

OntarioWineReview

A bi-weekly newsletter dedicated to helping you discover Ontario's best Wines and Wineries. Enjoyment comes from understanding - Passion comes from understanding more.



OntarioWineReview Newsletter – 138
July 22, 2010

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OntarioWineReview: 200 Years – Really!?!

Back in February I received an email from the [Ontario Viticulture Association](#) announcing the call for a celebration around Ontario's 200th year of winemaking. Now I hear ya saying, "200 years ... winemaking in Ontario ... Really?" As it turns out it's true and here's how it break down according to the OVA President Jim Warren's findings:

"Johann Schiller is acknowledged as the "father" of the Ontario Wine industry. Schiller opened Ontario's first wine venture in 1811 in the area of Mississauga, now known as Cooksville, where he offered, to the public, wines made from wild labrusca grapes. From this humble beginning, the Ontario wine industry took root. The subsequent story is convoluted, with periods of excitement, prosperity, political pressures, and virtual abandonment. After prohibition ended in 1927, it took until 1975 for the first new winery to open in Ontario. The success of Inniskillin and other 20th-century wine pioneers has fostered a lively industry in Ontario, and this no doubt played a role in the evolution of fine wineries elsewhere in Canada.

There are currently more than 160 wineries licensed in Ontario, including traditional wineries, fruit wineries, and meaderies. The industry has also survived upgrades to its vineyards. Until the 1980s, Ontario vineyards were dominated by labrusca grape species, including Concord, Niagara, Delaware, and Isabella. Vine pull-out began in the 1960s and the majority of vineyards were replanted with cold-hardy hybrid grapes such as Vidal, Seyval Blanc, Baco Noir, and Marechal Foch. Another replanting drive began in 1978, when growers replaced many of the hybrids with European vinifera varieties: Chardonnay, Riesling, the Cabernets, Pinot Noir, and many others.

Ontario has always been proud of its best wines. A report from the Paris Exposition of 1867 heaped praise on the wine entries from Ontario. This tradition of creating award-winning wines is firmly ingrained in the industry, and Ontario wines bring home international awards year after year, and not just for its icewines.

And so, with that kind of history under our collective belts the OVA is proposing the following: "OVA requests that the Government of Ontario officially recognize this exciting milestone by declaring 2011 to be the Bi-centennial of the Ontario Wine Industry." Write to you MPP and star making plans for a party two hundred years in the making ... After all I think we all deserve it.

Want to find out more about Ontario's Wine Industry Milestones, check out these:

- 1811: Johann Schiller, the father of Canadian winemakers, makes wine from local and imported North American grapes and offers them for sale to the public.
- 1857: Porter Adams begins cultivating grapes in Southern Ontario.
- 1864: Canadian Vinegrowers Association is formed in Ontario.
- 1867: Canada becomes a nation.
- 1873: George Barnes Winery opens in Niagara.
- 1874: T.G. Brights Winery opens in Niagara.
- 1894: John Sotheridge plants vineyards in Stoney Creek.
- 1916: Prohibition begins. Ontario has 67 wineries producing medicinal and sacramental wines, and wines for export.

1927: Prohibition ends. Alcohol jurisdiction is handed over to the provinces. Ontario implements a moratorium on new winery licences.
1960s: Growers begin to rip out North American species and plant French-American Hybrids. Baby Duck is the best-selling wine in Ontario.
1933 to 1974: After much consolidation in the industry, there remain only six wineries in Ontario.
1974: Donald Ziraldo and Karl Kaiser apply for a winery license -- the first since prohibition -- and open Inniskillin winery in Niagara-on-the-Lake.
1978: Ontario implements a pull-out program to remove native and labrusca grapes species, to be replaced by hybrids. Wineries are allowed to import grapes/juice/wine to fill the gap until Ontario's vineyards reach production age.
1988: Ontario vintners create the Vintners Quality Alliance (VQA).
1997: Cool Climate Vinicultural Institute opens at Brock University in St. Catharines.
1999: 100th winery licensed in Ontario.
1999: VQA is entrenched as Ontario law.
2000: Fruit Wines of Ontario is founded, and establishes the Quality Certified (QC) program for non-grape wines.
2001: Ontario Wine Content Act becomes law.
2007: Prince Edward County is recognized as a vinicultural region.
2009: There are 164 licensed wineries in Ontario, this includes fruit wineries and meaderies.
2011: Ontario celebrates the Bi-centennial of its wine industry.

So let's all see what we can do to celebrate Ontario's bi-centennial of winemaking excellence ... might I suggest a party devoted solely to Ontario wines.

Thanks to Jim Warren and the OVA for bringing this to mine, and now your, attentions.



Grape Guy's Picks of the Bunch: *What's New from Who's New*

Five Rows 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon - \$50.00 (W)

www.fiverows.com

I tried this wine for the first time at Cuvee 2010 in February – at that time I wasn't sure whether what I was sipping a barrel sample or a recently bottled sample – either way I decided to sit on my notes until I could get a handle on what I was tasting (my initial assessment was a 4-star rating). Now some 5 months later I can talk freely about this offering, a very complex and nuanced wine with a laundry list of smells and flavours. The nose shows mocha, black fruit, hint of red cherry, white pepper, and spiced vanilla. The palate shows a real greatness of flavour: red and black fruit, with mocha/chocolate notes, vanilla, good acid and tannin balance – absolutely lovely flavour – all developed thru good growing practices and 2 years in French oak. Only 600 bottles made. Price: \$50.00 – Rating: ****½

Bonus Review: [Five Rows 2007 Pinot Noir - \\$50.00 \(W\)](#)

Pondview 2009 Riesling - \$16.00 (W)

www.pondviewwinery.com

New winery alert ... yes folks Niagara-on-the-Lake has another new winery and it's worth a look-see. Grower Lou Puglisi (former Grape King) got tired of seeing some of his fruit going unbought and lying on the ground, so he decided that his hard work should not go for not. Thus Pondview was born. Lou has been growing for some 37 years and has seen a lot of changes in the Ontario wine industry – he also has 50 acres of vines under his watch with 8 different varieties grown within. This Riesling is made from his 10 year old vines and shows real complexity and enjoyability in the glass. The nose is stony with apple and lemon fruit. The palate is where the real complexity shows: a mix of mac and delicious apples, lemon/lime acidity, a touch of mineral with a long lingering finish of lemon/lime flavour. Very enjoyable and best of all, well-priced. Only 300 cases made. Price: \$16.00 – Rating: ****½

Bonus Review: [Pondview 2008 Cabernet - \\$18.00 \(W\)](#)

Good Earth 2009 Riesling - \$20.00 (W)

www.goodearthfoodandwine.com

The Good Earth Food Company has been feeding Niagara since 1998 and now they've taken the next logical step in their evolution, adding wines to their line-up of offerings. I tried this tasty '09 Riesling with its white fruit driven nose along with some pineapple backing. The palate was dry with brisk mouth cleansing acidity – the fruit found on the tongue is green apple with some under-ripe pear and melon rind. What makes this wine fun is the long finish that keeps things dry and still manages to be loaded with fruit in the form of pineapple core nuances. Price: \$20.00 – Rating: ****

Two More Newbies:

[Hinterland Wine Company 2007 Etoiles - \\$39.20 \(W\)](#)

[The Old Third Vineyard 2008 Pinot Noir - \\$35.00 \(W\)](#)

Availability legend: W (Winery) – L (LCBO/Vintages) – WTH (Winery to Home).



Weekly Wine Notes and More: *Barrels and Jazz – Konzelmann and Sandbanks*

A new Ontario wine is reviewed every Tuesday ... take two minutes to listen to the [Podcast](#) or read the tasting notes on the [Blog](#).

[Weekly Wine Notes](#) (added to the Blog and Pod in the past few weeks):

July 13, 2010 – Konzelmann 2008 Sparkling Secco ([LISTEN](#))

July 20, 2010 – Sandbanks 2009 Dunes ([LISTEN](#))

[On the Road with the Grape Guy:](#)

Trips, tours and tastings – join me as I review the highs, and sometimes, the lows

[Huff's 6 Barrels for 6 Chefs](#)

[Hillebrand 21st Annual Jazz Concert](#)

[Lost and Found \(blog\)](#)

Wines that got "lost" in my cellar - some are Treasures others Trash ... Find out what happened

[Willow Springs 2003 Vidal](#)

[Taste it Again Grape Guy \(blog\)](#)

Find out what has happened to some of my favourites over the years

Nothing new this week – but keep checking back

[What I'm drinking Tonight \(blog\)](#)

When it's not an Ontario wine, here's what I'm pulling out of the cellar

[12 New Reviews Added](#)

Including: An Ironstone competition and an 03 Flying Cigare

[Vintages Release \(blog\)](#)

[July 24, 2010 - Vintages Report](#)

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Quick Sips: *Occasionally interesting things cross my desk that I would like to pass on*

July 2010

Truth and Rumour - More truth than rumour here ... Craig McDonald, multi-award winning winemaker of Creekside fame, will be taking over at Hillebrand for the now departed Darryl Brooker. In other wine related news, Bruce Walker retires from Vincor.

Grapes Down - How Do You Like Them Apples? ... Ontario's apple and grape cultivated acreages have each dropped more than 13 per cent over the past year, a Statistics Canada report released June 30th said. Cultivated apple acres in the province dropped to 16,100 in 2010 from 18,635 in 2009; while the acreage for table and wine grapes fell to 17,030 from 19,635 in the same time period.

Jackson and Teichman make a Union ... (Taken from the press release) - Canadian wine industry pioneers Allan Jackson, co-founder of Jackson-Triggs Estate Winery, and Andrew von Teichman, a former Vincor Canada and Pelee Island Winery executive, have joined forces to launch the Generations Wine Company and will launch their first Ontario VQA brand release called 'Union' in August 2010. As a "virtual" brand with no winery and no vineyards, the Generations Wine Company have sourced premium VQA wines from a number of Niagara wineries, and have produced a red and a white blend. The wines have been made by Jackson in a new-world style, to exemplify what Ontario does best. Retail price will be \$13.95 for both. Reviews pending.

Riesling Loves Global Warming ... Global warming has been a boon for Riesling, so says the hosts of last week's Riesling Rendezvous conference in Seattle, Ernie Loosen, Decanter's Man of the Year 2005, and Ted Baseler, the president of Château Ste Michelle. Other speakers suggested that warmer temperatures worldwide were opening up new regions for Riesling and guaranteeing consistency in more traditional regions. "Where we once had two poor vintages and a couple of washouts each decade, we really haven't had a bad year in almost a generation," producer Helmut Dönnhoff from the Nahe region of Germany said. For more visit: <http://www.decanter.com/news/300193.html?aff=rss>

New Wine Writers' Circle of Canada Website - sort of ... The [Wine Writers' Circle of Canada launched their new and improved website](#) last week, the biggest change that return visitors to the site will notice is a Twitter feed along the right hand side featuring all members' Tweets – no other site gives you the thoughts of Canadian wine writers in one spot. Come one. Come all. Come often.

Investment Advice ... If you had purchased \$1000.00 of Nortel stock one year ago, it would now be worth \$49.00. With Enron, you would have had \$16.50 left of the original \$1000.00. With WorldCom, you would have had less than \$5.00 left. If you had purchased \$1000 of Delta Air Lines stock you would have \$49.00 left. But, if you had purchased \$1,000.00 worth of wine one year ago, drank all the wine, then turned in the bottles for the recycling REFUND, you would have had \$214.00. Based on the above, the best current investment advice is to Drink heavily and recycle ... And these days you know you need it.

From a Reader – Just to See if You're Paying Attention: What Makes a Real Man ... A real man is a woman's best friend. He will never stand her up and never let her down. He will reassure her when she feels insecure and comfort her after a bad day. He will inspire her to do things she never thought she could do; to live

without fear and forget regret. He will enable her to express her deepest emotions and give in to her most intimate desires. He will make sure she always feels as though she's the most beautiful woman in the room and will enable her to be the most confident, sexy, seductive, and invincible ... No wait ... sorry ... I'm thinking of wine. Never mind.



Wine Event Spotlight: *Love BBQ – 13th Street has the Answer*

13th Street Sparks Up the 'Q' ... Two saucy evenings are in store - If you'd prefer to spend an intimate evening with 21 like-minded BBQ aficionado's in the company of Buster Rhino's Pit Boss Darryl Koster as he shares with you his South Carolinian family secrets for award winning southern BBQ then Thursday, July 29th is for you. If on the other hand you prefer a more casual affair hanging out with hundreds of other BBQ fanatics in the summer sun at the 1st Annual 13th Street Winery Southern BBQ, you will want to book your ticket for the August 28th event. Both events give you the chance to experience a range of delicious pork & beef dishes, expertly smoked, rubbed, grilled and sauced by Darryl and his team. For full details contact [Peter Bodnar Rod](#) for the PDF.

OntarioWineReview's bi-weekly newsletter is devoted to the love, enjoyment and promotion of the wines of Ontario and the wineries that make them.



What can the Grape Guy do for you ... Michael Pinkus (Grape Guy) provides a variety of wine related services that you might be interested in taking advantage of: he gives lectures, leads seminars, conducts tastings, sets up tours; consults, selects and judges. He also gives interviews, broadcasts, podcasts and writes. [Contact the Grape Guy if you require any of these services or have any questions.](#)



Psst, Pass It On ... keep the good wine flowing. Forward this newsletter to your mom in Mimico your uncle in Uxbridge, your great aunt in Grand Bend or any other family member or loved one that you know needs good wine advice.

To contact us with feedback, article ideas, comments, concerns or questions – email michael@ontariowinereview.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

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