Appellation America.com

WINE RECOMMENDATION

Fenn Valley Vineyards

**2005 Cabernet Franc
(Fennville)**

For red vinifera, Fenn Valley's winemaker Doug Welsch considers Cabernet Franc his signature wine. In most years, he sources Cabernet Franc from growers in the Lake Michigan Shore AVA and blends it with his own estate-grown Cabernet Franc. However, in July 2007, he will release this 2005 Fenn Valley Cabernet Franc with a Fennville AVA on the label. This is significant since the winery most often uses the Lake Michigan Shore AVA designation on its labels for a more recognizable marketing image.

With smoky blueberry aromas, complemented by blackberry fruit, camphor hints, marjoram and oregano-like spice, it's attractive from the first sniff. Sips reveal blueberry, blackberry and cassis fruit with hints of green peppercorns and freshly-ground black pepper. Overall, the wine has a generous fruit core, substantial ripeness, good length and structure. Pair it at the table with pepper steak, long-cooked or braised meats with a savory sauce or lamb shanks.

Because of its solid tannin structure, good color and vibrant fruit, Welsch considers Cabernet Franc his premium classic style dry red. Grown further south in the Lake Michigan Shore AVA where it's warmer, Cabernet Franc is less vibrant. Given its recent success, Welsch plans to plant more Cabernet Franc in his estate vineyards in the Fennville AVA.

Reviewed March 1, 2007 by Eleanor & Ray Heald.

THE WINE

Winery: Fenn Valley Vineyards
Vintage: 2005
Wine: Cabernet Franc
Appellation: Fennville
Grape: Cabernet Franc
Price: $17.00

THE REVIEWER

Eleanor & Ray Heald

The Healds have been writing about wine since 1978 and have focused on appellation significance in many of their world beat writings. They value recognizing site personality (*terroir*) within an appellation's wines. They praise balance and elegance in wines styled to pair well with food and eschew over-extraction, high alcohol and heavy-handed oak. "Delicious" is their favorite descriptor for a great, well-made wine.