



The “case” for northern Michigan Wines

BY REGGIE ONTARIO

There definitely is a “case” for northern Michigan wines.

During the past year, three of the world’s top wine critics have visited and tasted wines from the Leelanau and Old Mission Peninsulas.

Europe’s famed Tom Stevenson spent nearly a week with area winemakers, noting: “Many of the wines from Leelanau and Old Mission are of world-class distinction.”

His visit also resulted in another important discovery: “I have been waiting all my life to find the first world-class Gewürztraminer produced

outside Alsace and I found it in northern Michigan.”

Now that is worth a couple of bottles.

So impressed with the wines from the area, Stevenson took back 20 wines to England for a tasting with Europe’s famed “Circle of Wine Writers.”

Comments included, “We definitely need to taste more from there,” “I am impressed,” “These wines are far better than I expected.”

Put two more in the box.

Dan Berger and Wilfred Wong, California wine writers and judges with an international following, were as impressed as Stevenson.

“The Pinot Gris and Rieslings are as good if not better than any I have tasted anywhere in the world,” Wong said.

Add two more.

“Wines from the Leelanau and Old Mission Peninsulas are not going to arrive in five years; they have already arrived,” Berger said.

Ring up a couple more.

The Wine Spectator, *Wine Enthusiast* and *Food & Wine* have said: “One of two wine growing regions in the country to keep an eye on.” “There is great wine being made outside of California- just visit northern Michigan,” “In the Midwest it is northern Michigan.”

That’s right, three more for the box.

Hmm, only 11 bottles- just one more for the case.

Northern Michigan wineries are not only making world-class wines of distinction- they are also playing a major role in area land preservation efforts. Local wineries have become key to continuing the areas rich agricultural heritage. Add in their impact on area tourism and support of cultural and culinary offerings and it is easy to pull another bottle off the shelf.

Now that makes a case for northern Michigan wines!

Reggie Ontario lives in northern Michigan and writes about food and wine.

Photo/David L. Fox

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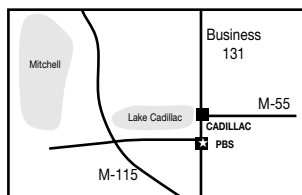
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