



# Wines of the Finger Lakes

## Featured Selection

### GLENORA 2007 VINTNER'S SELECT SYRAH

New York's Farm Winery Act, passed in 1976, provided incentives for grape growers to start their own wineries. The first winery to be licensed under the act was Glenora Wine Cellars, located on the west side of Seneca Lake. Its winemaker, John Williams '74, would later move on to Napa Valley as owner of the renowned Frog's Leap Winery. His first crush at Glenora in 1977 produced 5,000 cases of mostly white wine made primarily from Chardonnay, Riesling, and assorted French-American hybrid grapes.

It's unlikely that Glenora's co-founder, Gene Pierce '67, was thinking at the time that thirty-three years later he would be president of an operation that produces 45,000 cases a year of more than thirty different wines—but that's what happened. These days, an increasing percentage of Glenora's production is red wine made from *vinifera* grapes, and current winemaker Steve DiFrancesco is particularly proud of his 2007 Vintner's Select Syrah.



Syrah is usually associated with the warmer climates of southern France, California, and Australia (where it's known as Shiraz). Perhaps surprisingly, the grape now seems to be catching on in the Finger Lakes, despite the cooler weather. In recent years, several wineries have offered small amounts of Syrah, some of it remarkably good.

Glenora produced 293 cases of its 2007 Vintner's Select from grapes grown by Norbud Farms on the east side of Seneca Lake. It's ruby red in color, with a lovely aroma containing hints of plum, cherry, and a smoky quality found in many French Syrahs. The flavor mirrors the aromatics, with a pleasant peppery note sneaking into the finish. This wine would make a nice accompaniment to game, stews, wild mushroom dishes, or firm cheeses like Gruyere. Reasonably priced at about \$17 per bottle, it's a pleasant surprise from a stalwart Finger Lakes winery.

— Dave Pohl

Dave Pohl, MA '79, is a wine buyer at Northside Wine & Spirits in Ithaca.

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