

Canada

White

90 Cave Springs Gewurztraminer 2006, Beamsville Bench (\$19.95)

It is hard to find a better Canadian Gewurz than this. It offers an intense bouquet of cold cream, peaches, honey, flowers and pink grapefruit. It is full bodied, somewhat oily in texture, dry and with a spicy finish. (ES)

89 Thirty Bench Small Lot Chardonnay 2005, Beamsville Bench (\$30)

A mid weight Chardonnay that weaves a web of vanilla, spice, caramel, pear and apple to a lengthy finish that is citrusy and refreshing. Pan seared skate wing with a beurre noisette/sage sauce would be sublime. (ES)

89 Cave Springs Riesling Indian Summer 2006, Niagara (\$24.95)

Light straw colour with honey, apple juice, smoky/flint and apricot. It is streamlined, with a fine backbone of acidity that gives the wine lift. (ES)

89 Cave Springs Riesling CSV 2006, Beamsville Bench (\$30)

A full bodied, youthful Riesling with aromas of citrus, mineral, orange pop, bergamot and apple. Off dry on the palate with lots of lemon/lime acidity. (ES)

88 Peninsula Ridge Viognier Reserve 2006, Niagara (\$30)

Yes, there is oak to the wine, but it acts as a counter weight for the peach, flowers, honey, yogurt and spice flavours of the Viognier grape. Rather full bodied with a creamy texture and very good length. A Condrieu of comparable quality costs double the price. (ES)

87 Cave Springs Riesling Estate 2006, Beamsville Bench (\$17.95)

Expect to find flowers, honey, apricot, bergamot and lime in this tight, young wine. Ideally, it should not be broached for a couple of years and will easily age for a decade. (ES)

Red

91 Thirty Bench Small Lot Cabernet Franc 2005, Beamsville Bench (\$35)

There are only 109 cases of this amazing wine in existence. Guaranteed by the time this rating is published, there will be a lot less. Dark cherry with a pink rim, this full bodied offering offers a sweet nose of blackberry and raspberry jam, plums, cocoa, vanilla and spice. There is excellent length and a sweet core of ripe fruit as well as some heat from 13.8% alcohol. Now until 2017.

90 Thirty Bench Small Lot Cabernet Sauvignon 2005, Beamsville Bench (\$35)

Another great red from the winemaking team at Thirty Bench! Plums, cherries, raspberries, licorice and mint are all present in this full bodied wine. Tannin structure is there, so hold for a couple of years and drink until to 2018. Best served with grilled lamb chops. (ES)

88 Thirty Bench Red 2005, Beamsville Bench (\$22)

The blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Cabernet Franc and 10% Merlot possess a medium to dark cherry colour and a rich bouquet of blackcurrants, cherries, leather, plums, licorice and herbs. In the mouth, cocoa, plums and spice linger as the wine finishes with dusty tannins. Made for pot roast or roasted top sirloin. Drink over the next 4 to 5 years. (ES)

88 Henry of Pelham Reserve Baco Noir 2005, Ontario (\$24.95)

Henry of Pelham, the King of Baco, has clocked in with another great Reserve offering. Medium to full bodied with plums, cherries, wildberries, cocoa and spice. Baco's nervous acidity shows through at the end making it well suited for wild boar or grilled quail. (ES)

88 Calamus Cabernet Sauvignon 2005, Niagara (\$22.95)

Let this wine breath for a half hour before serving. When open, it will showcase plum, minty/cedar, incense, violets and black licorice. The palate is somewhat “sweet” with black fruit resonating through the finish. Drink over the next five years. (ES)

86 Peninsula Ridge Shiraz 2006, Niagara (\$14.95)

This is the LCBO’s first general list Canadian Shiraz. It offers aromas of plum, raspberry, black pepper and herbs. Good weight and medium length. It is ready to serve on the dinner table with roast beef. (ES)

86 Peninsula Ridge Merlot 2006, Niagara (\$14.95)

Out of the bottle flows plum, cocoa, blackberries, spice and hickory. It should drink well over the next 2 to 3 years as there is some grip on the finish. (ES)

85 Calamus Red 2006, Niagara (\$15)

This is the second vintage of this bottling, one that is softer than its predecessor. Cassis, black raspberry, herbs, roasted nuts and cherry are to be found in the light to mid weight wine. (ES)

Australia

87 Lindemans Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve 2005, Coonawarra (\$15.25)

Very good value! There is an undercurrent of mint which meshes together with the more pronounced aromas of blackberries, plum, vanilla, spice and leather. It possesses a medium body as well as enough tannin to take it 3 to 4 years. (ES)

peach and citrus. Medium length, off dry and a good dose of alcohol on the finish. (ES)