

Wines of the Finger Lakes



Featured Selection

FOX RUN 2008 BLANC DE BLANCS

It is a truism for many in the Finger Lakes that the region's relatively cool climate makes it an ideal location for the production of world-class sparkling wine. Grapes ripen more slowly in cooler growing areas, and when harvested their acidity is relatively high. That acidity is what lends crispness and elegance to good sparkling wine.

Despite this logic, the Finger Lakes is not yet well known for its sparklers, and one might argue that truly outstanding examples are still rare. A wine that may help to change that situation is the Fox Run 2008 Blanc de Blancs. Made solely from Chardonnay grapes, this delicate, fragrant beauty demonstrates just how good Finger Lakes bubbly can be.

According to Fox Run winemaker Peter Bell, this wine was produced solely from the winery's original block of Chardonnay vines, planted during the late Eighties. In an unusual move for the Finger Lakes, the wine was fermented in the barrel before bottling and re-fermentation.



This painstaking process mirrors the practice of top French Champagne houses such as Krug and Bollinger.

Fewer than 100 cases of this wine were made. "I'd be happy to produce 2,000 cases," says Bell, "but the demand isn't currently there." He notes that while the locavore movement insists on locally produced food, when it comes to celebrating, even individuals who prefer to "eat local" are happy to toast with sparkling wine from France, Spain, or California.

Interestingly, Bell does not serve his Blanc de Blancs in a standard Champagne flute. He prefers to pour it into a small, narrow, regular wine glass, which he feels does a better job of concentrating the wine's aroma. However you serve it, this lovely wine (\$30 retail) is perfect for holiday celebrations. It can be purchased only from the winery; for information, go to www.foxrunvineyards.com.

— Dave Pohl

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

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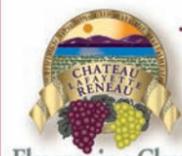
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