



Just Off the Vine ...

Ontario Wine Society Events

❖ Toronto Chapter

- **A Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) Library Tasting - A Vertical of Cabernet/Merlot Blends, Monday, November 24, 2003**

This is only the second time that the Canadian Wine Library at Brock University has offered the Ontario Wine Society such a unique tasting opportunity from its collection. The tasting will be conducted by Vintages' Claudius Fehr, who is also a Canadian Wine Library Director.

- **Icewine Weekend Extravaganza, January 24/25, 2004**
- **Matching Food and Wine, February 24, 2004**
- **Hillebrand Trius Vertical, March 30, 2004**

❖ Niagara Chapter

- **Annual Dinner, Tuesday, November 11, 2003**

The Niagara Chapter's first annual dinner will be held at The Restaurant at Peninsula Ridge, reception 6:30pm, dinner 7:00pm.

- **"Port-Styled" Wine Tasting, Monday, December 8, 2003**

Stoney Ridge Winery.

Note: Members may attend events in either chapter.

Recent OWS Tastings

❖ Toronto Chapter

Ontario's Great Dabbler Returns to Stoney Ridge

By David Lawrason, Wine Access, November 2003

It's always been a standing assumption among Niagara pundits that Jim Warren makes too many wines. At various points, Stoney Ridge Estate Winery, the winery that he founded, has had over 50 brands on its roster. The thing is, he just can't help himself. Whenever a feasible, or even an unfeasible, idea pops

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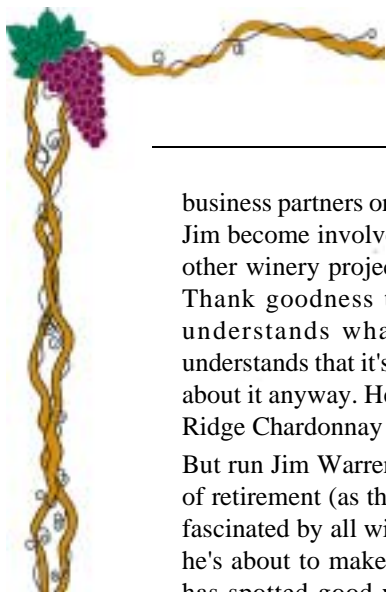
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into his head it seems he just has to chase it down. Like my endlessly enthusiastic pup tearing after a tennis ball.

The urge to dabble has helped drive three separate



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business partners onto other endeavours, and has seen Jim become involved as a consultant to at least three other winery projects, that we publicly know about. Thank goodness that sweet Charlotte, his wife, understands what makes him run, or at least understands that it's in his fibre and she can't do much about it anyway. Her reward is a very popular Stoney Ridge Chardonnay named in her honour.

But run Jim Warren still does, with no fixed thought of retirement (as that age looms). He is a winemaker fascinated by all wine, and specifically the next wine he's about to make. He is a real estate eleveur, who has spotted good vineyards and transformed them into Ontario's best know sites (Lenko, Kew, Butlers Grant, Wismer). A mentor, who spots promising wineries and turns them into stars (Daniel Lenko, Kacaba, Niagara College). A teacher who taught high school French in Hamilton for most of his life, and now teaches winemaking at same Niagara College. And he is an activist who has taken on the cause of fruit wine as executive director of Fruit Wines of Canada, tirelessly lobbying government, media and consumers to accept fruit wine as a legitimate equal.

But back to the twisted tale of Stoney Ridge, and Warren's recent return to the winery he calls home. He is not the owner this time; that distinction goes to the young and erudite Barry Katzman, a former Molson's man who went into the wine business with pal Glenn Hunt to create a quite successful virtual winery called Woods End. The Woods End wines were eventually made at Stoney Ridge in a deal that made them partial investors in the real winery. When the ownership ride ended for Ottawa businessman John Belanger in late 2001, Katzman was able to engineer the purchase of Stoney Ridge, with a contract to manage the prime Bench vineyard called Cuesta that is now coming to fruition.

One of Katzman's first moves was to entice Jim Warren back to make a line of premium Founders Signature Collection. His presence around the winery will also benefit the rest of the portfolio being made by Liubomir Popovici, who given the quality of the 2002s, is already quite accomplished. I had a chance to taste some of them one day in September in Niagara, then the same evening during a tasting for the Ontario Wine Society in Toronto. The bread and butter Bench range are varietally correct with a hint of rounding sweetness, with the 2002 Pinot Grigio the hit of the range and winner of a Gold at the Ontario Wine Awards 2003. The just bottled 2002 Reserves were clearly a notch up, particularly the 2002 Fox Vineyard Cabernet Franc (rating 89). Then came

Warren's Founders Signature wines, the opulent, surprisingly floral 2002 Charlottes Unoaked Chardonnay (\$29.95, rating 90) mentioned above, and the just bottled 2002 Meritage (\$34.95, 90 to 92) that is rich, well proportioned and destined to age very well.

And speaking of ageing, a cache of library wines that Warren made in the mid-90s are now for sale at Stoney Ridge, and although the pricing of the reds is over the top (\$95 for a 1997 Cab Franc, \$150 for a 1995 Eastman Vineyard Cabernet Merlot), they are holding up well. The whites are better however - a wonderful \$25 Riesling 1995 Reserve (rating 90) that's alive and kicking, and a perfectly matured \$55.00 Chardonnay 1997 Old Vines (from Lenko vineyard) that has the stature and depth of some great white burgundies (rating 92).

Almost twenty years after Warren first opened a tiny winery on a stony ridge atop the Niagara escarpment, it's reassuring to know that he is home to roost, even though still dabbling and inspiring many others along the way.

Ontario Winery Events

❖ Angels Gate

Barrel Club Dinner

Saturday, November 22

Your evening will begin with a series of barrel tastings from the fabulous 2002 vintage. This is an opportunity to get a sneak preview of our up and coming big reds. This tasting will be conducted by our winemaker, Natalie Spytzkowsky. This marvellous tasting will be followed by an elegant 5 course dinner presented by Wellington Court's own Erik Peacock. Each course has been specially designed to pair with one of our award winning wines.

Open to Barrel Club members only. Call for details 1 877 ANG GATE

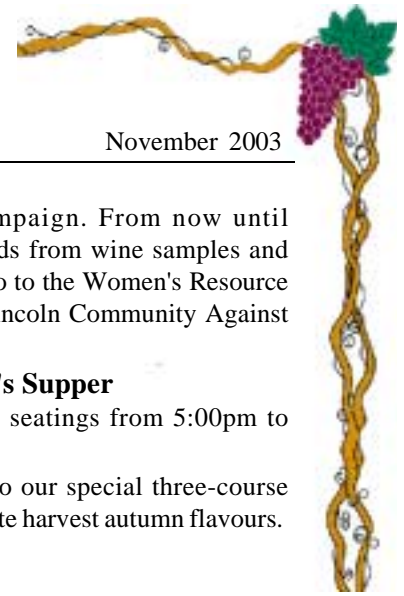
❖ Cave Spring

Gift Baskets 101

November 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, 11:00am and 2:00p.m.

What to give this holiday season? That is the question. Put your own signature on the gift of wine by learning to create your own wine gift baskets from one of our expert packagers!

\$8 per person. Reservations required. Call 905 562 3581, Ext. 302.



❖ Colio

Christmas Open House

November 29, 30, 1:00pm to 3:00pm

Pre-holiday in-store specials, roasted chestnuts, Christmas cake.

❖ Creekside

Five Chardonnays

Weekends in November, 2:00pm

Listen to our winemaker discuss the techniques used in the vineyard and cellar to improve and enhance the flavor of our Chardonnay wines. This event will take place in our underground cellars, one of Niagara's most extraordinary cellars. Finish with a comparative tasting of five of Creekside's Chardonnay wines.

\$5 per person. Reservations required.

❖ EastDell

Magical Memories

Tuesday, November 4

Working with elegant ribbons and quality papers, hand craft a unique Memory Book suitable for gift-giving. The end result is a perfect place for collecting pressed flowers, photos and other memorable treasures. Don't miss this imaginative offering by LouAnne Wronski.

\$52.99 per person, plus applicable taxes.

Calling All Angels

Tuesday, November 11

Chris Grenville makes elegance easy as she helps you make a heavenly 12-inch angel for your table or tree top. Fashioned with ceramic head and hands, dressed in gold lamé with ribbons, roses, feathered wings and a rhinestone halo, your angel will become a favourite of your traditional holiday décor.

\$74.99 per person, plus applicable taxes.

Deck Your Halls

Tuesday, November 18

Designer Sharon Allan presents three ways to dress your home's exterior for the holidays. Choose to frame your entrance with a pair of hanging swags, design a tall sap bucket arrangement or create a fabulous wreath. Learn the elements of design when working with fresh greenery, wired ribbon and decorative accents. Confirm your craft choice and colour scheme when reserving.

\$74.99 per person, plus applicable taxes.

An Angel At Our Door

Saturday, November 29, 2:00pm to 4:00pm

We flip the switch on our indoor and outdoor holiday lights to launch the Angelfest Trail of Lights and our

'Tis Better to Give campaign. From now until December 31, all proceeds from wine samples and Christmas Tree Wishes go to the Women's Resource Centre, an initiative of Lincoln Community Against Violence.

Angelfest Winemaker's Supper

Saturday, November 29, seatings from 5:00pm to 8:00pm

Follow the Angel Trail to our special three-course supper, featuring hearty late harvest autumn flavours. \$39.95 per person.

❖ Konzelmann

Taste the Season

November 8, 9 and 15, 16

Konzelmann is featuring a sample of Riesling paired with 'Zwiebelkuchen' - German Onion Cake.

❖ Malivoire

Malivoire's Fall Touring Weekend

November 15, 16

This "by invitation only" event was introduced to rave reviews last year. The format gives Malivoire's owners and staff an intimate opportunity to visit with their top customers at the winery. You can be included by calling 1 866 644 2244 and mentioning that you are a member of the Ontario Wine Society.

You can attend on either November 15 or 16 at a pre-arranged time. Malivoire staff will lead you through the winery, and will answer any questions that you have about the vineyards, the winery and the wines. Winegrower Ann Sperling will be on hand to share her insights on this vintage.

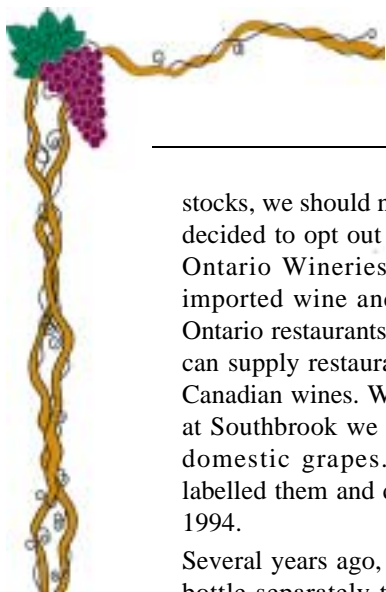
Appointments are available every half hour from 10:00am to 5:00pm. You should plan to be there for at least one hour. Appointments are essential and must be made in advance. Group size will be 15 or less. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes, as there are two flights of stairs and no elevator! Directions to the winery are available on our website at www.malivoire.com. Don't be disappointed - reserve your appointment right away.

❖ Southbrook

Triumphus Launching

This year's grape harvest looks to be good quality, but it may be the smallest on record. We had contracted for about 7000 litres of Sauvignon Blanc, which would yield about 750 cases of wine. The harvest has come in and the total yield was only 480 litres!

All of the Ontario wineries have been affected, but due to Southbrook's policy of keeping considerable



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stocks, we should not be too badly affected. We have decided to opt out of the program which will allow Ontario Wineries to make blends of up to 90% imported wine and allow them to be delivered to Ontario restaurants. With our stocks we feel that we can supply restaurants and other customers with all Canadian wines. When we first started making wine at Southbrook we were able to blend imported and domestic grapes. However, we always clearly labelled them and decided to stop blending wines in 1994.

Several years ago, 1997 to be precise, we started to bottle separately the single best barrel of red and white wine each year if the vintage justified it. These wines have been sitting in our cellars ever since, maturing and daring us to think of what to do with them. We have finally solved the logistics of labelling and are announcing the availability of Southbrook's Triumphus wines.

To debut these wines to the press, we had a winemaker's dinner in the barrel cellar with winewriters David Lawrason, Tony Aspler, Dan Kislenko, Walter Sendzik and Frank Baldock. The menu was delicious and matched perfectly with the wines. We have found the Triumphus wines take one to two years longer to approach their peak than our other wines so the '97s and '98s are really only maturing now.

The vintages available for Chardonnay are '98, '99, '00 & '02 and for Cabernet/Merlots are '97, '98, & '01. All of these are available in limited quantities.

Winemaker's Dinner Menu

Saturday, November 1, 7:00pm

To launch these wines, we will be hosting the same dinner. Very limited seating is available and will be sure to sell out quickly.

\$100 per person plus taxes. The menu is detailed below.

•1st Course

Seafood cioppino with a saffron broth. Triumphus Chardonnay 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002

•2nd Course

Braised Ontario lamb shanks with a Yukon mash, Southbrook buttercup squash, brussel sprouts with sesame oil and toasted almonds. Triumphus Cabernet/Merlot 1997, 1998, 2001, Triumphus Cabernet/Merlot 1999

•3rd Course

Parmigiano reggiano, pecans, dates & figs drizzled with Southbrook honey. Triumphus Cabernet Merlot

2001

•4th Course

Double chocolate torte with fresh berries and creme Anglaise framboise d'or

Coffee/Tea

Call or e-mail us for reservations: 905 832 2548 or office@southbrook.com.

Triumphus Tasting

Sunday November 2, 2:00pm to 5:00pm

We will be tasting all of the Triumphus wines in our old tasting room. Light snacks will be served.

\$25 per person. Reservations required: 905 832 2548 or office@southbrook.com. Limits for the older wines especially are very low. Some of the wines are also available in magnums.

❖ Thomas & Vaughan

Holiday Open House Featuring New Releases

Saturday, November 29, 11:00am to 5:00pm

Join Thomas & Vaughan Vintners in celebrating the Holiday Season while sampling some of our new releases, including 2001 Chardonnay Vintner's Select, 2001 Chardonnay Sur Lie, 2001 Riesling.

Complimentary.

❖ Willow Heights

Holiday Open House

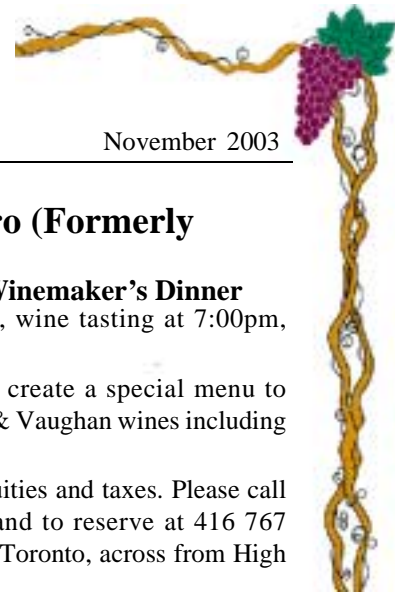
November 29, 30, 11:00am to 5:00pm

You are invited to our annual holiday open house. To celebrate the holiday season, join us at Willow Heights to sample our favourite holiday cocktail -The Icewine Martini. New releases for this special weekend include the 2001 Chardonnay Reserve, 2002 Gamay Noir, 2001 Cabernet Franc, 2001 Cabernet Sauvignon and the 2001 Tresette Reserve.

Our second annual Bin End Sale on selected wines is extended to our valued customers for this weekend only! In addition, present this article and receive 25% off all giftware!

What better way to commence the Holiday Season...Good wine, Good food and Good friends!

For more information call 905 562 4945 or visit us at www.willowheightswinery.com.



Ontario Restaurant Events

❖ The Briars

Southbrook Winemaker's Dinner

Saturday, November 1, Champagne reception 6:30pm, dinner 7:00pm

Colin will be hosting a winemaker's dinner at the lovely Briars Resort overlooking Lake Simcoe. This 5 course menu looks very exciting and the evening includes dancing afterwards.

Menu as follows;

•Seared Ahi Tuna

Arugala and pear salad, crisp wonton, sesame soy glaze. *Pinot Gris 2001*

•Asparagus And Truffle Bisque

Sweet Potato and rosemary cheese sticks. *Triomphe Sauvignon Blanc 2001*

•Grilled Quail And Portobello Mushroom

Organic quinoa and sundried blueberry Tian, white balsamic reduction. *Triomphe Chardonnay 1999*

•Seared Medallions Of Black Angus Beef Tenderloin

Potato rose, Fall baby vegetables, thyme jus, sugared shallots. *Cabernet Franc "Watson Vineyard" 2001*

•Warm White Chocolate And Cranberry Cheesecake

Wrapped in phyllo, persimmons and mango coulis. *Framboise and Vidal Ice Wine*

\$75 per person plus taxes and gratuity. Call to reserve 416 493 2173 or 905 722 3271.

After such a lovely evening, why drive home? Indulge yourself and spend the night. Call 1 800 465 2376 and ask for the special "SOUTHBROOK" rate.

The Briars Resort, 55 Hedge Rd., RR#1, Jackson's Point.

❖ The Little Inn in Bayfield

Lailey Winemaker's Dinner

Saturday, November 15, 2003

'Wine and dine' special dinner at The Little Inn in Bayfield hosted by winemaker Derek Barnett

Featuring: Salad with Roasted Quails and Puy Lentils, Savarin Artichokes and Fonduta, Scallop Cake with Sesame Seed, Fillet of Beef with Braised Oxtail Sauce, Quebec Artisanal Cheeses, Grapefruit and Fig Gratin with Almond Cream.

Lailey Vineyard wine is served with each course.

\$100 per person. For further details or to make reservations call 800 565 1832 or www.littleinn.com.

❖ Mardi Gras Bistro (Formerly Spago)

Thomas & Vaughan Winemaker's Dinner

Thursday, November 27, wine tasting at 7:00pm, dinner 7:30pm.

Chef Anthony Mair will create a special menu to accompany four Thomas & Vaughan wines including a dessert wine.

\$50 per person, plus gratuities and taxes. Please call Spago for more details and to reserve at 416 767 7246. 1982 Bloor St. W., Toronto, across from High Park.

❖ Tundra

Peninsula Ridge -November Feature Winery

Wines featured in the Tundra restaurant will be,

Whites

2002 Chardonnay

2002 Inox Chardonnay

Reds

2001 Cabernet

2001 Cabernet/Merlot

2001 Merlot

2000 Cabernet Sauvignon

TUNDRA, at Hilton Toronto, 145 Richmond Street, West. Please call 416 860 5300 or e-mail tundra.toronto@hilton.com for reservations or visit www.toronto.com/tundra

❖ Twisted Fork

Malivoire Winemaker's Dinner

Wednesday, November 26, 7:30pm

Chef Michael Killip has created a delicious five-course menu to showcase Malivoire's finest wines. Winegrower Ann Sperling will be the featured guest at the restaurant in Oakville.

\$65.00 per person excluding tax or gratuity and reservations can be made by calling 905 825 FORK. See the menu at Malivoire's website at www.malivoire.com under "Upcoming Events."

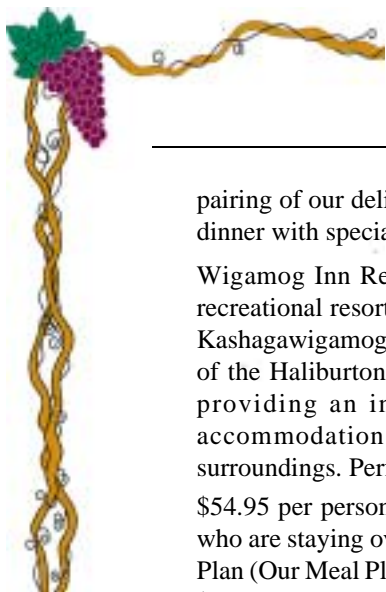
Twisted Fork, 67 Bronte Road, Oakville, Ontario

❖ Wigamog Inn

Featherstone Winemaker's Dinner

November 14 to 16, reception 6:00pm, dinner 7:00pm

We have partnered with the Featherstone Estate Winery & Vineyard, home of the 2003 Grape King and Ontario Vineyard of the Year for a special "Winemakers Weekend". A complimentary sampling of their wines will be offered before dinner, as well



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pairing of our delicious four-course country gourmet dinner with specially selected wines.

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. Perfect for any occasion.

\$54.95 per person plus taxes and gratuity. For those who are staying overnight on our Modified American Plan (Our Meal Plan) the price would be an additional \$25 per person on top of our published rates.

For reservations please contact the Wigamog Inn Resort at 1-800-661-2010 or email at reservations@wigamoginn.com. Visit the Wigamog Inn Resort at www.wigamoginn.com and the Featherstone Winery at www.featherstonewinery.ca

Other Ontario Wine Events

❖ Ottawa Wine and Cheese Show

November 7 to 9, Ottawa Congress Centre, 55 Colonel By Drive.

Halina Player, organizer of the Ottawa Wine and Food Show, promises something for everyone with 200 booths presenting wines and foods to tempt your palette and a number of others presenting gift items to tempt your pocket book. This year's show again promises to be a taster's tour around the world.

Friday 7, 12:00pm to 9:00pm

Saturday, 8, 12:00pm to 9:00pm

Sunday, 9, 12:00pm to 6:00pm

\$14.00 per adult 19 and over. Advanced ticket sales - TicketMaster at 613 755 1111.

❖ Royal Agricultural Winter Fair

The Royal Vineyard

November 7 to 16, 11:00am to 9:00pm daily. Sunday from 12:00pm to 6:00pm.

Cheers to the Royal Vineyard by Bob Kirner, from the 2003 Royal Magazine

Just beyond the west entrance gates, now a backdrop for a French chateau, visitors are welcome to experience the tranquil and verdant environs of a vintner's estate. That's how organizers envisioned The Royal Vineyard, a spectacular tribute to Ontario's wine growers and winemakers and a premier attraction at this year's Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.

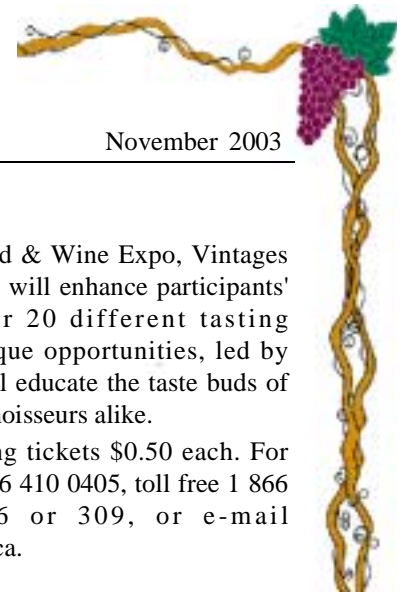
Since the Royal is all about communicating excellence in Canadian agriculture, it's only fitting that this year's edition of the country classic salutes our nation's wine producers. Wine grapes are, after all, an agricultural crop and Canada's winemakers, mainly Ontario-based, have garnered a slew of international awards in the last few years. That, plus the fact their product is enjoying steady growth within the market share of domestic wine purchases, makes the industry one of the greatest success stories in recent Canadian agricultural history.

An achievement of this magnitude deserves to be feted, and the Royal and its partners are doing it in style. Spread over 40,000 square feet in Heritage Hall, The Royal Vineyard will tickle the palate of every connoisseur, novice and serious alike, by featuring wine samplings and winemaking demonstrations, shops and boutiques, an interpretive centre, haute cuisine and a market. You'll find these attractions and more along pathways set amidst spectacular country gardens and vineyards.

Need a wine to complement tonight's planked salmon? Look no further than The Cooking Stage, where celebrity chefs from the finest eateries in Toronto and the Niagara Region will share their tricks of the trade, pairing Ontario VQA wines with upscale menus featuring produce from the region. The demonstrations are performed daily, and change hourly. If fine dining in luxurious surroundings is more what you're after, try the Vintner's Terrace. This 400-seat, upscale restaurant offers scrumptious fare, à la carte. It is popular and reservations are recommended. Call 416 263 3979.

Save time to explore the market with its country village feel. You'll find representatives from many of Ontario's tourism interests there. There are shops, too, and stands with wine-related products for purchase. At the wine-sampling counter, you can sip from among the finest VQA wines in the region for a small fee. Discover a new favourite? Make your next stop the on-site LCBO store and pick up a bottle or two for later.

Don't forget to visit the Museum of Wine, a self-educating exhibit, where displays depict the history and process of wine-making. And yes, those are living grapevines in the vineyard. Ontario's grape producers grew them especially for the fair. Don't miss it.



❖ Stratford Culinary Festival

Feast of Flavours

November 7 to 9

Renowned culinary masters prepare gourmet dinners and visitors can participate in workshops and tastings throughout this weekend event.

Cost: Visit the web site for package options. For more information, call 1 800 461 8500 or visit www.4seasonsstratford.com.

❖ 3rd Annual 'Taste the Season'

The Wineries (14) of Niagara-on-the-Lake

November 8,9 and 15,16, 11:00am to 5:00pm

Taste the Season is back by popular demand at the 14 Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake and it's the perfect opportunity to stock the cellar for holiday entertaining and support a good cause at the same time! Choose one of the two weekends and visit the wineries. Enjoy a wine and food delicacy at each stop and then discover great holiday gift selections, wines for your seasonal entertaining, and wines to cellar for enjoyment later. Passport holders who visit at least six wineries over the weekend will also receive a hand-blown glass ornament. Your touring passport helps support Second Harvest and its programs to help feed those who would otherwise go hungry.

Participating wineries are Chateau des Charmes, Hillebrand, Inniskillin, Jackson-Triggs, Joseph's, Konzelmann, Marynissen, Peller, Pillitteri, Reif, Stonechurch, Strewn, Lailey, and Sunnybrook Farm.

Passports are \$25 per person, inclusive. Call Second Harvest at 416 408 2594 for passport purchase.

❖ Toronto Gourmet Food & Wine Expo

November 20 to 23, Metro Toronto Convention Centre - South Building, 222 Bremner Blvd.

- Thursday, 20th, VIP evening, 6:00pm to 10:00pm
- Friday, 21, 2:00pm to 10:00pm
- Saturday, 22, 12:00pm to 10:00pm
- Sunday, 23, 12:00pm to 6:00pm

Returning for its 9th year in Toronto, the Gourmet Food & Wine Expo is Canada's biggest and best consumer food and wine show. This year, the Gourmet Food & Wine Expo welcomes France as its official theme country.

More than 30,000 attendees are expected to indulge in samples poured from a multitude of fine vintages and experience delicious creations by top chefs from dozens of the area's most desirable dining destinations. Guests are invited to participate in live stage demonstrations held concurrently during the

show.

During the Gourmet Food & Wine Expo, Vintages Tutored Tasting Program will enhance participants' wine savvy with over 20 different tasting experiences. These unique opportunities, led by notable wine experts, will educate the taste buds of wine enthusiasts and connoisseurs alike.

\$15 per person. Sampling tickets \$0.50 each. For more information, call 416 410 0405, toll free 1 866 414 0454, Ext. 306 or 309, or e-mail info@foodandwineshow.ca.

❖ Wine Aid

Vintages, the fine wine and premium spirits division of the LCBO, the Wine Council of Ontario, the Wine Importers of Ontario and the Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association are staging three gala events to aid the Ontario hospitality industry in its time of need. This is the second event.

A series of unprecedented calamities from September 11th to the blackout and SARS have severely damaged the economic viability of the hospitality sector. WINE AID is here to remind the world that Ontario's restaurants and hotels are open for business. Proceeds from the events will be donated to charitable organizations assisting hospitality workers in Ontario.

Vintners Quality Alliance Toasts Ontario

December 3, Fairmont Royal York Hotel, 100 Front Street West, 6:30pm to 9:00pm

A gala evening featuring exclusive VQA wines poured by winery principals and winemakers, paired with wonderful regional cuisine prepared by winery and Toronto restaurant chefs, all set in the elegant surroundings of the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. Wineries will select one signature varietal and pour an example of a fabulous vintage from the past, the current vintage, and a barrel sample for a future vintage.

\$75 per person. To order tickets call Vintages Customer Service at 416 365 5767 or toll free at 1 800 266 4764.

Ontario Wine Industry News

❖ Inniskillin Wins "Best Sweet Wine" Award at Vinexpo!

BORDEAUX, France, June 26, 2003 - The Canadian company that won Vinexpo's coveted "Grand Prix d'Honneur" award back in 1991, has now won another exceptional, top-ranking prize from the



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largest and most prestigious wine event in the world. The "Best Sweet Wine" award in Vinexpo's "Découvertes" competition was awarded to Canada's Inniskillin Wines at a special ceremony held yesterday. The award was presented by the exhibition's President, Jean-Marie Chadronnier.

Now in its second year, the "Découvertes" competition brings together the world's most respected sommeliers and wine writers to review all Vinexpo exhibitors' wines, and to pick their personal favourites in the "red," "white," and "sweet" wine categories.

Now in its twelfth year, and closing today, Vinexpo 2003 hosted 2,500 exhibitors from 40 countries, approximately 48,000 visitors and over 1,200 journalists. From their short list of 60 wines in all three categories, the "Découvertes" judges eventually picked their top three: the Tuscan Testamatta 2001, from Bibi Graetz, as the red; the Austrian Hornivogl-Gruner Veltiner-Smarragd 2002, from Franz Hiltzberger as the white; and, as the sweet, the Inniskillin Vidal Oak Aged Icewine 2002, VQA Niagara Peninsula, Canada.



Inniskillin's Donald Ziraldo (centre), accepts the "Best Sweet Wine" Award from Vinexpo's President, Jean-Marie Chadronnier (right).

"It is another extraordinary blessing that the judges chose our Icewine as one of the world's best at Vinexpo," enthused Donald Ziraldo. "We are honoured."

A product of Canada's cold winter, Canada's Icewine is made from grapes that are netted and left to freeze naturally on the vine. They are carefully picked by hand, only when the temperature drops to - 8°C (17.6°F) or colder. Inniskillin prefers to pick its Icewine grapes at -10°C (14°F). The frozen grapes are then pressed to release a highly concentrated nectar, rich in sugar, acids and flavour that represents only 5 to 10% of normal yield. Bottled in small, 375 ml

quantities (or less), Icewine is both rare and expensive, and has become a unique Canadian delicacy that is now exported around the world.

❖ Vineland Wins Provincial Business Award of Distinction for 2003

Vineland, ON – Vineland Estates Winery was honoured last night with a "2003 Award of Distinction" at the Ontario Chamber of Commerce's Outstanding Business Achievement Awards Gala Dinner at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Vineland Estates Winery's President and CEO, John Howard, accepted the award on behalf of the winery at this unique event to celebrate business excellence in the province of Ontario along with over 950 prominent business and political leaders.

This year, Vineland Estates Winery was selected for the award from more than 100 nominees, with businesses ranging from auto manufacturing to logistics. During the presentation of the award, it was noted that Vineland Estates Winery was the first Canadian winery to receive the top winery award at VinItaly in Verona, Italy this year and that this was a factor in the decision process for this award. Awards of Distinction were granted to businesses having established a solid reputation for maintaining the highest level of excellence. This has been a banner year for Vineland Estates Winery with the Grand VinItaly win and the winery's acclaimed restaurant earning a 4-Diamond Rating for AAA/CAA and Distinguished Restaurants of North America Listing. Other recipients of the Awards of Distinction included Siemens and Thunder Bay International Airport Authority Inc.

The award was presented to John Howard by Susan Houston, Chair of OCC along with David Gadsie, 1st Vice Chair, Ogilvy Renault and Premier Designate, Dalton McGuinty. This was the first major address for Mr. McGuinty to a business audience.