



# Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

May 2005

## Upcoming Events

### Toronto Chapter

**Erie North Shore Tour** June 11/12, 2005

This event is a **GO!!!** There are still a few seats left so contact Gerry Arbus if you want to go on this trip. See the last Newsletter or the web site for details.

<http://www.ontariowinesociety.com/>

**The Estates of Vincor** June 14, 2005

**All Ontario Wine Award Winners** June 16, 2005

### Niagara Chapter

**Double Horizontal Sauvignon Blanc Tasting at Stonechurch Vineyards**

Tuesday, May 17, 2005

Gooseberries?? Grass?? Cat Pee?!? What better wine for spring than the fresh flavours of a Sauvignon Blanc; a wine capable of an extraordinary range of styles.

Fortunately for Niagara, it is a grape whose best features and crisp acidity really only develop in cool climate growing regions. Join us as we discover the complexities of this noble grape while tasting samples from both the 2003 and 2004 vintages. Our guest speaker, Linda Bramble, will lead us through this tasting.

**Matching Wine and Cheese Tasting** - June

**Amateur Winemakers Night** - July

**Annual BBQ Event** - How to Properly Taste Wines - August

## Recent OWS Events

### Toronto Chapter Annual Dinner

**DEAN TUDOR**

MAY 3, 2005

The Ontario Wine Society celebrated its Annual Dinner at 1055 Restaurant (1055 Yonge Street), now chefred and owned by Brian Vallipuram who specializes in spicy Fusion food (he was formerly at Axxcess, North 44, and Oliver's Bistro). The dinner was, of course, sold out.

The wines served were from Kacaba Vineyards, owned by Michael and Jo-Anne Kacaba. It is on the Niagara Escarpment Bench in Vineland. Currently, Kacaba produces about 5,000 cases. Their goal is about 10 - 12,000 cases of premium wines, mostly developed from sustainable agriculture principles. They only farm red grapes in their own vineyards. All the white grapes are

sourced from elsewhere in Niagara, with long term contracts given to growers. Beth Mischuk, one of Jim Warren's graduate NCT students, is striving for more-fruit driven wines.

The reception was called for at 6:30, but there was no room to mingle and mill about. OWS members and their guests were immediately seated with hors d'oeuvre and Kacaba Oaked Chardonnay 2000. We had a mini walnut and sweet potato ravioli with fried sage and caramelized onions, and a tartish scallop ceviche on daikon radish. Both went well with the Oaked Chardonnay 2000 (voluptuous, fruit-driven, nicely aged, \$22 at the winery).

Mike Kacaba popped up between courses to talk about his winery, wine styles, and to tell us about the particular wine in our glass at the moment. Of course, he answered questions and parried comments. The appetizer was terrific, one of the best that I have ever been served: goat cheese with cinnamon roasted apples, roasted sweet red peppers, pecans, and a honey-truffle vinaigrette, greens and Belgian endive. All the flavours merged with a spicy-herb consistency, greatly buttressed by the Riesling 2004 (full, firm, good acidity, price not available) which competed for our attention with the aromatic truffle flavouring.

The first course was an aromatic kingfish with South Asian flavours, Masala dosai, and Gamay pomegranate butter sauce. It was served on a crepe, all the better to absorb the pungent flavours. It was accompanied by the Gamay Noir 2002, which had lost of acid and extract and fruit (sold out); its plumminess went well with the fish. But so did the Riesling, which I retried. The main course was pan-seared New Zealand lamb loin served with red beet mashed potatoes, Japanese eggplant terrine and a Cabernet Franc reduction. It was a spicy dish. The Kacaba Cabernet Franc Reserve 2002 (very cabby, full of extract, lots of flavour developing on the mid-palate, with a dynamite explosive finish, \$35) held up well initially but eventually it was overpowered by the food. The Gamay Noir did a good job here when I re-tasted it. For dessert, there was a stunning housemade banana strudel with a warm caramel sauce and rum-raisin ice cream, accompanied by Jennifer Jades Gewurztraminer Icewine (\$30 for 200 mL), luscious with full gewürztraminer flavours, almost an Alsatian SGN. And everybody seemed to be having a wonderful, wonderful time, with plenty of dinner conversations and scarfing down of food.

For more details about the Ontario Wine Society, check out [www.ontariowinesociety.com](http://www.ontariowinesociety.com).

As a quality wine and food event, this rates a 9.



# Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

May 2005

## Niagara Chapter

### Canadian Wine Library Tasting

Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute  
at Brock University

**YVONNE HALLIDAY**

**April 21, 2005**

*What makes a wine ageable? Which varietals are best suited to aging? How do you know how long to age that great bottle of wine you just purchased?* There are a million questions surrounding the ageability of wine and even more uncertainty. We accessed one of Canada's best wine resources to try to uncover the answers to these and more questions.

Our evening began with a comparative tasting of two sparkling wines; one from 1995, and the other a non-vintage bottled prior to 1998. It surprised a number of us how well these sparkling wines actually aged, contrary to what you might normally expect. After a quick Annual General Meeting,

CCOVI Director **Isabelle Lesschaevre** treated us to a tour of the *Canadian Wine Library* Cellar.

Guest speaker **Peter Gamble** (independent wine consultant and Director to the Canadian Wine Library) then guided us through this tasting of specially selected 1994 and 1995 vintage whites and reds from the *Canadian Wine Library* – CWL - (some of their earliest vintages).

Established in 1996, CCOVI is a facility within Brock University dedicated to research in Oenology and Viticulture in cool climate regions and is the only university degree program of its kind in North America. Housed at CCOVI, the CWL is a library of Canadian wines judged ageable by the Directors, and reserved for use by the industry for promotional, research and educational purposes.

Of the 7 wines tasted, some showed better than others, but the two stars for the evening were the **1995 Reserve Blend** from *Thirty Bench Winery* and the **1995 Riesling** from *Lakeview Cellars Est. Winery*. Because the purpose of the Canadian Wine Library is for research in ageability of Canadian wines, we were required to submit our evaluation sheets, to contribute to the overall statistics of the Cellar; an opportunity that is truly an honour.



*Peter Gamble and  
Isabelle Lesschaevre*

We'd like to thank CCOVI and Brock University for granting us access to the Canadian Wine Library, and to Barbara Tatarnic for her assistance in planning the tasting. Thanks to **Peter Gamble** for leading the tasting and to Isabelle Lesschaevre for the tour. Thanks also go to *Sodexo* for preparing the food.



*CCOVI Wines*

*Photographs by Yvonne Halliday*

## Archibald Orchards & Estate Winery

<http://www.archibalds-estatewinery.on.ca/>

### Food, Wine & Jazz

Saturday, May 28 - noon - 5 p.m.

An afternoon of food, wine & jazz music with 8 wineries are matched with local chefs who serve up wonderful regional cuisine. This is a fund-raiser for the **Big Brothers & Sisters of Clarington**.

\$8.00 in advance & \$10.00 at the door. Tasting Tickets are \$1.00.

905-263-2396

## Cave Spring Vineyard

<http://www.cavespringcellars.com/>

### White Wine Fever

May 7, 14, 21 & 28 - 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Nothing is more enticing than the aroma of a young white wine just off the bottling line. Taste our newest releases of Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris, and Gewürztraminer from the '04 vintage.

\$12.00/person

Reservations Required - 905-562-3581, ext. 302

### Walking the Vine

June 4, 11, 18 & 25 - 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Nestled on the Niagara Escarpment overlooking Lake Ontario, Cave Spring Vineyard is a spectacular place to learn about grape vines. A guided tour followed by a tasting in our cellars.

\$12.00\*/person (\*Free to Niagara New Vintage Festival Passport holders.)

Reservations Required - 905-562-3581, ext. 302

# Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

May 2005



## New Vintage Wine Dinner

June 8, 2005

Join winemaker Angelo Pavan and chef Kevin Maniaci for a multi-course dinner celebrating Niagara's New Vintage Wine Festival.

Call 1-800-701-8074 for details and reservations.

## Château des Charmes

<http://www.chateaudescharmes.com/>

### Connoisseur Series

Join us for a series of in-depth seminars and tastings for those as passionate about wines as we are. **Thursdays and Sundays at 2pm.** Space is limited to the first 12 people. Reservations required.

### May: Rare and Pioneering Varieties

Explore how rare varieties from around the world thrive in Niagara. Learn about how Canada's first home-grown vinifera vine was propagated on the St. David's Bench Vineyard.

### Mother's Day Luncheon

Gather your family, and join ours, for a champagne toast to Mothers! Our winery matriarch, Madame Andrée Bosc, welcomes you to raise a glass this Mother's Day to celebrate the matriarch in all our families. An exquisite brunch featuring the award-winning wines of Château des Charmes, paired alongside the four-diamond cuisine of The Pillar & Post, promises to delight our special guests this Sunday. This Mother's Day celebration will also feature the preview of our 2004 Rosé, 'Cuvée d'Andrée'.

Sunday, May 8 11:30 am

\$60 Adults % \$35 Youths % \$20 Children

Plus taxes and gratuity. Reservations required.

For more information and to make reservations please call 905-262-4219.

## Creekside Estate Winery

<http://www.creeksideestatewinery.com/>

### Meet the Artists

May 14 & 15 -12 to 5 pm

Enjoy wine country ambience at Creekside Estate Winery. This weekend only, Creekside will be showcasing the talents of local Niagara artists in our underground barrel room and retail store. The artists will be on hand to discuss their works and select pieces will be available for purchase. In addition, Creekside will be hosting a tasting of our award winning wins paired with complementary hors d'oeuvres throughout the day.

Admission is free with proceeds going to VON.

## Seafood & Sauvignon Blanc

May 21, 22, 23 & May 28, 29, 30 -12 to 4 pm

This signature Creekside event is back by popular demand. Enjoy east-coast style steamed mussels paired with Creekside's award winning Sauvignon Blanc, a perfect match.

\$8 per person.

## Creekside Cheese and Wine Experience

June 4 to June 12 -10 am to 6 pm

In celebration of Niagara New Vintage Festival, Creekside launches wine and artisan cheese pairing flights. Be among the first to taste our new vintages of Pinot Grigio and Shiraz. These wines will be paired with a complimenting selection of Canadian artisan cheeses.

\$5 for non-passport holders. Complementary to passport holders.

## Taste with the Winemaker

June 18 & 19 - 12 to 4 pm

Learn some of the secrets to producing some of Niagara's most acclaimed wines. The Creekside winemaking team will be on hand to discuss their craft as you sample their efforts in the ambient surroundings of our underground barrel cellar. This is a unique opportunity not to be missed!

\$5 per person.

## Colio Estates

<http://www.colio.com/>

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Colio Car Classic

June 18

Antique and Classic Cars. A great way to celebrate the day before Father's Day. Free Tours of the winery, Hot food available for purchase by the local Rotary Club. People's choice awarded to the Best Car.

Tours and Admission FREE.

## Coyote's Run Estate Winery

<http://www.coyotesrunwinery.com/index.htm>

### Herb & Wine Passport

Weekends in May - 10am - 6pm

Come to Niagara-on-the-Lake and celebrate spring. Purchase a passport visit any of the 16 participating Niagara-on-the-Lake wineries for a different food and wine pairing. Each winery will present a different herb expertly matched with their featured wine. Visit Coyote's Run to sample Roasted Red Pepper Bruschetta with Italian Parsley paired with our 2003 Cabernet Franc. For



# Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

May 2005

more details, ticket information and other food/wine pairings go to

[www.wineriesofniagaraonthelake.com](http://www.wineriesofniagaraonthelake.com)

Cost \$20 for the passport, good for all weekends in May.

## New Vintage Niagara

June 4 - 12 - 10am - 6pm

Niagara's premier spring wine event. Purchase your touring passport and enjoy food and wine events at all participating wineries. Visit Coyote's Run Estate Winery for a sumptuous sample of grilled Ontario Pork paired with our 2004 Riesling.

\$2 for passport holders, \$3 for non-passport holders.

## EastDell Estates

<http://www.eastdell.com/>

### May 8 - Mother's Day Brunch

Let us do the cooking today! Mom can relax and enjoy the rustic charm of EastDell Estates' rolling vineyards and spectacular view while enjoying a celebration buffet brunch. Special gift for moms. Three seatings: 10 a.m. enjoy a discounted rate of \$18.95 p.p. Seatings at 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. are the celebration rate of \$23.95 p.p, \$12.95 p.p. for children under 12. Call (905) 563-9463 to reserve.

### June 19 - Father's Day Brunch

Bring Dad back to nature! Let Dad enjoy the rustic charm of EastDell Estates' rolling vineyards and spectacular view while enjoying a celebration buffet brunch. Special gift for dads. Three seatings: 10 a.m. enjoy a discounted rate of \$18.95 p.p. Seatings at 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. are the celebration rate of \$23.95 p.p, \$12.95 p.p. for children under 12. Call (905) 563-9463 to reserve.

## Fielding Estate Winery

<http://www.fieldingwines.com/>

### New Winery Takes "Flight" with New Vintages!

June 4 - 12 - 11:00 am - 5:30 pm

Come celebrate the opening of our new winery! Enjoy an exclusive "flight" of our winemaker, Andrzej Lipinski's, 3 favorite New Vintage wines - and discover your new favorites!

Complimentary with presentation of Niagara New Vintage Gala Wine Tasting Ticket or Passport or \$8.00 fee for non-passport holders

905-563-0668 or members can email us at [contact@fieldingwines.com](mailto:contact@fieldingwines.com).

## Inniskillin Wines

<http://www.inniskillin.com/index.asp>

### May's Magical Merlots

Runs throughout the month

What does Single Vineyard mean? Here is your chance to find out. Inniskillin's Sip and Savour bar is offering a horizontal tasting of its 2002 Merlots. You will taste the difference a Niagara VQA Merlot has to one of our Single (Cru) vineyard Montague Merlot's along side a cheese tasting. What better way to enjoy a May afternoon?

\$8.00 per person

## Lailey Vineyard

<http://www.laileyvineyard.com/>

### Spring Open House

Saturday May 28

\* Reservations are required. There is no charge to attend. Guests will experience a series of guided wine tastings at select locations in the winery and in the vineyard. New releases of wines will be paired with local specialty foods. Please call the winery @ 905-468-0503 or email [tonya.lailey@laileyvineyard.com](mailto:tonya.lailey@laileyvineyard.com) - with your requested visiting time. reservation times are subject to availability.

Reservation Times: 10:30 / 11:00 / 11:30 / 12:00 / 12:20 / 1:00 / 1:30 2:00 / 2:20 / 2:40 / 3:20 / 3:40 / 4:00 / 4:20 / 4:40

New releases to be featured

2004 Vidal Off-Dry

2004 Unoaked Chardonnay

2003 Chambourcin

2003 Cabernet Sauvignon Canadian Oak in half bottles

2003 Cabernet Franc Canadian Oak in half bottles

And a re-release...

2000 Cabernet Sauvignon - from our very first vintage as a winery

## Malivoire Wine Company

<http://www.malivoirewineco.com/>

### The Wines of Spring

What better way to shake off the winter doldrums than with three new wine releases from Malivoire - a red, white and pink for Spring! These wines will have you thinking warm weather, barbecues, picnics and casual dining. Releases include: Pinot Gris Estate Bottled 2004, Ladybug Rosé 2004 and Courtney Gamay 2003.



## Stonechurch

<http://www.stonechurch.com/>

### The Stonechurch Herb & Wine Experience

May 7 & 8, 14 & 15

Celebrate spring with our Herb Market where you can purchase fresh herbs for planting and discover how fresh herbs enhance the enjoyment of wine. On Saturdays, Chef Oscar Turchi will conduct a pesto demonstration at 1 & 3pm. As one of the participating "Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake" Herb Fest, Stonechurch will be featuring the first release by our new winemaker, Terence van Rooyen - the 2004 Sauvignon Blanc. Guests can also taste our delectable herb & wine dips, herbed mustards, and other herbed foods for purchase. By the way, if your name is Herb, the Sauvignon Blanc tasting is on us!

### Thirty Bench Vineyard and Winery

<http://www.thirtybench.com/>

#### Yoga in the Vineyard

June 11 - 10:00am – approx. 2:00pm

Weather permitting - Reservations required

Enjoy the tranquil setting of the vineyard while experiencing the joys of nature, as instructor Jesse guides you through Hatha Yoga. Following the class, Chef Ryan Shapiro has prepared a seasonal three-course luncheon, paired with a selection of our wines. Dress in appropriate apparel. Beginners to advanced.

\$60.00/person (taxes included)

905-563-1698

## Willow Heights

<http://www.willowheightswinery.com/>

### Uncork Spring in Wine Country - Annual Spring Open House

May 21 – 23 - 11:00am – 5:30pm

New releases include 2004 Gewurztraminer VQA, 2004 Riesling Reserve VQA, 2004 Riesling VQA, 2004 Gamay VQA, 2003 Merlot, 2003 Cabernet Franc, and 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon.

Join us in welcoming Spring and the seasonal opening of our Patio Wine Bar, weather permitting. Save on our annual "Bin End Sale" A perfect opportunity to stock up on wines for the BBQ and new giftware for the summer season.

What better way to commence the summer season; good wine...good food...and good friends!

905-562-4945

## Saab Vine Dining

<http://www.theatreaquarius.org/>

Sunday June 19, 2005

What better way to spend a summer's day than strolling lazily through a vineyard, along with happy groups of connoisseurs of fine food and wine. As they stroll, they sample brilliant creations prepared by some of the most talented chefs from the area's best restaurants, complemented by delectable wines from our fabulous Niagara Peninsula wineries.

"Vine Dining is the summertime reflection of Cuvee, an unsurpassed walking gourmet picnic that takes guests through the picturesque vineyards and woods at Vineland Estates Winery overlooking Vineland. Leading chefs and caterers set up kitchens along the route and work hard to outdo each other with their creations, and are interspersed among wineries once again offer samples of their best stuff. The date is Sunday, June 19, 2005 rain or shine. Tickets are \$125. each (with a tax deductible portion of \$75) and can be purchased by calling the box office at 905.522-7529".

- Dan Kislenko The Hamilton Spectator

Don't miss your chance to win a two night stay for two at the Lake Okanagan Resort, Kelowna B.C. and return flight for two from Westjet.

#### 2005 Restaurant Participants

The Bench Bistro  
Castlefield Fine Wine & Liqueur Jellies  
Chef & Wife Catering  
Faloney's of Ancaster  
Fortinos Coffees  
Good Vibrations  
La Dolce Vita  
Las Aguas  
Las Cascata  
Liaison College  
Vineland Estates Winery Restaurant  
Papagayo  
Paradiso  
Pearl Street Cafe  
Pepperwood Bistro & Rosewood Bistro  
Sole Mar  
Stone Road grill  
Room 41  
Terroir La Cachette  
The Catered Claw  
The Portable Feast Cafe  
The Potters Cafe  
Turtle Jacks Grill House  
Water St. Cooker



# Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

May 2005

## 2005 Winery Participants

Angels Gate Winery  
Birchwood Estate Winery  
Coyote's Run Winery  
Colio Estate Wines  
Cilento Wines  
Creekside Estate Winery  
Eastdell  
Harbour Estates Winery  
Hernder Estate Wines  
Jackson-Triggs Niagara Estate  
Joseph's Estates Wines  
Kacaba Winery  
Kittling Ridge Estate Wines & Spirits  
Konzelmann Winery & Vineyards  
Legends Estates Winery  
Malivoire Wine  
Palatine Hills Estate Winery  
Reif Estate Winery  
Stonechurch Vineyards  
Strewn Winery  
Thomas & Vaughan Winery  
Willow Heights Winery  
Vineland Estates Winery

## Ontario Wine Awards

### Consumer Tasting - 10th Anniversary

Thursday, June 16, 2005 - 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm

#### Where:

The Distillery District  
The Stone Distillery, Building #6  
Fermenting Cellar  
(1st parking entrance south of Mill Street off of  
Parliament)  
55 Mill Street, Toronto

#### Tickets:

\$45 plus GST prior to May 20

\$50 plus GST thereafter

To purchase your ticket(s) to this exciting event, contact  
Sandy Kurbis at 416-398-3335 Ext. 2, or by email at  
[tickets@forefrontcom.com](mailto:tickets@forefrontcom.com)

Complimentary shuttle between The Distillery and Union  
Station available from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm – sponsored  
by Niagara Airbus.

This year, hundreds of Toronto wine lovers will  
experience first-hand the best VQA wines that Ontario has  
to offer. You'll also have the opportunity to meet the  
award-winning winery principals.

## “MONDOVINO”

THINKFILM's Release of “MONDOVINO”  
sure to cause a stir!

Controversial film opens theatrically in Toronto on May  
27 and in Ottawa on June 10.

For thousands of years, wine has been a symbol of  
Western civilization, but never has the fight for its soul  
been as desperate and defining as it is today. Never has so  
much pride and money been at stake. And, never have the  
battle lines been so clearly drawn between old world and  
new, between simple farmers and billionaires, and  
between artisanal styles of wine production and  
multinational mass production. With wine widely  
available at local supermarkets throughout the world, one  
can argue that a greater number of consumers have a  
greater taste for wine than ever before. What that wine  
tastes like is another matter...

A thought-provoking film about wine and wine culture,  
MONDOVINO was filmed by award-winning director  
and sometime sommelier, Jonathan Nossiter. Filmed in  
five languages over a three-year period, the documentary  
features interviews with Michel Rolland, Robert Parker,  
Hubert de Montille, Aime Guibert, Neal Rosenthal and  
members of the Mondavi family. Juxtaposing mom-and-  
pop wine growers with conglomerates, Nossiter  
intertwines multiple family dramas - some of which play  
like soap operas - and uncovers a complex tapestry of  
conflicts, conspiracies, and alliances that all stem from  
the production, distribution and consumption of one of  
the oldest remaining and most respected luxuries.

## JACKSON-TRIGGS

STEVEN PAGE Performs as the Grand Finale  
for the 2005 Amphitheatre Season.

Jackson-Triggs Niagara Estate Winery is thrilled to  
announce that on Saturday, September 3rd, 2005, it will  
be presenting “**Steven Page - Solo and Acoustic**” as the  
season-closer for this year's performing arts programme  
at its stunning open-air amphitheatre - just minutes from  
the centre of picturesque Niagara-on-the-Lake.

As a surprise addition to this year's “**Twilight in the  
Vineyard**” summer season, music lovers will be able to  
get up close and personal with one of Canada's most  
respected and recognized singer-songwriters, who will be  
performing songs from his soon-to-be-released solo  
album, *The Vanity Project*, as well as favourites from the  
**Barenaked Ladies**, all, as he puts it, “unplugged and  
interactive.”

# Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

May 2005



As one of the co-founders of the Barenaked Ladies, Steven Page has been honoured for numerous Canadian musical achievements including the first independent cassette to go gold (1991), the first album to reach Platinum status in just over a one week (**Gordon** in 1992), and the first Canadian billboard charting band to compose a musical score for a Stratford Production (**As You Like It**) this year.

A member of the Board of Directors of **World Wildlife Fund Canada**, Steven Page is pleased that he and Jackson-Triggs will come together for this event to make a cash donation of \$25,000 in support of Canada's World Wildlife Fund. Jackson-Triggs' Proprietors, **Don Triggs** and **Allan Jackson**, are also delighted to have been able to form this special partnership in support of such a worthy cause. "We believe firmly that we owe the success of our wines both to the gifts of nature and to great teamwork," said Triggs.

Steven Page, a self-proclaimed oenophile, is no stranger to the Canadian wine scene. His contributions include appearances at international wine conferences, a regular column in the Canadian wine journal, *Vines*, and sponsorship of an award in the Barenaked Ladies' name at the Ontario Wine Awards. "I'm thrilled to be performing under the stars in 'Wine Country'. I've long been a huge fan of Niagara wines, and as a passionate devotee of eating and drinking locally, I'm so impressed to see the great dedication Jackson-Triggs and the entire Niagara community have shown toward making top-quality wines, and toward making Niagara a world-class destination."

**Tickets go on sale on Thursday, April 28th at noon**, and are priced at \$59.00 each. A dinner and show package, including a four-course epicurean dinner and a selection of exclusive wines, is also available for \$150.00 per person.

## The Wine Dating Game Wins pl@tform 2005 Award

The Ontario Media Development Corporation and the New Media Business Alliance recently announced that The Wired Schoolhouse, a Toronto-based e-learning producer, is one of three winners of the pl@tform 2005 award to support the creation of unique, interactive, digital media content.

The winning project, The Wine Dating Game, is a revolutionary, interactive web-based game in which contestants choose a 'wine date' to match their mood and

situation. The game was conceived by Billy Munnely of Billy's Best Bottles, and his partner, Kato Wake, who have successfully used 'wine characters' and imagery in their wine seminars for several years. "Understanding mood and context is the key to wine savvy."

Wine grape types are transformed into engaging (edible) characters, each with a distinctive personality reflecting its intrinsic nature. Contestants pose questions to each wine character. Questions and answers are creatively constructed to give contestants a clear sense on how each wine differs. Based on the answers, the user selects the most appropriate wine companion for their mood or situation, and can download party planners for each grape type - which includes entertaining tips, complimentary food ideas and product knowledge. The Wine Dating Game has tremendous potential as a sales and marketing tool for wineries, wine importers, wine retailers and the hospitality industry - in web, kiosk and print media.

Production work on the project has begun as of April 2005. Munnely and Wake will act as content and creative leads respectively. As part of the award, The Wine Dating Game will be distributed via Canada's largest Internet portal, Sympatico / MSN beginning in Fall 2005.

## About pl@tform 2005

Pl@tform is sponsored by the Ontario Media Development Corporation ([www.omdc.on.ca](http://www.omdc.on.ca)) and the New Media Business Alliance ([www.nmba.ca](http://www.nmba.ca)). In its second year, the program seeks to help emerging interactive media firms develop experience and traction in the highly competitive New Media industry. Winning teams were adjudicated based not only on the quality of their projects but also on their strategy for growing their company around the creation of their own proprietary interactive content.

## About The Wired Schoolhouse

[www.thewiredschoolhouse.com](http://www.thewiredschoolhouse.com)

The Wired Schoolhouse (TWS) is a Toronto-based e-Learning company. TWS staff has extensive experience working with clients and subject matter experts to create effective online learning that leads to measurable performance improvement.

**About Billy's Best Bottles** [www.billysbestbottles.com](http://www.billysbestbottles.com)

Billy Munnely has been delivering entertaining and common wine-sense to the average consumer for over two decades. He is author and publisher of an annual wine handbook, 'Billy's Best Wines' and Billy's Best Bottles Wineletter, Canada's first independent and largest circulation wine consumer report. His goal is to down-style wine and get rid of the snobs. Kato Wake has been



# Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

May 2005

involved in art and design alongside hospitality service training for almost as long as Billy has been drinking.

## Carmela Estates

GLEN C. SIEGEL

I was on my way home from Ottawa last St. Patrick's day when I found the time to stop by Carmela Estates out in Prince Edward County, more or less south of Belleville. Prince Edward County, or The County, is Ontario's newest wine region.

Carmela Estates is in the south-west corner of The County, at 1186 Greer Road, Wellington which is just off Highway 33. I was able to spend some time speaking with Jill Shipp and Erin Traer about the vineyards, the winery and the wines.

Carmela has 40 acres in the Hillier area which is the most planted area of the County. The soils in their vineyards are about 30 inches or 76 cm of rocky clay soils over the limestone base. They currently have 28 acres of vines growing 5 varietals: riesling, pinot gris, chardonnay, pinot noir and cabernet franc. They are using French and German vines. Their earliest plantings were in 2000 with the last vines going in the ground in 2002. Each plant is mounded with soil in the fall to help them through the winter.



The vineyards slope down towards the south. As usual in Ontario, the rows run north / south to increase the sunlight striking the vines. In Carmela's case, this orientation also helps the rain to run off. Last summer was very wet and Carmela had 21 days of rain last July. Thanks to a beautiful fall, their grapes ripened nicely.

As the vines are still quite young, Carmela's winemaker, Norman Hardie, is honing his skills on grapes brought in

from Niagara. He is sourcing grapes from younger vineyards to prepare for his own grape production over the next few years. Carmela has released an Estate Bottled 2002 Cabernet Franc that promises good wines to come considering the youth of the vines. Norman has a vineyard of his own in the area. Michael Traynor, of Coyote Run / Willow Springs fame is their viticulturalist.

The winery was opened in November 2002 and the Banquet Hall, which seats 150, was opened in last June. The restaurant, which is in the main building, is open from April to December. Lunch is available daily and dinner is available Tuesday to Saturday.

Carmela has several wines currently available but only one of them, the 2002 Cabernet Fran, is from their own grapes. I thought the Pinot Gris was quite a nice wine, more of an Alsatian style than some Ontario Pinot Gris. My notes on the 2002 Cabernet Franc were that although it was light in colour which you would expect from the very young vines, it was quite fragrant and there was more flavours of cherry and other bright red fruit than you might expect from the colour. This is a lovely patio wine and I look forward to future bottlings. The Cabernet Sauvignon 2002 is also from young vines but again has great aromas. I can't remember if it was Jill or Erin who summed it up as "I just love opening the bottle!" It had a very traditional cabernet sauvignon nose but it was another wine that you could share with some friends on a patio with some burgers or steaks.

To find out more about Prince Edward County and the wineries, go to <http://www.pecountywines.ca/>.

There can be no vocabulary of tasting unless wines have many complex qualities which are worthy of comment... There are millions of bottles of neutral, flabby and impersonal wines about which the taster can say nothing once he has spat them out.

**EMILE PEYNAUD**

*The Taste of Wine, 1983*