

**Rocky Creek Winery****2006 Ortega
(Vancouver Island)**

A third generation home winemaker, Mark Holford had dreamed of starting a winery once he could afford a vineyard - after his retirement, presumably years from now, from his career as an environmental engineer with a Vancouver Island pulp mill. However, in 2005, he and his wife Linda figured out how to start a small commercial winery in the basement of a large family residence in suburban Ladysmith. Two years later, the business has outgrown the house and the Holfords are planning to trade the house for vineyard property in the Cowichan Valley.

Commercial winery rules allow producers to import bulk wines and bottle them under their own labels in Canada. The Holfords produce only wines from Vancouver Island grapes, attributing at last part of their success to the fact that island consumers are very loyal to island wines.

This Ortega – a signature white variety for Vancouver Island – comes from a small vineyard in nearby Chemainus that is leased by Rocky Creek. The wine, with a delicately fruity aroma, is crisply dry. It has flavours of apples and lemons and a spine of minerality and tangy acidity.

Reviewed October 5, 2007 by [John Schreiner](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Rocky Creek Winery](#)

Vintage: 2006

Wine: Ortega

Appellation: [Vancouver Island](#)

Grape: Ortega

Price: \$14.00

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.