

**Golden Beaver Winery****2006 Merlot Vin de Curé
(Okanagan Valley)**

Proprietors Bruno Kelle and Stella Schmidt left Calgary business careers two years ago because the wine lifestyle, in their view, is fun. They have set out to communicate that in the winery's packaging – a bibulous beaver on every label. As they explain, the beaver is an iconic Canadian symbol and, typical of winegrowers, a hard worker.

They certainly work hard to make their Vin de Curé wines – a peachy, candied Vidal, and this spicy Merlot. Bruno dries the mature grapes after harvest on greenhouse racks for about seven weeks, constantly turning them and making sure they remain free of spoilage. At the end of this drying period, the Merlot had lost 40 percent of its weight to evaporation that raised the Brix to 40°. Only then were the grapes crushed

and fermented.

The result is an intense and spicy wine, tasting of cherries, chocolate and licorice, with a lingering port-like sweetness. An ideal after-dinner wine with, perhaps, a nibble of fine chocolate. 88 points.

Reviewed October 20, 2007 by [John Schreiner](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Golden Beaver Winery](#)

Vintage: 2006

Wine: Merlot Vin de Curé

Appellation: [Okanagan Valley](#)

Grape: Merlot

THE REVIEWER**John Schreiner**

John Schreiner has been covering the wines of British Columbia for the past 30 years and has written 10 books on the wines of Canada and BC. He has judged at major competitions and is currently a panel member for the Lieutenant Governor's Awards of

Excellence in Wine. Both as a judge and as a wine critic, he approaches each wine not to find fault, but to find excellence. That he now finds the latter more often than the former testifies to the dramatic improvement shown by BC winemaking in the past decade.