

TURKEY PAIRINGS THAT HELP PEOPLE IN NEED



Carolyn **Evans Hammond**

It's fine and dandy to serve wine on Thanksgiving because it goes with the big bird you haul out of the oven, all golden and glorious. But there's more to it than that. We eat and drink well that day to honour the harvest in the spirit of gratitude, community and humility. So pour an Ontario wine that not only tastes drop-dead-delish with turkey, but also hails from a winery that gives back. Here are five shining examples:



2013 Grange of Prince Edward Gamay Noir VQA Prince Edward County (LCBO 615062, \$17.15, in store only)

This gorgeous Gamay teems with crisp cranberry, warm plum, and sweet cherry notes with a gentle white pepper finish. It's not only delicious: Caroline Granger who built and runs the winery has a powerful track record for giving back. She has chaired Alternatives for Women in Prince Edward County for the past 20 years, a support centre for abused women. Not only does she give generously throughout the year but, for the month leading up to Oct. 10, all proceeds from her tasting bar goes to the Store House Wellington & District Foodbank's initiative to pack Thanksgiving hampers for families in need.

Score: 91



2014 Southbrook Organic Triomphe Chardonnay, VQA Niagara Peninsula (Vintages 172338, \$22.95)

This thrilling Chardonnay that hit shelves Oct. 1 drinks like a \$40+ bottle. The nose starts with smoke and stones, then races across the palate with fleshy-warm flavours of yellow plum and grapefruit oil edged with Chantilly cream before tapering to a long smoky-flinty finish. It's a sophisticated drop worthy of a Thanksgiving feast made by Southbrook, a winery that gives back generously. It donates wine and labour to Community Food Centres Canada initiatives, including Restaurants for Change, a national fundraising event on Oct. 19 where 65-plus restaurants in 15 cities donate proceeds from dinner service to support programs across Canada.

Score: 92



2014 Château des Charmes Gamay Noir 'Droit' VQA St. David's Bench, Niagara (Vintages 346742, \$17.95, in store only)

This wine won gold medals at both the 2016 Ontario Wine Awards and the 2016 Wine Align Awards. Pure crushed violets and blackberry aromas lead to a beautifully balanced swath of the same, edged with the gentlest whisper of smoke and finely ground black pepper. The texture is refined, the structure crisp and the finish long. Buy a bottle and you support a winery that gives between \$40,000 and \$50,000 worth of wine and tourism experiences to more than a dozen charitable organizations annually, spanning arts and culture, health care, social services, veterans and schools throughout Ontario.

Score: 92



2014 Lighthouse Cabernet Franc, Pelee Island Winery, VQA (145441, \$13.95)

I'm a huge fan of Cabernet Franc from Lake Erie North Shore and Pelee Island, and this bottle is a fine example. Gorgeous balance. Charming rusticity. Supremely drinkable. Red plum, cranberry, violet, talc, red pepper, plum and beetroot flavours — all tightly sewn together — offer lovely depth and complexity. What's more, Pelee Island Winery gives back through community charitable organizations, including various chapters of United Way across Canada. One such example is the On Track to Success Program for the United Way of Windsor-Essex County, where Pelee Island Winery has made a commitment to more than \$25,000 in donations through 2020.

Score: 90



2013 1914 Valour Red VQA Niagara Peninsula (LCBO 399030, \$13.95)

This blend of 50-per-cent Merlot, 30-per-cent Shiraz and 20-per-cent Gamay offers a silky-smooth-and-supple wave of summer berry flavour. It's a clean, easy-drinking charmer by Diamond Estates Winery that offers honest value for money. And 50 cents from every bottle sold goes to the True Patriot Love Foundation, a national charity honouring the sacrifices made by members of the Canadian Armed Forces, veterans and their families in times of peace and conflict. So far, Diamond Estates has raised more than \$40,000 since releasing the wine in the fall of 2014, just before Remembrance Day.

Score: 89