



Just Off the Vine ...

Ontario Wine Society Events

• Icewine Weekend, January 25 & 26, 2003

This year's Icewine Weekend Extravaganza includes a tour and tasting at the new Peller Estates Winery and dinner in their exquisite dining room. Saturday night, members and guests will be staying at the Royal Park Hotel in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

• Sauvignon Blancs of the World, February 18, 2003

This was to be a "Rieslings of the World" tasting, but since the October 2002 event was a tasting of Rieslings from the CCOVI library, the theme for this event has been changed to Sauvignon Blanc. Some of the finer Ontario Sauvignon Blancs will be compared to others from around the world.

• Canadian Wine Awards, March 2003

• Annual Dinner, April 2003

• Fine Wine and Fine Glasses, May 2003

• Ontario Wine Awards, June 2003

Recent OWS Tastings

❖ CCOVI Library Tasting

By Dean Tudor

The Cool Climate Oenology and Viticultural Institute (CCOVI) at Brock University offered the Ontario Wine Society an unprecedented opportunity - a tasting of Ontario wines from their Canadian Wine Library.

The wines had been acquired and stored by CCOVI. The Library is an incorporated, permanent, revolving collection of VQA wines judged ageable by the directors of the Library. It is to be used by the industry for promotional, research and educational purposes.

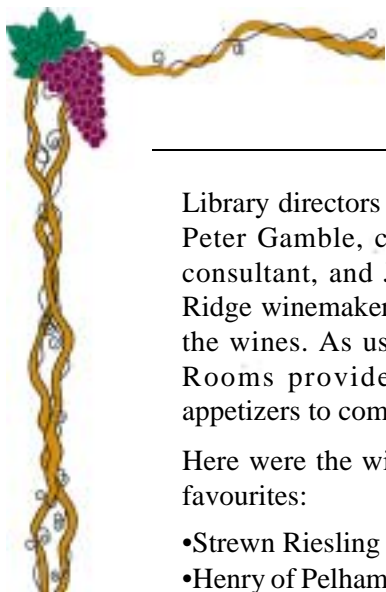
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This night was a wonderful learning opportunity for the OWS to see how grapes from stronger and weaker vintages age in the bottle. The varietal for the tasting was Riesling, one of the premier vinifera grapes grown in Ontario with an extensive track record.



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Library directors present included Tony Aspler, Peter Gamble, co-chair of CCOVI and wine consultant, and John Pierre Colas, Peninsula Ridge winemaker. They commented on each of the wines. As usual, Chris Boland of Tasting Rooms provided a delicious selection of appetizers to complement the wines.

Here were the wines, with an indication of my favourites:

- Strewn Riesling Reserve 1994
- Henry of Pelham Riesling 1994, my fourth rated wine: herby nose, high acid palate, Bench mineral character, zesty, long citric finish. Needs food.
- Cave Spring Riesling Reserve 1995, madeirized, a second bottle less so.
- Lakeview Riesling 1995, my third choice: typical Riesling, good vibrancy, grapefruit. Held up well. From an exceptional year.
- VP Cellars (now Creekside) Riesling 1996
- Hillebrand Trius Riesling 1996, my fifth choice: broad flavours, almost off-dry, some dropoff in the acid levels.
- Pillitteri Riesling 1997
- Thirty Bench Dry Riesling 1997, my first choice: good all round intense Riesling flavours, some anise, good depth and length.
- Stoney Ridge Riesling Reserve 1998, my second choice: off-dry, suggestive of cheese and lemons, needs food.
- Inniskillin Riesling Reserve 1998: off flavours, two bottles tried.

There were many, many questions about the wines, about Rieslings, about CCOVI, vintages, and the Ontario wine scene in general.

A great idea for a tasting! Let's hope it becomes annual. We can work our way through all of the varieties.

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

❖RE: Future OWS Tasting Events

As the number of attendees at our events continues to grow, we are experiencing

operational problems at the beginning of our tastings, for example, slower pouring due to the number of attendees in the tasting room and some attendees not getting an aperitif wine. For these and other reasons, we are changing the procedures that we follow at the beginning of our tasting events.

For future events,

- Attendees will not be permitted into the tasting room until 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the event.
- Attendees may be limited to one glass of the aperitif wine.
- Payment for the event must be received in advance. If payment is not received in advance, attendees may not be seated for the event.

Ontario Winery Events

❖Cave Spring

The Rise of Riesling

Saturdays in January, 2:00pm

The predominant grape of the Cave Spring Vineyard will be the focus of this tasting. Learn how the 'terroir' of this site affects Estate Bottled Rieslings from the '98-'00 vintages.

\$5.00 per person.

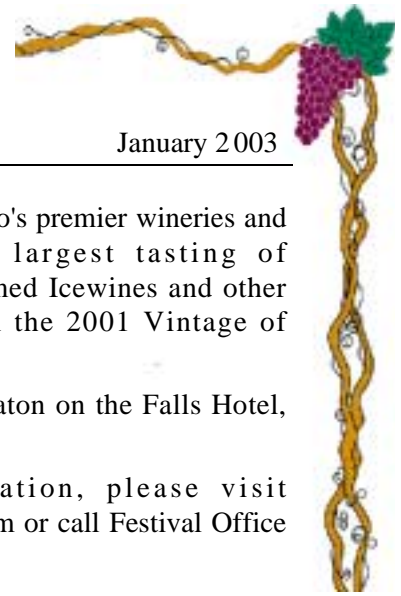
January 18 & 19, during the Niagara Icewine Festival, passport holders can enjoy our January 'Rise of Riesling' tasting rounded out by a tasting of CSC Riesling Icewine for \$2.00 per person, \$5.00 for non-passport holders.

❖Chateau des Charmes

New Year's Eve Gala

Tuesday, December 31, 7:00pm

The Bosc family invites you to celebrate New Year's Eve with an extraordinary evening of culinary excellence, fine wines and live musical entertainment. Join us for a wine reception followed by a winemaker's dinner featuring the cuisine of Chef Stephen Treadwell, Queen's Landing Inn, paired with the wines of Château des Charmes.



The Duncan Hopkins Trio will entertain through midnight as 2003 is welcomed with Brut Sparkling wine and truffles!

\$125 per person plus taxes and gratuities. Reservations required. For reservations or information contact Tina Dehondt, hospitality coordinator at 905 262 4219, Ext. 27 or at tinad@chateaudescharmes.com.

Icewine Festival "Savoury Beginnings, Sweet Endings"

January 18, 19, 11:00am to 5:00pm

Commonly paired only with dessert, Château des Charmes invites you to explore the versatility of Icewine when paired as an aperitif with canapés or as a digestif with dessert. Choose for yourself whether you prefer it served with a savoury beginning, sweet ending or both!

\$14.00 for passport holders. \$18.00 for non-passport holders. Reservations are not required.

❖ **EastDell**

Yuletide Willow

Tuesday, December 10

Weave a flat Christmas tree to hang indoors or out. Once again Bryce Weylie has designed a session that will be a sure sell out!

\$30 per class includes a light lunch and a complimentary 4oz glass of wine.

Guardian Angel

Tuesday, December 17

Engage your creative talents this holiday season in a project to design an Angel to stand watch over your front door. Christmas lights not included!

\$30 per class includes a light lunch and a complimentary 4oz glass of wine.

The above two events are part of EastDell's Make Your Own Tuesdays (MYOT) craft program.

❖ **Icewine Gala, Xerox 'Images of Winter'**

Friday, January 17, 2003, 8:00am to 11pm

This spectacular evening showcases wines from

more than 30 of Ontario's premier wineries and features Canada's largest tasting of internationally acclaimed Icewines and other premium wines from the 2001 Vintage of Distinction.

\$125 per person. Sheraton on the Falls Hotel, Niagara Falls.

For ticket information, please visit www.garpeandwine.com or call Festival Office at 905 688 0212.

❖ **Inniskillin**

Icewine Tent In The Vineyard

January 18, 19, 26, 25, 12:00pm to 4:00pm

Join us in our "Icewine Tent" set amidst the Brae Burn Estate Icewine Vineyard. This unique experience will allow you to view & sample the frozen Icewine grapes while savouring the unadulterated nectar, of our 2001 Vidal Icewine paired with a unique cheese selection.

\$5.00 per person. \$2.00 per person for Gala and Passport holders.

For further information please contact our boutique 1 888 466 4754 Ext. 311, or 905 468 3554 Ext. 3

❖ **Konzelmann**

Konzelmann Estate Winery Holiday 'Open House'

December 7, 8, 12:00pm to 5:00pm

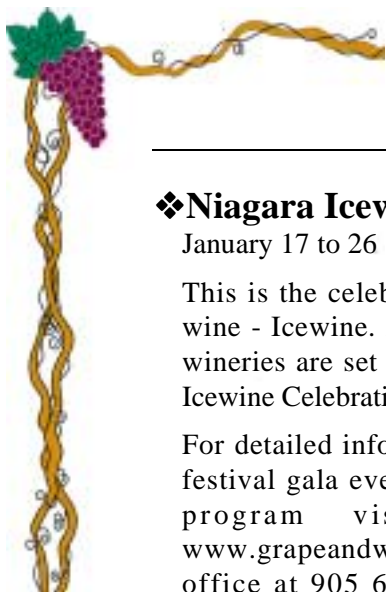
Be prepared for the holiday season and acquire knowledge on 'cooking with wine'. Sample mulled wine paired with holiday delicacies, and receive recipes for Konzelmann Cabernet Cake and Vidal Icewine Muffins, to ensure exquisite, never fail flavours for your holiday entertaining. Join us for this customer appreciation weekend and 'Savour the Season'.

❖ **Maleta**

2nd Anniversary Celebration

January 18, 19, 25, 26.

During the Icewine Festival we are celebrating our 2nd anniversary with an open house and invite you to sample our award winning Meritage plus hors d'oeuvres and cheeses.



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❖ **Niagara Icewine Festival**

January 17 to 26

This is the celebration of Canada's premiere wine - Icewine. More than 30 of the region's wineries are set to take a bow as the Niagara Icewine Celebrations get underway.

For detailed information and reservations for festival gala events and the winery passport program visit the website at www.grapeandwine.com or call the Festival office at 905 688 0212. Icewine Festival passports can be purchased at the festival office or participating wineries for \$20.

❖ **Peller**

Holiday House Tour

December 6, 7

Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club's 4th annual Holiday House Tour will feature historic and contemporary old town Niagara-on-the-Lake properties decorated for the holiday season. Included in the tour is Peller Estates Winery, where guests can partake in a tour, complimentary wine sampling and silent auction and make reservations for a special dinner in our restaurant.

For Holiday House Tour passes, \$18 in advance, please call 905 351 3807. For reservations at Peller Estates Winery Restaurant call 905 468 4678.

❖ **13th Street**

Christmas Release Event

Saturday, December 7, starting at 9:00am.

Expect a similar format to last year, with great food and wine. We will be releasing our 2001 G.H. Funk Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2000 Sandstone Gamay Reserve and 2001 Sandstone Chardonnay. Volumes will be limited. Parking is along the lane behind the winery building. Look forward to seeing you.

❖ **Thirty Bench**

Icewine & Truffles

January 18, 19, 25, 26

Relax and enjoy a sample our 2000 Riesling

Icewine or our award winning 1999 Riesling Icewine along with one of our Riesling Icewine Truffles while looking over snow-covered vineyards.

\$2.00 with Icewine Evening Tickets or Passport, \$4.00 for Non-Passport holders.

2000 Premium Red Wine Release

January 25, 26, 10:00am to 6:00pm

Thirty Bench Wines is proud to present the release of the 2000 premium red wines. Please join us as we sample these wonderful wines, along with bread and assorted cheeses. All are welcome!!!

For further information please contact the winery at 905 563 1698.

❖ **Vineland**

Scenic Horse Drawn Carriage Rides

Fridays and Saturdays from 6:00pm, and Sundays from 12:00pm to 3:00pm, every 20 minutes

Sleigh bells ring and festive spirit is in the air as we celebrate the holidays and offer horse-drawn carriage rides (closed carriage) on a route around the estate. A complimentary hot or cold beverage in our restaurant will follow the carriage ride.

Rides are \$20 per person. You can reserve your ride time to just top off your day of holiday shopping in the area or so that it ends just before a dining reservation at our restaurant. To secure your booking, please call Julie at 1 888 846 3526 Ext. 25 or Dom at Ext. 55

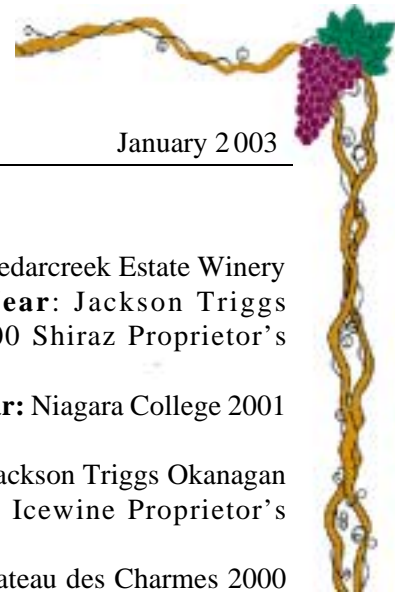
New Years Eve Gala Celebration

Tuesday, December 31

This is an executive dining package to ring in the New Year with style. This package includes a tour & tasting, scenic carriage ride and a private reception followed by a 5-course pairing menu by Mark Picone at Vineland Estates restaurant.

For more information or to reserve for this gala event, please call Dominique us at 1 888 846 3526 Ext. 55.

"A Tribute To Vidal" Icewine Dinner



Saturday, January 18

A place at our table awaits you to join us for a festive dinner in our carriage house as we present our gold medal Vidal Icewine with executive chef Mark Picone's unique pairing menu to celebrate this year's Icewine harvest.

For reservations or menu information call 905 562 7088 Ext. 25. \$60 for Icewine Festival passport holders plus wine, taxes and gratuities. \$65 for non-Icewine Festival passport holders plus wine, taxes and gratuities. This unique Icewine Festival dinner menu will be offered throughout the run of the festival in our restaurant.

Golden Princess Wine Cruise ~ Barcelona to Venice

May 4 to 17

Vineland Estates Winery presents an executive wine cruise from Barcelona to Venice hosted by Allan Schmidt, General Manager and original winemaker at Vineland. 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, cocktail reception and a Vineland Estates gift basket.

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

Ontario Wine Industry News

❖ Canadian Wine Awards

The 2nd annual Wine Access magazine Canadian Wine Awards' judging took place this past year at the Fairmont Empress Hotel in Victoria, B. C. from August 26 to 30.

This year 85 wineries participated compared to 71 in 2001. There were 621 wines entered compared to 528 last year. Forty three percent, or 268, wines won awards compared to almost 48%, or 247, last year.

Here are the wines that were judged the best in

each category.

Winery of the Year: CedarCreek Estate Winery

Red Wine of the Year: Jackson Triggs Okanagan Estate 2000 Shiraz Proprietor's Reserve

White Wine of the Year: Niagara College 2001 Chardonnay

Icewine of the Year: Jackson Triggs Okanagan Estate 2000 Riesling Icewine Proprietor's Reserve

Best Value White: Chateau des Charmes 2000 Gewurztraminer St. David's Bench Vineyard, \$14.95

Best Value Red: Hernder 1999 Cabernet Franc \$13.95

Best Value Dessert: Inniskillin 2000 Riesling Select Late Harvest \$19.95

Best Chardonnay: Niagara College 2001 Chardonnay

Best Pinot Blanc: Burrowing Owl's Sandhill 2001 Pinot Blanc

Best Pinot Gris: Mission Hill 2001 Pinot Grigio

Best Sauvignon Blanc-Semillon: Creekside 2001 Sauvignon Blanc

Best Riesling: Marynissen 2000 Riesling

Best Gewurztraminer: Chateau des Charmes 2000 Gewurztraminer St. David's Bench Vineyard

Best Other Whites: Gray Monk 2001 Siegerrebe

Best Rose/Blush: Calona 2001 Gamay Noir Blush

Best Cabernet-Merlot/Meritage Blends: Jackson Triggs Okanagan 2000 Red Meritage Private Reserve

Best Merlot: Sumac Ridge 1999 Merlot Blacksage Vineyard

Best Cabernet Franc: Hernder 1999 Cabernet Franc

Best Cabernet Sauvignon: Quail's Gate 2000 Cabernet Sauvignon Family Reserve

Best Pinot Noir: CedarCreek 2000 Pinot Noir Platinum Reserve

Best Shirah/Shiraz: Jackson-Triggs Okanagan 2000 Shiraz Proprietor's Reserve

Best Gamay, Zweigelt & Lighter Reds: Hawthorne Mountain Vineyard 2000 Gamay

Best Red Hybrid: Birchwood Baco Noir



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Best Late Harvest: Inniskillin 2000 Riesling Special Select Late Harvest

Best Vinifera Icewine: Jackson-Triggs Okanagan 2001 Riesling Icewine Proprietor's Reserve

Best Vidal Icewine: Konzelmann 2000 Vidal Icewine

Best Sparkling Wine: Sumac Ridge 1998 Stellar's Jay Brut

❖ Ottawa Wine And Food Show Awards

International Wine Competition, 2002 Results - Ontario Wineries

Sparkling Wine

•SILVER: Chateau des Charmes Brut Méthode Traditionelle NV, \$19.95

Off-Dry White (\$8.50 to \$11.99)

•GOLD: Hernder Riesling 2000, \$9.95

•SILVER: Angels Gate Vidal Blanc 2001, \$11.95

•BRONZE: Birchwood Gewurztraminer/Riesling 2000, \$9.95

Late Harvest/Sweet White Wine

•GOLD: Daniel Lenko Select Late Harvest Vidal 2000, \$15.95

•BRONZE: Hernder Special Select Late Harvest Riesling 1999, \$29.95

Icewine

•GOLD: Vineland Vidal Icewine 1999, \$39.95

•SILVER: Inniskillin Vidal Icewine 2000, \$52.95

•BRONZE: Andrew Peller Signature Series Riesling Icewine 2000, \$60.00

Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon (\$8.50 to \$11.99)

•GOLD: Pelee Island Sauvignon Blanc 2000, \$9.95

Chardonnay (\$8.50 to \$11.99)

•GOLD: Stoney Ridge Bench Chardonnay 2000, \$11.95

Chardonnay (\$12 to \$19.99)

•GOLD: Thomas & Vaughan Estate Reserve Chardonnay 2000, \$16.95

•GOLD: Featherstone 'French Oak' Barrel Fermented Chardonnay 2001, \$16.95

Chardonnay (\$20 and over)

•GOLD: Konzelmann Chardonnay Grand Reserve 2000, \$44.95

•GOLD: Angels Gate Barrel Aged Old Vines Chardonnay 2000, \$23.95

•SILVER: Stoney Ridge Old Vines Chardonnay 1997, \$29.95

•BRONZE: Daniel Lenko 'French Oak' Old Vines 2000, \$24.95

Dry Riesling/Alsatian Varietals (\$8.50 to \$11.99)

•SILVER: Inniskillin Reserve Riesling 2000, \$11.25

•BRONZE: Konzelmann Riesling 2001, \$9.95

Dry Riesling/Alsatian Varietals (\$12 and over)

•GOLD: Chateau des Charmes St. David's Bench Gewurztraminer 2000**, \$14.95

** BEST OF SHOW

•SILVER: Stoney Ridge Reserve Gewurztraminer 2000, \$14.95

•BRONZE: Daniel Lenko Gewurztraminer 2001, \$14.95

Other Dry White Wine (\$8.50 to \$11.99)

•SILVER: Harvest Estate Chardonnay Musqué 2001, \$11.95

•BRONZE: Pelee Island Pinot Gris 2002, \$9.95

Other Dry White Wine (\$12 and over)

•BRONZE: Hernder Chardonnay Musqué 2001, \$14.95

Merlot (\$8.50 to \$11.99)

•BRONZE: Harvest Estate Unfiltered Merlot 1999, \$11.95

Merlot (\$20 and over)

•SILVER: Reif Estate Merlot 2000, \$21.95

•SILVER: Colio CEV Merlot Reserve 1999, \$24.95

•BRONZE: Cilento Merlot Reserve 1999, \$34.95

Cabernet Sauvignon/Cabernet Franc (\$20 and over)

•GOLD: Thomas & Vaughan Cabernet Franc Estate Reserve 1999, \$37.95

•BRONZE: Kacaba Cabernet Franc 2000, \$22.00

Cabernet/ Bordeaux Blends (\$8.50 to \$11.99)



- GOLD:** Chateau des Charmes 'Silver Label' Cabernet 2000, \$9.95 Canada
- SILVER:** Jackson-Triggs Proprietors' Reserve Meritage 2000, \$11.45
- BRONZE:** Maleta Cabernet-Merlot 2000, \$11.95

Cabernet/ Bordeaux Blends (\$12 to \$19.99)

- GOLD:** Kacaba Meritage 2000**, \$18.00
**BEST RED WINE
- BRONZE:** Hillebrand Trius Red 2000, \$19.95

Cabernet/ Bordeaux Blends (\$20 and over)

- GOLD:** Trius Grand Red 1999, \$52.00
- SILVER:** Colio CEV Cabernet/Merlot 1999, \$49.95
- BRONZE:** Henry of Pelham Cabernet-Merlot 1999, \$24.95
- BRONZE:** Reif Estate Meritage 2000, \$26.95

Pinot Noir (\$12 and over)

- SILVER:** Lailey Pinot Noir 2001, \$20.00

Other Red Wine - New World (\$8.50 to \$11.99)

- GOLD:** Harbour Estates Baco Noir 2000, \$9.95
- SILVER:** Featherstone Gemstone Red Baco Noir/Cabernet Franc 2001, \$9.95
- BRONZE:** Harvest Baco Noir 1999, \$9.95

Other Red Wine - New World (\$20 and over)

- BRONZE:** Henry of Pelham Reserve Baco Noir 2000, \$21.95

❖ **Reif**

Reif Estate Winery Receives Prestigious Award in Europe

November 6, 2002, Niagara-on-the-Lake:

Reif Estate Winery's world-class reputation was further enhanced by winning the Best Icewine Trophy for its 2000 Vidal Icewine and the trophy for Best Canadian Winery at the 2002 International Wine and Spirits Competition (IWSC).

The awards were presented during a special banquet dinner held at the Guildhall in London, England. Klaus Reif travelled there in the midst of the grape crush to be honoured during the celebration. The Niagara-on-the-Lake family estate winery was also nominated for The Robert Mondavi Winemaker of the Year award at the

IWSC.

"It's an honour to receive the trophies for Best Canadian Winery and for Best Icewine," said Klaus Reif, proprietor, and Roberto DiDomenico, winemaker, of Reif Estate Winery. "To also be nominated for International Winemaker of the Year is a very special achievement.

Reif's 1999 Vidal Icewine also took top honours at Concours Mondial in Brussels, Belgium in 2001, gold medals at the Challenge du Vin and Olympiades du Vin Vinexpo in Bordeaux, France in 2001 and a Vines magazine award for Icewine of the Year. The 2000 Vidal Icewine was recently selected again for the award, making it back-to-back awards from Vines magazine.

Based on their continuing success the winery is currently planning a \$2.5 million expansion to their facilities.

Reif Estate Winery was established in 1983 and now has 135 acres of vineyards. Reif is located on the Niagara Parkway in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

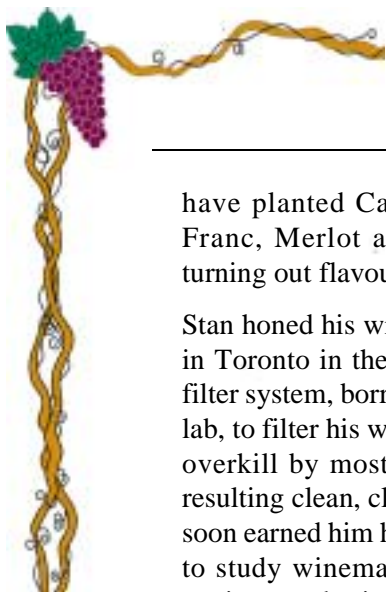
Feature Article

❖ **Maleta Winery - Harvesting Quality**

By Barbara Leslie

Stan Maleta's dream is to make premium wines in the style of the great Bordeaux reds but, ironically, his first award as a professional winemaker was for a white wine. Using the Riesling grapes already planted on his property, he made a 1999 Riesling Reserve Off-Dry that garnered top marks in a German wine competition. Even more noteworthy, Maleta's was the only wine from outside Germany in the top 50.

That was three years ago. Now Maleta is winning awards for their reds, too. Stan and his wife, Marilyn, strive for quality, not quantity. By keeping production small they can achieve better control and maintain a relaxed cottage-style atmosphere in which to welcome visitors. They



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have planted Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Syrah which are already turning out flavourful, concentrated wines.

Stan honed his winemaking skills as an amateur in Toronto in the 1970s. He adapted a vacuum filter system, borrowed from a colour processing lab, to filter his wine - a technique considered as overkill by most of his fellow amateurs. The resulting clean, clear flavourful wines, however, soon earned him his friends' respect. He went on to study winemaking techniques, attend wine tastings and wine courses whenever possible. Soon he was earning awards at home winemaking competitions.

When the Maletas finally found their 17 acres of vineyard on Queenston Rd. in Niagara-on-the-Lake, its somewhat derelict condition may have made it affordable but its location and heritage made it desirable. It sits adjacent to what was once the Sunnieholme Winery, founded in 1918, and on what was probably the site of Ontario's first commercial vineyard, developed in the mid 1800s.

The sloping land is situated in one of Niagara's warmer mesoclimates, on what was once the shoreline of an ancient lakebed. The Maletas reconditioned the tough Halimand soil with organic materials like straw and horse manure and underdrained at every row of vines. Subtle manipulation such as limiting the number of bunches per vine and removing leaves to maximize sun exposure ensure well structured and flavourful wines.

The Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc is used for blending into the Maleta's luscious Meritage. Gamay, Beaujolais's fruity red was well established on the property, and Stan finishes it with a subtle touch of oak for added complexity. He crafts his Riesling into sophisticated off-dry styles that make wonderful aperitifs or dessert wines.

Although some of the vines are still young, Stan has been able to coax full flavours out of the grapes and the 1999 Maleta Meritage tasted in the spring of 2002 was full of cassis and blackberry fruit, a satin texture and long, fruity

finish. To ensure continuing quality, Maleta's vines are bunch and leaf thinned to yield two tons an acre. Vinification takes place in a pink (yes, pink) Quonset hut that houses the winemaking equipment and a mix of French and American oak barrels. Although they grew from 700 cases to 1200 cases in their first two years, the Maletas want to limit production at 5000 cases to make sure they can maintain the premium quality.

Klaus Reif and Reif Winery winemaker Robert DiDomenico were instrumental in advising Stan and Marilyn during the winery start-up. Today, the Maletas contract out for most of the important vineyard functions such as pruning, trellising and harvesting. Stan and Marilyn moved from their suburban home in Oakville in 1998 with their three exuberant dogs and have settled in to their new lifestyle complete with duck pond. Marilyn, who worked for a major publication in Toronto, now manages the boutique which requires both her creative and business skills. She has also established an active distributorship for wine books and somehow, she also finds time to visit restaurants to promote Maleta wine.

Working at a successful car dealership while pursuing a lifelong dream to make world class wine is a challenge but the Maletas' small production sells out quickly which bodes well for the future as do the various awards earned by the individual products. Maleta's flagship wine, the Meritage, leads the way and has earned the accolades of other local winemakers. The Meritage just won the Canadian Wine Awards "Meritage of the Year" and also a silver medal in the American Wine Competition.