



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

January 2010

Upcoming Events

Toronto Chapter

Annual Dinner

Wednesday, February 24

Reception: 6:30 p.m. Dinner: 7:00 p.m.

The Venue, The Chefs' House:

The restaurant is the first of its kind in Canada – fully open to the public with students training to cook, bake and serve.

Housed in a 3,200 square foot heritage brownstone, the new restaurant serves up one-of-a-kind dining experiences to the city's food lovers while providing George Brown Chef School students with the latest in real-world culinary training.

The Chefs' House is an urban culinary retreat ... a contemporary space that is used to profile and celebrate the bounty of locally grown food products and pay homage to the international cuisine that influences Toronto's culinary scene.

The 68 seat space offers daily lunch and dinner menus; food and wine workshops; special events space and programming, and a series of culinary excellence awards and educational programs.

Culinary students are front and centre in The Chefs' House, with a large, open-concept kitchen. A private dining room, with a capacity for parties of up to 16 guests, is located in the restaurant's lower level.

The Winery, Hidden Bench: "Terroir, Technology, Sustainability, and Passion" Hidden Bench Vineyards and Winery is an artisanal winery dedicated to producing ultra premium wines solely from vineyards situated within the Beamsville Bench VQA sub-appellation. Non-interventionist, quality focused and terroir driven, Hidden Bench wines are produced from three distinct vineyards totalling almost 100 acres.

Founded in 2003 by Harald Thiel and family, Hidden Bench focuses on Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Riesling. They also produce limited quantities of a white Meritage, Nuit Blanche, and two distinct red blends, Terroir Caché, and, the super premium, La Brunante.

From a very young age Harald had the dream of owning an artisanal winery. Prior to starting Hidden Bench, Harald was one of the founders of the Gourmet Food and Wine Expo and is also a founding partner in the Upper Canada Cheese Company in Jordan. As a hands-on owner

he is intimately involved in all the day to day operations of the winery from vineyard to bottle.

The winemaker, Jean-Martin Bouchard, grew up in Quebec and developed a keen passion for fine wine studying and working in the hospitality industry. He has worked for many ultra premium producers including Penfolds and Torbreck (Barossa Valley) and Moorilla (Tasmania). In 2003, after a great vintage as Assistant-Winemaker for Penfolds, he moved back home to as winemaker at Sumac Ridge, in British Columbia. A year and a half later, after meeting a very persuasive Harald Thiel and sharing the Hidden Bench vision, JM joined Hidden Bench in 2005.

Niagara Chapter

Matching Wine & Aphrodisiacs

with Linda Bramble at Strewn Winery

Wednesday, January 27

\$ 35 Members \$ 45 Non-Members

6:30pm – Reception, 7:00pm – Tasting

Ignite your passion just two weeks before Valentine's Day. Come out and learn from a real "Matchmaker" how to select wines to pair with your favourite aphrodisiacs!

Wine Writer and Educator, Linda Bramble, will tickle your fancy by leading us through this tasting in an interactive, educational, entertaining and playfully flirtatious fashion with prizes to boot! Then we'll tease your taste buds as you sit down with an array of aphrodisiacs and wine options and explore the qualities of each and why they may or may not pair well together. All the while, we will be working in teams to answer multiple choice (and perhaps slightly risqué) questions posed by Linda to attain a prize at the end of the evening.

We will mainly feature the wines of Strewn Winery. Winemaker Joe Will will arouse your thirst and be on hand to talk about and describe the wines, and answer any of your wine related questions. Strewn opened its doors in 1997 and produces only VQA wines. Strewn's old cannery location houses Canada's only winery cooking school and restaurant Terroir La Cachette which features Strewn's wines.

Our aphrodisiacs will be prepared by La Cachette's kitchen. Chef Alain Levesque will turn up the heat and design hor's d'oeuvres to highlight each exciting food item. La Cachette's Provençal styled food has delighted diners for over nine years at Strewn Winery. Alain focuses on local suppliers and products wherever possible.



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This event is great for both couples and singles alike. Be prepared to laugh, giggle and perhaps even blush as we prepare you for Valentine's Day.

Please go to the website to register for this event.

Oakville Chapter

Wine and Chocolate Event

Oakville, February 2, 2010

If you agree that chocolate is the perfect accompaniment to wine, then plan to attend the OWS Oakville Chapter "Sumptuous Wine and Seductive Chocolate" event being held at Cucci Ristorante on Tuesday, February 2, 2009.

This wine and chocolate tasting event will be hosted by Sue-Ann Staff, Proprietor of Sue-Ann Staff Estate Winery (a complete vineyard and winery service plus winery), based on her family's 200-year-old estate in Jordan, Ontario and Winemaker for John Howard Cellars of Distinction producing the Megalomaniac brand in Vineland, Ontario. Sue-Ann has become one of Canada's top winemakers by winning over 450 national and international wine awards. She was acclaimed as "2002 Winemaker of the Year" by the Ontario Wine Society and one of the top four "Women in Wine" in the world by the International Wine and Spirits Awards of London, England twice.

Everyone is welcome, however, all attendees must be 19 years of age or older. Cost is \$35 for members, and \$45 for non-members.

Space is limited, so register early. Watch for the flyer on this event coming soon to the OWS website. Online registration will be available. For further information, contact Cathy Bergsma at 416-996-6700. Cucci Ristorante is located at 119 Jones Street in Oakville (event room).

Previous Events

Toronto Chapter

The First of Its Kind...

PATRICIA DINSMORE

It took a lot of planning, a lot of emails and more than a fair share of visits to the wineries of Ontario – not that any of us minded that part – but on Monday, November 30th, 43 of Ontario's wineries plus WineryToHome gathered at the University of Toronto Faculty Club to share their wines and kick off holiday wine sales.

Were you there at the Faculty Club that night? Were you one of the people who placed an order at one of 17 wineries that received orders? With over 250 wines available for trying it is a little hard to pinpoint favourites. Perhaps it would be a bit more fitting to show you in pictures since, after all, a picture is worth a thousand words.



For those who were able to attend, here is a sampling of some of the comments we heard over the course of the evening. From D. Maltby, who has never attended an Ontario Wine Society event but has been a member of the Ontario Wine Society's Facebook group for quite a while.

"I had a great time at the event! At first I wasn't sure how "formal" it was going to be, but it didn't take long to get into the swing of things. I've been to many wineries in Beamsville, Vineland and NOTL, and this event was like having 43 wineries all beside each other without having to worry about driving to each one! I found some wines were not ones I would expect to have "free"

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tastings of (some Icewines and other specialty wines), so this was an added bonus.

It felt, in a way, like getting a backstage pass to an industry tasting, since there was a certain informality and comfort to the event. When I go to the wineries themselves, I find a certain disconnect at some places that can be a little off-putting. However, I had better discussions and learned more at this event with most of the people. Three hours is not enough time to try all I wanted to try! However, it seemed everyone was on their "A" game, and I was pleased to see how Ontario wines have so much quality to offer."

Lynn Sullivan, from Rosehall Run Vineyards (PEC), sums up quite nicely what a lot of the wineries had to say about our event,

"Thank you for orchestrating such a well-attended and important event. I thought that the set-up and execution were excellent – there was just the right amount of food and from what I could tell, guests were partaking in a serious contemplation and discussion of the wines presented.

I do not expect a huge return of immediate sales as a result of these events. I still think that we have a long way to go in convincing consumers to order wine and have it delivered (rather than purchase it directly at the LCBO). Nonetheless, we have already received a couple of orders from WineryToHome.

Having said that, the opportunity to showcase all of Ontario's producers in one evening is 'priceless'."

Finally, from our executive team and the organizers of this event, we hear the following...

"The OWS Taste and Order event was the largest ever Ontario VQA tasting. Over 250 wines under one roof! We also launched our Member Discount Boutique where OWS members are now eligible for discounts on various services and goods. All in all, a hugely successful event."

If you wish to check out the Ontario Wine Society Member Discount Boutique, please go to the following website: http://www.ontariowinesociety.com/discount_boutique.htm. I am sure at this point, you are probably wondering how the wineries that participated did following the tasting in terms of orders. From Doug Towers, President of WineryToHome, we have the following details.

11 individuals placed 30 orders

15 of those orders qualified for and were given delivery discounts

17 wineries had orders placed

150 bottles of wine were sold for approximately \$3000

So, to wrap this up, I have a couple of questions for everyone. If you were not able to make it to the first ever Taste and Order event, why not? Was it a scheduling conflict? Also, are you interested in trying to make it to this event if we run it in the future? Hopefully, for those who placed orders, you had the opportunity to try some over the holidays and maybe impress a few non-believers on the merits of Ontario wine. In fact, hopefully we all had some great Ontario wines over the holiday season. What better time is there to Drink Local when entertaining over the holiday season? Cheers and Happy New Year.

Niagara Chapter

Gadgets, Gizmos, Games... Oh My!

SHARON MARKS

With the Christmas season just around the corner, Niagara Chapter conducted a festive event at Konzelmann Estate Winery. The recently renovated Konzelmann Winery was a beautiful venue for this sold-out event.

As a wintery storm was rolling in with blustery winds and freezing rain, guests were warmly greeted in the stunning foyer and then directed into the new tasting room called "The Oak Room". The reception was held in "The Oak Room", where members and guests sipped on Sparkling Riesling while browsing through the variety of wine gadgets and merchandise available in the wine boutique. A variety of artisanal cheeses, provided by Chef David House, accompanied the reception wine beautifully.



Our guest speaker Michael Pinkus

The main event was held in Konzelmann's cozy upstairs event room warmed by the corner fireplace. Back by popular demand, self-described "Gadget Slut", Michael Pinkus, arrived with a large box of his own wine gadgets

and gizmos to share with us. Members had been encouraged to bring their favourite odd or unusual wine gadgets in hopes of stumping Michael. To the delight of all the guests, an unusual gadget brought by Debbie Levere did in fact stump Michael. She had brought what looked to be blacksmith tongs but was in fact Port bottle cutters.



The tasting was held in Konzelmann's unique loft

Michael kept the audience in stitches with his witty yet educational demonstrations. Some debates ensued on the benefits or non-benefits of certain gadgets such as magnetic stone coasters which some claim soften the tannins in a glass of wine placed on the stone coaster. A favourite gadget of Michael's was the Vinturi wine aerator. The benefits of the Vinturi aerator were demonstrated in our wine tasting, along with traditional decanters.

A comparison tasting of decanted versus non-decanted Konzelmann wines was enjoyed by all. Two white wines and two red wines were chosen for this comparison. The first white wine tasted was the very aromatic 2007 Gewurztraminer. It was agreed by almost all that aromatic whites such as this particular Gewurztraminer, are much better enjoyed non-decanted. Decanting aromatic whites strips the lovely aromatics and subdues the flavours. The second white we compared was the 2007 Barrel-Fermented Chardonnay. Although a heavily American oaked Chardonnay may have benefitted from decanting, Konzelmann's Chardonnay had been fermented in French oak and was nicely balanced, thus no benefit was determined from decanting.

The red wines that were chosen for the comparison were the 2007 Reserve Merlot and a younger 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon. All agreed that both reds were delicious and agreed the smoothness and flavour increased with decanting. The Gewurztraminer and Merlot were tested with the Vinturi aerator and the

Chardonnay and the Cabernet Sauvignon in traditional decanters.



Chef David House provided delicious finger foods

Once again, Chef David House delighted our palates with scrumptious festive appetizers. From Sugar-cured Duck Breast with Cranberry Goat Cheese, Braised Short Rib with Foie Gras Terrine, and Musk Ox Rilletto (yes, real musk ox brought back from the Yukon by David's brother!) to Eggnog Pudding in Chocolate Cups and Pumpkin Mousse with Shortbread, the food was thoroughly enjoyed by all!

Many thanks to Jansin Ozkur and his staff at Konzelmann Estate Winery for hosting our event, and special thanks to Jacob for his assistance pouring the wines during the event. Thanks also go to talented Chef David House for preparing the array of amazing appetizers, and to President Sharon Marks for organizing the event. Thanks also go to Bruce Jackson for his photographs of our event, which can be seen in this article, with more on the OWS website.

News from the Vines

FRED COUCH, NIAGARA CHAPTER

Pillitteri Estates Winery has been awarded the top prize at a wine competition in France. The Niagara-on-the-Lake winery was awarded first overall and a gold medal at the Effervescents du Monde Competition held recently in Burgundy. Pillitteri's 2008 sparkling Cabernet Icewine was the only North American wine to break the top ten.

Birchwood Wines has moved to 20 Bees in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The property has been sold and a new winery will be opening there later in the year. The former Thomas and Vaughan Winery has been sold yet again. Once remaining Thomas & Vaughan wines have been liquidated a new winery will open on the property.

Andrzej Lipinski has joined the team at Cornerstone Winery in Beamsville. www.cornerstonewinery.com.

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He is working part time as a consultant and will be making some new wines such as Gewurztraminer, Chenin Blanc and Cabernet Franc. Andrzej is also the winemaker at the Organized Crime and The Foreign Affair wineries.

Follow the progress of a winery under development. Burning Mills Vineyards of Port Dover has plans to produce "unique and highly valued wines – both red and white made in the appassimento style, as well as Icewine and late harvest wine". The first wines should be ready by 2011. A television documentary is being made of the winery's development. For more information go to: www.burningmills.com.

D'Angelo Estate Winery, Amherstburg and Colchester Ridge Estate Winery, Harrow are the latest wineries to become Industry Members and supporters of the Ontario Wine Society. Check out their websites at www.dangelowinery.com and www.colchesterridge.com.

Our condolences to the family of **Gabe Magnotta** who passed away on December 30th. Gabe was the founder and head of the Magnotta Winery Corporation – Canada's third largest wine producer in volume and sales.



President Ken Burford presenting award to Caitlin Heit

The Ontario Wine Society Prize of \$500 is awarded annually to a third-year Brock University student in the Oenology and Viticulture program on the basis of academic merit and based on the recommendation of the Chair of Oenology & Viticulture. This year's recipient of the prize was Caitlin Heit.

Members' Benefits

The Ontario Society is delighted to announce that we have added a new "Discount Boutique" member benefit feature to our website. A link to it appears on our home page www.ontariowinesociety.com.

Currently, there are five companies offering our members discounts on their products or services, like wine magazines and courses. And, more will be added. But, you have to be a member of the Ontario Wine Society to take advantage of these discounts.

Currently, new member fees are \$40 and yearly renewal is \$30 if you receive mailings via e-mail and \$40 for regular mail. The main benefit of a membership is that you and one guest can attend events at the member rate which is usually \$10 less than the non-member rate.

Industry Member Events

CALAMUS ESTATE WINERY

Winter Winemaker's Dinner

"Join the Calamus team for our first Winemaker's dinner in our beautifully renovated event room. A wonderful way to celebrate the Icewine Festival. Menu conceived by wine writer Mike Lowe and James Cuttriss of "The Heat is On Catering" Sat. Jan. 30 6:30 p.m. \$85 per person Contact the winery to book your spot: info@calamuswines.com 905-562-9303 or 888-225-9866.

CAVE SPRING CELLARS

Twenty Valley Winter Winefest

January 16 & 17 noon until 5:00 p.m.

Come and enjoy winter at its best with us at Cave Spring during the Twenty Valley Winter Winefest. We will be partnering with our local cheese maker Upper Canada Cheese Company, sampling some exquisite cheeses paired with Cave Spring wine. Not to be missed!

Magic of Winter

January 30 & February 27 - 5:30 p.m.

Approximately one hour

Cost: \$20.00 per person

Join us at Cave Spring Vineyard to experience winter in all its beauty with the magical light of the full moon. Tour the vineyard with our guide and take in nature in all its winter splendour. We'll finish off the walk with some mulled wine to warm your insides. Be prepared with



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proper winter clothing (layering is best) and winter footwear, as well as a flashlight or headlamp. For more details please contact the wine shop at 905-562-3581 extension 304 or e-mail retail@cavespring.ca. Reservations required.

Double Decadence...Wine and Chocolate

February 13 - 1:00 p.m. ~ 4:00 p.m.

Experience the sensation of decadent wine and chocolate pairings with some of the most exquisite local chocolates from Kelly Nemeth of Tote Sweet and the wines of Cave Spring.

\$5.00 per person

Let's Get Reddy...

....and taste some outstanding reds from our 2007 vintage! Take this opportunity to discuss with Brian Kelly, Cave Spring wine consultant, everything you would like to know about Cave Spring and their approach to wine making and enjoy these dynamite reds from a great year as well as a surprise from 2006!

February 27 - 1:00 p.m. \$15.00 Reservations required

COYOTE'S RUN ESTATE WINERY

Mulled Icewine

Every day in January

Try this delicious winter warm up - warm, mulled Icewine. This cozy drink will take the chill out of the coldest day. It's like warm apple pie in a glass.

\$3/sample

Niagara Icewine Festival Touring Pass: Sweet and Spicy Springrolls

January 16&17,23&24,30&31

Enjoy a sample of our award-winning 2007 Riesling Icewine with spicy Vietnamese spring rolls. These fresh spring rolls are made with Icewine braised pork, and Icewine marinated vegetables. The perfect spicy sweet treat. \$10 without a Niagara Wine Festival Discovery Pass.

Days of Wine and Chocolate

Weekends in February

Explore pairings of two of your favourite indulgences - wine and chocolate, as you tour the 22 wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake in February. Each stop will feature a decadent chocolate selection, from classic flavours to unexpected surprises, matched to a premium VQA wine. Visit Coyote's Run to sample our 2007 Red Paw Vineyard Pinot Noir matched with dark chocolate covered almonds. \$30/person + taxes.

CREEKSIDE ESTATE WINERY

Launch of the Creekside Cellar Club

We are announcing our new Creekside Cellar Club. This is the first of two annual 'Future's' style releases that we will be doing as a benefit to club members. There is a fee to join the Cellar Club - people who sign up via the website will be added to our members database and get insider information as well as first chance at any special releases, events and future's offerings.

Fire and Ice: Creekside's Annual Chestnut Roast

January 16&17 - 11:00 a.m. ~ 4:30 p.m.

A celebration of winter comforts! Join us for our 10th annual chestnut roast on the Creekside deck as we prepare fresh roasted chestnuts topped with artisanal butters, paired with Vidal Icewine and house made mulled wine.

Fee: \$6 per person. No reservations required.

Creekside Futures Tasting:

January 23&24

The first Creekside Futures Program. Features a preview tasting of offerings from our 2010 futures club. Be among the first to taste the next vintage of some of Creekside's most acclaimed wines including Reserve Sauvignon Blanc, Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Broken Press Shiraz and Reserve Viognier. This tasting is free to confirmed Futures members and \$10 to the general public. Hosted by the Creekside Winemaking team, the tasting is available from 12 - 4 each day at the winery retail store.

FLAT ROCK CELLARS

Vines Magazine Wine Seminar

January 16 - 11:00 a.m.

Join Vines Magazine Editor and Wine Educator Chris Waters and Host Ed Madronich of Flat Rock Cellars for an educational and fun tasting of the famed winery's award winning wines. For information, visit online (www.niagaraicewinefestival.com). To book, call 905-688-0212 ext 112. Price: \$10.00

Weekend Workshop - A Sneak Peek of the 2009 Harvest

February 6 - 10:00 a.m. ~ 12:00 p.m.

Be among the first to see what the 2009 harvest offers in a tasting with our harvest winemaker, Ross Wise.

\$25 per person (maximum 20 people per session)
Contact/Registration Information: 905-562-8994,
www.flatrockcellars.com

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At the Winemaker's Table

with Chef Mark Hand of Hospitality on Hand

February 14 - 12:30 p.m.

This year we discovered – and it came as a shock to us – that not everybody wants to get down and dirty in the vineyard! However, there does appear to be a slew of you that would happily put your boots under our table, roll up your sleeves and talk turkey over a great meal with Ed and Marlize.

Grill Ed about his passion for building Niagara's wine industry or, if you prefer, about his earlier heady basketball days. Chew the fat with Winemaker Marlize Beyers about cold climate winemaking or life growing up in South Africa. It's your chance to get to know the faces behind the wines you'll enjoy, while tucking into an outstanding three-course lunch prepared by one of our many super-talented, local chefs.

So if you're more comfortable with cutlery than you are with secateurs, this is the Flat Rock event for you – because the only thing that's going to get dirty here is your napkin.

Price: \$75 per person (plus GST)

Contact/Registration Information: 905-562-8994,
www.flatrockcellars.com

*To keep things interactive, numbers will be kept to 12-14 guests.

In the Winemaker's Boots

Full Day Seasonal Series

March 21 - 9:00 a.m ~ 5:00 p.m.

Prepare yourself for a very hands-on, full day session where you will spend the day with the winemaker and Flat Rock Cellars president learning all the ins-and-outs of pruning in the vineyard and preparing the wines for bottling in the winery. Each session is designed to spotlight the seasonal activities taking place in both the winery and vineyard at a critical time of the growing year. Four key components – vineyard activities, winery work, lab analysis, and tasting/blending sessions – are featured in each session. We'll be serving up a fantastic lunch and you'll walk away with a cool Flat Rock t-shirt in one hand and a snazzy certificate that's sure to impress your friends in the other. We'll provide the tools you need, you just bring the elbow grease, your sense of adventure and, as always, a sense of humour.

\$200 per person

Contact/Registration Information: 905-562-8994,
www.flatrockcellars.com

HILLEBRAND WINERY

EVENTS

Icewine Dinner Tasting Menu

Every evening from January 2 to 31

Chef Frank Dodd has taken his favourite signature Icewine dishes, many of them lauded by wine and food critics and has created a six-course tasting menu in which each dish has been made or paired with Icewine.

\$110 per person, with wines. \$75 per person, without wine.

Icewinemaker's Lunch

Every Saturday in January - 12:00 noon ~ 3:00 p.m.

Baby it's cold outside, so come on into the Hillebrand Winery Restaurant and snuggle down with Icewine inspired cuisine and a complimentary glass of our Trius Golden Brut. Created by Chef Frank Dodd and Winemaker Darryl Brooker, enjoy a three-course limited a la carte menu filled with Icewine infused or inspired cuisine.

\$35 per person, exclusive of wine, taxes and gratuities.

Trius Icewine Salon

January 16&17, 23&24, 30&31 - 11:00 a.m. ~ 5:00 p.m.

Relax at our outdoor Icewine Salon while sipping a glass of our award winning Icewine paired with Chef Frank Dodd's handmade Trius Cupcakes.

\$10 per person. \$5 for Wine Club Members.

Icewinemaker's Dinner

January 23

Icewine Reception: 7:00 p.m. Dinner: 7:30 p.m.

A Hillebrand tradition – join Winemaker Darryl Brooker and Chef Frank Dodd for this celebration of the Icewine harvest. The evening begins with an Icewine Reception before leading into the sumptuous Icewine Tasting Menu. Created with the finest local ingredients, every course of the tasting menu is either made or perfectly matched with Icewine.

\$150 per person, exclusive of taxes and gratuities. \$135 for Wine Club Members, exclusive of taxes and gratuities.

Twenty Years of Trius & Jazz

Offered daily in January

Join our celebration of 20 years of Hillebrand Jazz at the Winery with an exhibit of vintage jazz posters. Guests will enjoy a complimentary sample of Trius Red, Niagara's Benchmark wine celebrating its 20th vintage and Hillebrand jazz enthusiasts' favourite wine. Just drop in!



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Farmers' Market Brunch

Every Sunday from 11:30 am to 2:30 pm
Great wine, great food, great place. Start your
Sunday on a high note with a Farmers' Market

Brunch at Hillebrand Winery Restaurant. Celebrate
local wine and food with a special menu for only \$44.95*
per person. Prepared by Chef Frank Dodd and served
with a complementary glass of our award-winning Trius
Brut, it is always seasonally inspired and showcases the
bounty of Niagara.

*Plus wine, taxes and gratuities

Days of Wine & Chocolate

Every Weekend in February - 11:00 a.m. ~ 5:00 p.m.
Warm up your winter with this match made in heaven!
Explore pairings of two of your favourite indulgences –
wine and chocolate, as you tour the 22 Wineries of
Niagara-on-the-Lake. Each stop features a premium
VQA wine matched to a delectable chocolate selection.
A romantic celebration for two or a great reason for a
girls' getaway weekend!

At Hillebrand Winery we are showcasing the Artist Series
Limited Edition Cabernet Merlot 2007 paired with a
decadent dark chocolate and pistachio creation.

Passes are \$30 per person (plus applicable taxes) and can
be used any of the four weekends.

INNISKILLIN WINES

Icewine Discovery Tour

Weekends 11:00 a.m. ~ 5:00 p.m.

Come experience Extreme Winemaking: Icewine. Be
greeted outside with Sparkling Vidal Icewine in a unique
glass carved of ice (keep your mitts on!) Continue onto
the Vidal Icewine Vineyard to enjoy our special Olympic
Vidal Icewine with the actual frozen Vidal grape; moving
on to our Founders Hall you will sample our Riesling
Icewine; next on to Brae Burn Barn to enjoy our new
Canadian Oak Aged Chardonnay Icewine and our
Cabernet Franc Icewine. \$25 per person

I.C².E. Dinner - Inniskillin Cool Culinary Experience

January 30th

I.C².E. will prove to be a one-of-a-kind dinner experience
that showcases culinary interaction with unique food and
wine pairings, including our famous Icewine. Relax,
unwind and let us guide your experience. \$150 per
person inclusive. Reserve @ 905-468-2187 Ext. 5423

Give yourself a break program for Teachers!

Coordinated efforts between Niagara Estates for a free
tour and tasting for teachers plus guest at 12:30pm and
2:30pm to teachers everywhere!

All Canadian Kitchen Party

February 20

A new and exciting interactive dinner experience-The
Great Canadian Kitchen Party-where guests don an apron
and get into the thick of things. Menus are designed
drawing inspiration from Canadian Cuisine —Coast to
Coast. Reserve at 905-468-2187 Ext. 5423, \$175 per
person inclusive.

For additional private and public experiences please visit
our website at www.inniskillin.com.

KONZELMANN ESTATE WINERY

2nd Annual Winter Barbecue

Continue the Icewine celebrations after visiting Niagara-
on-the-Lake's Downtown Icewine Bar with an outdoor
culinary experience. 'BBQ Lunch at Konzelmann'.
Featuring Lakeland's Wild Boar Sausage, Pulled Pork,
BBQ Chicken and Chili offerings served "al fresco" style
at the winery. Join us for a Winter Barbecue on Saturday,
January the 23rd and enjoy a grilled meal with all the
fixings with a glass of Konzelmann Wine. The grill is on
from 11:30 am to 2:30 pm. For more information call us
at 905 935 2866 or visit www.konzelmann.ca.

PELLER ESTATE WINERY

Chef's Icewine Tasting Menu

Every evening in January

Let us take care of the tough decisions and 'Awaken your
Palate' with an unscripted Icewine inspired culinary
journey. Each of the five-courses has been made or
matched with Icewine, what we consider to be winter's
rare gift. \$115 per person, with wine pairings. \$80 per
person, without wine pairings.

Icewine Brunch

Every Saturday & Sunday in January

12:00 noon ~ 3:00 p.m.

The weather outside might be frightful and we couldn't
be more pleased. That is because we are bringing the
best part about winter in Wine Country indoors and to
our tables. Icewine! At this signature brunch, settle
down by the fireplace and enjoy an Icewine inspired
three-course limited a la carte Brunch menu created by
Winery Chef and CityLine personality Jason Parsons
accompanied by a complimentary glass of Icewine.

\$44.95 per person, exclusive of wine, taxes and
gratuities.

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Sweet Sensations

January 16&17, 23&24, 30&31- 11:00 a.m. ~ 5:00 p.m.
Join us at our outdoor Icebar for a taste ...or two...of our award-winning and world renowned Icewines followed by the opportunity to toast Winery Chef and CityLine personality Jason Parsons' delectable Icewine marshmallows over an open fire.

\$10 per person. \$5 for Wine Club Members.

Icewinemaker's Dinner

January 23

Icewine Martini Reception: 7:00 p.m. Dinner: 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Winemaker Lawrence Buhler and Winery Chef and CityLine personality Jason Parsons, the evening begins with Icewine Martinis served by the fireplace followed by a five-course Icewine inspired tasting menu where each course is paired or prepared with winter's rarest gift. \$150 per person, exclusive of taxes and gratuities.

\$135 for Wine Club Members, exclusive of taxes and gratuities.

Icewinemaker's Lunch

January 23

Icewine Martini Reception: 12:00 noon Lunch: 2:30 p.m.
Can't make it for our Icewinemaker's Dinner? Join us for our Icewinemaker's Lunch instead! Hosted by winery Chef and CityLine personality Jason Parsons and visited upon by Winemaker Lawrence Buhler, all four courses of this lunch are made or paired with Icewine. After lunch, we will toast Icewine Marshmallow over an open fire.

\$105 per person, exclusive of taxes and gratuities. \$95 for Wine Club Members, exclusive of taxes and gratuities.

Intense Icewine Weekend: A Boot Camp for (Bundled Up) Bon Vivants

January 23&24

Winemaker Lawrence Buhler has a really cool job...literally. Are you tough enough to live the life of our winemaker during Icewine harvest? Over a weekend can you:

- Brave sub-zero temperatures in our Icewine vineyards?
- Taste over 25 Icewines?
- Eat and sip through 16 courses?
- Identify different Icewines blind?

\$550 per person, \$895 per couple, exclusive of taxes and gratuities - this price includes accommodation at White Oaks Resort & Spa on Saturday night, transportation on Saturday by Niagara Classic Cabs, two lunches, one

dinner, an immense amount of wine and an exceptionally memorable wine weekend.

Days of Wine & Chocolate

Every weekend in February - 11:00 a.m. ~ 5:00 p.m.

Warm up your winter with this match made in heaven! Explore pairings of two of your favourite indulgences – wine and chocolate, as you tour the 22 wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Each stop features a premium VQA wine matched to a decadent chocolate selection. A romantic celebration for two or a great reason for a girls' getaway weekend! At Peller Estates we are featuring the Andrew Peller Signature Series Chardonnay 'Sur Lie' 2007 alongside a creamy confection of milk chocolate and hazelnut.

Passes are \$30 per person (plus applicable taxes) and can be used any of the four weekends.

Chef's Table Dinner Series

February 6 & 20 - March 6 & 20

Kitchen Reception: 6:30 p.m. Dinner: 7:00 p.m.

Come behind the scenes at Peller Estates Winery Restaurant and discover how Winery Chef and personality Jason Parsons approaches the art of pairing wine and food. Your dining experience begins with a reception in Jason's kitchen where he will discuss collaborating with winemaker Lawrence Buhler and his approach to developing innovative food and wine pairings. You will then enjoy a seasonally inspired tasting menu presented by Jason and perfectly paired with wines selected by Lawrence.

\$140 per person, plus tax and gratuities. Space is limited.

PENINSULA RIDGE ESTATES WINERY

Winter Winefest! The "not just Icewine" festival!

January 16&17 - noon ~ 5:00 p.m.

Peninsula Ridge Estates Winery and Jordan Village
Come join us for a spectacular weekend in Jordan Village at the first annual Winter Winefest. Try some great Peninsula Ridge wines along with some delicious food prepared by the Kitchen House at Peninsula Ridge.

There will also be over 20 other great VQA wineries in the village this weekend so here's your chance to try many of the very best Niagara wines, all in one beautiful location.

If you have time to drop by the winery, we will reward you with a FREE Icewine or Ratafia tasting paired with some of Jane's scrumptious artisanal cheeses! This is an



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event not be missed so bundle up and come on down to the first annual Winter Winefest!

PILLITTERI ESTATES WINERY

Icewine and Jazz Celebration

Every weekend in January

Visit Pillitteri and be "charmed" by a flight of Riesling and appetizer pairings that crescendo in flavour peaking with our 2007 Riesling Icewine. A set of complementary wine charms are yours to keep.

Icewine Festival

January 16&17, 23&24, 30&31

Pillitteri will be pairing the 2007 Riesling Dry, 2008 Riesling Select Late Harvest and 2007 Riesling Icewine with a poached pear, blue cheese and chocolate treat that is sure to get your taste buds singing.

Icewine Gala

January 15 - 8:00 p.m. ~ 11:00 p.m.

Fallsview Casino, tickets \$175

Pillitteri will be unveiling the award winning 2008 Cabernet Sparkling Icewine for its first public tasting.

Pillitteri Wine Club Barrel Tasting

January 16 - 3:00 p.m. ~5:00 p.m.

Open to Pillitteri Wine Club Members, to become a member visit www.pillitteri.com/wine_club to sign up. Meet our Winemaster and taste upcoming reserve wines right from the barrel. RSVP to jeff@pillitteri.com with wine club membership number.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Icewine Experience

January 23&24

Downtown Niagara-on-the-Lake

Join Pillitteri and many other Niagara wineries as we pour our Icewines at the annual Icebar in downtown Niagara-on-the-Lake, there will be many activities, including ice carving, jazz music and gourmet food samples.

Days of Wine and Chocolate

Every weekend in February

Purchase a passport from any Niagara winery and visit Pillitteri to sample our 2005 Chambourcin Special Select Late Harvest paired with a dark blackcurrant chocolate.

Cuvee Gala

February 19 - Fallsview Casino, tickets \$200

Taste the most amazing wines released in Ontario, meet Ontario's winemakers and mingle, all while enjoying amazing atmosphere and food from the Niagara Region.

REIF ESTATE WINERY

La Dolce Vita... Living the Sweet Reifstyle

January 16&17, 23&24, 30&31 - 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Taste our Vidal Icewine paired with Spit Roasted Porketta served on a mini-brioche with apple Icewine sauce. Warm up by an open fire while you savour our signature Reif Estate Icewine produced from our oldest vineyard blocks. No reservations required.

Cost \$10 per person or with Icewine Discovery Pass Voucher.

Visit www.niagarawinefestival.com for more information.

Icewine, Jazz and Blue

January 30- 5:30 p.m. ~ 7:30 p.m.

Join us for our first Jazz concert with 'Tarragon J' in our Icewine press room. Guest will also enjoy Icewine Cocktails paired with BLUE inspired hors d'oeuvres prepared by local chef Robin Howe. Cost \$40 per person includes concert, two cocktails and hors d'oeuvres.

A Culinary Journey with Icewine | A winemaker's dinner

January 30 - 5:30 p.m. ~ 9:30 p.m.

Start your evening with a Jazz concert in our Icewine press room followed by a cocktail reception in our wine boutique and finish with an Icewine inspired menu at the historic Grand Victorian Mansion circa 1870. Klaus W. Reif will join you for dinner to share his award winning Icewines that are paired with a four-course regionally inspired menu prepared by local chef Robin Howe. \$125.00 per person plus taxes and gratuity.

RIVERVIEW CELLARS WINERY

Chocolate Falls on Niagara

January 16&17, 23&24 - 11:00 a.m. ~ 6:00 p.m.

Fond of Fondue? Enjoy our ultra rich 2008 Vidal Icewine while savouring fresh fruit and homemade biscotti, both dipped in a fountain of Belgian chocolate. A classic Icewine Festival event! No reservations required.

\$10 without a Discovery Pass.

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STREWN WINERY

Harvest Vegetable & Salmon Chowder with Icewine Drizzle

January 2 - 31

Come in from the cold and enjoy the comfort of a hot creamy chowder with an Icewine drizzle and tea biscuit. Paired with Strewn's award-winning Vidal Icewine, this yummy combo will warm your heart and please your palate. Available 10 am to 5:30 pm; \$10. Free to Niagara Icewine Festival Discovery Pass Holders.

Ice Gold – Hands-On Winter Wine Harvest

January 16

During the Niagara Icewine Festival, you can become part of the Strewn winemaking crew for a truly magical experience. You will help harvest and press Gewurztraminer Icewine grapes and taste the fruits of your labours, followed by a conducted tasting of award-winning Icewines. Maximum 20 people. Cost \$40 including taxes and gratuities. Reservations required 905-468-1229.

Niagara Icewine Shake

Every year we hear people love Icewine poured over ice cream. We've taken a good idea and made it better and developed a thick, creamy Icewine Shake for adults only! Available daily in January between 10 am and 5:30 pm at the Main Tasting Bar; \$5 (4-oz serving).

Inside The Wine Seminar Series: Dessert Wines

January 23

The "Inside the Wine" seminar series is a response to requests for in-depth wine tastings — January's theme is dessert wines ranging from Late Harvest to Icewine. Strewn winemaker Joe Will will conduct the tasting and help you discover the subtle nuances and complexities of some of Niagara's world-renowned sweet wines. Time: 11:30 am to 12:30 pm (note: the seminar is scheduled for late morning when your palate is sharper). Cost is \$25; reservations required. To book your spot, call 905-468-1229.

The Cozy Kitchen Cooking Classes

January 16 & 23

When winter temperatures drop and drop, the warmth of the kitchen becomes even more appealing. Working with a partner, you will prepare a delicious winter-inspired three-course menu - finishing off with Icewine to celebrate the season! Bookings must be made for two people (friends, siblings, spouses, etc.). Special rate of

\$340 per couple plus 5% tax. To register, call the Wine Country Cooking School at 905-468-8304.

Wine & Chocolate

February 6&7, 13&14, 20&21, 27&28

As part of the Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake 'Days of Wine & Chocolate' touring program, we will be pairing our premium VQA Cabernet Select Late Harvest with a decadent Dark Chocolate with Dried Apricot. Touring Passes are \$30 plus tax and include one pairing at each of the Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake members. Valid February 6/7, 13/14, 20/21 and 27/28, from 11 am to 5 pm. Passes can be purchased at the wineries or online at www.niagaraonthelake.com and by phone at 905-468-1950.

Other Ontario Wine Events

CANADIAN CLUB OF HALTON PEEL

Guest Dinner Speaker – Darryl Brooker, Senior Winemaker, Hillebrand

Thursday, March 18

Oakville Conference Centre, 2515 Wyecroft Road (QEW & Bronte Rd), Oakville

Registration/Cash bar 6:00 pm; Dinner 7:00 pm

Darryl Brooker joined Hillebrand Winery in April 2005. In March 2009 he received the Tony Aspler Cuvee Award of Excellence recognizing his contributions to the Ontario wine industry. Darryl will talk about his experiences as a winemaker as well as the challenges and opportunities in the industry.

\$40 per person (students \$15)

Call Barry Wylie at 905-827-6302 for reservations

The Tuesday Tasters

Demonstrating the cooperative spirit of Niagara wineries

BRUCE JACKSON

I get to attend meetings of a wine tasting club called the Tuesday Tasters that is not available to most members of the OWS. You have to be an employee of a winery in Niagara-on-the-Lake. I thought the OWS might be interested in what the Tuesday Tasters is all about.

I often get into conversations with wine people who have come here from other countries and I frequently hear the same comments about the wineries in Niagara. They talk about their surprise at the cooperative spirit of the

wineries and their employees here.

Apparently in some areas there is a very competitive atmosphere and very little support among the wineries. Although there is competition in Niagara, there is a great deal of support for what the others are doing.

The Tuesday Tasters is a perfect example of this supportive spirit. On the first Tuesday of every month, one of the wineries in NOTL will host the group. There will be an announced theme like sparkling wine, rose, Riesling or wines that go good with a certain food. The staffs of all the wineries are notified and each winery supplies a bottle of their wine that fits the theme. There is no charge to attend.

Here's where the supportive spirit shows up. The tastings are held so that staff who deal with customers know what other wineries are doing. We are encouraged to let customers know which other wineries have a product the customer is looking for or suggest wineries that the customer might like to visit or whose wines they might enjoy tasting. It also gives us a chance to network and keep up with the special events that are being held in Niagara.

On January 5, 2010, we held our first Tuesday Tasters meeting of the year. It was held at Reif Estate on a snowy night and was attended by about thirty winery employees, including some retail managers and winery chefs. The theme was Icewine with a focus on the Niagara Icewine Festival and the on-going Icewine and Jazz Celebration being held through January.



The Reif Estate Tasting Room

This was a learning experience too. The first item of business was an Icewine tour with Reif winemaker Roberto DiDomenico who took us to the large shed where the Icewine presses were operating. Rob explained the process used at Reif and answered questions; a great help to staff who work to improve their understanding and knowledge of the wine business.

On the way back to the main building we passed some tobacco sheds in which Reif is drying grapes to produce raisins. Some of these raisins will be pressed to produce an experimental Amarone style wine.

It was during this short trek that I also saw that spirit of mutual support at work. I was asked by one fellow if Inniskillin was still doing tours at this time of year. His winery wasn't doing tours in the winter and he wasn't sure where to send customers seeking a tour. When I told him that we and Jackson-Triggs were still doing tours, he passed it on immediately to some of his co-workers.

A little later someone else asked, "Is anything new at your winery? What new wines do you have?"



Reif Winemaker Rob DiDomenico Gave An Icewine Tour

We were also given information about the Icewine and Jazz Celebration, with buttons and handouts which we were encouraged to bring back to the staff at our wineries. As we assembled back in the Reif tasting room we were provided with light snacks like gourmet pizza, cheeses and fruits and we had an opportunity to taste several Icewines from the different wineries.

This cooperative relationship extends beyond the Welland Canal to the other Niagara wineries but for practical purposes (it's a long drive from Puddicombe to Peller!) the Tuesday Tasters focus on Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The Tuesday Tasters is a great way to forge friendships and a great learning experience for retail and tour staff who have to deal with the many customers who come here. The more we know, the more supportive we are, the better the experience for the customer and the more likely they will want to come back.

Article and photos by Bruce Jackson. Bruce is an employee of Inniskillin Winery and is the Director of Events and Official Photographer for the OWS Niagara Chapter.