alcohol, sussreserve, Germanic-style. Sussreserve, means that a little of the sweet juice from the original pressing of the grapes is added back to the finished wine. It is definitely a wine with a wide appeal: it's great for your non-wine drinking friends because of its sweetness, it's perfect for lovers of German Rieslings, and it's perfect for you because it's just plain good. At only 9.7%, it is one of the lowest alcohol by volume Rieslings in Ontario ... perfect for afternoon luncheons and sipping (no feeling drunk before 5 here, even if you do finish the bottle all by your lonesome). The nose is sweet peach, citrus and pineapple juice, with hints of ripe apples and pears. The mouthwatering acidity keeps the sweetness in check, so that it's not too much to handle: white peach, mango and limeade all follow the up front apple beginning. Delicious, delightful ... and as Cole Porter would say, "de-lovely". Share with friends and enjoy the afternoon.

Hot Tip on a Hot Wine: Not to take the focus away from Angels gate, but I just got word that time is running

out to take advantage of one of the best wine bargains in Niagara. [Calamus Estate Winery's 2005 Calamus Red](#) is an overachiever at its current pre-release price of \$13 ... price goes up June 1st, 2007. Get this wine now by any means necessary, at this price you are literally stealing it out of their hands.

These wines are available at the winery, while the Sussreserve is also at the LCBO.



Weekly Wine Notes and More

The Grape Guy presents the "Weekly Wine Note"! A savoury selection of Ontario wines to impress, enjoy, or just plain drink! A NEW Wine Selection is added to <http://ontariowinereviews.blogspot.com> every Tuesday!

Here are the Weekly Wine Notes that were added to the Blog over the past two weeks:
[Fielding Estate Winery 2006 Fume Blanc](#) and [Calamus Estate Winery 2005 Calamus Red](#)

Also look for these reports in the NEW On the Road with the Grape Guy section:
[Ontario Wine Awards Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony](#)
[Greek Wine Road Show](#)



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.

Sure the store is beautiful, open and impressive, but it's the trek to get there that's the real WOW of this visit. The pond, with its promise of aquatic life beneath the surface, will get you to peer over the edge and into its murky waters. Sometimes, if you look hard enough, you'll find a large turtle scurrying along the edge of its aqua domain as it seeks the shelter in its wetland home, plunging into the pond from the side; or maybe you'll see pairs of Kermit-eyes from a few frogs as they poke their collective heads up for a look see ... or sometimes careful observation will reveal just one. On the other side of the path, there's a drop to the rocks and creek below ... gaze long enough at either one of these natural/man-made wonders and you might find yourself getting lost in the tranquility of it all. Whatever your pleasure: wetlands or waterfalls, do take a few moments to enjoy the view – you'll be glad you did.



Wine Event Spotlight: 3 Events for May and one for Tomorrow

This time round this part should be called the "Wine Events Spotlight" cause in lieu of a ticket giveaway I have four to promote:

We'll start in Prince Edward County (PEC), where on Saturday May 19 the second annual "Terroir" festival will be taking place in the Crystal Palace at the Picton Fairgrounds. All the PEC wineries will be there sampling their newest vintages and some old favourites. Visit www.thecountywines.ca for more details on the who, what, where and how much (\$20 in advance / \$25 at the door).

Three F'in wineries in Niagara are presenting "The F'in Winery Tour": Fielding, Flat Rock and Featherstone ... get it. Saturday and Sunday May 5 & 6. F'ing wines will be paired with F'ing food and you'll have an F'ing good time. Man, that was fun to write. Tickets are \$10 per person, contact the F'ing wineries for details or visit their respective websites.

Warren Porter of Iron Gate Cellarage has been after me for weeks to announce this, it's in the Events section of the website, but I thought I would mention that Decant takes place tomorrow in the BCE Place Galleria, Toronto. It's an opportunity to try, and buy, wines that are not available through the LCBO – check out www.decant.ca for details.

Finally ... the Kiwi's are coming! The annual New Zealand Wine Fair returns to Toronto May 17th at the Design Exchange (234 Bay Street). Robert Ketchin, representative for New Zealand wines, told me to tell you to visit www.nzwine-events.ca and use the password: "nzwf7" to purchase your tickets.

Whatever you're doing be careful and have fun.

Recent Winners: Winners of the Sante Sip, Savour and Shop passports were Lee Alcock (Richmond Hill);

Christine Bradshaw (Toronto) and Dan Herald (Toronto). Information about other events that are happening during the Sante Festival, ticket prices and more can be found at www.santewinefestival.net.

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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