

Ontario Chardonnays Shine on Trafalgar Square



Written by the Tidings Staff | 04 June 2010

Top U.K. wine critics embrace Ontario Chardonnays

On May 17th, Canada House - prestigiously located on Trafalgar Square in London England - hosted a tasting of Cool Climate Chardonnays from Ontario. Twenty-two Ontario wineries showcased a selection of 40 Chardonnays highlighting the quality and range of these wines to top U.K. wine critics, proving that Canadian wine can hold its own on the world stage. Ninety-five top wine critics and members of the trade attended the event including Jancis Robinson, Steven Spurrier, Oz Clarke, and Charles Metcalfe amongst others. Many of the winery owners and winemakers were on hand at the event to pour their wine and show how Ontario wines are food-friendly and reminiscent of fine white Burgundies.

"The excitement in the room was unbelievable. This was an historic moment for Canadian Wine," said Ed Madronich, Chair of the Wine Council of Ontario and proprietor of Flat Rock Cellars who also attended the tasting. "Attracting this number of top U.K. wine critics for a single tasting is almost unheard of; it is an accomplishment unto itself," said Bill Redelmeir of Southbrook Vineyards, the brainchild behind the "Seriously Cool" Chardonnay tasting.

Jancis Robinson, world-renowned wine authority, said "Ontario alone can produce a vivid array of styles of Chardonnay, some of which can hold their own with the world's finest". When leaving the tasting she commented "This variety is very well suited to Canada, I'd say".

"Overall I was amazed," said Steven Spurrier who was impressed that all the wines he tasted were of such a high quality. "There was not a single poor wine there. They all have an individual personality. They're all brilliantly well made. I'm very impressed."

Oz Clarke told the winemakers to "be confident about their Chardonnays and not to let the populist tabloid press put them down. We all know that Chardonnay is a fantastic grape whose time will come again."

"Having this group of wine critics say that Ontario makes some really terrific table wines is hugely significant," said Tony Aspler, who assisted in organizing the tasting, and is a long time supporter of Ontario wines. "It shows that Ontario wines can sit proudly on the world stage". For more information on Ontario wines, visit www.winesofontario.ca or visit.

Here are the 40 Ontario VQA Chardonnays from 22 wineries that were poured.

Cave Spring Cellars CSV 2003
Cave Spring Cellars CSV 2005
Cave Spring Cellars Dolomite Brut Sparkling 2006
Chateau des Charmes Barrel-Fermented 2007
Chateau des Charmes Musqué 2008
Closson Chase Kocsis Vineyard 2007
Closson Chase South Clos Vineyard 2007

Colio Estates Musqué 2007
Coyote's Run Black Paw Vineyard 2008
Creekside Estate Queenston Road Vineyard 2008
Flat Rock Cellars Reserve 2007
Flat Rock Cellars The Rusty Shed 2008
Henry of Pelham Barrel-Fermented 2007
Henry of Pelham Speck Family Reserve 2007
Hidden Bench Tête de Cuvée 2006
Hidden Bench 2007
Hillebrand Showcase Wild Ferment 2008
Huff Estates Winery Cuvée Peter Huff Blanc de Blanc Sparkling 2006
Lailey Brickyard Vineyard 2008
Lailey Old Vines 2008
Le Clos Jordanne LCJ Vineyard 2006
Le Clos Jordanne Talon Ridge 2007
Malivoire Moira Vineyard 2004
Malivoire Moira Vineyard 2005
Malivoire Mottiar Vineyard 2007
Norman Hardie Unfiltered 2008
Peller Estates Signature Series Sur Lie 2007
Peller Estates Signature Series Sur Lie 2008
Peninsula Ridge Reserve 2007
Peninsula Ridge Beal Vineyard Inox Reserve 2005
Pillitteri Estates Chardonnay Icewine 2007
Ravine Rowan Vineyard 2008
Ravine Rowan Vineyard Reserve 2008
Rosehall Run Rosehall Vineyard 2008
Rosehall Run Cuvée County 2008
Southbrook Poetica 1998
Southbrook Poetica 2005
Southbrook Triomphe Certified Organic 2008
Tawse Quarry Rd Vineyard 2007