



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

April 2007

Upcoming Events

Toronto Chapter

Annual Dinner at Bangkok Garden

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Reception - 6:30pm, Dinner - 7:00pm

Bangkok Garden, closed for 1½ years due to extensive renovations to the Elmwood Spa, is again open and now under the direction of our “knight in shining armour” and OWS friend from the Tasting Rooms, Christopher Boland, Senior Food and Beverage Manager.

Bangkok Garden Chef, William Thetsombandith, a native of Thailand and part of the original Bangkok Garden team, is leading the kitchen staff. Chef is a bronze medal winner from the 2000 B.C. Chefs' Association Culinary Salon competitions. Christopher and William created the menu just for us for this evening, combining flavours from the Spa and Bangkok Garden menus to match as perfectly as possible with the flavours of Malivoire's wines.

Martin Malivoire believes that the Beamsville Bench of the Niagara Peninsula offers many features similar to the great vineyards of Alsace and Burgundy. Here soil, drainage, airflow, aspect and other meso-climatic factors combine to produce uniqueness in his wines – “le goût de terroir”. Malivoire is frequently credited as having “raised the quality bar in Ontario” and is dedicated to sustainable viticulture. Malivoire's winemaker, Shiraz Mottiar, took over the reigns from Ann Sperling prior to the 2005 harvest. Shiraz joined Malivoire as a cellar hand in 2000, quickly moving to Assistant Winemaker in 2001. Shiraz was born and raised in Ontario and has 10 years of higher education, including a BA from the University of Western Ontario and a Business Diploma from Wilfred Laurier University. A passion for wine led him to Brock University's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute making him a member of the first graduating class, receiving his BSc (Honours) in Oenology and Viticulture in 2000.

During dinner, Shiraz will provide more details about the winery, the wines and the food matching.

NOTE: This meeting will also include the Annual General Meeting of the Toronto Chapter and the election of the Board of Directors.

Niagara Chapter

Regional Wine & Food Match at About Thyme Bistro

Monday, April 23, 2007

Reception 6:30pm, Tasting: 7:00pm

Its “thyme” to explore the elegant and complex wines produced along the Lincoln wine route. Chefs Ryan Shapiro and Imant Malins will take to the kitchen at Vineland's hottest new restaurant, About Thyme Bistro, to prepare an outstanding array of tapas style dishes paired with several local wines from the Lincoln area. This will be an exciting opportunity to learn first hand from two talented Niagara Chefs about the thymeless art (sorry, we can't help ourselves) of pairing food and wine grown and produced within the same region.

The staff has been creating tantalizing dishes for locals and tourists alike since the opening of the Bistro last year. Co-Owners Ryan Shapiro and Donna Thompson are passionate about offering their customers a relaxed dining experience offering gourmet style local produce and wines without a high gourmet price.

The doors will open exclusively for OWS members to savour petit-size morsels of delicious entrées accompanied by sumptuous wines. The Chefs will guide us through the range of components, which can make wine and food pairing a challenge. Come and taste for yourself how and why certain matches work well together. We will also explore how breaking the tiresome “White with White” and “Red with Red” rule adds the spice of life to the dining experience. The wine styles will be selected specifically for this event by Sommelier Colleen Rivard and reflect the Bistro's ever-evolving Regional wine list. The Chefs will design the dishes to reflect seasonal local produce.

Toronto Chapter Upcoming Events

June 9th, 2007 - Bus Trip to Niagara Peninsula

August 22, 2007 - Bin End Dinner at Woodbine Racetrack

Niagara Chapter Upcoming Events

May 16 - Caroline Cellars - Show us your Hybrid

June 26 - Lailey - Oak Comparison featuring Canadian Oak

July - Fielding Estate - Pinot Gris/Pinot Grigio

August - Harbour Estates - TBA



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Previous Events

Niagara Chapter's Great Clone Debate

LYNDA JURGENSON

The evening began, for a lucky few early arrivals, with a visit to the barrel cellar as Flat Rock President, Ed Madronich, retrieved the barrel samples we would use in the tasting to come. All of our members then got to enjoy samples of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir accompanied by some fabulous baked Camembert and Brie made by Chef Marc.

Ed called the group to order and welcomed us to Flat Rock. He then escorted us upstairs where the fun would begin. Yvonne performed her presidential duty, welcoming all, especially our two new members, Sandra Edgar, and Art Bailey & his guest. After introducing Marlize Beyers, the winemaker, Yvonne turned the evening over to both Ed and Marlize.

Ed and Marlize provided a very informative picture of how clones are developed, how winegrowers go about choosing which ones to plant, how the vines are managed so as to produce the best fruit and then how the winemaker chooses the wines for blending. Throughout their presentation they answered a slew of questions from the floor.

They introduced to us their three clones, "115", "677", and "777". Generally speaking, they use 115 for tannin, 677 for structure, and 777 for its fruitiness. Our final taste was their blend they call "Gravity". (m mmmm...delicious!) Each table was then supplied with a bottle of each clone, paper, and measuring beakers. Our assignment: to create a blend of our own to submit for judging.

As each table got down to work, the noise level grew as discussions ensued about which of their blends was best. Finally when consensus was reached, each table blended 100 ml of their best and offered it up for judging along with a name and their recipe. While we waited and watched, our chef for the evening (and his assistant), brought up the first trays of goodies.

Then the judges stood and announced they had made their decision. But before they announced it they wanted to hear each table's rationale. Table number one gave an excellent sales pitch. The other tables tried to match them. It was great fun. Finally the winners were announced: Table 5 (my table!) It was our blend not the sales pitch that was the deciding factor. Art Bailey, Liz Bailey, Chuck Reid, and yours truly all received a bottle of Gravity as our prize! The evening continued with more wonderful food and discussion



Standing - Art Bailey, Liz Bailey, Chuck Reid and Lynda Jurgenson with their prizes. Sitting - Marlize Beyers and Ed Madronich. Photo by Bruce Jackson.

The Niagara Chapter would like to thank Flat Rock Cellars for hosting the tasting; and our speakers Ed Madronich & Marlize Beyers for leading us through the tasting. We'd also like to thank Marc McKeracher for the food and Lynda Jurgenson for planning the tasting. Pictures of the event were taken by Bruce Jackson, and can be viewed on the web site: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/photoshopplake>. Thank you Bruce.

News from the Vines

FRED COUCH, OWS – NIAGARA CHAPTER

Winemakers on the move: Lydia Tomek is now the winemaker at Hernder Estate Wines. Terence van Rooyen, an award-winning winemaker and oenologist, has been named winemaker at the Niagara College Teaching Winery. Van Rooyen was formerly winemaker at Stonechurch Vineyards. Congratulations to this year's Cuvee Award Winners. For best red wine, the winner was 2002 Creekside Estate Winery Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon and for best white wine, 2005 Thirty Bench Wine Makers Riesling. The 2007 Tony Aspler Cuvee Award of Excellence went to Jim Warren. For a complete list of the 2007 winners go to: www.cuvee.ca. Ever dream about owning a winery on the Beamsville Bench? If so, Crown Bench Winery is up for sale! Information can be found on the Royal LePage website.

From the OWS Website

The Webmaster has added this link to the website: About Thyme Bistro - <http://aboutthymbistro.com>



OWS CCOVI Award



CCOVI student Lisa Dowling is the recipient of the \$500.00 OWS award for this year past.

When I started in the Oenology and Viticulture program at Brock four years ago, I knew nothing about wine. I was fresh out of high school, and I had picked this program originally because I liked biology and chemistry, but also because I was intrigued by the possible career options. I knew I would get the chance to work outside, which I love, but also the chance to dress up and do the fancy galas. Plus, the travel opportunities in the wine industry are amazing.

So in first year, I was going in optimistic but very inexperienced. The first year Introduction to Wines course taught me a lot, but I was still waiting for the more in-depth science courses. Those came in second year, with my first viticulture courses. I had never worked in a vineyard before, so it was completely new to me, and it wasn't until I did my summer viticulture co-op with Dr. Helen Fisher that things really started to make sense.

Then with third year came oenology courses, and I caught on a little faster to the theory in those. The first time we made wine for an experiment, however, I was lost again, and I'm sure I drove my lab demonstrator crazy with the daily questions I had for him. But eventually I did get the hang of it, and began to look forward to

starting the next batch, seeing how each one developed differently. After third year, I started my co-op work term at Malivoire in Beamsville. Although I enjoyed working retail in the summer, seeing all the different customers and learning what people liked, and spending some time working in the vineyard, I was eager for harvest to start. It was an amazing experience, following the grapes from buds to fully ripe, sorting them to be crushed or pressed, then checking their daily progress as they fermented, and I learned more than I ever could have imagined. As soon as it was over, I was looking forward to the next harvest – which is an amazing realization when you are trying to decide if this is the right career path for you. I see that passion for winemaking in so many of the people I've met in the industry, so it's an incredible community to be joining. Plus there's constant innovation, and room to be yourself, with so many different views and ideas. Next year, I start my fourth-year thesis with Dr. Debbie Inglis, and I'm sure I'm going to learn even more.

LISA DOWLING

Corporate Member Events

ANGELS GATE WINERY

Fruit & Wine Pairing + Preserve Preparation Seminar

April 21 - 1:00 p.m.

Spring has sprung – soon all your favorite fruits will be in season! Discover how to pair delicious wines with fresh fruit and decadent fruit filled desserts. Also – hints on fruit and wine preserve preparation.

Special Guest: Harvest Crafters

Cost: \$10 per person

Pamper Thyself...or Someone You Love!

May 5 - 2:00 p.m.

Treat yourself or a loved one to a special afternoon of bliss at our winery. Spend two hours getting gorgeous with a mini manicure – getting spoiled with scrumptious wine and food pairings – getting smart with a mini seminar on wine and getting some special time with family or friends.

Special Guest: Mini-Manicurist Amie Praskey

Cost:\$25 per person



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BBQ & Dine with Wine Seminar

June 16 - 2:00 p.m.

Grill on the hill with us – the Beamsville Bench that is – in grand outdoor style! Learn how to prepare marvelous marinades and spectacular sauces – all with the secret ingredient – wine!

Special Guest: Country Corner

Cost: \$15 per person

Please contact Angels Gate to register for any events at 905-563-3942 or mail@angelsgatewinery.com

EASTDELL ESTATES

Superstitious Date Night at The VIEW

Friday, April 13 at 7:00 p.m.

This month's theme ties into Friday the 13th and superstitions around food. \$80/couple for meal or \$110/couple for meal with Sommelier suggested wine pairings. Reservations recommended.

Chef & Sommelier's Table with a VIEW

April 27 at 7:00 p.m.

Chef Kent Deal and Sommelier Robert W. Paul of The VIEW Restaurant will lead you through an educational evening of food and wine samplings. Chef Kent will create dishes in the dining room for you to try while our Sommelier, Robert explains which wines predominantly enhance the flavours in each dish.

\$75 p.p. Reservations required.

Mother's Day Brunch with a VIEW

May 13 - Three Seatings: 10:30am, 12:30pm & 2:30pm.

You know she deserves the best! Let us fuss over Mom this year with a decadent Sunday Brunch Buffet. \$24.95 p.p, half price for children under 12. Reservations recommended.

Spring Date Night with a VIEW

Friday, May 18

Spring is in the air and on our Date Night menu. \$80/couple for meal or \$110/couple for meal with Sommelier suggested wine pairings. Reservations recommended.

For all EastDell events, please call (905) 563-9463 or email EDretail@eastdell.com to reserve.

JACKSON-TRIGGS NIAGARA ESTATE

Savour the Sights

May 12th, 2007 - 6:30pm

Note: The April 14th date is sold out.

Enjoy an epicurean experience including five courses of fine wine and food served in picturesque locations throughout the winery. The first course, a selection of assorted hors d'oeuvres and sparkling wine, will be served in our Great Hall. This will be followed by a second course in the Atrium of our fermentation room. Next, enter our contemporary Tasting Gallery with its view of the vineyard and enjoy the third course. The fourth course will be served at candlelit tables amidst oak barrels in our vaulted ceiling Barrel Cellar. Finally, a sweet ending to your dining experience as you enjoy the fifth course in our Estate Lounge, overlooking our picturesque vineyard and open air amphitheatre.

Price \$135.00. For your convenience, charges will be made prior to your dining experience. Please note that applicable taxes and gratuity will be added at that time, and a receipt will be presented to you at arrival.

Cancellations must be made at least 7 days in advance.

Contact: 905.468.4637 Ext. 226

PELEE ISLAND WINERY

Springsong

May 12 - 5:00 p.m. ~ 10:00 pm.

A banquet that celebrates the yearly bird migration through Pelee Island. This year's special guest is David Suzuki. Tickets are available through Pelee Island Heritage Museum by calling 1-519-724-2291.

Official Pavilion Opening Day

May 18 - 10:00 a.m. ~ 7:00 p.m.

Today is the day that the Pelee Island Wine Pavilion is official open for the 2007 season.

Victoria Day Celebration

May 20 - 2:00 p.m. ~ 6:00 p.m.

Come join Pelee Island Wine Pavilion for some live entertainment, good friends, and great wine! Relax in our wine garden and take in the scenery. No admission fee.

Memorial Day Celebration

May 27 - 2:00 p.m. ~ 6:00 p.m.

We invite our US neighbours to celebrate Memorial Day with the Pelee Island Wine Pavilion. We offer live entertainment and we tempt you with our famous bread and cheese platter to accompany your favourite wine! No Admission fee.

Events held at The Pelee Island Wine Pavilion.

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REIF WINERY

“Fly First Class” - First Growth Barrel Tasting

April 28 - 3:00 p.m. ~ 5:00 p.m.

Join us for our annual Barrel Tasting Wine Club Event of the First Growth Collection featuring wines produced from our oldest vineyard block in the Niagara River sub-appellation. Guests will not only enjoy a sneak preview of the 2006 vintage with winemaker Roberto DiDomenico but he will guide you through a flight of the 2002 First Growth Collection including the Cuvee Award Winning Cabernet Merlot as well as the Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir and Merlot.

Each guest will leave with a 375mL bottle of their favorite wine from the 2002 First Growth Collection (\$25.00 Retail Value).

Reservations Required - Cost \$39.95 per person. Call 905-468-WINE ext. 21 or email events@reifwinery.com

VINELAND ESTATES

Mother's Day Feature Menu

May 13

Join us for a delicious three course lunch menu featuring expert wine pairings - the perfect gift for any Mother on her special day.

Dining Adventure Series ~ Mother Goose Menu

May 16 - Reception 6:30pm. Dinner 7:00pm

Starting at \$70 per person ++.

The Restaurant @ Vineland Estates Winery

Please call 888 846 3526 ext. 33 or email reservations@vineland.com

Other Winery Events

ARCHIBALD ORCHARDS & ESTATE WINERY

The 8th Annual Fruit Wine & Food Festival

May 26th, Noon - 5:00 p.m.

Archibald Orchards & Estate Winery,

6275 Liberty St.N., Bowmanville

(905)263-2396 email: archibalds@idirect.com

Come savour the wonderful matches created by Ontario's leading fruit wineries & regional chefs! Jazz music by Simon Maxwell. Cheese pairing with Gurth Pretty.

Admission: \$8 in advance; \$10 at the door. Tasting Tickets - \$1. **Proceeds to Big Brothers & Sisters.**

COYOTE'S RUN ESTATE WINERY

April - New releases!

Visit the winery to sample the newly released Reds from the 2005 Vintage. Taste for yourself our 2005 Cabernet Franc and our 2005 Pinot Noir. These wines will not last long! Sample fee: \$1/wine, refundable with purchase Open daily 11am - 5pm

Wine & Herb Touring Pass

Weekends in May

Visit Coyote's Run for the Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake Wine & Herb touring program. Enjoy a sample of our 2005 Rose with Smoked Salmon on Thyme Crostini.

Visit www.niagaraonthelake.com for tickets. \$30 for a touring pass, good for all 17 participating wineries.

CREEKSIDE ESTATE WINERY

Santé Winemakers Dinner: Creekside and BB33 Bistro

Bb33 Bistro, Delta Chelsea Hotel, 33 Gerrard St. W. Toronto ON

May 9 - 6:00 p.m. ~ 10:00 p.m.

Introducing a dynamic, all-Canadian lineup. Chef Kevin Philips creates his contemporary Canadian cuisine using only the freshest seasonal ingredients from across the country. These flavours will be enhanced by premium VQA wines from the critically acclaimed Creekside Estate Winery, a renowned vintner that challenges Ontario winemaking conventions, and a great compliment to the bold cuisine of the BB33.

\$70.00 per person (taxes & gratuities extra)

Contact BB33 at 416-585-4319

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY WINEGROWERS

Second Annual “Terroir” Celebration

Victoria Day Weekend May 19, 20 and 21

Prince Edward County Winegrowers (PECWA) are sponsoring their second annual “Terroir” Celebration .

On Saturday PECWA wineries will be releasing their 2006 whites and roses and a few 2005 reds, pairing them with foods prepared by our local celebrity chefs. The event is held at the Crystal Palace in the Picton fairgrounds between 1pm and 6pm leaving lots of time to grab a great evening meal in the County. Entrance fees are \$20.00 a person.



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On Sunday and Monday each of the wineries will be open for you to buy your favorites and will offer a range of special musical and artistic diversions.

For more information contact info@thecountywines.ca or call 1-888 313-9463 or 613 921-7100. We advise ordering tickets in advance because of space restrictions.

SANSON ESTATE WINERY.

Artisan Canadian Cheese and Ontario Wine. Finding Balance.

April 10 - 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Sanson Estate Winery
Join our fun, delicious and informative session led by Kathy Guidi, Dean of the Cheese Education Guild of Toronto. Learn to savour cheese and wine like an expert and gain tips to plan your own event. Local wines from Sanson Estate Winery and Viewpointe Estate Winery will be paired with six artisanal Canadian cheeses.

Limited to 30 people. \$40.00 per person.

Call us at (519) 726-9609 to reserve your spot now.

Meet the Winemaker in Chatham

May 12 - 7:00 pm at William Street Cafe

Meet Dennis Sanson of Sanson Estate Winery. Join us at this warm and welcoming spot in Chatham and enjoy uniquely-styled food and wine samplings.

Tickets available April 15th. \$25.00 per person. Contact Susan at (519) 360-1932 to reserve your spot now.

William Street Cafe is located at 28 William Street South in Chatham.

STONEY RIDGE ESTATE WINERY

Winemakers Luncheon In the Barrel Room

With a Surprise Wine tasting

April 14 - 12:00 noon ~2:00 p.m.

\$45.00 per person

Gardening with Herbs

April 22 - 2:00 p.m. ~ 4:00pm

Join Herb Expert Ellen Mitchinson as we help you plan your summer herb garden as well food and wine pairing suggestions and sampling will be provided

\$25.00 per person

Spring Luncheon in the Barrel Room

April 28 - 12:00 – 2:00 PM

Welcome spring with a refreshing taste of light wines from the Wine library.

\$40.00 per person

Special Mothers Day Treat

May 6 - 1:00 p.m. ~ 4:00pm

Try our new Rose wine paired with strawberries dipped in chocolate

\$10.00 per person

Gardening with Annuals

May 12 - 2:00p.m. ~ 4:00 p.m.

Join our Horticultural expert as we help you learn how to beautify your patio for the summer. while sipping refreshing summer wines paired with cheeses

\$25.00 per person

Winemakers Luncheon In the Barrel Room

May 19 - 12:00 noon ~ 2:00 p.m.

Enjoy this summer lunch paired with wines from our barrel room

\$45.00

Music in the Garden

May 20 - 12:00 noon ~ 3:00 p.m.

Spring BBQ and wine accompanied by live outdoor music

\$15.00 per person

Sparkling Victoria Day Celebration

May 21 - 12:00 noon ~ 3:00 p.m.

Come and enjoy our explosive new Sparkling Wine, BBQ Lunch, Music in the garden and a free Stoney Ridge Flute

\$20.00 per person

20 Valley Open House

May 25 - 1:30 p.m. ~ 5:00 p.m.

Local hospitality business owners are invited to come and taste our products and tour our facilities -wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served

Wine and Music in the garden

May 26 - 12:00 noon ~4:00 p.m.

Special blind taste test and BBQ

Come and hone your wine tasting skills and learn how to identify basic grape varietals.

\$20.00 per person

For further information on any Stoney Ridge event, call 905 562 1324 x 25, toll free 1866 778 6619 or email store@stoneyridge.com

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WILLOW HEIGHTS ESTATE WINERY

Spring Uncorked

Willow Height's Annual Open House

May 19, 20, 21 - 11:00a.m.~ 5:00 p.m.

Join us as we uncork the new season in wine country. On this 7th Annual Open House we release our newest wines including the 2006 Unoaked Chardonnay, 2006 Chardonnay Reserve and 2005 Tresette Reserve Red.

Also this weekend we unveil the Willow Wine Vista – our new patio and grill, featuring a succulent menu made to order. For complete details visit our new website at www.willowheightswinery.com

Open to the public. Contact the winery at 905.562.4945

Wine Related Events

Canadian Club of Halton Peel Guest Speaker Dinner

Jim Warren – “Niagara Wines: Terroir to Tetra Pak”

April 19 – Registration 6:00 p.m. Dinner 7:00 p.m.

Jim Warren, Professor & former Winemaker, Niagara College Teaching Winery, Founder, Stoney Ridge Winery, and recent recipient of the Tony Aspler Award of Excellence, will present a mini tasting of 3 NCTW wines before dinner and in his after-dinner remarks will discuss the successes of the Niagara College Teaching Winery and current issues in the Ontario wine industry.

Members \$30; Non-Members \$40; Students \$15.

Oakville Conference Centre, Oakville (QEW & Bronte Road).

For information and reservations call Barry Wylie at 905-827-6302 or e-mail bwylie@globalserve.net.

SANTÉ: The Bloor-Yorkville Wine Festival

May 8 - 12

The Bloor-Yorkville Business Improvement Area (BIA) would like to take this opportunity to introduce one of its major events of the year. Bloor-Yorkville's signature event, SANTÉ: The Bloor-Yorkville Wine Festival is taking place May 8-12, 2007. Patrons will be invited to our vibrant neighbourhood, to “Uncork a World of Wines”, in our restaurants, stores and galleries. Award-winning winemakers, from 90 Canadian and International wineries, will partner with Bloor-Yorkville's most distinguished chefs, for a food and wine extravaganza beyond compare.

Pathways to Wine 2007

June 14 - 6:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Waterstone Estate and Farms

Newmarket, ON

<http://waterstonefarms.com>

Pathways to Wine is a wonderful and relaxing evening of wine tasting, auction bidding, live entertainment and sumptuous foods. Partake of the fun and excitement while enjoying superb international wines brought to you by Lifford Wine Agency.

Tickets: Only \$60.00 and includes sumptuous wines donated by Lifford Wine Agency, hors d'oeuvres, silent auction, live entertainment and much more!

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES are available! Please call Amber Gordon at 905-471-7877 for more information.

Colours of Hope Gala

April 28

A fundraising event for the Kawartha-Haliburton Children's Foundation to send the kids in care of the local CAS to summer camp.

The Colours of Hope Gala will be on Saturday April 28th at the Holiday Inn in Peterborough. The gala begins with a wonderful wine tasting featuring many Ontario Wineries, with cheese and fruit and a classical guitarist serenading the tasters. We then have a live wine auction featuring many exclusive wines, Rob Rusland is auctioneering the wines and we have a silent auction, a three-course meal and dancing to a live band.

Tickets are \$90 with a \$45 tax receipt - please call 1-800-661-2843 ext. 228

This is truly a great evening. Larry Paterson, Hugh Johnstone, Shari Darling and Rod Davidson help us to coordinate this wonderful evening and attend to talk about the various wines. Please visit our website to learn more about the Foundation at www.k-hchildrensfoundation.com and visit Larry Paterson's website to find out more about the wines and the auction at <http://www.littlefatwino.com/>

Ottawa Chamber Music Society

May 9 - 6:00 p.m.

The OCMS Wine Auction is one of the major fundraising events for the Ottawa Chamber Music Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to making chamber music of the highest calibre readily available and accessible. The Wine Auction helps the Ottawa Chamber Music Society to present the highly acclaimed Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival, the largest chamber music festival in the world, as well as our fall/winter Concert Series, the Family Music Fair, and a CD label – CMS



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Classics.

This year's auction will be our largest ever with donations of fine and vintage wines, including many exceptional wines. There will be almost 500 bottles divided in over 150 lots up for bid. Admittance is \$50, which can be applied as a credit towards any wine purchase. Registration for the event commences at 6 pm, providing an opportunity to enjoy a reception where one can mingle and peruse the auction lots. The auction begins at 7 p.m. This year's event will be held on May 9, 2007 at Christ Church Cathedral, 420 Sparks Street in Ottawa. Tickets may be purchased through the OCMS office at 613.234.8008, ext. 244.

Terroir Weekend in The County

GLEN SIEGEL

If you are looking for an interesting destination for the May long weekend, think about Prince Edward County and Picton, the county seat and the home of Terroir, the annual festival of wine and food in The County.

Prince Edward County, or The County, is one of the newer wine regions in Ontario. There are currently 11 wineries in the area and on Saturday, May 19th, most of them will be at Terroir. On the Sunday, most of wineries have special events planned. Plan to stay overnight in the area and spend Sunday visiting the wineries and seeing the sights.

The Terroir tasting is held in the Crystal Palace in Picton. This green and gold building was erected in 1887 and restored in the 1990's. Due to the windows that make up a large part of the walls, there is considerable natural light which makes the Palace a great place for a wine tasting.

Last year, the wineries were at tables along the walls of the Palace with the wine and the matching food at the same table. This gave you a much better feeling for how well the wines work with food.

Overall, the wines, especially the reds, were fairly light. The last couple of years were not conducive to great wine grapes but you could taste the potential. Some of the wineries were serving wines from grapes grown in Niagara but vinted in the County. Everyone had at least one wine produced in the county and many producers were serving only wines produced in the county. Although many producers are focusing on Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, I had several good Cabernet Francs and a couple of Rieslings that I would describe as outstanding. On the other hand, I had a couple of wines, mostly Vidals, that were really bland. My notes on my favourites for the day wines are below. I should point out that I missed Norman

Hardies' Chardonnay and several people told me it was outstanding.

The overall highlight of this event was the friendliness of everyone involved. Everyone was ready to talk about their wines and their wineries if they had time. This may change as this event becomes more popular and therefore, busier.

Last year, the event started at 1:00 pm. When I arrived around 2:00 pm the Palace was reasonably full. By 3:00 it was packed. Once the crush was over, around 4:30, I was able to walk around quite comfortably and had the opportunity to talk to the owners and winemakers about the wines. When I left around 6:00 pm, there were still a large number of friendly groups of people standing around talking.

One change I would recommend would be to skip the live music. Although the band was quite good, the layout of the event meant that you couldn't see them very well and you really couldn't talk while they were playing.

Cost (2006): Admission: \$20.00 in advance. \$25.00 at the door. Tickets: 10 for \$8.00. Tasting samples were 1 or 2 tickets. The munchies that were paired with the wines were free, plentiful and quite tasty.

For more information, contact Sally Peck at 1-888-313-9463 or email her at info@pecountywines.ca.

Wine Notes:

Black Prince Winery Cabernet Franc 2004 - 12% - \$15.95 - slightly candied red fruit on the nose - bright cherry flavours on the palate - medium tannins and a medium long finish - slight prickle of CO2 that dissipated quickly

By Chadsey's Cairns Riesling 2004 - 12.4% - \$16.00 - intense mineral nose - lime and grapefruit flavours with a slightly sweet medium length finish

By Chadsey's Cairns Riesling 2005 - 12% - \$18.00 - incredible grapefruit and other citrus flavours - bright acidity - long grapefruit / pineapple finish

Carmela Estates Cabernet Franc 2004 - \$18.95 - light bodied - red berries with strawberry notes dominating - medium tannins - well balanced wine - almost a rose wine - this would be great with summer fare

Sandbanks Baco Noir 2005 - 12% - \$13.95 - red berries and some smokiness on the nose and the palate - moderate tannins and medium length finish

Waupoos Winery - Baco Noir 2004 - 13.6% - \$14.95 - red fruits and leather on the nose - bright red fruit flavours - balanced tannins and acidity - medium length finish