

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 – 11
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OntarioWineReview: *WINERY REVIEW - Sanson 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.

Our second stop on our Lake Erie North Shore (LENS) tour was Sanson Estates ... and it turned out to be the second jewel in the LENS crown (following our stop at Wagner Estates – see newsletter 7). It was after leaving Sanson, that we made the decision to come back next year ... but before we can do that, we first must tell you why.

Sanson Estates looked like any other cottage winery you might have visited before – a little red “shed” with no discernable sign around the front door; but walking through the door was like stepping into another dimension. A longer than expected room with wines of all kinds filling the shelves along the left wall: Merlots, Cab Sauv, Rielslings, and Vidals shared space with Bacos and blends – a plethora of wine to be tasted! Maureen greeted us at the tasting bar, which ran most of the length of the right hand side of the room. She was friendly, knowledgeable, and accommodating – letting us try wine after wine with a great story to accompany each and some history about the winery and the winemaker. Surveying this hall-like room we noticed a big bay window, which looked into the tank room and barrel cellar, took up the far end wall. Truly impressive.

Maureen then took us on a brief tour deeper into this deceptive “little” place. She showed us a banquet hall and events room with its high vaulted ceiling, and a beautiful view from the floor to ceiling bay windows which encased the room, allowing you to look out over the vineyards in the distance. We were awed by the beauty of our surroundings and by the size of the interior of Sanson (which goes to show you that looks from the outside can really be deceiving). The tour ended with a return trip to the tasting bar for a few more samples of the very impressive reds and stellar whites, including an Autumn Vidal and the best Ontario Shiraz we have ever tasted.

Near the end of the visit, Dennis Sanson appeared. I complimented him on his shiraz and, in what we have determined to be typical LENS behaviour (in our 3 day visit to the area), he brushed the compliment off with “it’s just something we’re experimenting with.” He then let it be known that he had not entered it into any competitions “yet”, he said with a twinkle in his eye and a smile on his face. Dennis Sanson proved himself to be quite affable, modest about his wines and willing to give compliments to fellow winemakers in the area for their achievements.

Any plan to visit this section of Ontario's wine country should definitely include Sanson Estate. If there were any justice in the wine world, all roads would sooner or later lead you to Sanson.



Grape Guy's Pick of the Bunch : 2 superb wines from Sanson
Visit www.sansonestatewinery.com for more details or to purchase this great wine.

Sanson Estate Winery – 2001 Cabernet Merlot

This wine got stellar reviews from our panel when we brought it back from our Lake Erie North Shore trip. They went ga-ga over the fruity nose, with a slight hint of green pepper in the background. The mild tannins, the smooth mouth-feel ... the pleasant bite on the finish. All indications point to a great wine drinking experience for the next few years to come. This medium bodied red was a real crowd-pleaser: "delicious"; "very nice" were just some of the comments ... this could possibly be one of Ontario's best drinking Cab-Merlots.

Sanson Estate Winery – 2003 Autumn Harvest Vidal

Maybe it's the advent of summer – the hot weather, the sun beating down, the stillness of the air – but something screams whites to most of us at this time of the year – especially in the mid to late afternoon. This Sanson offering is perfect for that time of day – typical tropical fruit on the nose: mangoes and pears, semi-sweet, taste of light honeyed pear on the palate and a well balanced sweetness versus acidity. Well chilled this is a beautiful wine for summer sipping. Cheers ... Salut ... Ahhhh ... Enjoy.

Both wines available at the winery only or visit www.sansonestatewinery.com to order



The Grape Vine : *Submit your opinion and become a part of the OWR tasters circle.*
Should this wine be a candidate for our OntarioWineReview Crystal Cork Awards? Chime In!

Contact us at michael@ontariowinereview.com



Beautiful Bottles : *Sanson – Easy Breezy Label Reading*

Sanson's label is an example of classy marketing. Each varietal is associated with a different colour, but the re-occurring theme is navy blue above with the other colour below. Clearly marked as to varietal and year – easy to read, easy to identify – clean looking. Great job. Finding what you're looking for is made easy-breezy.



Wine Event Spotlight : Niagara Wine Festival September 16 - 25

September is coming and that means the Niagara Wine Festival is just around the corner. A 10 day event encompassing two weekends with bands, park events, cheese and a winery touring passport which allows you to sample wines with matched foods. Check out <http://www.niagarawinefestival.com> for all the details, brochures and a list of events.



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 We look forward to hearing from you!