



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

April 2003

Ontario Wine Society Events

❖ Toronto Chapter

• Annual Dinner, Tuesday, April 29, 2003

Our featured restaurant for 2003 is Bb33 Bistro and Brasserie at the Delta Chelsea Inn in downtown Toronto. Creekside Estate Winery has matched the wines for the meal for us.

Bb33 chef Margaret MacKay began her cooking career in Toronto a number of years ago at Madcaps on Queen St. West, a restaurant owned by the "Blues Brothers", James Belushi and Dan Ackroyd. Since that time, Margaret has been honing her skills at Toronto's Le Papillion, Winston's, Oro, Scaramouche and JK at the ROM. Her European experience includes the Hotel Sacher in Vienna, Café Winkler in Salzburg and the Four Seasons Hotel in Zurich.

Creekside Estate Winery produces a range of premium wines and icewines from their two vineyards in Jordan Station and St. David's. They recently have won awards for their 1999 Vidal Icewine, 2000 Sauvignon Blanc and 1999 Laura's Blend.

• Ontario Wine Awards, Wednesday, May 28, 2003

The venue this year will be the Royal York Hotel and Tony Aspler will be on hand to lead the tasting.

• Bus Tour to Prince Edward County, Saturday June 14, 2003

• Summer Cellar Dinner, August 7, 2003

❖ Niagara Chapter

• Matching Wine and Food, Tuesday, April 22, 2003, 7:00pm

Our first Niagara event will be held at Chateau des Charmes winery and led by one of our regions most noted wine experts, Linda Bramble.

There are only 40 seats available. No tickets will be sold at the door. \$25 per person. Cheque must be received by April 17. Mail cheque to: The Ontario Wine Society, Niagara Chapter, 4850 Cherrywood Dr., Beamsville, Ont., L0R 1B9.

Note: Members may attend events in either chapter.

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Recent OWS Tastings

❖ Sauvignon Blancs: Ontario vs. The World

By Pat Dinsmore

In our first ever Sauvignon Blanc tasting event, there were some great moments and a few surprises. One of the most popular events to date, there were over 80 people in attendance.



Hrayr Berberoglou, the tasting leader, discussing the tasting with Bob Moore, OWS Toronto Chapter Vice-President.

Our goal with this unprecedented tasting, was to get an unbiased opinion as to which, from the collection, was the best Sauvignon Blanc. Quite naturally, we were looking for an Ontario wine to shine through, which on a show of hands did not appear to be the case. Once the tasting sheets were ranked, it turned out to be slightly different. From top to bottom, the ranking was as follows:

- 2002 Seifried (NZ)
- 2001 Mission Hill Private Reserve(B.C.)
- 2002 Graham Beck Coastal (SA)
- 2001 Les Baron Henri Bourgeois (Fr)
- 2002 Yalumba Oxford Landing (Aus)
- 2001 Chateau des Charmes, St. David's Bench
- 2001 Henry of Pelham

- 2000 Southbrook Triomphe
- 2000 Buena Vista Winery (Cal)
- 2000 Lailey Vineyard

Hrayr Berberoglou, affectionately known as Mr. B., led us through this tasting, eloquently and expertly explaining the different grapes that make up the Sauvignon Blanc family. To further illustrate the differences between the various regions, Mr. B. gave specific descriptions of each of the winemaking regions and the major characteristics of their efforts. Along with some fabulous selections from the Tasting Rooms, Mr. B. enlightened us with his own pairing choices, specific to each wine we tasted.

All in all, a successful evening. Great wine, great food and great conversation.

Ontario Winery Events

❖ Cave Spring Going Vertical

April 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2:00pm

Riesling and Gamay, perhaps more than any other varietals, act as looking glasses into Niagara's terroir. See just how through a vertical tasting going back as far as vintage '98.

\$5.00 per person. Reservations required. 905 562 3581 Ext. 302.

❖ EastDell Easter Brunch

Sunday, April 20. Two-hour seatings at 10:00am, 11:00am, 12:00pm, 1:00pm and 2:00pm.

Bring the family for a celebration lunch.

\$18.95 per person.

❖ Hillebrand Vineyard Café's Easter Brunch

Sunday, April 20, 11:30am - 3:30pm

Indulge in Chef Tony de Luca's spring inspired Easter menu.

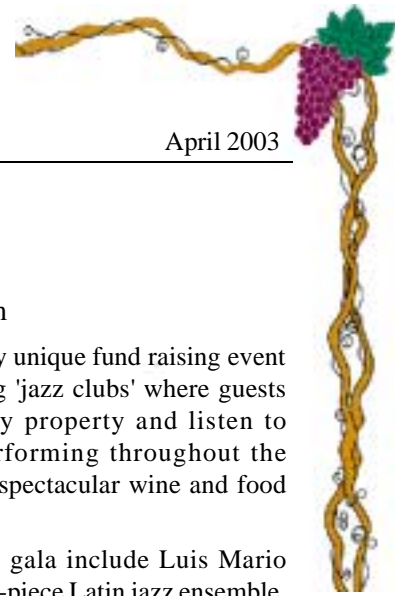
\$35 per guest, exclusive of taxes and gratuities.

❖ Jackson-Triggs Savour the Sights

Saturday, April 12, 6:30pm until late.

Enjoy an epicurean experience including five courses of fine food and wine throughout picturesque locations in the Jackson-Triggs Niagara winery.

\$125 plus taxes and gratuities. Bookings essential: 905 468 4637 Ext. 221.



❖ Lailey

Lailey Vineyard Retrospective with wine expert Edward Finstein (a.k.a the Wine Doctor),

Saturday, April 19, 2:00pm

Includes a vertical tasting of Lailey Vineyard wines produced from the vineyard before the winery opened to the present. Tasting concludes with Québec cheeses and home-made bread.

\$20.00 per person. Reservations required. 905 468 0503. Proceeds to the Canadian Cancer Society.

❖ Lakeview

Easter Dinner Wines

April 12, 13, 12:00 to 4:00pm

Chardonnay Reserve, Pinot Noir and Paté. Enjoy a wine and food pairing sample.

\$3 per person includes wine, food samples, and keepsake recipes.

❖ Magnotta

Wines for your Easter Feast

April 14 to 17

Visit any of our seven retail locations during this week and discover which wines will accompany your Easter feast. Enjoy a complimentary wine sample selected by our Product Consultant.

For further information, please contact the winery at 1 800 461 9463 or visit our website at www.magnotta.com.

❖ Ocala

A Day for a Lady

Thursday, April 3, 11:30am to 3:00pm

Winery tour and tasting with a simple country buffet luncheon. After lunch presentations include: Attractions and Destinations in Durham Region, Growing Winter Hardy Roses, and the Kent Farndale Art Gallery.

\$20 per person. Reservations required.

❖ Peller

Easter Brunch at Peller Estates Winery Restaurant

Sunday, April 20, 11:30am - 3:30pm

Peller Estates Winery Restaurant celebrates spring with an Easter brunch. Choose selections from a specially prepared menu created by Chef Jason Rosso.

\$35 per guest, exclusive of taxes and gratuities.

❖ Peninsula Ridge

Jazz on the Ridge

Friday, May 23, 7:00pm

Please join us for this truly unique fund raising event that features four exciting 'jazz clubs' where guests stroll around the winery property and listen to celebrity musicians performing throughout the evening while savouring spectacular wine and food pairings.

Performers at this year's gala include Luis Mario Ochoa & Cimarrón, a nine-piece Latin jazz ensemble, The Clayton/Scott Group, Frank DiFelice Quartet and John Neudorf Trio.

The Founder's Club of Peninsula Ridge, a non-profit organization initiated by winery owner Norm Beal, has pledged to raise \$250,000 over the next five years from proceeds of Jazz on the Ridge for the capital fund raising campaign to build a new West Lincoln Memorial Hospital for our community.

Tickets are \$175, \$75 tax deductible receipt. Black tie optional. Please call 905 563 0900 Ext. 25 to reserve your tickets. Donations for the silent and live auctions are also greatly appreciated. Please contact Johanna Burkhard at 905 563 0900 Ext. 28 or jburkhard@peninsularidge.com.

❖ Southbrook

The Ultimate Dinner

Saturday, April 5, 7:00pm

In our 125 year old barrel cellar indulge yourself in a spectacular evening of fine wine, ambiance and outstanding service!

\$70 per person plus taxes and service charge. Limited seating. Call winery for reservations and additional info.

❖ Stoney Ridge

ABC of Chardonnay Aromas

Saturday, April 5, 10:30am and 2:30pm

This 45 minute seminar is an in-depth look at the various aromas found in our favourite Chardonnays. Conducted in the historical atmosphere of our Wine Library, explore the aromas of a Chardonnay wine by using the Wine Awakenings aroma kit followed by a tasting of current and rare vintage Stoney Ridge Chardonnays in their best presentation. Limited spaces available, reservations required.

Complimentary.



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Vins et Fromages

April 6 and 27, 12:00pm to 4:00pm

Enjoy a variety of gourmet cheeses with a pairing of selected Stoney Ridge wines while listening to soft jazz at our premium wine tasting bar.

Wine Library Tasting Series

April 12, 13, 12:00pm to 4:00pm

Each month, Stoney Ridge Estate Winery will feature a tasting of vintage wines from our Wine Library. This educational tasting will focus on a single grape variety from various years and vineyards. This month's grapes are Chardonnay and Gewurztraminer.

\$5 per person

Wine and Food Series

Saturday, April 26th, 12:00pm to 4:00pm

Each month, Stoney Ridge Estate Winery will feature a pairing of wines and foods to simplify your entertaining needs. This month's feature is "What do I serve with my cold cut and cheese trays?".

\$2 per person

❖ Vineland

LCBO VQA Thursday Nights in Niagara's Wine Country

Thursday, April 3, 4:00pm to 7:30pm, LCBO Fairview Mall, St. Catharines

Thursdays are VQA tasting nights at the new LCBO Wine Country store in St. Catharines. Join us as we pour our general list wines paired with taste creations from Mark Picone at Vineland Estates restaurant.

For information about the VQA program or this new location, call in store Event Coordinator, Mary Berry at 905 646 1818.

Vineland Estates Chef & Winemaker at the James Beard Foundation, New York

Wednesday, April 9.

We are proud to announce that Chef Picone has been asked to be the star chef, designing a gourmet dining experience for the members of the exclusive James Beard Foundation in New York City.

Allan Schmidt, General Manager and Original Winemaker will accompany Mark and lead this group through an informative Winemaker's Dinner that will discuss the development of our menus to pair perfectly with our estate made wines. Mark's exquisite culinary creations enhance and support the wine experience and have been ground-breaking in

the development of Niagara's regional cuisine style.

For information on the James Beard Foundation, visit their website at: info@jamesbeard.org for more information on this event or menu information, please call Myrna at 1 888 846 3526 Ext. 37.

Vineland Estates Golden Princess Wine Cruise ~ Barcelona to Venice

May 4 to 17

Vineland Estates Winery presents an exclusive wine cruise from Barcelona to Venice hosted by Allan Schmidt, General Manager and Original Winemaker of Vineland Estates Winery. This unique experience is limited to 50 guests for 12 nights aboard the "Golden Princess". Special features include an exclusive pre-cruise Winemaker's Dinner at Vineland Estates, a special Icewine tasting onboard, and cocktail reception and Vineland Estates gift basket.

For information on this executive cruise package or to call and reserve your cabin, call Regal Cruises and Travel at 1 800 461 7447.

Other Ontario Wine Events

❖ Canadian Club of Halton Peel

Who Killed Baby Duck? - Jim Warren

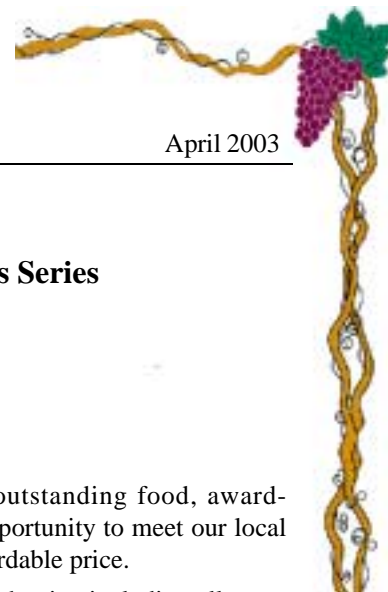
Thursday April 24, Oakville Conference Centre, 2515 Wycroft Road, Oakville, Ontario (QEW & Bronte Rd.)

Please join us for the final dinner of the 2002/2003 season

Our guest speaker, Jim Warren, will conduct a mini-wine tasting of 3 specially selected Ontario wines prior to dinner. Following dinner he will discuss the major changes that have taken place in the Ontario wine industry over the past 30 years and what he sees as future trends and challenges.

We are delighted that Jim will be joining us for this entertaining and informative evening. He is best known by the general public as the founder of Stoney Ridge Cellars but he is equally well known in the wine industry for his award-winning winemaking abilities, his knowledge of winery management, his consulting expertise and his teaching skills.

If you appreciate good wine and food, if you want to know more about Ontario wines and the dynamic growth in the industry, if you are interested in opportunities in the industry, or if you just want to meet one of the nicest guys in the business, you won't



want to miss this event!

Cash Bar 6:00pm, mini-wine tasting 7:00pm, dinner 7:30pm

Canadian Club Members \$28, non-members and guests \$38, includes mini wine tasting.

To inquire about registration contact the Canadian Club at P.O. Box 52148 Oakville, Ontario L6J 7N5. Tel. 905 845 2862, Fax. 905 339 0469, e-mail rjtpreston@cogeco.ca, www.canadianclub.ca

❖ **Santé: The Bloor-Yorkville Wine Festival**

May 6 to 10

Toronto hosts this five-day premier wine festival. Santé was founded in 1998 and is jointly organized by the Bloor-Yorkville Business Improvement Area (BYBIA), the Wine Council of Ontario (WCO), and Toronto Life Communications.

In 2002, this successfully growing Festival featured 69 wineries from 10 countries: Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain and the United States.

Each year, it is Santé's goal to present a line-up of events that will both entertain and educate the Toronto consumer as well as provide a beneficial opportunity for participating wineries to showcase and promote their products to Toronto's many existing and aspiring wine lovers.

What sets Santé apart from other wine & food events? For a winery to be accepted into the Festival they must guarantee the attendance of their winemaker or owner. It is these winemakers or owners who pour the wines for guests attending any of the Festival's events.

Tickets for Santé events will be available from TicketMaster in February 2003. For detailed information about events, visit www.santewinefestival.net.

Ontario Restaurant Events

❖ **Bb33 - Delta Chelsea**

April Feature Winery - Creekside

In April our featured winery of the month is Creekside. We promote this winery's products throughout the month and offer it for wine pairings in our Bistro.

Bb33, 33 Gerrard St. West, Toronto, 416 585 4356

❖ **La Cachette**

Winter Winemaker's Series

Rief Estate Winery

April 4, 7:00pm

Henry of Pelham

April 25, 7:00pm

Our goal is to provide outstanding food, award-winning wines and the opportunity to meet our local winemakers, all at an affordable price.

\$85 per person. Dinner with wine including all taxes and gratuities. For information and reservations please call 905 468 1222. 1399 Lakeshore Rd., Niagara-on-the-Lake (at Strewn Winery).

❖ **Tundra, at Hilton Toronto**

Ontario Wines Featured

From the design to the décor to the menu, Tundra evokes the image, the texture and the taste of Canada. The creative mind behind the Canadian inspired cuisine of Tundra restaurant is chef John Cirillo. And this year the team at Tundra has paired up the best Ontario wines with the best Canadian cuisine.

The upcoming monthly features are:

April - Vineland Estates

May - Thomas and Vaughan Vintners

June - Malivoire Vineyard

Check out www.toronto.com/tundra for the featured wines from each winery. Fabulous cuisine, distinctive wines, and stylish ambiance. What could be better!

TUNDRA, at Hilton Toronto, 145 Richmond Street, West. Please call 416 860 6800 or e-mail tundra@hiltontoronto.com for reservations.

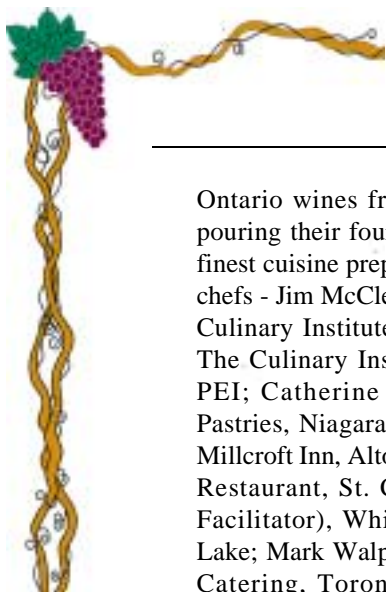
Ontario Wine Industry News

❖ **Cuvée 2003**

February 28

It was definitely Oscar Night in the Ontario Wine Industry. Cuvée 2003, the celebration of excellence in Ontario winemaking, presented by Grey Gables School, St. Catharines and Niagara Falls, began with the Cuvée Gala held February 28, 2003 at the White Oaks Resort, Niagara-on-the-Lake. It was followed on Saturday and Sunday by tastings and special events at the wineries.

The Gala, with over 700 guests from near and far, came to meet the winemakers, taste the world-class



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Ontario wines from the 40 participating wineries pouring their four best VQA wines and sample the finest cuisine prepared by eight of our nation's finest chefs - Jim McClean and Mario Scozzafava, Niagara Culinary Institute, Niagara Falls; Tim McRoberts, The Culinary Institute of Canada, Charlottetown, PEI; Catherine O'Donnell, Willow Cakes and Pastries, Niagara-on-the-Lake; Jason Parsons, The Millcroft Inn, Alton; Erik Peacock, Wellington Court Restaurant, St. Catharines; Michael Price (Chef Facilitator), White Oaks Resort, Niagara-on-the-Lake; Mark Walpole, Skydome's Great Moments in Catering, Toronto; and Anthony Walsh, Canoe Restaurant, Toronto.

And what wines they came to taste!

Prior to Cuvee, Ontario's winemakers submitted a selection of their red, white, sparkling and sweet wines to be judged in a strictly-supervised blind tasting by their peers. These winners were announced during the Awards' Presentation by His Excellency, John Raulston Saul, husband of Canada's Governor General, the Honourable Tim Hudak, Minister of Consumer and Business Services; Ms. Helen Johns, Minister of Agriculture and Food; Mr. Andrew Brandt, Chair of the LCBO; His Excellency Svend Roed Nielsen, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark; His Excellency Ilkka Kullervo Ristmaki, Ambassador of the Republic of Finland; His Excellency Lennart Alvin, Ambassador of Sweden; and His Excellency Ki-Ho Chang, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea.

The Winners:

Cuvee Gold identifies a wine, that in the opinion of the judges, is of international gold medal calibre. These were the winners.

Red Wine

- Winner - Reif Estate Winery, Meritage 2000 (gold)
- Kacaba Vineyards, Meritage 2000 (gold)
- Maleta Estate Winery, Meritage 1999 (gold)
- Inniskillin Wines, Klose Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 1999 (gold)

Limited Edition Red Wine

- Winner - Thomas and Vaughan Vintners, Cabernet Franc Estate Reserve 1999 (gold)

General List Red Wine

- Winner - Reif Estate Winery, Cabernet Merlot 2001

White Wine

- Winner - Lakeview Cellars Estate Winery, Chardonnay Reserve Vinc Vineyard 2000 (gold)
- Harvest Estates Winery, Riesling 1999 (gold)
- Cilento Wines, Chardonnay Reserve 2001 (gold)

- Daniel Lenko Estate Winery, Viognier 2002 (gold)
- Creekside Estate Winery, Signature Series Chardonnay 2000 (gold)

Limited Edition White Wine

- Winner - Konzelmann Estate Winery, Chardonnay Grand Reserve Barrel Fermented 2000 (gold)

General List White Wine

- Winner - Château des Charmes, Riesling 2001

Sparkling Wine

- Winner - Hillebrand Estates Winery, Trius Brut NV

Sweet Wine

- Winner - Cave Spring Cellars, Riesling Icewine 2000 (gold)
- Konzelmann Estate Winery, Vidal Icewine 2000 (gold)
- Reif Estate Winery, Vidal Icewine 1999 (gold)
- Pillitteri Estates Winery, Vidal Icewine 2001 (gold)

Cabernet Sauvignon

- Winner - Inniskillin Wines, Klose Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 1999 (gold)

Merlot

- Winner - Peller Estates, Andrew Peller Signature Series Merlot Unfiltered 1999

Cabernet Franc

- Winner - Thomas and Vaughan Vintners, Cabernet Franc Estate Reserve 1999 (gold)

Red Hybrid

- Winner - Lakeview Cellars Estate Winery, Reserve Baco Noir 2000

Riesling

- Winner - Harvest Estates Winery, Riesling 1999 (gold)

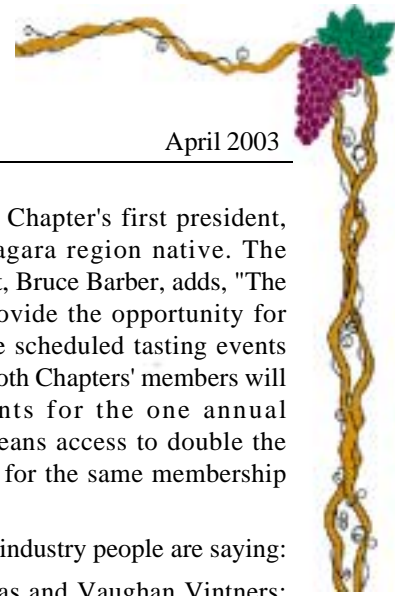
Aromatic White Wine

- Winner - Daniel Lenko Estate Winery, Viognier 2002 (gold)

In addition to the "Oscars", Cuvee 2003 honoured Karl Kaiser. Mr. Kaiser was presented with the prestigious Tony Aspler Award of Excellence. This award is presented to Karl Kaiser, Vice President and Co-founder of Inniskillin Wines, "for introducing the world to Canadian Icewine."

The final awards of the evening, The Awards of Distinction for Excellence in an Ontario Wine List for Cuvee 2003, were presented to

- Allen's, Toronto;
- Eclipse Restaurant, Deerhurst Resort, Huntsville;
- Elmhirst's Resort, Keene;
- LIV, White Oaks Resort, Niagara-on-the-Lake;
- Oro Restaurant, Toronto; and
- Roselawn Centre for the Living Arts, Port Colborne.



❖ Jackson-Triggs

Jackson-Triggs Wins Canada's Only Gold Medal at Chardonnay Du Monde

Mississauga, Ontario, March 21, 2003

Jackson-Triggs Vintners is pleased to report its recent success at the 10th annual Chardonnay Du Monde wine competition held last week in Burgundy, France. The results, just in, show that Jackson-Triggs had the singular honour of being the only Canadian winery to win a gold medal, and, by winning three out of the eleven medals awarded to Canadian wines, was the highest achiever among its peers.

Jackson-Triggs' gold medal went to its 2000 Grand Reserve Chardonnay, VQA Niagara, and silver medals went to its 2000 Grand Reserve Chardonnay, VQA Okanagan and its 2001 Proprietors' Reserve Chardonnay, VQA Niagara.

According to the competition organizers, Chardonnay Du Monde rewards the best wines on the basis of their intrinsic quality. This year, 1,167 Chardonnays from 37 countries were tasted. After 4 days of judging, the panels awarded medals to 351, or 30%, of the total wines entered. Of these, only 41 won golds, making each an exceptional achievement.

"Considering the calibre of this year's entries, we are particularly delighted with our first ever gold medal at the world's leading Chardonnay competition," said Don Triggs, co-founder and proprietor, Jackson-Triggs Vintners. Triggs went on to congratulate winemakers, Tom Seaver and Bruce Nicholson, from the Niagara Peninsula and Okanagan respectively. "Thanks to our winemakers' personal commitment to the quality of every single wine they craft, coupled with technological advancements at our wineries, we are now seeing the tremendous potential of both our Niagara and Okanagan appellations," Triggs continued.

❖ Niagara Chapter of the Ontario Wine Society Formed!

St. Catharines, Ontario, March 2003

As the Niagara region's wine industry grows, so does its need for wine education and comparison opportunities. We are pleased to inform you of the opening of the newest wine society in the Niagara Region! A new Niagara Chapter of the Toronto based, non-profit Ontario Wine Society, has been formed and will begin operating this spring.

"It does not make sense for Niagara residents to drive to Toronto for wine tasting events, when the majority of Ontario wines come from the Niagara Region"

says the OWS - Niagara Chapter's first president, Yvonne Halliday, a Niagara region native. The Toronto Chapter president, Bruce Barber, adds, "The Niagara Chapter will provide the opportunity for Niagara residents to have scheduled tasting events right at the wineries and both Chapters' members will be able to attend events for the one annual membership fee. This means access to double the number of tasting events for the same membership cost."

Here's what Ontario wine industry people are saying:

Thomas Kocsis of Thomas and Vaughan Vintners: "We needed an Ontario Wine Society chapter in Niagara since it is the largest wine growing region in Canada and has become an internationally recognized area. In this area, I understand there is even an American Wine Society chapter...but no Ontario group. The new Niagara OWS chapter will allow wine lovers to learn about and sample different Ontario Wines. With over 800 new VQA wines released every year, there is a wonderful opportunity to try a wide variety of wine. In the heart of the Niagara wine region, we should be the first to recognize the excellent wines we make. And, what better way to do so than with a wine club dedicated to tasting and promoting Ontario wines."

Tony Aspler, author of 'Canadian Wine for Dummies' and founder of The Ontario Wine Awards, hails: "Congratulations to the Ontario Wine Society for opening a Niagara Chapter. Toronto shouldn't get all the plums. It's only fitting that wine lovers in the peninsula should have the opportunity to taste the best of Ontario wines that grow in their own backyard. The industry needs all the evangelists it can get."

The Ontario Wine Society is an independent, member operated and funded, non-profit group that promotes the education of its members on Ontario wines through organized comparison tastings, lectures, tours, and special events.

The first Niagara event will be hosted by one of our local wineries, Chateau des Charmes, on April 22, and will feature one of our regions most noted wine experts, Linda Bramble. She will conduct her "Matching Wine and Food" seminar.

❖ Sunnybrook Farm

Sunnybrook Farm Estate Winery has Blackberry and Black Raspberry wines in stock again. The previous vintages sold out quickly, and so we are pleased to be able to offer the wines again.



Feature Article

❖ Allen's Restaurant

By Bob Moore

At a recent wine event, I ran into John Maxwell, the owner of Allen's, who proudly told me that he had won the Royal Bank award for the best V.Q.A. restaurant wine list at last year's Niagara Grape and Wine Festival. Since then, it has just been announced that he also was the winner of a Cuvee Award of Distinction for Excellence in an Ontario Wine List at this year's ceremonies on February 28, 2003. A double gold!

Before opening Allen's in 1987, John had started Joe Allen's on John St., Toronto, in 1980, which later became Orso with a huge Italian wine list. After opening Allen's he was using the usual bit-of-everything wine list but then started to introduce V.Q.A. wines. And, unlike other restaurants that have a good component of these, his entire list now is a well-chosen and reasonably marked-up collection of Ontario and some British Columbia products. On his wine list each has a brief characteristic description and/or background on the winery. Now, there are 16 white and 4 top dessert wines from Ontario and 16 reds from Ontario and 3 from B.C., many available by the glass. John also has been buying older vintages for the cellar which will join the Stoney Ridge 1995 Merlot Barrel Select, of which he has the last remaining bottles in 1.5 litre format listed at \$145.

So that his staff is knowledgeable about Ontario wines, he periodically takes them to Niagara to visit wineries to better understand the products. His overall aim is to present the best V.Q.A list in Ontario. At first, he had some trepidation over this strategy, but, has been delighted to see his dollar sales increase considerably from an appreciative clientele. In addition to the wines, Allen's has an imposing array of craft and imported beers by draught or bottle and a stunning collection of single malts and other whiskies.

The menu is eclectic with 17 appetizers and salads from \$3.95 to \$10.50 at lunch with 17 mains from \$8.95 to \$20.95. The dinner menu is similar with slightly higher prices on some of the mains.

In 1997, John opened Dora Keough next door, a real Irish pub complete with a snug and private room at the "back of yer ma's kitchen". This is available for up to 14 people. This is an aptly named room ... my mother had the identical 1940's G.E. refrigerator!

Allen's, 143 Danforth Ave., Tor., 416 463 3086.

Book Reviews

❖ A Year In Niagara

- the people and food of wine country

Whitecap Books, 2002, 333 pages, ISBN 1-55285-398-5, \$22.95 paper covers. Reviewed by Dean Tudor

This is by well-known food writer Kathleen Sloan-McIntosh, who left life in Toronto for the Niagara peninsula in 2000. This is her account of the year 2001 in that region. And, a great idea it is too ... a lot of this book qualifies as Canadian cuisine, with its local recipes using local produce, descriptions and profiles of local food growers and merchants, bakers, chefs, innkeepers, and winemakers. The book is seasonally arranged, beginning with winter in January 2001 and moving through to Christmas. Matthew Speck, Henry of Pelham winery, provides a brief monthly commentary on life in the vineyard.

Ted McIntosh, a sommelier, provides Niagara wine recommendations for the recipes, which include root cellar chowder, star anise-crust duck breast, rabbit rillettes, rhubarb fool, salmon on fiddleheads ... about 150 recipes in all. My colleague Steve Elphick provided the landscape photos.

There is an extensive sources list and directory of addresses, with separate indexes for recipes and for people. Some nitpicking: while porcetta is raved over at one point in the book, there is no recipe for it, and Cuvee is held in late winter, beginning of March, not early spring.

What I don't like about this book: the typeface is a little too light, sepia lavender ink, for a sustained reading of the narrative, and the Wine Council of Ontario maps are too small. Readers will need a magnifying glass. The maps also include extraneous regions such as Lake Erie and Toronto.

What I do like about this book: its seasonal approach, and style of writing. Quality to Price Ratio rating: 91.

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