

TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2008

Finger Lakes Winery Report - Shaw Vineyard

I had given high [praise to the red wines](#) at Shaw Vineyard when the new winery opened last summer. Little did I know that owner Steve Shaw and winemaker Morten Hallgren (who is also owner of Ravines Wine Cellars on Keuka Lake) were also working on a line of white wines. I visited Shaw Vineyards last weekend as they unveiled these new whites and they are very impressive. Don't let the slightly disheveled look of the winery's finishing touches being completed keep you away because, when you get past the rough exterior, inside you will find truly inspired wines. In fact, you may pass right by without seeing it. But passing by would be a big mistake. If you are near Hermann Wiemer Winery, then you are close.

Steve is a vineyard man with decades of experience growing top-notch Finger Lakes grapes for some of the top Finger Lakes wineries. Steve is obsessed with growing great grapes. Morten is obsessed with crafting great wines. This is a match made in winemaking heaven. They both use some innovative techniques in the vineyard and in the cellar. Steve's theory is that traditional vineyard techniques have their limitations in the Finger Lakes and he has developed his own techniques specifically for the unique growing challenges of the Finger Lakes. All I can say is that they must be working very well. These are wines with character, with finesse, and with grace! I highly recommend stopping in to taste. Here are my tasting notes:

- > 2005 Semi-dry Riesling, 1.2% RS, Like I said, I thought Steve & Morten were concentrating mainly on reds when I visited last year and here he goes making an excellent Riesling, \$16.99, soft lemon, lemon rind, and a mouthwatering mineral finish.
- > 2005 Dry Riesling, .2% RS, \$18.99, This is a Riesling some people will love and some people will not. I just don't think there is a middle ground for this wine. The people that will love it are those that like those deep petro/kero German Rieslings. Steve says these grapes come from a part of the vineyard that is all clay soil and at the top side of the vineyard. Many people feel that petrol is the sign of quality aged Rieslings. But normally I do not taste it in Finger Lakes Rieslings. If you do not care for that taste, then you will not like this wine. This wine is not for the squeamish. But be brave, fellow winos, and you shall be rewarded, very soft with lots of petrol.
- > 2006 Gewurztraminer, .8% RS, \$18.99, lots of soft light citrus fruit on the front into Classic Gewurz spice on the finish.
- > 2007 Sauvignon Blanc, .3% RS, \$17.99, In my book this wine is the star of the Shaw white wine lineup, very aromatic, citrus and orange peel tones into layered mineral tones, layers and layers of flavor, very complex, Excellent! As an unnamed poet once said, Now I know what rainbows taste like.
- > Rose', \$9.99, 3.5% RS, a unique blend of Cabernet Franc & Cayuga, a nice value sipper.
- > 2006 Cayuga, \$10.99, 3% RS, layers of lemon, honey, and candied citrus, an excellent Cayuga.
- > 2002 Pinot Noir, \$23.99, abundant cherry with leather undertones, heavy tannins, this shows the potential of Finger Lakes Pinot Noir.
- > 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, \$19.99, layers of cherry and plum, heavy tannins, lay it down and await the inevitable pleasures.

I really can't say enough about this winery and the wines showing so well right out of the gate. Steve Shaw says that he will do everything necessary to put out nothing but the highest quality product. In my book, he has already succeeded in doing just that!