

Canada

Whites

86 Fielding Estate Gewurztraminer 2005, Niagara (\$16.00)

A pleasant wine with moderate aromatics of peach, honey, spice, rose and cold cream. Off dry and somewhat creamy on the palate with good density and a lengthy finish which resounds with roses, lemon and tropical nuances. (ES)

86 Chateau des Charmes Estate Riesling 2005, Niagara (\$15.95)

It is a well regarded fact that hot years (as is the case for 2005) do not favour the Riesling grape . This being said, CDC has done a solid job with their Estate Riesling. A nose of lime, lemon and mineral. Good length and a fresh finish. Try with grilled prawns doused with lemon, olive oil and thyme. (ES)

85 Henry of Pelham Dry Riesling 2005, Niagara (\$11.95)

Ready to drink with lime zest and mineral qualities. Good length and fresh acid.

84 Henry of Pelham Pinot Blanc 2005, Short Hills Bench (\$14.95)

Pale colour with lots of zesty green apple and melon flavours. A perfect foil for shellfish or salads

Red

88 Fielding Meritage Reserve 2004, Niagara (\$40)

The Indian summer of 2004 helped the grapes that went into this wine to achieve phenolic ripeness. Medium bodied with a delicious nose of smoke, blackberries, cassis, chocolate, dark cherries. The palate flirts with the same flavours as well as possessing very good length and a cedary finish. A blend of 50% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Cabernet Franc. Drink over the next 2 to 3 years. (ES)

88 Chateau des Charmes St Davids Bench Cabernet Sauvignon 2002, St Davids Bench (\$25)

Resonates with cassis, tobacco, vanilla and minty/herbs. The palate showcases CDC's typical linear qualities with ripe fruit, a good dash of tannin and just the right amount of acid. Very good length. Drink over the next 4 to 5 years. (ES)

86 Henry of Pelham Gamay 2005, Niagara (\$13.95)

This is one of those easy drinking reds which finds its place on the table with tomato based sauce dishes or roasted chicken with herbs. Lots of sweet red fruit, black pepper and herbal flavours. Good length and ready to be uncorked. (ES)

85 Henry of Pelham Pinot Noir 2004, Niagara (\$16.95)

Plums, violets, earth and cherry are all present in this easy drinking Pinot. Soft in the mouth with good acid. Drink now. Try with beef or salmon carpaccio. (ES)

Greece

White

87 Wine Art Estate Idisma Drios Chardonnay, Drama (\$17)

A Chardonnay which was given the royal treatment -free run juice, mololactic fermentation, aging in new Allier barrels and batonnage. Overt, with lots of pineapple, peach, figs, spice and honey on the nose. In the mouth, the wine is creamy, yet it displays fresh acid and a nice honey/oaky/spicy finish. (ES)

Red

86 Ampelou Gis 2002, Messina (\$13.95)

A new listing at the LCBO and one that definitely merits attention. This product, which is Greek by birth, is made from Spain's Tempranillo grape and France's Cabernet Sauvignon. Light to medium bodied it offers lots of strawberry, sandalwood, leather and black cherries on the nose, while in the mouth there is cassis, earth and cedar flavours. Medium plus length and perfect for a medium rare NY strip. (ES)

85 Tsantali Mount Athos Red, Mount Atheos (\$9)

For under \$10, you will be hard pressed to find a wine of this quality on the LCBO general list. Equal portions of indigenous Limino and Grenache has produced an offering which showcases plum, spice, tar, leather, raspberry and Greek oregano (ironic, n'est pas!) Medium length and ready to drink. Try with pizza, pasta or souvlaki. (ES)

South Africa

White

86 Grand Provence Angels Tears White 2005, Franschhoek Valley

A blend of Chenin Blanc and Muscat of Alexandria, two grapes which have a long history in South Africa. Off-dry with the Muscat component dominating in the form of peach, orange blossom, musk, honey and bubble gum. Clean finish. Asian cuisine all the way. (ES)

85 Grand Provence Angels Tears Sauvignon Blanc 2006, Franschhoek Valley (\$9.55)

Clean and refreshing with a good dose of minerals, gooseberries, asparagus and passion fruit. Medium length and balanced. (ES)

Red

90 Grand Provence Cabernet Sauvignon 2004, Franschhoek Valley (\$28)

At a recent tasting of private importation South African wines, this was my top pick. Medium to full bodied with lots of cassis, vanilla, black olives, herbs and mint on the nose. The palate spreads out with sweet blackberries, spice and cocoa coating the mouth. Long finish with good cellar potential. Now to 2011.

88 Grand Provence Shiraz 2004, Franschhoek Valley (\$28)

This wine doesn't have the same "meat on the bones" quality as the Cab Sauv, but it is well made with a bouquet of leather, tobacco, stewed dark fruits, cherries and toasty elements. The palate is peppery with sweet blackberries and cherries. (ES)