



Just Off the Vine ...

Ontario Wine Society Events

❖ Toronto Chapter

• Annual Dinner, Wednesday, May 5, 2004

The Toronto Chapter's annual dinner will be held at the thoroughly Canadian Tundra Restaurant in the Toronto Hilton Hotel. Thomas & Vaughan Vintners will be the featured winery of the evening with Thomas Kocsis, owner, and Jason James, winemaker on hand to talk to us about the winery and their award winning wines.

• 2004 Ontario Wine Awards Winners, Thursday, June 3, 2004

We will be joining the consumer tasting event of the Ontario Wine Awards at the newly renovated Miller Tavern on Yonge St. and experience first-hand the best wines that Ontario has to offer.

• Summer Bin End Dinner, Thursday, August 19, 2004

This year we're heading to the patio at the Tasting Rooms Restaurant with wines from the OWS cellar.

• Ontario Cabernet Sauvignon vs the World, September, 2004

• Southbrook, Chardonnay Vertical, October, 2004

❖ Niagara Chapter

• Terroir Series - Global Terroirs - Riesling, Monday, May 17, 2004

Winemaker Joe Will of Strewn Winery will lead this tasting of Rieslings from Ontario and 3 other wine regions of the world as we explore the concept of Global Terroir and try to detect the differences.

• Terroir Series - Local Terroir - Chardonnay, Thursday, June 24, 2004

Winemaker Philip Dowell of Inniskillin will lead this tasting, focusing on Chardonnays grown in single vineyards from Ontario, as we explore the concept of Local Terroir and the impact it has on the wine and the growers' choice of where to plant.

• Matching Wine and BBQ, Friday, July 23, 2004

We will explore the world of pairing wines to the BBQ foods of Creekside with the winery's chef David Paquet, outside on the covered deck!

To Contact Us

Mail: Toronto Chapter P.O. Box 519, Station K,
Toronto, Ontario
M4P 2G9

Niagara Chapter 4850 Cherrywood Dr.,
Beamsville, Ontario
LOR 1B9

Voice-mail: Toronto Chapter 416 921 9798

Niagara Chapter 905 685 7623

E-mail: contact@ontariowinesociety.com

Web: www.ontariowinesociety.com

In This Issue

page

Ontario Wine Society Events	1
Toronto Chapter	1
Niagara Chapter	1
Recent OWS Tastings	2
Toronto Chapter	2
Ontario Winery Events	2
Archibald	2
Cave Spring	2
Chateau des Charmes	2
Creekside	3
EastDell	3
Lailey	3
Legends	3
Peninsula Ridge	3
Reif	4
StoneChurch	4
Strewn	4
Ontario Restaurant Events	4
Bb 33, Bistro and Brasserie	4
Tundra	4
U of T, Faculty Club	4
Wigamog Inn	5
Wildfire Grill	5
Other Ontario Wine Events	5
6th Annual Santé: The Bloor-Yorkville Wine Festival	5
Couchiching Institute Fund-Raiser	5
Lincoln Wine Route - A Sense of Spring	6
Niagara-on-the-Lake Herb & Wine Festival	6
Ontario Wine Industry News	6
9th Annual Ontario Wine Awards	6
Growing Niagara Wine Company Adds Boutique Vintners to Cellar	7
New Director for Brock's CCOVI	7
Feature Article	8
Sue-Ann Staff, the Capable Winemaker of Pillitteri	8

- **Fruit Wines, August - TBA**
- **September 2004 - No Tasting**
- **October 2004 - No Tasting**
- **Annual Dinner at EastDell Estates Winery, November, 2004**

Guest political speaker; Tim Hudak, will talk about the latest political issues surrounding the wine industry and answer your questions.

Note: Members may attend events in either chapter.

Recent OWS Tastings

❖ Toronto Chapter

Hillebrand Double Vertical Tasting, Tuesday, March 23, 2004
By Dean Tudor

The Ontario Wine Society put on a Hillebrand Trius vertical of Lakeshore Chardonnay and Trius Red, all from 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001. It was at the usual Tasting Rooms with a sellout crowd attending.

J.L.Groulx has been the senior winemaker at Hillebrand Estates for 15 years. He was the Ontario Wine Awards' OWS Winemaker of the Year in 1998. Overall, he is responsible for over 50 different wines each vintage. Hillebrand and its sister property, Peller Estates, have a policy of holding back a certain percentage of their quality wines for sale later in the decade. Thus, 25% of the wine will come on-stream a few years after the initial release, and a series of 5% annually after that until the wine is all sold. For example, there are only a few cases of the Lakeshore Chardonnay 1998 left (indeed, maybe only a few bottles) – at a higher price than the release, naturally, just to cover capital costs of storage.

All of this was carefully explained to us by David Laroque, Wine Educator for the Estates (and soon to be a freelance consultant). He told us some things about the Trius brand name, Lakeshore properties, and vinification methods. He took us through the tasting, explaining how conditions in each year affected the grapes and, thus, the wines' maturity through the years. David handed out the technical sheets for each wine, unfortunately not including the winery price. And to the surprise of no one, there is also a Trius Grand Red, but it has just been released....

A tasting plate of food followed, such as tuna sushi roll, smoked salmon, spinach phyllo, beef, ham, and roast duck.

Here are my notes; I had to leave early, so I was not around for any discussion;

- Chardonnay Lakeshore 2001: this is the current vintage, although 2002 will be along soon. Perfumed palate, a bit soft, medium length, sour apples on the finish. I

ranked it 3rd of the Chardonnays.

- Chardonnay Lakeshore 2000: Honeyed aromatic nose, good length, fine palate, some green apples, needs food, Burgundy style. I ranked it 2nd.
- Chardonnay Lakeshore 1999: excellent age on the nose, still evolving, good length, a bit lean, definitely needs food. Some aromatic vanilla toast from the 39% US oak employed. I ranked it 1st.
- Chardonnay Lakeshore 1998: nose a bit off, palate ripe and full, good length, creamy, aging well but still aging. I ranked it 4th.
- Trius Red 2001: this is the current vintage. Ripe, herby nose, Cabernet Franc/Sauvignon and Merlot blends in Bordeaux approach. Still hard and tannic at this stage. Of the reds I ranked it 4th.
- Trius Red 2000: black fruit, softer on palate, longer length shows integration of flavours, food obviously. Ready in a few years. I ranked it 3rd.
- Trius Red 1999: vanilla nose, chocolate, mocha tones but lots of tannins still. I ranked it 2nd.
- Trius Red 1998: burnt toast, full fruit on the palate, aging nicely into some kind of ripe English-style Bordeaux. I ranked it 1st.

Dean Tudor, Wine Writer and Professor Emeritus of Journalism, Ryerson, University, Toronto, www.ryerson.ca/~dtudor.

Ontario Winery Events

❖ Archibald

5th Annual Fruit Wine & Food Festival

Saturday, May 29, 12:00pm to 5:00pm

Eight of Ontario's leading fruit wineries will match their wines with wonderful regional cuisine created by local chefs. An entertaining afternoon of wine, food & jazz music.

\$8 in advance; \$10 at the door. Tasting tickets are \$1. Proceeds benefit Big Brothers & Sisters. 905 263 2396.

❖ Cave Spring

Might in White

May 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, 11:00am and 2:00pm

The 2002 vintage has produced the most concentrated whites ever from Cave Spring Vineyard. Taste our Reserve and CSV Rieslings and Chardonnays, and see just how strapping white wine can be.

\$10 per person. Reservations required. Call 905 562 3581, Ext. 302.

❖ Chateau des Charmes

Art Exhibit

May to October, daily 11:00am to 5:00pm

Experience the talent Niagara has to offer! Chateau des Charmes is pleased to showcase artists from the St. Catharines Art Association. Selected works will be featured throughout the Spring, Summer and Fall



seasons in our St. David's Bench Vineyard Room.

Complimentary. Reservations are not required.

Taste the Season - Wine & Herb Experience Weekends in May

Château des Charmes is pleased to present our 2002 Aligoté, Estate Bottled with Shrimp Gazpacho and Basil Crouton. Sip, savour and taste the season this spring!

Passports are \$25 available online at www.niagaraonthelake.com or at participating wineries. For more information on the Herb & Wine experience, visit www.wineriesofniagaraonthelake.com.

A Rosé Toast to Mothers!

May 9, 1:00pm

Join us this Mother's Day for a celebration of moms, spring and the launch of our 2003 Rosé, Cuvée d'Andrée. Paul Sr. and Pierre-Jean, father and son winemaking duo, have crafted and dedicated this delightful new Rosé in honour of Madame Andrée Bosc, wife, mother and winery matriarch. The Cuvée d'Andrée Rosé, along with a selection of other favourites, will complement the fresh and vibrant flavours of springtime cuisine presented by Chef Randy Dupuis of the Pillar and Post.

"We look forward to raising our glass with you!" -The Bosc Family

\$50 adults, \$40 youths, plus applicable taxes/gratuities. Reservations required.

❖ **Creekside**

Seafood & Sauvignon

Weekends in May, 12:00pm to 4:00pm.

Join us for the magnificent pairing of mussels and Creekside's Sauvignon Blanc.

\$10 per person.

❖ **EastDell**

Mother's Day Brunch

May 9, 10:00am, 12:00pm and 2:00pm

You know she deserves the best! Let us fuss over Mom this year with a decadent Sunday Brunch Buffet. Special gift for Mom.

\$21.95 per person, \$10.95 for children under 12.

❖ **Lailey**

Open House and Major 2002 Release

Saturday May 1, 11:00pm to 4:00pm

The first opportunity to taste and to purchase 2002 Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon in Canadian Oak, Limited Edition Chardonnay and Old Vines Chardonnay.

Hors d'oeuvres will be served to complement the wines.

There is no charge to attend this event. Reservations required by phoning 905 468 0503.

❖ **Legends**

Legends BBQ Kick-off

May 15, 16

Available every weekend.

Call 905 563 6500 for details.

Winemaker's Diners

May 22, Taboo Resort & Inn

Call for details 705 687 8430.

May 28, Elements & Legends - Peterborough

Call 705 876 1116 for details.

❖ **Peninsula Ridge**

Wine and Culinary Experience Dinners

The pleasures of the table and of the cellar are integral to the experience we offer at Peninsula Ridge. Our winemaker Jean-Pierre Colas and executive chef Robert Berry invite you to join them for our very special Wine and Culinary Experience Dinner Series this spring featuring four-course menus complemented by our wines. Space for these intimate dinners is limited.

The dinners are held in our restaurant and provide a personalized dining adventure where you interact with both our chef and winemaker to discover their creative philosophies along with their suggestions for pairing foods and wines. A truly fun and memorable evening is in store for you!

Upcoming Wine and Culinary Experience Dinner Dates:
Tuesday, May 11 and Tuesday, June 15

\$99 for each evening, plus taxes and gratuity.

For reservations, please call 905 563 0900, Ext. 35.

Mother's Day - Rosé & Jellies

May 8, 9

Complimentary tastings of our very popular summer sipper, 2003 Rosé, in addition to samples of Castlefield wine jellies.

Riedel at Peninsula Ridge Seminar

Friday, May 21, 7:00pm

Discover the difference fine stemware can make! In-depth Riedel tasting seminar featuring Peninsula Ridge Estates Wines.

\$15 per person or \$25 per couple. 905 563 0900, Ext. 25.

All ticket prices will be deducted from any Riedel purchase that evening.

Jazz on the Ridge - Wine, Dine and Jazz Gala (Sold out!)

Friday, May 28

The third instalment of our gala fundraiser for the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital Foundations features fine wines, gourmet food, and live performances by some of Canada's finest jazz artists.



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

May 2004

❖ Reif

Herb Festival

Some weekends in May

Reif will be featuring presentations and tastings with "The Herbery", a producer of fine oils and vinegars.

Call the winery for details at 905 468 7738.

❖ StoneChurch

Herb Festival

May 1,2, 1:00pm to 4:00pm

This festival features wines paired with herbs, herbed food demonstrations and herb plantings. Experts on hand include Chef Pam Mundy and Carol Penner, a graduate of the Niagara Horticultural School. This year's special feature is growing and using edible flowers.

❖ Strewn

Parsley, Sage, Rosemary & Thyme Cooking Class

Saturday, May 15, 10:00am to 3:30pm

This is a one-day cooking class.

Cost is \$195 per person.

Celebration of Herbs Culinary Weekend

May 22, 23

\$350 per person. Reservations are required by phoning 905 468 8304.

Wine & Herb Pairing Seminar

May 29, 30 at 2:00pm

This includes a number of herb-delicacies matched to different wines.

\$15 per person plus tax. Reservations are required by phoning 905 468 1229.

Ontario Restaurant Events

❖ Bb 33, Bistro and Brasserie

May Feature Winery - Pelee Island

Pelee Island wines will also be used for our Santé Festival, Dine, Sip and Savour event on Wednesday, May 12. Pelee Island wines will be paired with each course.

Santé menu, Thursday, May 12, 6:30pm

- Fiddlehead chowder
- Carpaccio of Bison, with arugula and canola oil and Parmesan cheese shavings
or
- Smoked Aortic Char, with lemon thyme potato pancakes and dilled sour cream
- Grilled Digby scallops, barley risotto and roasted turnip and dried oven tomato sauce
or
- Alberta beef tenderloin topped with Port-soaked wild

mushrooms and Ermit blue cheese with a truffle jus

or

- Loin of lamb with a milled crust and a cherry balsamic jus

All entrees served with organic vegetables

- Pear & Cassis liquid centre dome with a sable biscuit and a compote of cassis and ginger

or

- Artisanal Quebec cheese plate

\$95 per person.

Bb33, Bistro and Brasserie, 33 Gerrard St., W., Toronto

❖ Tundra

May Feature Winery - Hillebrand

The wines featured will be 2002 Sauvignon Blanc Vineyard Select; 2002 Gamay Noir Rosé Vineyard Select; 2002 Gamay Noir, Harvest; and 2002 Cabernet.

Santé Dinner

Wednesday, May 12, reception 7:00pm, dinner 7:30pm

Niagara terroir enjoyed on Canadian Tundra.

Executive Chef John Cirillo of Tundra and Tony de Luca of Hillebrand Estates Winery Restaurant combine their culinary expertise to create a sumptuous 5 course menu.

Tickets are \$135.00 per person, excluding taxes and gratuities. For full details, menus, and reservations visit www.toronto.com/tundra or contact the Tundra Event Line at 416 860 5300.

Tundra at the Hilton Toronto Hotel, 145 Richmond Street West, Toronto.

❖ U of T, Faculty Club

Discover the Great Wines of EastDell

Wednesday, May 26, reception 6:30pm, dinner 7:00pm

Please join us as Chef Guy Troendlin matches his culinary imagination and talent with a selection of wines from the cellars of EastDell.

Reception:

- Almond coated Brie with raspberry coulis, smoked salmon pinrolls with fresh dill, asparagus and cream cheese, wrapped in a floured tortilla, paired with 2002 Unoaked Chardonnay and 2002 Red Cab

Dinner:

- Baby arugula in an Asiago cheese croustade, with balsamic dressing, paired with 2002 Unoaked Chardonnay
- Cherville and potato soup, paired with 2002 Riesling
- Free range chicken in a ginger sauce, with shiitake mushrooms, baby bok choy and steamed jasmine rice, paired with 2002 Red Cab

Dessert:

- Crème caramel with fresh berries, paired with Winter Apple dessert wine.



•Coffee, Tea

\$60 all inclusive. For reservations call 416 978 6325.

The Faculty Club, the University of Toronto, 41 Willcocks St., Toronto.

❖ **Wigamog Inn**

May Feature Winery - Thomas & Vaughan

Wigamog Inn Resort is proud to continue its tradition of supporting our truly exceptional Ontario Wineries.

During May, we will be featuring the wines of Thomas & Vaughan Vintners. Thomas & Vaughan, located in Beamsville, Ontario, enjoys an excellent reputation as a premium estate winery producing small-batch, hand-crafted wines. Thomas & Vaughan recently added to their substantial medal collection by having their 2002 "Old Vines" Marechal Foch voted "the Best Red Hybrid in Ontario" at Cuvee 2004.

The highlight of this partnership will be a winemaker's dinner on May 15, pairing their world class wines with a specially created four course gourmet dinner. The dinner will be hosted by Thomas & Vaughan Winemaker Jason James and Wigamog Inn Resort Executive Chef James Jennings.

The dinner can be added to your overnight stay for \$29.95 per person or for those wishing to attend the dinner only the price is \$54.95. The Wigamog Inn Resort is pleased once again to donate \$2.00 per dinner guest to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation.

Wigamog Inn Resort will be continuing its support of Ontario wineries throughout the summer as each week they will be featuring the wines of a different winery. The week will include tastings and advise on food pairing, as well as the opportunity to meet with some of Ontario's truly world class winemakers.

Wigamog Inn Resort is a four season, full service recreational resort and country inn overlooking Lake Kashagawigamog and surrounded by the rolling hills of the Haliburton Highlands. We pride ourselves in providing an intimate atmosphere, charming accommodation and superb dining in beautiful surroundings.

For more details or reservations please contact the Wigamog Inn Resort at 1 800 661 2010 or email at reservations@wigamoginn.com. Also, Wigamog Inn Resort at www.wigamoginn.com.

❖ **Wildfire Grill**

Winemaker's Dinner - Henry of Pelham

May 31, 6:30pm reception, dinner to follow

Wildfire will be hosting a 5-course dinner featuring the wines of Henry of Pelham.

\$80 per person.

Wildfire Grill, 3438 Yonge St., Toronto.

Other Ontario Wine Events

❖ **6th Annual Santé: The Bloor-Yorkville Wine Festival**

May 12 to 16, Toronto

A five-day extravaganza of tastings, seminars, galas, shopping events and more has made Santé a major stop on the world wine circuit and popular with aficionados and novices alike. This week of festivities, at some of Toronto's finest venues and restaurants, offers the opportunity to meet the winemakers and sample from the over 60 participating international wineries.

\$10 to \$195. Call Ticketmaster at 416 870 8000. Visit www.santewinefestival.net for more details.

❖ **Couchiching Institute Fund-Raiser**

Saturday, May 29

"Wine that maketh glad the heart of man" - Psalm 104.

"Wine is the most civilized thing in the world" according to Ernest Hemingway.

Therefore, the Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs (CIPA), advisory council member Bluma Appel and the Wine Council of Ontario are organizing a day in wine country as a special fund-raising event for the CIPA.

Bluma Appel has graciously offered to host a luncheon reception at her beautiful residence in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Niagara VQA Ontario wines will be featured, thanks to the Wine Council of Ontario which is also arranging deluxe wine tastings at wine country wineries following the luncheon. One of these tastings will be at Peller Estates in Niagara-on-the-Lake and the other at Henry of Pelham Winery in St. Catharines, which will be hosted by CIPA board member Bobbi Speck and her family who own the winery. You will meet the owners, taste award-winning wines and enjoy some wonderful company. A luxury coach will whisk you to Niagara-on-the-Lake, Bluma Appel's home, the wineries and will bring you back to Toronto. There will be other surprises as well.

The proceeds of this event will help to ensure that the organization continues its mission to increase awareness and understanding among Canadians on issues of important public policy and that it continues to bring together the best of Canadian and foreign thinkers and speakers to spark debate and challenge citizens to become more knowledgeable and engaged on topics of concern to us all.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 29. Space is limited so please reserve early! Tickets are \$500 per person, a large portion of which will be tax receiptable.



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

May 2004

Cash, cheques, VISA, Master Card and AMEX are accepted.

Tickets can be purchased by calling CIPA at 416 494 1440, Ext. 229 (Shannon Bott) or Ext. 231 (Ruth Abrahamson). Fax requests with credit card numbers can be sent to 416 495 8723. Tickets can also be purchased online on our secure web site at <http://www.couch.ca>.

And so "good friends, go in, and taste some wine with me, And we, like friends, will straightway go together." - William Shakespeare

❖ Lincoln Wine Route - A Sense of Spring

May 15, 16, 12:00pm to 4:00pm

Lincoln Wine Route presents "Summer Kick-Off BBQ!" at seven participating wineries in Beamsville. Pick up a free passport at any one of the wineries and tour Angels Gate, Crown Bench Estates, Legends Estates Winery, Magnotta Winery, Mountain Road Wine Company, Thirty Bench Winery and Thomas and Vaughan Vintners to taste delicious wines paired with barbecued treats, while enjoying the beauty of a budding summer in the heart of wine country. Learn the trade secrets of the Lincoln Wine Route's chefs; recipe cards will be sold for a reasonable price with all proceeds going directly to a local charity. Get your passport stamped at all seven and enter to win a mixed gift basket from the Lincoln Wine Route Group. Feature foods and wines:

- Angels Gate: To Be Announced
- Crown Bench Estates: To Be Announced.
- Legends Estates Winery: To Be Announced
- Magnotta Winery: To Be Announced
- Mountain Road Wine Company: Greek style grilled lamb and rice stuffed grape leaves on a pita wedge paired with our 2004 All-Canadian Wine Championship gold winning 2000 Cabernet Sauvignon and our Cuvée 2004 gold winning 2000 Barrel Aged Chardonnay.
- Thirty Bench Wines: Grilled pork and sautéed vegetables served in a bite sized pita drizzled with one of our Thirty Bench wine jellies.
- Thomas and Vaughan Vintners: "Vegetables off the Grill". A delicious fresh roast of vegetables drizzled with a savoury olive oil seasoning served with a toasted Focacia bread.

No charge for passport holders. Donations will be accepted for "Out of the Cold" charity. For information call 905 563 3959 or visit www.lincolnwineroute.com.

❖ Niagara-on-the-Lake Herb & Wine Festival

Weekends in May

If you love fresh herbs, great wine and beautiful scenery, then plan on visiting Niagara-on-the Lake for the second

annual Wine & Herb Festival. Events include a Touring Passport at the wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake, special herb-themed meals at the winery restaurants, cooking classes, seminars and garden expeditions.

During the Wine & Herb Touring Program, each of the 14 wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake will be featuring a different herb & wine pairing. Match-ups include Cabernet-Merlot with grilled eggplant and sweet onion confit and Stilton at Inniskillin, Sauvignon Blanc with tarragon remoulade wrapped with house-cured salmon at Reif, Cabernet Franc with rosemary-infused dip, Italian bread and a Mediterranean medley at Pillitteri, and Merlot with Belgian chocolate mint truffles at Konzelmann.

Niagara Herb Farm is hosting a "Herbed-Wine Cuisine" demonstration on Sunday, May 9 and 16. Proprietor and herb expert Arlene Mills will show how to flavour wines with herbs, fruit and spices. No charge. Call 905 262 5690.

Herb-inspired menus will be offered on weekends at the restaurants at Hillebrand, Peller and Strewn wineries.

Whether you're a wine enthusiast, home gardener or simply someone who loves the flavour herbs impart to recipes of all kinds, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Wine & Herb Festival is for you!

Passports, which can be used on all five weekends in May, are \$25. Order online at www.niagaraonthelake.com, by calling 905 468 1950, or purchase at any of the participating wineries. Collect a complete set of the 14 recipe cards by visiting all 14 wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake during the month.

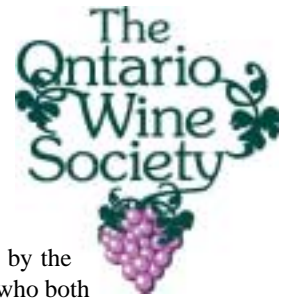
Ontario Wine Industry News

❖ 9th Annual Ontario Wine Awards

Toronto, April 4, 2004

Twenty-four prominent judges, six panels of four, from the Ontario wine press, the LCBO, Master of Wine candidates and sommeliers gathered at George Brown College to participate in the blind tasting of wines in 24 categories. Each panel was given the daunting task of selecting this year's winning Ontario wines. A record number of entries of 453 wines were submitted this year from 49 Ontario wineries. All eligible wines are certified under the VQA appellation, produced from 100% Ontario grapes. The criteria for judging the entries not only involve having a professional appreciation of wine, but also a working knowledge of VQA wines from Ontario's vineyards.

The judges were also asked to vote for Ontario's "Winemaker of the Year". Criteria for this prestigious award include overall quality of winemaking, depth and breadth of winemaking, creativity, consistency and



contribution to the Ontario wine industry as a whole.

Other key winning categories include: Toronto Star/Wine Connection Wine of the Year - an award for the wine with the highest aggregate points from the judges; Ontario Tourism Wine Journalist Award for the best print article on Ontario wines; the Riedel Sommelier Award, a new award for sommeliers who compete in a blind tasting of Ontario wines.

The listing of all award winning wines will be released to the public and media on April 30.

The Ontario Wine Awards were founded in 1995 by Tony Aspler, one of Canada's most acclaimed wine writers. His vision was to catapult Ontario VQA wines into the most successful, most revered wines available to domestic and foreign markets by recognizing and promoting the top Ontario wineries for the quality product they produce. "Our mission is to provide recognition for outstanding Ontario wines and the people who are dedicated to producing a superior product," explains Tony Aspler. "These awards enhance the profile of Ontario wines in the world market, opening doors to new opportunities for Ontario wineries."

Awards Gala Dinner - On Friday, April 30, the awards will be presented to the wineries and winemakers at the annual Gala Dinner, held at Queen's Landing in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Guests will be treated to an Oscar-style evening starting off with a sparkling wine reception at 6:30 pm, followed by the Gold Medal wines being matched with an exceptional menu created by Executive Chef, Stephen Treadwell. The Gold, Silver and Bronze winners in each category will be announced throughout the course of the evening. Ticket price is \$130.00 plus GST.

Consumer Wine Tasting Event - On Thursday, June 3, celebrate with hundreds of Toronto wine lovers at the newly renovated Miller Tavern, 3885 Yonge St., experience first-hand the best wines that Ontario has to offer and meet the award winning winery principals. Ticket prices are \$60 before May 15, \$55 for Ontario Wine Society members, and \$65 thereafter.

To purchase tickets for both of these events, please call 416 410 4630, or email your requests to sandy@forefrontcom.com.

Proceeds from the 2004 Ontario Wine Awards Consumer Event will help support Toronto's Second Harvest. "We are very excited to announce that Second Harvest is our charity of choice for this event," said David Rose, President, The Forefront Communications Network Inc. "At this year's Consumer Event, Second Harvest will be raising funds by holding a raffle with all proceeds going towards their cause. With your help we will raise awareness and much needed funds for the extremely valuable services they provide to the

community on a daily basis."

This year's awards are presented in part by the Toronto Star and the Wine Connection, who both actively support the Ontario wine industry. Visit www.wineconnection.ca to order your favourite Ontario wine and have it delivered straight to your doorstep.

Other key sponsors for this event include; Blair Franklin, CIBC Aerogold, Dairy Farmers of Canada, Dare Foods, Evian, Grape Growers of Ontario, JAZZ.FM91, LCBO, Niagara Credit Union, Ontario Tourism, Ontario Wine Society, Riedel Crystal of Canada, The Wine Council of Ontario, The Wine Establishment, VINES Magazine, Vintage Inns, Vintages and Vintage Keeper.

For more information on the judging and tickets for the Consumer Event, please contact Sandy Bavington, Forefront Communications, at 416 398 3335, Ext. 2, or Tony Aspler at 416 488 8597.

❖ Growing Niagara Wine Company Adds Boutique Vintners to Cellar

Beamsville, Ontario, April 21, 2004

Niagara Cellars Inc. is pleased to announce the purchase of Thomas & Vaughan Vintners, an award-winning winery in the grape-rich Niagara Peninsula region.

"In Thomas & Vaughan, we have purchased a very fine winery indeed for our growing company," says Susan O'Dell, President of Niagara Cellars Inc. "Their rich, complex reds will increase our ability to offer a full range of wines that appeal to consumers at all market levels."

Thomas & Vaughan joins Niagara Cellar's existing portfolio which includes EastDell Estates, a producer of affordable table wines, and EastDell Estates Vineyards, both located on Locust Lane in Beamsville. Niagara Cellars also recently expanded its property holdings with the purchase of 37 acres of prime Bench vineyards located on the same hillside as EastDell Estates.

Thomas & Vaughan, located on RR81 in Beamsville, enjoys an excellent reputation as a premium-estate winery producing highly crafted boutique wines. The operation will continue to produce small quantity and limited edition releases that will uphold the high standards of winemaking it has established.

The purchase closes May 31, 2004.

❖ New Director for Brock's CCOVI

An internationally renowned expert in the sensory evaluation of wines has joined Brock University as the Director of the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI), effective April 1, 2004.

Dr. Isabelle Lesschaeve brings to CCOVI and Brock University a commitment to developing strategic



research initiatives with the Niagara, Canadian and international grape and wine industries while maintaining Brock's commitment to excellence in undergraduate and graduate instruction.

"It is a pleasure to welcome Dr. Lesschaeve as the new Director of the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute," said Dr. Ian Brindle, Dean of Mathematics and Sciences at Brock. "We looked long and hard for a director who is qualified to lead this important research enterprise at Brock University who also has the qualities of experience and leadership that are required. We are delighted that Dr. Lesschaeve, who matches so well our description of the ideal candidate, has joined Brock in this position."

A native of France, Dr. Lesschaeve brings 15 years of experience in both academia and industry research affiliations, including the National Institute of Agronomical Research in Dijon, France, and one of the largest wineries in the world, based in California. She has extensive experience in conducting research projects related to wine quality management as well as wine market research. She is also the author or coauthor of more than 25 scientific papers and regularly presents papers and leads symposia in France, North America and Australia. Dr. Lesschaeve will continue her affiliation with Inno Vinum, a consulting firm which specializes in sensory strategies for the wine industry.

"I am looking forward to the exciting opportunities that lie ahead for CCOVI and Brock University," said Dr. Lesschaeve. "I believe that CCOVI can increase its influence on the economy and stature of Canadian wine and grape production in Canada and abroad. Brock will continue to position CCOVI as a world leader in viticulture and oenology research." Dr. Lesschaeve takes over the reigns of CCOVI from Dr. Michael Owen who was acting Director for the last year in addition to his role as Director for the Office of Research Services at Brock.

CCOVI is dedicated to meeting the research and educational needs of the cool climate grape growing and wine producing regions of the world. Its roles are to pursue the groundbreaking research and leading-edge technologies necessary to maintain and enhance the competitive position of Canada's grape growers, vintners and related professionals, and to foster partnerships between these groups and the worldwide academic community.

Brock's position as a world leader in the study of cool climate oenology and viticulture was recognized by the Conference Board of Canada with a 1999-2000 National Partners in Education Award. Brock's undergraduate degree program in oenology and viticulture is the only program of its kind in Canada.

Feature Article

❖ **Sue-Ann Staff, the Capable Winemaker of Pillitteri**

By Hrayr Berberoglu

Pillitteri Estates winery in Niagara-on-the-Lake has been winning many awards, both international and domestic of late. The success of the winery comes, to a large degree, from the efforts of Sue-Ann Staff their winemaker.

Sue-Ann's interest in viticulture began at an early age, influenced by a long family history of grape growing spanning five generations in the Niagara Peninsula. After obtaining an honours degree in Horticulture and Biotechnology at the University of Guelph, she decided to work towards a graduate degree in oenology at the University of Adelaide, Australia. After successfully completing all requirements of the programme, Sue-Anne graduated in 1996 and worked at several Australian wineries before deciding to return to Canada.

Since her appointment as winemaker of Pillitteri Estate, Sue-Anne has appeared on several TV shows and her wines have been awarded many medals. She is particularly successful in producing finely balanced icewines, Vidal and Riesling, a significant quantity of which is exported to Pacific Rim countries.

Her winemaking philosophy is simple: to produce the finest wines possible from the highest quality Niagara Peninsula fruit. However, the strategy is much more complex. Each vineyard and wine must be treated individually since they each have their own "personality" which must be respected and appropriately expressed. From harvesting to bottling, internal quality control measures maintain a very high standard throughout the year. In her own words, "My everyday goal is to vinify wines for the Pillitteri family that they can be proud of ... full-bodied reds, rich, fragrant and lively whites, and luscious icewines."

Sue-Ann is considered to be one of the best winemakers in Canada and may even be the best amongst female winemakers in the country and in 2002 was voted the Ontario Wine Society's Winemaker of the Year at the Ontario Wine Awards. Many more delightful and expertly balanced wines can be expected