



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

October 2006

Upcoming Events

Toronto Chapter

Ontario vs. German Riesling

Tuesday, October 24, 2006

Reception: 6 p.m., Tasting: 6:30 p.m.

Ontario Club

At this year's Cuvée Expert Tasting, Riesling was the featured wine and was described as Ontario's potential "White Knight". Always the predominant grape in Germany, it is showcased in this, our first ever international comparison.

Ronald Fiorelli of the German Wine Information Bureau and the man who brings us the annual German Wine Fair has assembled the German wines. Anne Weiss Pennachetti, from a family of German wine producers and wife of Tom Pennachetti and who have 60 acres of vines in the Bench, 45 of which are Riesling, will be our guest speaker. Ron will give us an overview of the German wine regions. The wines selected for this tasting are dry and off dry (Trocken and Halb Trocken).

From Germany:

Kenderwan's 2004 Riesling Schiefer (Mosel)

St. Urbans-Hof 2005 Riesling QbA (Mosel)

St. Urbans-Hof Piesporter 2004 Riesling Kabinett (Mosel)

Gunderloch Jean Baptiste 2003 Riesling Kabinett (Rheinhessen)

2003 was the hottest and driest year in the last 140 resulting in extremely rich and fine wines.

From Ontario, our wines will be:

Cave Spring Reserve 2005 Riesling

Chateau des Charmes Estate 2005 Riesling

Flat Rock Cellars Nadja's Vineyard 2005 Riesling

Vineland Estates Winery St. Urban Vineyard 2004 Riesling

Members: \$34, Non-Members: \$42

Upcoming Events

Niagara Chapter

Annual Dinner

Friday, November 10, 2006

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

Hernder Estate Winery

This year's Annual Dinner will be held at Hernder Estate Winery. Set on a beautifully tailored property complete with pond, covered bridge and country barn, the breathtaking estate has been the setting for many bridal parties. Once we arrive, we will have the opportunity to sip on Hernder's sparkling Riesling as we relax and mingle before dinner.

Our guest speaker for the evening will be Walter Sendzik. After our main courses, Walter will speak to us on Opening The Wine Distribution System in Ontario and its impact on the local wine industry. Walter is a newly appointed Senior Executive of the St. Catharines Chamber of Commerce. His long list of credentials include founding and building Vines Magazine, co-writing Vines: The Buyer's Guide to Canadian Wines, being a past Chair and member of the board of the Niagara Grape & Wine Festival, and acting as Secretary of the Bi-National Tourism Alliance Board of Directors.

The menu for the evening will be:

Shrimp Cocktail Paired with Hernder Estate 2004 Chardonnay Sur Lies

Curried Carrot Soup Paired with Hernder Estate 2004 Autumn Collection Gewurztraminer

Angel Hair Pasta with Sun-dried Tomatoes & Goat Cheese Paired with Hernder Estate 2002 Chambourcin

Grilled Beef Tenderloin with a Morel, Merlot and Toasted Garlic Sauce with Herb Roasted Potatoes Paired with Hernder Estate 2004 Merlot

Grilled Peaches with Marscarpone Cheese Paired with Hernder Estate Iced Peach

Members: \$ 85, Non-Members: \$ 95



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Toronto Chapter

Ontario/BC Tasting Monday, Nov 27, 2006.
Cabernet Franc Horizontal Tuesday, Jan 23, 2007.
Ice Wine Weekend Saturday, Feb 3, 2007.
CCOVI Tuesday, Feb 20, 2007.
New Kids On the Block Tuesday, March 13, 2007.

Niagara Chapter

November 10 - Annual Dinner at Hernder Winery
December - TBA
January - Canadian Meritage and Bordeaux
February - Interactive Blending Tasting
March - Annual Social Event
April - Malivoire - Matching Wine and Food Tasting

Previous Meetings

Toronto Chapter

The Time and Date: Monday September 25, 2006 6 PM
The Event: Ontario Wine Society monthly tasting, this time a variety of red wines plus two whites at reception.
The Venue: Ontario Club, Commerce Court South.
The Target Audience: members, wine press, new consumers.

The Availability/Catalogue: Wine writer Ed Finstein led the tasting – we were told what the grapes were but not the specific label nor vintage. Nine VQA red wines were tasted, all under cork, three each from Reif Estate, Pelee Island Winery, and DeSousa Wine Cellars. Finstein spoke on some lengthy in-depth tasting notes. There were two reception wines, Reif Estate Late Harvest Gewurztraminer (terrific, with a slightly bitter finish, good concentrated body) and DeSousa Wine Cellars Semi-Dry Riesling (showing MVC Germanic character).

The Quote: “Fin is a really entertaining speaker: he should go on the road”.

The Wines: we had 7 wines with names plus 2 mystery wines...

*Reif Pinot Noir First Growth 2001, \$50 at the winery, 8 bottles left. My first choice for wine of the night, fragrant, quite attractive nose, off-dry, age showing nicely, good wood, still needs time to balance out, changed in the glass, earthy, not typical pinot but pinot nevertheless, French and US oak. I guessed it correctly: no brainer.

* Pelee Island Merlot 2005, \$9.50, tannic nose, aromatic berries, light sipper. I nailed it, also easy to do.

* Reif Shiraz 2004, \$16.95 Vintages, tannic, mild wood, seductive nose, light food wine. I missed it because it did not taste like shiraz nor syrah. There was no MVC.

* Pelee Island Baco Noir 2005, \$9.90, one of my top three wines, tight, taut nose, still closed, but elegant and long lasting, good bracing acid, smoke, some wood and rusticity, spicy. Finstein said some dill. I correctly identified this wine.

* DeSousa Marechal Foch 2004, \$9.95, some swampiness and vegetative character, not unpleasant, earthy, raisiny, black fruit, underbrush. I nailed this wine.

* Reif Cabernet Sauvignon 2002, \$23.95, caramel on the nose, slight heat, black cherries and cassis (much later), hot finish, mushrooms. I missed this, no initial MVC. 60% French oak, rest US.

* Mystery Wine #1: Reif Shiraz 2004, \$16.95 Vintages, same wine as above, light oaking, aromatic, quite pleasant nose, okay sipper or fooder. I missed this because it differed slightly from the wine above (bottle variation), had more pepper in it (and my table mate agreed). It was one of my top three wines (the other shiraz would have been wine #4). Still no MVC for shiraz or syrah. But my initial notes were closely related. Other than that, I had no excuses beyond this being 7:30 PM after two other wine tastings this day (see above).

* Pelee Island Cabernet Franc 2005, \$10.90, veggies nose, hot, leafy, bell peppers, instant MVC, needs time to open up. I nailed this wine.

* DeSousa Port 2002, \$22, another no brainer for a Mystery Wine, seeing as how DeSousa was in the mix. Sweet chocolate, vintage style port, from Touriga Nacional grapes.

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The Food: Ontario Club provided a range of club food (cheese, liverwurst, meatballs, deep fried veggies).

The Contact Person: tastings coming up involve an Ontario Riesling vs. German Riesling shootout, Icewine weekend, new wineries, trip to Niagara next June, et al. Check out www.ontariowinesociety.com, or OWSMarketing@sympatico.ca

The Effectiveness (numerical grade): 85.

News from the Vines

FRED COUCH

OWS – Niagara Chapter

Andres Wines Ltd. has changed its name to Andrew Peller Limited following this year's Annual General Meeting. This change is in honour of the Company's founder. The company was started in 1961 in Port Moody, British Columbia. In 1973 a facility was opened in Winona, Ontario with a bottle of the Company's market leading sparkling wine – BABY DUCK. In Ontario, Andrew Peller Limited owns Hillebrand Estates, Peller Estates, Thirty Bench Winemakers and Vineyards Estate Wine Stores. Another new winery in Niagara: 20 Bees Winery (Niagara Vintners Inc.) is run by a group of the region's finest grape growers. Collectively, the growers farm approximately 40 per cent of all premium vineyards in the Niagara area. A winery shop will open this fall. The winemakers are Sue-Ann Staff and Jordan Harris. Congratulations to this year's Grape King, Matthias Oppenlaender. Matthias is a business partner in Huebel Grapes Estates.

From the OWS Website

The Webmaster has added a new category to links called Wine Education. Check out these listings:

Global Wine Tour – www.globalwinetour.com

Colleen Rivard Home Advintage – www.homeadvintage.com.

Evan Saviolidis Wine Savvy Consultants – www.winesavvy.ca

Szabo and Szabo Drinks Trade Consultants – www.szaboandszabo.com.

Steve Thurlow – www.stevethurlow.com

Niagara Region winery added to the website – www.20bees.com.

Winery Events

Corporate Members

CAVE SPRING CELLARS

Crush 101

October 14-15, 21-22 & 28-29, 2006

Brix, pH, total acidity, racking...it all sounds complicated. In the midst of harvest learn the ABC's of how grapes are crushed and fermented into wine in a simple and easy to understand way.

Reservations Required 905-562-3581, ext. 302
11 a.m. and 2 p.m., \$15.00/person

EASTDELL ESTATES WINERY

Sunday Brunch with a VIEW

Every Sunday 10:30am & 12:30pm seatings

Enjoy our splendid setting and a hearty buffet of delicious brunch favourites including hot carving & omelet stations, salmon, sausages, bacon & eggs, fresh fruits, seasonal salads and homemade pies. \$21.95 p.p. Children under 12 are half price. Reservations recommended. Call (905) 563-9463 or theview@eastdell.com to reserve.

Date Night at The VIEW

Friday, October 20 - Seatings from 5pm

Part I of The VIEW monthly dining series. Each month brings a different themed meal for two. \$80 per couple for the meal or \$110 for the meal with suggested wine pairings. Reservations recommended. Call (905) 563-9463 or theview@eastdell.com to reserve.

Halloween Trolley Tours

Join our guide on a haunted ride through EastDell's vineyards with treats for the children and tastings for the adults. \$5 children under 12; \$8 for adults (includes 3 wine tastings). Call (905) 563-9463 or EDretail@eastdell.com to reserve.



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KACABA WINES

The first day of October was also the first day of the 2006 harvest here at Kacaba

Vineyards. We harvested several tons of Syrah.

Two days later we took off the Pinot Noir. The grapes are looking very good and I am looking forward to a great harvest and making some outstanding wines.

It's been a wet fall so far and this has caused problems in some vineyards, but Kacaba's vineyards have fared much better than most. Early vineyard management along with leaf pulling, crop thinning and hand picking has resulted in healthy vines and quality fruit. Now that the rain has stopped and the weather forecast is for sunny days and warmer temperatures, I am confident that 2006 is going to be a great year for Kacaba Vineyards.

It's always busy around the winery during harvest, but it's also an exciting time to visit and see us in action. You are always welcome to drop by and shake a grape-stained hand as well as taste some of our latest releases or the last of the 2002 Meritage. We are open every day from 10 am to 6 pm. I look forward to seeing you.

John Tummon

Winemaker and just great guy

LAKEVIEW CELLARS ESTATE WINERY

15th Anniversary Celebration

October 14, 2006

Guests of Lakeview Cellars are invited to visit the "Vintage Room" to taste fine wines from Lakeview's library paired with a complementing food sample. \$10p.p. Also available for tasting on October 14th: 15th Anniversary Syrah Reserve and a Limited Edition Cuvee Marin sparkling wine.

Call (905) 562-5685 x227 or email
LVretail@lakeviewcellars.ca to reserve.

MALIVOIRE WINE COMPANY

All in Good Taste

October 22 - 1 pm - 6 pm

Hernder Estates Winery,

1607 8th Ave, St. Catharines, ON

Come out for an afternoon of good food, wine and music in the beautiful St. Catharine's countryside. Join Malivoire and five other Niagara wineries, local restaurants, artisan's and others to support the Homes for Special Care (HSC) fundraising event.

The Homes for Special Care Program was established in 1964 to provide long-term and permanent residential care to persons discharged from Provincial Psychiatric Hospitals (PPH) who require supervision or assistance with activities of daily living. The program encourages community living by offering a housing alternative to institutional care.

Tickets, in the form of "passports", are \$25 per person. They can be purchased at the Malivoire winery or by calling Candace at 905-522-1155 ext 6619.

All proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to the Homes for Special Care Program.

PELLER ESTATESS

Taste the Season

Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake

November 11/12, 18/19 and 25/26

Purchase a passport for one of three weekends to enjoy a wine and food pairing at each of the 17 Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake AND discover great holiday gift selections, wines for your seasonal entertaining and wines to cellar for enjoyment later. Present your passport at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce at 26 Queen Street in the Historical Shopping District and receive your "Vintage 2006 Collectible Ornament" as a keepsake of your trip. Join us with your friends and plan to spend the weekend – relax, savour the delights the Wineries have in store for you and purchase some outstanding wines to take home!

Your touring passport also supports Second Harvest and its programs to help feed those who would otherwise go hungry.

Passports are \$40 and are available by calling Second Harvest at 416-408-2594. Passports and accommodation bookings are available online at www.niagaraonthelake.com.

REIF WINERY

Artisan Wine & Cheese Seminar 101

October 14, 2006 - 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m

Exclusive to Wine Club Members - Membership is Free

Join us for an evening of wine and cheese lead by resident Sommelier Carol LePage and Lori Elstone of Deluca's Cheesemarket and Deli to explore the cause and effect of pairing artisan cheeses with Reif Estate Wines.

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The tasting will include pairings of limited edition wines with artisan cheeses followed by a private book signing with Gurth Pretty author of *The Definitive Guide to Canadian Artisanal and Fine Cheese* where each guest will receive a copy of this fabulous new publication. Reservations required.

Cost: \$39.95 per person. Buy on-line www.reifwinery.com or Telephone 905-468-WINE or email events@reifwinery.com

STONE RIDGE WINERY

Winemakers Dinner

October 25th
Four Seasons Hotel Yorkville
6:30 - 10:00 pm \$125.00 per person

Murder Mystery Dinner in the Barrel Room

Halloween Costume event
October 28 - 6:00 – 10:00 pm
\$75.00 per person

Ottawa Wine and Food Show

Cellars of the World Wine Competition
November 3rd -5th
For reservations for any of the above events call toll free 1866 778 6639 x25 or 905 562 1324 x 25
Or e-mail store@stoneyridge.com

VINELAND ESTATES

Dining Adventure Series - Fall Fireworks

October 18, 2006
As nature's dance draws to a close the grand finale begins. This dining experience celebrates the culmination of our Niagara harvest. Both the vine and the field are in full glory, much to the delight of our Winemakers and Chefs. Join our celebrated Niagara growers as we enjoy with them, the fruits of their labour.

Starting at \$70 per person ++. Please call 888 846 3526 ext. 33 for reservations.

Wine Club members enjoy a discounted rate for all events in our series. To learn more about the benefits of membership, please call 1-888-846-3526 ext. 29 or e-mail to wineclub@vineland.com.

Other Winery Events

CALAMUS WINERY

Calamus Estate Winery, which began sales operations only this summer, announced today that six Ontario restaurants are now carrying Calamus wines.

Calamus wines are now available at:

On the Twenty (Jordan)
Jordan House (Jordan)
Zooma Zooma Café (Jordan)
Treadwell (Port Dalhousie)
Crush Wine Bar (King Street West, Toronto)
Artbar Creative Dining (Kitchener.)
The winemaking is in the talented hands of Arthur Harder who has extensive experience as winemaker in both the Niagara region and Europe.

FEATHERSTONE WINERY

Food Celebration: The Perfect Pear-ing

October 21/22 11:00 am - 4:00 pm \$3.00 per person
Honey-roasted pear salad with thyme verjus paired with cranberry wine. Does regional cuisine get any more authentic than this? Verjus (pronounced ver-ZHU) literally means 'green juice' and refers to the tart, fresh juice of unripe wine grapes. It is a mellow substitute for vinegar or lemon juice, and a delectable base for sauces and marinades- the perfect balance of sweet and tart. And, yes, we've got lots of recipes to help you enjoy your Featherstone verjus.

Wine Seminar: Harvest Happenings

October 21 at 11:00 a.m.
October 22 at 1:00 p.m.
Try your hand at harvesting grapes, taste the juice, and understand for yourself the magic of autumn in the vineyard. Winemaker Dave Johnson guides you through a day in the life of a winery at harvest with this up-close wine experience. Then meet Amadeus, the raptor who guards the grapes at Featherstone. Falconer and winery co-owner Louise Engel will talk about Amadeus' role in the vineyard as a deterrent to pest birds.

\$10.00 per person, max 15 people per session. Please call ahead to reserve: 905-562-1949



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Holiday Open House

November 25/26 11:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.

Each year as the holiday season approaches, the folks at Featherstone pull out all the stops to make their Open House an event to remember.

Newly released wines are poured by the winemaker and matched with house specialties —like blue cheese shortbread, mushroom-ricotta tartlets, walnut-cranberry stuffed brie laced with Fabiana's pepper-berry blast, marinated olives and seasoned nuts. We also create gift baskets that make beautiful presents (hint, hint). The neighbouring wineries and merchants of the Twenty Valley Tourism Association all hold their Holiday Open House the same weekend, so plan on making a day of it.

STRATUS WINES

Auberge du Pommier@stratus

October 21

Chef Jason Bangerter from Auberge du Pommier, one of Canada's foremost restaurants, together with celebrated Winemaker J-L Groux, reveal 'the future of traditions'. These two masters approach their crafts with a classical yet contemporary focus. Indulge your palate at this exceptional Winemaker's dinner.

Evening Dégustation Menu 6:30 p.m.

\$150.00 per person

Auberge and Stratus Afternoon Flight

Canapés paired with signature wines - 1:00 p.m.

\$35.00 per person

KAWARTHA COUNTRY WINES

www.kawarthacountrywines.ca

Wine and Cheese tasting event

October 21- starting at 4:00 p.m.

\$20 pp Call to reserve 705 657 9916

Christmas in the Valley - Winery Touring Passport

November 25

Niagara's Twenty Valley

The Wineries of Niagara's Twenty Valley welcome you to join them this festive season! The purchase of a \$20 passport (available at participating wineries) provides you with free tastings and access to individual special events. Your passport also includes four, collectable, stone tile coasters, branded with each winery you visit. Start a new tradition this year and experience Christmas in the Valley!

Contact Twenty Valley Tourism Association

Email: info@20valley.ca 905-562-3636

Wine Related Events

Introduction to Wine Tasting

Learn how to get more out of wine !

1st Series November 14,21,28

2nd Series December 6,13,20

\$65 ~ Single Class or \$180 ~ Series of 3 Classes

All classes are taught by leading sommeliers including John Szabo MS and Zoltan Szabo.

For more information please visit www.thecva.ca

Advance ticket sales only. Purchase on line

www.thecva.ca by email info@thecva.ca or call 416 654 9695.

Location: Fine Wine Reserve, 439 King Street West, LOWER LEVEL

CCOVI ANNOUNCEMENT

Our Graduate Student Takes Top Spot at Sommelier Graduation

The Ontario Hostelry Institute (OHI) and the Canadian Association of Professional Sommeliers (CAPS) announced that AMY BOWEN (Ph.D candidate at Brock University in Dr. Andy Reynolds lab) and STEVE

McADAM have won the Niagara and Toronto Region Awards, respectively, by achieving the highest cumulative average scores while successfully completing all components of the CAPS program. This includes the successful completion of each of the six academic modules, the final certification examination and the required 30 hour stage/work experience.

Each Award is valued at \$3,500.

Amy decided to take the CAPS sommelier program to round out her wine education. Through her studies at Brock she was learning the science of wine making but also wanted to learn more about the finished product, how to serve it and how the profile of wine varies throughout the regions of the world. "The sommelier course allowed me to develop my palate, hone my service skills and increase my knowledge of grape varieties and wine styles outside of Ontario."

"Amy has done well to broaden her wine knowledge and continues to bring honours upon herself, Brock University and CCOVI. We are all very proud of Amy and her accomplishments," commented Dr. Isabelle Lesschaeve, Director of CCOVI.



ASTHMA SOCIETY OF CANADA

Essentia Gala

The Asthma Society of Canada (ASC) would like to invite you to its third annual Essentia gala event which will take place on Wednesday, October 25, 2006 at the newly opened and highly acclaimed Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts.

Event highlights include:

Special Guest Speaker, Robert Kennedy Jr. "A Contract with Our Future"

Delicious cuisine prepared by: By Davids'; one of the finest catering companies of Canada. Their Executive Chefs will marry their exotic cuisine with different wines from around the world.

Exclusive wine tasting experience from five wine regions: Italy, France, New Zealand, California and Niagara

Christie's Auction House will perform a Live Auction.

During this event the ASC will launch its program Breathe Free Canada through the speech of Mr. Robert Kennedy Junior. In June of 2006, the Asthma Society of Canada completed a new research initiative that clearly demonstrates how polluted air negatively impacts on the respiratory health of Canadians. The Breathe Freely in Canada report outlines the scientific connection between air pollution and increased respiratory exacerbations for Canadians afflicted with asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. In response to the report findings, the Asthma Society of Canada has launched a social marketing program called Breathe Free Canada.

Breathe Free Canada will support organizations that have taken concrete action in implementing operational processes that demonstrate a clear reduction in air pollutants. The Asthma Society of Canada will officially champion Canadian firms that are able to demonstrate that their environmental initiatives are allowing Canadians to breathe cleaner air!

All proceeds from Essentia will be used to support the operating cost of our Clean Air Programming. Admission is \$250/person (\$150 tax receipt); party of 10 is \$2,000 (\$1,000 tax receipt). To purchase tickets you can contact me at 416-787-4050 ext 105 or e-mail essentia@asthma.ca.

Lawrason On Wine

Ontario Pinot Noir with Your Turkey

Posted on September 25, 2006

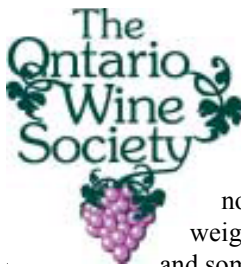
Reprinted with permission from www.torontolife.com. See David Lawrason's BLOG for more wine reading.

If Thanksgiving is about celebrating local bounty, and you like cranberry with your bird, then there is only one wine choice for your holiday table—Ontario VQA pinot noir. This light red just loves poultry and is morphing into a specialty of our cool climate, with a number of promising pinots emerging, most since the 2002 vintage. New names like Flat Rock Cellars, Tawse Estate, and Coyote's Run of Niagara, plus Norman Hardie, Rosehall Run and Long Dog of Prince Edward County are leading the way—although often, with limited production, the wines are found only at the wineries themselves. We eagerly await the debut of new pinots from Le Clos Jordanne, the Niagara-based joint venture between Boisset of Burgundy and Vincor. On October 17, the local media gets to taste the range and I will duly report on that at the time.

The Burgundy-Niagara comparison is spot on because our latitude and growing conditions are very similar, including the currently humid August-September conditions that give growers fits. Pinot's tight, pine cone-shaped bunches (pineau in French) rot easily in a wet environment. The wines are similar too although few of our pinots have yet developed the vine age, viticultural traditions and specific siting of Burgundy's best "crus." But Ontario pinot has more in common with Burgundy than it does with other pinot hot spots like Oregon, New Zealand or California. This is not a quality judgment, but a stylistic commentary.

The dominant flavour of Ontario pinot noir is of sour, sometimes bitter red fruit—cranberry, pomegranate, red currant, raspberry and sour cherry are common descriptors, some with a beetroot earthiness. With these fruits come firm, sometimes tart acidity. Pinot works beautifully to foil the richness of turkey, Cornish hen, quail, etc. while providing contrasting flavours, especially if herbal, spicy dressing is added to the mix. Before serving it will help to decant and aerate young Ontario pinot for an hour or two, and serve it just a touch cool. Here are some more readily available examples in ascending price order, and where to find them.

Chateau des Charmes 2004 Pinot Noir **1/2 (\$12.95 LCBO)



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Quite floral, raspberry, lightly spicy nose is pretty if simple. Light to mid-weight pinot with tart acidity, earthy notes and some green tannin. Moderate to good length.

East Dell 2005 Pinot Noir **1/2 (\$14.95, LCBO)

Earthy, burlap note crowds ripe raspberry, floral flavours. Light to medium bodied, with an even, fruity middle then a tart, dry finish. Good length.

Cave Spring 2004 Pinot Noir *** (\$15.95 LCBO)

Light, correct pinot with pale ruby-garnet colour. Spicy, peppery, dill, cran-raspberry fruit and background clove spice from new oak. Light to mid-weight, with a dusty tannic finish. Best now to 2008.

Inniskillin 2004 Pinot Noir Reserve ***1/2 (\$16.80, LCBO)

Nicely balanced, youthful, classy pinot noir with ripe strawberry-cherry fruit layered amid vanilla, wood smoke and earthy notes. Light to medium bodied, gentle with firm dusty tannin. Good length. Best 2008 to 2010.

Henry of Pelham 2004 Pinot Noir ***1/2 (\$16.90, LCBO)

More weight, grip and complexity than other 2004s. Spicy cran-raspberry fruit with pine, leather and wood smoke. Mid-weight, firm and balanced with a dry finish. Very good length. Now to 2009.

Flat Rock 2004 Pinot Noir *** (\$19.95, Vintages)

Now starting to mature a bit, this is light, crisp pinot with cran-cherry fruit, earth, spice and wood smoke. Lively taut, sweet and sour palate with a slightly bitter finish. Very good length, with clove spice and raspberry fruit.

Flat Rock 2004 Gravity Pinot Noir ***1/2 (\$29.95, Vintages)

Lifted red currant-cranberry fruit with cinnamon stick, light smoke and some floral character. Quite supple, charming, mid-weight palate with some baby fat. Rootsy slightly earthy finish. Fine tannin although some bitterness. Best 2007 to 2010.

Henry of Pelham 2002 Speck Family Reserve **** (\$40, www.winerytohome.com) Heading into garnet-brick maturity. The nose shows generous cran-cherry fruit with smoky, dusty wood, earthy and pine forest scents. Some bitterness on the finish will recede with the tannin. Best 2007 to 2010. Last tasted in 2005.

Harvest with Henry

GLEN C. SIEGEL

On September 11, 2006 Henry of Pelham once again held their "Harvest With Henry". This is the dude ranch approach to wine production. We started at 930 with coffee croissants and danish.

Around 9:45, Daniel Speck explained that we would be picking some of the Chardonnay for their sparkling wine. It's picked early to preserve the acidity and before the sugar levels rise so the wine is fresh and crisp. The "crew" sauntered out through the vineyards to our picking location where we met up the Paul and Matthew who guided our efforts.

After a strenuous hour of picking, and eating, in the sunshine, we ambled back to the crusher where we watched some of the Pinot Noir that was picked the previous day being crushed. Then it was off to lunch – starched white table



Chardonnay

clothes, cutlery, stemware. After the lengthy lunch of grilled sandwiches washed down with the excellent HoP Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, we assembled in the

ballroom which is upstairs in the old house.

We tasted our way through a vertical tasting of 8 Reserve Pinot Noirs from 1998 to 2005. We also tasted the 2002 Speck Family Reserve Pinot Noir. Most of these were available from the



Some of the crew

Wine Library to reward the workers for their labours. Many of us were disappointed that the outstanding 1998 was not available.

I don't understand why my wife always told me that grape picking was hard work. I think I could spend a month working like this!!