



# National Capital Sommelier Guild

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## Newsletter - September 2002

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*“Life is too short to drink great wine in second-rate glasses”*

*“Found in a Niagara Winery Shop”*

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### Moderation is a sign of good taste

The National Capital Sommelier Guild strongly supports moderate and responsible consumption of wine and spirits. Guild dinner events allow a designated driver to attend at a reduced price. The designated driver will not be served

alcohol. Guild tasting events provide and encourage the use of spit buckets. As well, at every event, the organizer will arrange a method of safe transportation home for you or your friends upon request.

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### Vintages Pre-Release

Thursday, 19 September, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. (September - Part 2)

Thursday, 31 October, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. (November – Part 1)

*Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)*

Mark these dates on your calendar and plan to join those who have made this **Guild Signature Event** a regular feature of their wine life. These events provide an opportunity to sample several of the wines to be released by *Vintages* on the following Saturday.

The wines are always tasted blind, allowing the quality of each to shine through without the distortions that often result from knowing the producer's reputation and/or the

price range. These tastings give us an opportunity to discover well-made, inexpensive wines, little-known and often ignored quality wines, wines that offer an exceptional price/quality relationship and, to the greatest extent possible, more expensive, highly reputed wines that most would not experience otherwise.

**Members & Sponsored Guest \$25 each**

**Non-members \$35**

# The Winemaker from Caliterra – a Guild exclusive!

Thursday, September 5, 7:00 p.m.

*Trattoria Caffè Italia 254 Preston St. (at Gladstone) Parking at rear or at Preston Hardware Store*

A Chilean winemaker stops in Ottawa for one evening only, and conducts a tutored tasting **exclusively** for Guild members and guests! Through the **generosity of Gord Weber and the Phillippe Dandurand Wine Agency**, this tasting also offers exceptional value for money!

An event to whet your appetite for the upcoming Wine and Food Show where Chile will be the featured country. A full range of more than a dozen wines, predominantly red, will be offered. They include several Caliterra and Caliterra Reserve wines, selections from the premium Arboleda range and the super premium Don Maximiano and Seña (both >\$70 per bottle.) Look for Cabernet, Syrah, Merlot and ‘Carmenère’.

**Rodrigo Banto, Chief Winemaker of Caliterra wines**, will be our guest and lead the tasting. He is also on the winemaking team for the world class ‘Seña’. Rodrigo, born in Santiago, Chile, graduated in 1994 from the Universidad

Católica de Chile with a degree in agronomy and enology. He worked the ‘96 vintage in France with the Lurton family of Bordeaux and the ‘97 vintage in the U.S. at Flora Springs Winery in Napa. These international experiences improved his winemaking skills, while broadening his perspective.

At La Arboleda, Caliterra's state-of-the-art gravity-flow winery built in 1998. Rodrigo tastes and blends the wines with the help of two enologists and Mondavi's Tony Coltrin. "La Arboleda is a real joint venture winery -- a true composite of ideas," Rodrigo explains. "Our team philosophy at Caliterra is to continue improving the wines. We are working even closer with the vineyards and enhancing our winemaking technology".

**Maximum of 47 persons.** Light cuisine will be matched to each flight and served throughout the evening.

**Trade Members \$25**

**Members and Invited Guest \$30**

**Non-members \$35**

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## Dining with Class

Wednesday, September 25, 6 p.m. (dinner at 6:45 p.m.)

*Restaurant International, Algonquin College, Woodroffe Campus, free parking in front of restaurant.*

Your 6:00 p.m. welcoming wine will be the surprising Beringer California White Zin, recently discovered at the Heritage Guild affair. Sniffing and swirling in the foyer with friends, assorted canapes will be served. Seated promptly at 6:45, a Seafood Veloute on Phylo pastry with its Julienne of seasonal vegetables accompanies the 2000 Heim Reserve Pinot Gris from Alsace, France and the fabulous '99 Chateau St. Jean Fume Blanc. "La Petite Etoile" from the Russian River area. Next up, chilled fresh avocado and fresh tomato soup matched to the 2001 Marques de Riscal Rosado from Rioja, Spain. You may now rest for a while with your Lemon/Lime Ice Sorbet.

The succulent wild brome duck with sectioned grilled pineapple, cocotte potato, artichoke hearts, whole carrot and braised endive follows. A 1998 Henry of Pelham Reserve Pinot Noir escorted by the Alexander Valley, California Merlot from Chateau Souverain, join the main.

The piece de resistance is a "Le Lac des Cignes" (meringue swans on chocolate sauce w/dry ice and fresh fruits) lovingly wedded to the fabulous Pol Roger Extra Cuvee Reserve (demi-sec) from Champagne, France. Relax with your table companions over an assorted cheese (Brie, Oka, Parmagian Reggiano) and fruit tray matched to the 1998 silky smooth Cline 'Ancient Vines' Mourvedre from Contra Costa County, California.

Our Executive Chef for the evening will be Serge Desforges, a local chef, who graduated as top student with honours from Algonquin's culinary program. Serge has held positions as Executive Chef in various hotels, supervised a large culinary staff at Capital Food Services, and recently managed the opening of the culinary sector of the prestigious Camelot Golf and Country Club. Limited to 56 lucky persons.

**Designated Driver \$40**

**Trade Members \$65**

**Members and Invited Guest \$70**

**Non-members \$75**

## Top Premium Canadian Reds and a Few Whites

Thursday, September 26, 7:00 p.m.

Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)

Ever since Canadian producers made decided that their future lay in producing vinifera-based wines, there has been a race to top quality. Originally this was spurred by small boutique wineries, where passionate winemakers were striving to create a niche and a name for themselves.

Today, even the big guys are making small-batch, very high quality wines. The challenge for most wine lovers, is first, to find the wines, so rare many have become; and second, to afford them as they have often climbed in price as fast as they have improved in heft and quality.

You may have heard of wines such as the Trius from Hillebrand, Trivalente from Pillitteri, Oculus from Mission Hill, Pinnacle from Sumac Ridge and various high-priced blends and varietals from Malivoire, Pillitteri, Thirty Bench, Daniel Lenko, Inniskillin, Jackson-Triggs and Peller Estates in Niagara, plus those rarely seen in Ontario

from Burrowing Owl, CedarCreek, Hawthorne Mountain, Sumac Ridge and Mission Hill from B.C. While the intent is to taste and enjoy the wines, there may creep in an element of competition between the champions of each of these wine regions.

Here is your chance to experience them. We have been able to lay our hands on many of these medalled wines, most of them premium reds. However, to avoid being totally characterized as red chauvinists, we have selected some very top whites from the half dozen or so most highly prized white varietal wines.

**For an event of this nature and given the rarity of the wines, seating is obviously limited. Reserve now as there are only a few seats left!**

Trade Members \$35

Members and Invited Guest \$40

Non-members \$50

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## Smoked Fish and Wine

Wednesday, October 16, 7:00 p.m.

Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)

You won't want to go back to pan fried perch after you've finished *Ginette and Jean De La Durantaye's* exotic tasting tour of a delightful cross-section of smoked fish from their renowned *Boucanerie Chelsea* smokehouse. Discover the magic of cold and hot smoking processes. Revel in natural, lemon, fine herb, BBQ and even maple syrup flavourings, each designed to bring out the best and most complex tastes of our piscine treasures – from pickarel, salmon, scallops and mussels to tuna, marlin, and eels (yes!).

Moreover, it's two tastings in one, as Guild Co-Founder *Phil Nicholson* and Past President *Pierre Dupont* match each flight of fish (flying fish, surely?) with a couple of fine wines. All told, some 16 smoked fish and 10 or 11 wines for the moral equivalent of a full meal.

**Book early; the last time we held a smoked fish event, in January 1997, it was very quickly sold out.**

Trade Members \$50

Members and Invited Guest \$55

Non-members \$65

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## Tenth Annual Guild Holiday Gala - on The Hill!

A heads-up to circle December 15<sup>th</sup> on your calendar as that Sunday evening the Guild will host the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Holiday Gala. If one attended only one event per year, this should be the one. We have been extremely fortunate to secure an outstanding venue – a lavish salon in Parliament's West Block, with an ornately tiled floor,

adorned and corniced walls and a ceiling bejeweled by a bank of crystal chandeliers. The most sought-after high-end caterer in Ottawa, 'Thyme and Again,' has been contracted to prepare and serve a spectacular meal. **You cannot register yet, but you can set the date aside as a 'do not miss' in your busy holiday schedule.**

# Guild Business

## Guild Cancellation Policy Strengthened

Please take note of the following changes to the Guild cancellation policy. Although the changes are minor in nature, they are necessary to the smooth operational functions of registering and paying for events. This policy will assist in meeting member needs, ensuring maximum availability at events and assisting our hard working, volunteer Registrar and Treasurer. This policy will take effect October 1, 2002.

1. When registering and paying by cheque, the cheque must be in the hands of the Guild within 7 calendar days of registration. If the cheque is NOT received within 7 days, the registrar will phone/e-mail attendee to notify the registration is cancelled.
2. In the event of a member-initiated cancellation, notification must be made 5 days before the event and there will be no charge to the registrant. If less than 5 days, the registered person may designate another person(s), but is still responsible for payment to the Guild. Notify registrar immediately of your designate(s) to allow the host of the event to tally numbers. The "registered" person is responsible for payment and must make arrangements for collecting from their designate(s)

## Volunteers for the Ottawa Wine and Food Show November 1, 2, 3, 2002

Once again the Guild will be a prominent participant at the show. We need volunteers who are willing to devote three or four hours of their time, per shift, to attend our booth. It requires your arrival ten minutes before each shift, to remain at the booth throughout the shift, business dress, and a willingness to speak to attendees of the show about the Guild and to assist them in participating in our booth tasting. We also require members to assist Vice President, Mike Cowen, in the tasting room.

Arrangements will be made for show entrance, name tag and a briefing ten minutes prior to your shift. Please send along your name and availability to: Joseph Phelan, phone (613) 241-1418 or e-mail to [joseph.phelan@ottawa.ca](mailto:joseph.phelan@ottawa.ca) indicating your willingness to assist.

The following is indicative of the information required.

Show hours are: 12 to 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and 12 to 6 p.m. Sunday.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

I am willing to attend the Guild Booth on

Friday, 1 November from \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ (or anytime) \_\_\_\_ (check)

Saturday, 2 November from \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ (or anytime) \_\_\_\_ (check)

Sunday, 3 November from \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ (or anytime) \_\_\_\_ (check)

You may contact me by: Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Welcome our Newest Members

**John Bouskill**

**Jeff Bradley**

**Richard Casavant**

**Christian Davis**

**Simone Di Tomasso**

**Carole Jacob**

**Gisèle Jacob**

**François Rochon**

**Andrew Sharpe**

**Please offer them a warm welcome**

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## Items of Special Interest to Guild Members

### Eastern Ontario Amateur Winemakers' Competition/Awards Dinner & Dance

Do you remember a few years ago when a couple of local amateur winemakers challenged their "betters" (Napa

Valley) to a blind tasting of varietals at the Guild? Even though the Napa's were triple or quadruple the price, our

local amateurs trounced the Americans in all categories, hands down! Well, you can again taste some of the outstanding products of local amateur winemakers at this year's Eastern Ontario Amateur Winemakers' Competition. The competition (if anyone has wines they want to enter) will be held here in Ottawa in September. All the wines will be available for tasting, there will be a four-course

dinner, dance and door prizes at the Sala San Marco on Friday, September 20 at 6:30 pm. Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased from Allison Fader - call 997-3704. (Tickets must be purchased by Sept. 17 - none are available at the door.) For more information, see the website at <http://members.rogers.com/eoawc>.

## The Ottawa Art Gallery and Arts Court Foundation's Tenth Annual Wine Auction

October 9, 6:00p.m.

*Arts Court Theatre, 2 Daly Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.*

Wine consultant Nico van Duyenbode, who holds the awards Canadian Wine Taster of the Year and President's Cup for the Ontario Wine and Spirits Importers Association, has curated the wines for auction. He also represented Canada as a team taster for the German Wine Tasting Championships 1986 and 1990. Participants will enjoy an array of hors d'oeuvres and wine tasting while previewing the items available for auction.

The collection of over 100 lot will appeal to the most discriminating connoisseur, but there are also items of interest for newcomers. Mailed and faxed bids and credit card payments are welcomed.

Delivery can be arranged for out-of-town purchases. For information and tickets, call (613) 233-8699 ext. 221 or (613) 569-4821 ext. 232. Fax (613) 569-7660

Ottawa wine writer **Natalie MacLean** has recently revamped her web site with new wine articles and recommendations. You can find it at [www.nataliemaclean.com](http://www.nataliemaclean.com). Her articles have appeared in the National Post, Saturday Night, Canadian Business, enRoute and Food & Drink. If you'd like to receive her bi-weekly e-mail newsletter that covers a wide range of

topics, from the health benefits of wine and restaurant wine lists to food and wine matching and her top picks for the monthly Vintages releases, please e-mail her at [nataliemaclean@rogers.com](mailto:nataliemaclean@rogers.com). It's free, there are no ads and your e-mail address will be kept confidential. Natalie does this because she enjoys the occasional feedback she receives from those on her list.

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## Special Offers to Guild Members!

**CA Paradis** has been serving Ottawa restaurants and wine lovers for 80 years. Guild member Diane Paradis would like to offer a **10% discount on all regularly priced merchandise** to all Guild members. Next time you're

shopping at CA Paradis discreetly identify yourself as member of the NCSG, show your membership card, and enjoy the savings.

**Vines** magazine is a bi-monthly, up-scale glossy that has a primary focus on the Canadian wine scene. It offers tasting notes and evaluations on easily available wines, articles on wineries and wine makers and feature articles on regional cuisine. The publisher has agreed to accept subscriptions from Guild members at a 50% discount. This makes the

yearly subscription of 6 issues only \$7.50! Order your subscription by writing to: **Vines Magazine, 159 York Street, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6E9**. Simply send them a cheque for \$7.50, include your name and address and let them know you are a member of the National Capital Sommelier Guild. Good wine reading!

**An Offer for Collectors of Wine Implements** Many Guild members are also collectors. Obviously they collect wines, but many others collect wine paraphernalia: corkscrews, carafes, foil cutters, etc. ...and some even collect antiques. Those who harbour a passion for antique wine accessories might find that rare piece missing from their collection at **Ernest Johnson Antiques**. Ernest is a

long time Guild member and informs us that he can show you some fine antique decanters, funnels, spirit tags, wine coasters and corkscrews. Guild members will benefit from a discount of at least 10% on their purchases. The shop is located at 292 MacKay Street at the corner of Dufferin Road in New Edinburgh. It is open Thursday to Sunday. You can call Ernest at 741-8565 for more information.

# Passing Scene

## Battle of the Giants – No Holds Barred!

On Tuesday, 6 August at 6:30 p.m. the throng made small talk on the rooftop of the Heritage Inn in Cumberland, Ontario. The initial buzz concerned the balance, flavour and intensity of one of the welcoming wines. How could a White Zinfandel present with such complexity? Only the folks at Beringer know and you would do well to give this one a try.

The concept of Australia vs California was fun, but we soon realized that both areas had their heavyweights that could deliver a knockout punch, with or without food. Our referee, Mark Bruni, Manager Eastern Ontario, of Beringer (California) / Blass (Australia) wines, led us through a gustatory hedonist's delight. Mixed Green Salad w/Dates and spiced Vinaigrette were paired with a Wolf Blass and a Meridian Sauvignon Blanc. Round one winner – California! The Cold Black Bean and Mango Soup was paired with Black Opal Chardonnay and Beringer Founders' Estate Chardonnay. Round two winner –

Australia! And so it went. Imagine, an entire Roasted Quail with a Fresh Herb Rub w/Green Olive Sauce for an appetizer accompanied by Annie's Lane Shiraz and Meridian Syrah! Round three winner – the guests!

The main event was Regional Roasted Leg of Lamb Served w/Honey & Cumin Glaze, Seasonal Vegetables, Lebanese couscous along with Wolf Blass Barossa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon and Château Souverain Winemaker's Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon. The winner - a draw. After the fight we relaxed with the most scrumptious Pecan and Blue Cheese "Papillon Noir" Pie and a Wolf Blass Noble Gold Botrytis Riesling. The official score card reads: outstanding venue with service staff and cuisine exceptional, wines that captivated the guests and paired the cuisine consistently, everyone came away a winner!

## SUMMER IN THE CITY!!! by Keith Hearn

ASummer In The City® was designed as a party to say goodbye to a long hot summer. And what a party it was!!! Guild regulars and guests had exclusive use of the **Village Café** in Westboro on August 18 (Sunday) to wine, dine and mingle. The evening started with a chilled glass of white Port from Taylor & Fladgate and the opportunity to wind down.

Dinner began with a chilled soup of roasted tomatillo, vidalla onion & Bulgarian feta accompanied with ciabatta croutons. A great start by Lino, the Brazilian Chef & co-owner, who could be seen working in the open kitchen. The soup was paired with a Strewn Estates Terroir Chardonnay providing balance & harmony with the flavours of the roasted veggies & feta.

At a leisurely pace dinner moved on to a second course of breaded ocean perch drizzled with a coulis of vine ripened tomatoes & red onion atop a bed of field greens. The fish was paired with a Loire Valley Pouilly Fume by La Moynerie which some considered the top wine of the evening. For our vegetarian members this course included a white bean & vegetable ragout on polenta. The carnivores in the crowd looked on, some with curiosity, others with envy!!

The main course of beef tenderloin was served with a Brazilian sauce which no-one could pronounce but everyone asked about. Later in the evening the Chef explained the ingredients to us but in such a basso sotto

voice that the secret is still with him. An exceptional wine was served with this course: a 100 year old vines Shiraz from McLaren Vale. Twelve rows of vines, considered viticultural treasures in Australia, produce a wine of intense flavours with a well rounded mouth feel and the unmistakable mash of ripe berries & cherry mixed with pepper, smoky oak, mint and chocolate. Wine heaven!!! The vegetarian option was a zucchini fritter adorned with chevre & grilled vegetables. The plate looked stunning and convinced me to go veggie next year.

At this point in the evening everyone was in the kind of relaxed mood that only comes from a leisurely dinner with good wine, food & friends. Decadent dessert was a white chocolate, cranberry, pistachio & almond tart served after an offering of assorted cheeses & fresh fruits. The last wine was a mystery suitably served in masked bottles. This mysterious offering, which caused a buzz from every table, challenged sommeliers & wine aficionados alike. Wild guesses were thrown out but it fell to Guild Directors Lori Davis & Martin Carriere to come up with the closest answer of Banyuls. The wine was a 1980 Grenache from the town of Maury in Rousillon. It was as rich and smooth as a good Port or Sherry, as many guessed, but instead was an example of what proper ageing can do for the lowly Grenache grape.

With the mystery solved and dinner over, the evening came to an end. We lingered and slowly left. Many agreed, it's something to do again.