

**Vignoble De L'Orpailleur****2005 Cuvée Spéciale - Vin Gris
(Quebec)**

Wow, what a rare treat this wine from Quebec is! Tasted blind, this unassuming little wine provides a thrill ride with wonderful surprises at each turn.

From its appearance, you immediately assume you're about to be treated to a well aged dessert wine, due to its odd, orange-brown, almost copper tone color, reminiscent of an old Tokaji. But a noticeable pétillance, characteristic of younger wines, doesn't make sense with this color – is this old or is it new?

Upon nosing the wine, you're instantly transported to the tropics (for me, it's Hawaii, where I spent much of my youth) – guava, mango and ginger flower blossom leap from the glass. But this totally tropical aromatic profile only serves to dupe you a second time. Everything up to this point suggests an unctuous sticky. What a surprise to your palate to find that this is NOT a sweet wine. While there is a good degree of residual sugar, I would classify this as *off-dry* at best (though the label indicates "semi-sweet"). The flavours are somewhat ripe and mature and every bit as delightful as the aromas. My only knock is that the wine hollows out just a bit in the middle. But it finishes strong with great acid pucker and a touch of tannin with the flavours picking up again and lingering a good spell after swallowing.

The wine is a blend of hybrids Seyval Blanc and New York Muscat, and German *vinifera* cross Geisenheim. I believe the dominant characteristics of this wine – the deep color, the intense aromatics, and the mild tannic grip – can be attributed to the [New York Muscat](#) component, a pink skinned wildly aromatic cool climate variety popular in eastern Canada.

Wines like this are what keep the game interesting. It's the perfect ringer to pour for anyone who appreciates aromatic wines. I myself would drink this every day – I just love it! Many thanks to my friend Jeff Pinhey for bringing this vinous treasure back from *la belle province*.

Reviewed March 12, 2008 by [Adam Dial](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Vignoble De L'Orpailleur](#)

Vintage: 2005

Wine: Cuvée Spéciale - Vin Gris

Appellation: [Quebec](#)

Grapes: [Seyval Blanc](#), [New York Muscat](#),
Geisenheim

Price: \$13.00 (500ml)

THE REVIEWER**Adam Dial**

Adam Dial is co-founder and Managing Editor of Appellation America. Brought up in a family with winery ventures in both California and Canada, he seeks and appreciates diversity and individuality in wines. He is a Sommelier with more than two decades of experience in the hospitality and service industry, and is a respected wine educator, judge and industry advisor.