

## France

### **88 Saumur-Champigny Lieu-dit Les Poyeux 2005, Loire (\$16.85)**

Excellent value! Benefiting from the heat of 2005, this Cabernet Franc wine displays a black colour with a pink/purple rim. Not a powerhouse, rather it is elegant and juicy with plum, raspberry, toast, coffee, herbs and smoke. Tannins are soft, so drink over the next 2 to 3 years.  
(ES)

## Canada

### White

### **92 Hidden Bench Têtes de Cuvée Chardonnay 2005, Beamsville Bench (\$50)**

Hidden Bench continues to impress with their limited production /high quality offerings. Still

tightly wound, this full bodied yet elegant wine requires two years of cellaring before being broached. It possesses a pale yellow colour as well as green apple, smoke, peach, pear, honey and spice profile. Delightful stuff!

**90 Konzelmann Special Select Late Harvest Riesling Traminer (\$30)**

With 180g/l of residual sugar, this dessert wine has the same sweetness level of some icewines, but no cloying sensation thanks to the fresh acidity. Wall to wall peach, honey, pineapple and spice as well as excellent length. (ES)

**90 Hidden Bench Roman's Block Riesling 2006, Beamsville Bench (\$32)**

This is a style of Riesling for purists of the grape. It is a terroir-mineral-slate driven style, with lots of lime as well as apricot, peach and mandarin accents. The acid is definitely on the lively side, so it will age well, but my preference would to crack open a dozen malpeque oysters and revel in the perfect pairing. (ES)

**90 Hidden Bench Fume Blanc 2006, Beamsville Bench (\$28)**

An intense nose of smokey minerals jumps out of the glass and is followed by snap peas, vanilla, gooseberries, grapefruit, green apple and spice. Full bodied with lots of acid to clean everything up. Ideally this should be served with a filet of halibut topped with a butter sauce

infused with five spice. (ES)

**90 Hidden Bench Gewurztraminer 2006, Beamsville Bench (\$35)**

Sings like only a great Gewurztraminer can! Rose water, orange blossom, spice, peach and honey crescendo both on the nose and palate. Medium to full bodied with excellent length and some heat from the 15% alcohol. (ES)

**89 Flat Rock Cellars Nadja's Vineyard Riesling 2006, Twenty Mile Bench (\$18.95)**

Lots of lively acidity supports a profile of minerals, lime, grapefruit, green apple and vague stone fruit. Very good length and perfectly suited for a sushi platter. (ES)

**88 Hidden Bench Estate Riesling 2006, Beamsville Bench (\$24)**

Lighter than the Roman's Block Riesling, but like its bigger sibling, it is a terroir driven wine with loads of lime juice, citrus and minerals supported by zippy acidity. (ES)

**87 Angels Gate Winery Single Vineyard Riesling, Niagara (\$22)**

A dry Riesling with mineral, lime, citrus and green apple flavours. Light to medium body with a mineral/slate finish. Drink now.

**87 Featherstone Gewurztraminer 2007, Niagara (\$18.95)**

Gewurztraminer aromas of peach, flowers, spice and honey waft out of the glass. On the lips it is off dry with a creamy texture as **well** as flavours of lychee, grapefruit and peach. Very good length. (ES)

**Red**

**89 Mike Weir Cabernet/Shiraz 2005, Niagara (\$25)**

This blend of 75% of Cabernet Sauvignon and 25% Shiraz delivers plum, cassis, herbs and cocoa on the nose. The palate starts off with Shirazy flavours of herbs, black pepper and spice and finishes with plum and vanilla. There is a very good length as well as supple tannins, making it perfectly suited for a grilled leg of lamb seasoned with Herb de Provence. (ES)

**89 Chateau des Charmes Equuleus Paul Bosc Estate 2005, St. David's Bench (\$40)**

This, CDC's top red wine, is only released in the best years. A blend of 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Franc and 25% Merlot, it is full bodied with lots of firm tannins that will allow it to age for a decade. It serves up plum, cassis, vanilla, spice and toast on the nose and flavours of vanilla, smokey herbs and cassis in the mouth. Two to three years of cellaring and a thick cut of prime rib will do great justice to this wine. (ES)

### **88 Pelee Island Cabernet Sauvignon 2005, Pelee Island (\$26.15)**

A dark cherry colour launches into a bouquet of plum, leather, spice, herbs and cocoa. Medium to full bodied with plum, spice, vanilla and pencil shavings in the mouth. Drink over the next 3 to 5 years. (ES)

### **88 Vineland Estates Elevation Cabernet-Merlot 2005, Niagara (\$25)**

This blend of 90% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Merlot delivers a seductive nose of plums, cassis, smoke, vanilla and herbs. Medium to full body, the palate offers ripe dark fruits, a vanilla finish and supple tannins. Drink over the next 2 to 3 years. (ES)

### **88 Coyote's Run Winery Merlot 2005, Niagara (\$25)**

Coyote's run continues their hot hand in 05 with another solid release. The 05 Merlot exemplifies what a Merlot should be- plum, chocolate, cherries and spice flavours built on a soft

frame with just the right amount of tannin. Drink over the next 3 to 4 years. (ES)

**88 Strewn Cabernet Franc Icewine 2004, Niagara (\$63)**

Imagine yourself walking into an old time candy store and you essentially have the olfactory experience of this wine- wall to wall strawberry jam, plums, blackberries and vanilla. It demands a chocolate fondue with lots of red and dark berries to dip. (ES)