

Canada

White

91 Inniskillin Vidal Icewine 2003, Niagara (\$54.95)

A shining yellow colour paves the way to a bouquet of honey, peaches, citrus fruit and a touch of hickory. It is full bodied with excellent concentration and length. The finish reverberates with the taste of lychee nut, while fresh acid diminishes any heaviness. (ES)

89 Stratus White 2002, Niagara (\$36)

Stratus White, like the Red, is a blend of numerous grapes, but the proportions are of course a secret, à la DiVinci Code. To my taste, it is the Gewurz component which dominates on the nose. Superb aromatics of honey, peach, spice, lanolin and bubble gum are present. It is dry with a dense mid palate of spice and caramel and a touch of heat on the finish. Drink over the next 3 years. (ES)

88 Chateau des Charmes St Davids Bench Sauvignon Blanc 2004, Niagara (\$14.95)

Gold medal winner for best Sauvignon Blanc at this year's Ontario Wine Awards. Pale yellow with a nose of citrus, fresh cut grass, mineral, passion fruit and a touch of honey. Medium bodied with a citrus and mineral laden finish. Refreshing and ideal for those lazy hazy summer patio days. (ES)

88 Vineland Estates Dry Riesling 2004, Niagara (\$10.95)

Winemaker Brian Schmidt feels that the 2004 Rieslings are his best ever. I would have to agree! The wine is still very young, so give it 6 months in the bottle. Delicate with aromas of bergamot (think Earl Grey tea), peach jam, lime and minerals. Length is very good with bergamot, citrus, peach and minerals resonating in the mouth. Having tasted all of Vineland Rieslings since 1989, I can definitely say that this wine will age for 8 years at least. (ES)

Red

91 Stratus Red 2001, Niagara (\$38)

The 01 Stratus is a blend of 7 grapes, including such notables as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and Gamay. It is a beguiling combination of smoke, pain grille, blackberries, plums, and vanilla. Open knit with a soft mouthfeel, the wine is beautifully concentrated on the palate with excellent length. Offers so much right now that there is no need to cellar, but the wine has the stuffing to age. Drink until 2011. (ES)

89 Stratus Red 2002, Niagara (\$38)

More linear than the 01, displaying black fruit, Indian spice, bell pepper and smoke. The palate is rich with very good length and firm tannins. Now to 2012. (ES)

88 Creekside Estate Signature Merlot 2001, Niagara (\$29.95)

Introduces itself with smoke, chocolate covered coffee bean, cherries and plums. The palate jumps in with chocolate, smoke, plums and spice. It has very good length, fresh acid and enough tannin to take it 4 years. Now to 2009. (ES)

88 Chateau des Charmes Cabernet Merlot 2001, Niagara (\$19.95)

The 01 takes over for the 99, which I also rated 88 points. Built on a medium bodied frame, it delivers blackberries, vanilla, plums, raspberry, spice, violets and green notes on the nose. Very good length, a dark chocolate finish and a tannic bite. Drink over the next 5 years and. It is well worth the price. (ES)

87 Creekside Estate Laura's Blend Meritage 2001, Niagara (\$17.95)

A good dose of oak reveals itself in the form of smoke and chocolate, while raspberry, violets and plums add to the mix. Medium bodied and elegant, with spice, raspberry, cherries and flowers on the taste buds. Supple tannins. Drink over the next 3 years. (ES)

86 Chateau des Charmes St Davids Bench Gamay Noir Droit 2003, Niagara (\$15.95)

"Droit", a clone of Gamay which Paul Bosc Sr. discovered in the early 80s produces wines with more power than your typical Beaujolais. Deep ruby in colour, it blossoms with a bouquet of strawberry, raspberry, black pepper, plums and roasted herbs. Dry with medium length and supple tannins. Pair with grilled herb and red wine marinated quail. (ES)

86 Creekside Estate Cabernets 2002, Niagara (\$11.95)

This is one of those under \$12 best buys. Pale to medium ruby, it has a nose of chocolate, green tobacco, tandori spice and plums. Light to medium body with raspberry and smoke on the palate. Gains marks for the nose. Drink over the next 2 years. (ES)

Greece

White

88 Domaine Gerovassiliou White, Epanomi (\$20.70)

This wine, made from a blend of Assyrtiko and Malagousia exemplifies the fruit forward, food friendly style of Greek white wines. It offers a nose of pink grapefruit, pear, celery and flowers. Ideal with grilled whole fish, drizzled with olive oil and topped with fresh oregano. Otherwise try with kalamari and grilled zucchini topped with tzatziki. (ES)

Red

89 Ianos Oenoforos 2000, Naoussa (\$28, Dinos Vinos)

Ianos, a blend of Xinomavro and Cab Sauv clearly demonstrates the renaissance of Greek wines. Full bodied, it is a cherry, black fruit, earthy, leather and chocolate laced wine. Excellent length with ever present tannins which will allow it to age for a decade. A great wine for the Greek stew Taskabob or Moussaka. (ES)

87 Ampelou Gis Tsolis Winery 1999, Messinia (\$15 approx)

A perfect example of the E.U. at work-Tempranillo, the Spanish grape and Cabernet Sauvignon, the French grape are grown in Greek soil to produce this wine. It offers an interesting nose of leather, black olives, spice, plums and blackberries. Medium bodied with very good length, the wine offers great value at this price. Buy it by the case as it has the stuffing to age a few years and is a great value at this price. (ES)

86 Rapsani Reserve Tsantali 2000, Rapsani (\$15.95, Dinos Vinos)

Plums, overripe fruit, leather and spice reveal themselves in this well priced Greek wine. It is medium bodied with a smooth finish and will be wonderful with roast lamb. (ES)

New Zealand

92 Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2004, Marlborough (\$33.95)

Yup, Cloudy Bay does it again. The 04 is an intensely aromatic wine with nectarine, citrus, peach, honey and vegetal aromas. The mouth is rich and intense with flavours emulating those

on the nose. Full bodied, great length and refreshing. (ES)