



Ravishing Reds

Wineries to visit: Lailey Vineyard, Maleta Estate Winery, Marynissen Estate Winery, Palatine Hills Estate Winery, Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery and Stratus Vineyards

On this tour, we'll introduce you to our take on three popular varietals: Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Commonly known in the wine world as traditional Bordeaux varietals, they grow extremely well in Niagara-on-the-Lake, as our terroir shares characteristics similar to that of Bordeaux. In recent history, the vintages of 2005, 2007 and 2010 in particular were especially conducive to making these wines, as they thrive in a vintage with below average rainfall and an above average length of growing season. These are wines that won't fly the white flag when faced with strong flavours at the table. Cabernet Sauvignon is complex and full-bodied with tannins that will raise red meats and hard cheeses to new heights. This varietal is at its best after a few years in the bottle so look to older vintages for immediate consumption or cellar one of our newer releases. Cabernet Franc takes a softer approach but still has the weight to marry with grilled steak, game and lamb. Merlot is medium-bodied, fruit forward and friendly. Depending on the style, Merlot can be paired with grilled red meats, salmon and rich vegetarian dishes. We're extremely proud of our achievements with these essential reds and invite you to taste them at our wineries.

Cabernet Franc

Lailey Vineyard's superb Cabernet Francs go a long way to supporting their view that this is the region's premium red wine varietal.

Though '**Stratus Vineyards**' has become synonymous with 'assemblage' red wine enthusiasts in the know are aware that the winery is also making super-premium single varietal wines including Cabernet Franc, which have been aged to utter perfection and boast structure and complexity suited to ageability.

Cabernet Sauvignon

The oldest Cabernet Sauvignon vines in Canada, planted in 1978, are located at **Marynissen Estates Winery**. Only available at the winery, it is definitely worth the trip to Niagara-on-the-Lake to taste and buy the winery's sumptuous Cabernet Sauvignons. They sell out quickly, so even if you do not drink them right away, they will age beautifully in the cellar for enjoyment at a later date.

Maleta Estate Winery has the perfect Cabernet Sauvignon for you, whether you are looking for an easy-drinking red for a summer barbecue or a classy red for a special occasion. Maleta's Cabernet Sauvignons are aged in American and French oak barrels to give them a balanced structure with rich fruit and sublime oak.

Merlot

After the film *Sideways*, Merlot took a bit of a beating in the popularity department. **Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery** is only one of the many Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake dispelling this attitude by making world-class Merlots that are turning heads.

Often known best for its Gewürztraminer, **Palatine Hills Estate Winery** crafts a stellar roster of reds including Merlot. Exquisitely crafted in small batches, their Merlots are big wines with great complexity, showing typical Merlot characteristics including notes and flavours of red berries, vanilla and toasted oak.