

SANSON ESTATE w i n e r y

WHITE

Select Chardonnay 2008 (0) - \$15.95

A very surprising Chardonnay indeed! Exceptionally brassy in colour and the aromas and flavours certainly do not suggest an Essex County Chard at all. Actually, if I didn't know its origin, I would have guessed it came from somewhere like California or maybe even Western Australia. It's a very ripe, round fruit-driven wine, unencumbered by excessive oak and not particularly high in acidity. Its character is reflected in a lush, pure fruit core - but not cool-climate apple and pear as one would expect. It is actually redolent with tropical, mango and guava, with notes of peach and apricot. This one would be great with Paella, Berkshire Pork chops or roast chicken on a Sunday afternoon.

Autumn Harvest Vidal 2012 (2) - \$13.95

I really don't think I have ever visited Sanson Estate without someone coming in during my time there and buying a couple of bottles of this wine. It seems to be a staple for Essex County locals. Vidal is actually a hybrid grape that was designed to survive Canada's inclement winters but it found a niche as ice wine - actually celebrating those same cold months. Harvested a little late in the fall, after the fruit has had time to accumulate extra ripeness this wine shows round, honeyed aromas of pineapple and peach that carry to a soft, round, full palate. It's simply an easy-to-drink, slightly off-dry, un-oaked wine that is great on its own or will compliment a surprising range of foods - anything from pan-fried fish to roast fowl to spicy Asian cuisine... or just enjoy a glass on its own.

Ranchers White 2011 (1) - \$14.95

An interesting blend featuring a funky core of Vidal, with spicy notes of clove and fresh sage over white grapefruit and star-fruit. A splash of Sauvignon Blanc lends a little seam of fresh acidity and a bit of Chardonnay rounds it all out. My first impression of this wine reminded me of a dry, spicy, Alsatian Muscat or Gewurztraminer and, with that in mind, I would pair this guy up with a rich chicken liver pate (generously spiked with brandy) or a bit of smoked salmon. Chill it up well for a great summer, patio quaffer.

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RED

Baco Noir 2011 (0) - \$15.95

From the start, Baco has been one of Sanson's "go to" wines and the '11 is another great effort. Deep ruby colour and staining concentrated purple hues. The aromas show classic wild berry/black current and crème de cassis balanced with elegant, sweet oak bouquet – that's one of the keys with Baco, getting the oak to balance the bold fruit without the whole thing getting too overblown. On the palate it is full and round with ultra-ripe fruit - the other key is to keep the vigour of the vine in check to avoid green notes. Baco is a workhorse hybrid around here and it really makes my day when I can pour it for those I-don't-drink Canadian-wine-folks – and have them tell me they think it's "a pretty decent California Zin" Right on Dennis!

Baco Noir Reserve 2012 (0) - \$24.95

There are a handful of winemakers who can take the lowly hybrid cross, Baco Noir, and elevate it to something special – Dennis Sanson has made a career of it. Sanson came out of the gates when the winery opened about 15 years ago with award-winning Baco in the first year of operations and continues to be a master at turning this lowly hybrid into a wine to enjoy with anything from burgers and simple pastas in red sauce to steaks, prime rib or even rack of lamb. His 2012 continues in his tradition of providing gobs of juicy, brambly, bumble berry fruit with saturated, staining ruby colour. I think the thing that sets him apart from the rest though, besides its extremely saturated concentration, is the premium oak treatment that balances its naturally humble character and lends an elegance, with subtle, sweet vanilla nuances. A firm, full, wine to enjoy now or cellar it through 2020 to let all those complex layers meld together.

Ranchers Red 2011 (1) - \$15.95

A blend of Baco Noir, and just a "squirt" of Cabernet Sauvignon. The result is a rich, ready-to-drink - and very easy-to-enjoy wine. Look for velvety tannins and juicy acidity backing aromatic notes of new leather, rich plum and ripe blueberry that linger over a full palate and long finish. It would nicely pair up with a juicy burger or some smoky ribs off the barbecue... And don't skimp on the spice in the sauce!

Bird Dog Red 2006 (0) Lot 2 - \$19.95

A medium ruby colour with a youthful purple hue. Smoky aromas of wild bramble and elderberry with hints of coffee accenting the dense fruity core. The palate displays medium, approachable body and structure with good acidity and an evident, yet not overpowering tannic grip. The core remains rich and wild berry that simply goes on and on through the finish. Very versatile. Serve with wild game, hearty stew or lamb.

Cabernet Sauvignon 55% / Cabernet Franc 25% / Merlot 20%

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