

additional insights and factoids from the Notes on Sources. The book made both an absorbing and fascinating read and prompted me to refresh my thin acquaintance with Clifton Fadiman and even to seek out his own writing.

I received the review copy of the book accompanied by a press release that included the dates of the promotional tour. Fortuitously, I was visiting a daughter a few days later in the Washington, DC area when Anne Fadiman was scheduled to be there and made it a point to go and get my copy signed. As she did with everyone, she asked me if I am a bibliophile or an oenophile. I responded that I am both and she inscribed the book accordingly. If you are either but especially if you are both, you should find this sketch of a fading icon of the recent past worthy of your attention. One can hope that this small thoughtful volume will keep the father's star from vanishing while making the daughter's brighter.

Neal D. Hulkower
 McMinnville, Oregon
nhulkower@yahoo.com
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Reference

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RODERICK PHILLIPS: *The Wines of Canada*. Infinite Ideas Ltd., Oxford, 2017, 248 pp., ISBN 978-1908984999 (paperback), \$39.95.

This is an excellent and authoritative primer on the wines of Canada, a subject on which most of us are woefully ignorant.

The initial chapter sketches the broad outlines of the Canadian wine industry from 1850 to Prohibition in 1917, then to the Canada–U.S. Free Trade Agreement in 1988, and followed by the modern period. It is noteworthy that much of Canadian wine history is under the auspices of *labrusca* wines, with *vitis vinifera* gradually gaining ground over *labrusca* and hybrid wines. The gains made by the higher-quality wines were clearly spurred by the increasing availability of acceptable but cheap California wines. The post-2000 period also witnessed the rapid growth in “the number of wineries ... the volume of production, a more sophisticated infrastructure that includes the delineation of viticultural areas and sub-appellations” (p. 37) among other developments. The youthfulness of the Canadian wine industry is attested by the fact that most Canadian wineries came into existence after 2000.

An interesting and unusual feature of Canada is that there is no national wine law and producers in the different regions have to conform to different sets of regulations (p. 42). These are so confusing on the whole that “only residents of British Columbia and Manitoba can legally order as much wine as they like from another province” (p. 43). The principal wine regions are British Columbia and Ontario, with fairly comparable levels of wine production, with Quebec and Nova Scotia being much smaller, though not insignificant. It is also noteworthy that British Columbia and Ontario rely predominantly on *vitis vinifera* varieties, while the other regions depend much more on hybrid varieties. In Ontario, the most popular white varieties are Chardonnay, Riesling, and Pinot Gris, while the most popular red varieties are Cabernet Franc, Merlot, and Pinot Noir. British Columbia is not all that dissimilar, with whites being dominated by Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Riesling, and Gewürztraminer and reds by Merlot, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Cabernet Franc. While many of the Canadian reds and whites are enjoyable, they are not, on the whole, ready to compete with those of the major French or U.S. producers.

The one wine in which Canada has much more than a modest edge is icewine, which is quite *sui generis*. The section describing icewines (pp. 68–78) is outstandingly informative and strongly recommended. Although icewine has been made in Europe as early as the late-18th century, the first commercial icewine in Canada was not made until 1978 in British Columbia, with Ontario following some five years later. The crux of icewine is that it must be exposed to temperatures of -8°C , which is achieved in British Columbia, but much more routinely in Ontario. This low temperature causes the water in the grapes to freeze, leaving only a highly condensed sugary syrup in its unfrozen state, where it can be pressed. As a result, yields are low and “in many cases a single vine produces no more than one 375 millilitre bottle [of wine]” (p. 69). In addition to British Columbia and Ontario (with the latter being the main producing area), Nova Scotia also produces some icewine. It is to be noted that because of the modest yields, it is permitted to gather the berries that have fallen off the vine between the onset of the regular harvest and the beginning of the icewine harvest. Icewine is highly regulated, including its name, which is icewine, not ice wine or ice-wine, as per regulations of the Vintners Quality Alliance of Ontario. In Ontario and British Columbia the pressings must have an average of 35° Brix.¹ The yield is about 125 liters per ton of Riesling, much lower than for table wine. Because of the higher price of icewine, it is a good target for counterfeiting. Economics also drives the practice, legally permitted, of blending Canadian wines with non-Canadian wines; the production of these is quite widespread and accounts for 75% of Ontario-sold wines. It should also be noted that winter temperatures at times descend in the -35 – -40°C range, which would kill the vines unless specific protective measures were undertaken, such as covering the wines with soil for the

¹ Brix measures the sugar content of an aqueous solution: one degree is one gram of sucrose in 100 grams of solution. See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brix>.

winter. (It is noteworthy that -40°C equals -40°F .) While normally one would think that such regions are outside the region that can be profitably cultivated, global warming will almost certainly diminish the problems that extreme cold can cause.

The remaining four chapters cover in detail the producers and the characteristics of wineries in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and the Atlantic Provinces. A sizeable number of producers are discussed and anyone interested in acquiring Canadian wines would be well advised to study these chapters.

The writing is uniformly clear and accurate and useful maps of the various wine regions are provided in the various chapters. The only thing that might have improved the maps would have been to include measures of a geographic scale on each of the maps. In any event, the author provides a useful service to the wine-drinking public.

Richard E. Quandt
Princeton University
requandt@gmail.com
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IAN TATTERSALL and ROB DESALLE: *A Natural History of Wine*. Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 2015, 264 pp., ISBN 978-0300211023, \$30.00.

The front jacket blurb introduces this volume's purpose as providing a universally accessible answer to the question "What can science tell us about wine?" The dozen chapters contained within tend to be complementary but can be enjoyed as separate reads as each explores a relatively discrete topic; an ideal menu if the reader intends to consume the content paired with a glass of the studied beverage. Each is introduced by a wine label with a short discussion about its producer, region, and attributes. There are innumerable good regional wines that, alas, are still overshadowed by the flashy darlings which monopolise the attention of high-profile writers and the markets. We must warmly thank the authors for including both some accessible specimens whose virtues we recognise plus unknown others for fundamental reasons, rather than straining to impress with a Romani-Conti or other trophy wine. While the Dom Pérignon 1990 and Drouhin Montrachet are obvious exceptions to this, we are in good hands with folk who understand that Clairette de Die is also worthy of introducing a chapter.

The senses are engaged from the first touch with luxuriously thick, soft paper that conveys a sense of substance and familiarity. The illustrations are attractive and bright but use a palate of soft tones reminiscent of a venerable ornithology or other natural science text, reinforcing its gravitas. The illustrations also evoked nostalgic memories of Dungeons & Dragons in one member of our review panel ... Either way, you feel the book would be at home on a shelf in the American