



# National Capital Sommelier Guild

---

## Newsletter – May 2003

### May

- 12 Annual General Meeting
- 13 A Special Tasting of Vincor's Wines
- 26 A Wine & Food Matching Opportunity

### June

- 5 VPR
- 11 Champagne Dinner at Geraldo's
- 12 Reds of the Pacific Northwest
- 15 9th Annual Méchoui
- 18 Aussie Winemaker Dinner
- 26 Summer Reds

---

*Quickly, bring me a beaker of wine,  
so that I may whet my mind and say something clever.*

Aristophanes (450 BC–388 BC)

---

### 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.

---

### Vintages Pre-Release

Thursday, 5 June 2003, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)

Mark this date on your calendar and plan to join those who have made this Guild Signature Event a regular feature of their wine life. This event provides 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 and Sponsored Guests: \$25**

---

## The Charm of Chapoutier – Trade Members Only

*Sold Out*

Sunday, 11 May 2003, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

*Restaurant International – Bldg. H, Algonquin College, Woodroffe Campus (free parking directly in front of restaurant)*

## Annual General Meeting

Monday, 12 May 2003, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

*Restaurant International – Bldg. H, Algonquin College, Woodroffe Campus (free parking directly in front of restaurant)*

Note the date, time and venue of our Annual General Meeting. The **National Capital Sommelier Guild** is a non-profit member-run organization, led by a volunteer Board of Directors. **Please plan to participate in the running of the Guild by coming to the AGM, voicing your views, and electing the Board members.**

If you are interested in **running for a position on the Board**, submit your name to: The Nominating Committee, NCSG, 99 Fifth Avenue – Suite 130, Ottawa, ON K1S 5P5 by April 19. Anyone who has been a member of the Guild for a minimum of three (3) months and is a member in good standing is eligible to stand for election to the Guild's Board of Directors. All members of the Guild in good standing are eligible to vote at the AGM.

If you have a proposal to amend a By-Law, it must be submitted by April 19 so that it can be included in the next

newsletter for consideration by all members and reviewed by our legal team to insure compliance with provincial law. Amendments will not be accepted from the floor.

The agenda normally calls for reports on membership, finances and other Guild achievements, the consideration of any proposed amendments to the By-Law, and the election of the Board of Directors. If you have a specific item you would like added to the agenda, please contact our President, Vic Harradine, at vic.harradine@sommelierguild.com or call the Guild line at 237-7911.

**Please register in the normal way to attend the AGM so that we can appropriately plan this event.**

Looking forward to seeing you there!

**Members: Free**

**Guests: \$15**

## A Special Tasting of Vincor's Wines *presented by Vincor International*

Tuesday, 13 May 2003, 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

*Ottawa Marriott Hotel, 100 Kent Street*

The revolving *Merlot Restaurant* on top of the *Ottawa Marriott* will be the setting for a very special tasting for Guild members and their guests to sample a selection of some 40 estate bottled wines. This is a premiere event for Ottawa and the Vincor Sales and Marketing team is proud to present wines from their ten distinct wineries located in North America and Australia:

- Hawthorne Mountain Vineyards, Okanagan Valley BC
- Hogue Cellars, Columbia Valley, Washington
- Inniskillin Wines Niagara Peninsula and Okanagan Valley
- Goundrey Wines, Mount Barker, West Australia
- Jackson-Triggs, Niagara Peninsula and Okanagan Valley
- Nk'Mip Cellars, Okanagan Valley
- R. H. Phillips, Dunnigan Hills, California
- Sumac Ridge Estate Winery, Okanagan Valley.

Don't miss this great opportunity to taste great wines from each of the above producers. Some of the wines have not yet been released, others are only available in British Columbia or through private order. There will be Chardonnay, oaked and unoaked, Riesling, Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris, and several different styles of Icewine, even one that is sparkling. The reds include Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Shiraz, a variety of blended reds that should prove very interesting and VQA Pinot Noirs made by different producers for you to compare.

To accompany the wines, there will also be fine cheeses, fruit, bread and crackers.

Don't delay making your reservation for this popular event presented by Vincor for Guild members and their guests. As a service to Guild members, you may reserve for this event in the normal registration manner.

**Members and Sponsored Guests: \$30**

## A Comparative Survey of Pinot Noirs

*Sold Out*

Wednesday, 14 May 2003, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

*Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)*

## A Wine and Food Matching Opportunity

**Monday, 26 May 2003, 6:30 p.m.**

*West End Station Bistro, 3659 Richmond Road, Stafford Plaza, Bells Corners (ample parking available)*

Executive Chef/Owner Jordon Forester has prepared a very special menu for you to experience how carefully selected wines can enhance the delicacy of the food being served. This unique opportunity is sure to influence wines selected at future dinner parties. Sometimes the wine and food match

is made in heaven, at other times it is not as expected. Join two of your Directors, Lori Davis and Peter Collis, to find the secret in making these important selections.

This five course epicurean delight will be prepared for your dining pleasure:

*Seared Pacific halibut and giant scallop served with Tahitian vanilla bean and orange beurre blanc*

*Strudell of wild mushrooms and wild asparagus infused with fresh thyme and lemon balm*

*Seared escalope of Québec foie gras served on a bed of caramelized pineapple with crispy brioche toasts and a reduction of vintage balsamic and port*

*Sorbet*

*Médallion of Ontario venison served with a sun-dried ancho chilli and bitter chocolate sauce*

*Crepe scented with Seville orange, stuffed with fresh field berries and pastry cream and finished with an ice wine sabayon*

*Coffee*

The wines for this dining extravaganza will remain a mystery until you are comfortably seated at the table.

**Members and Sponsored Guests: \$90**

**Seating is limited to 40 persons**

## Champagne Dinner at Geraldo's!

**Wednesday, 11 June 2003, 6:30 p.m. reception for 7:00 p.m. dinner**

*Geraldo's, 200 Beechwood Avenue (east of St. Patrick bridge)*

A gourmet 5-course dinner will be matched exclusively with selected champagnes and premium sparkling wines from around the world. If you enjoyed the "Somethin' Fishy" dinner in January, come again to experience fine cuisine at Geraldo's. They are the proud recipient of the People's Choice Silver Award of Merit for the Best New Restaurant for 2002 in Ottawa/Hull. Chef Arup and his team will be preparing a menu to complement the selection of Champagnes and Sparkling Wines.

Even though wine selection is in the process of being finalized, three choices have already been made. The following two wines are usually non-vintage products but for this special occasion, a vintage year was obtained:

- **1995 Vintage Reserve Champagne, Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin, France**
- **1998 "Pelorus" Sparkling Wine from Cloudy Bay Vineyards, New Zealand** (now owned by the famous Champagne house Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin)

The dessert will be accompanied by the **Extra Cuvée Réserve, Demi-Sec Champagne from Pol Roger**. A total of six champagne/sparkling wines will be served. The menu and the completed wine list will be finalized before the next newsletter. A vegetarian meal option is available upon request at time of registering. Space will be limited. Please reserve early.

**Members and Sponsored Guests: \$95**

**Designated Drivers: \$65**

## Red Wines of the Pacific Northwest

**Thursday, 12 June 2003, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

*Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)*

Join Guild Director Mike Cowen as we explore the delightful wines of Oregon and Washington State, beginning with at least five examples of elegant Oregon Pinot Noir, including a 1992 from our Guild cellar. Oregon Pinots don't come cheap and are seldom sampled at Guild events, so this will be a rare chance to see what Oregon has achieved with the "heartbreak grape" without risking your wallet. The

wines of Washington State are growing rapidly in popularity and for those who like "big reds", they arguably offer better value than California. We will try out some of that state's very best Merlots, Cabs and Cab blends (including a 1992 from the cellar) and maybe a Syrah or two. This is a unique chance to catch up on what is happening in a most interesting corner of the wine world.

**Members and Sponsored Guests: \$45**

## 9th Annual Méchoui

**Sunday, 15 June 2003, 2:30 p.m. (Departing by bus from the RA Centre)**

*La Ferme Cavalier, St-Sixte, Québec*

Celebrate the return of summer with fellow Guild members and friends, sipping great wines in the fresh air and enjoying delicious food prepared by the **Cavalier** family. This Moroccan style feast begins with mouth watering Lamb Pâté flavoured with Madeira wine, to be followed by farm raised lamb slowly spit roasted over a bed of hardwood coals. There will be salads, vegetables and of course great desserts all prepared at the farm. As with every Guild event you will be pleasantly surprised with the selection of great wines to match the occasion.

Mark and Karen continue to organize this event for our enjoyment. Please dress comfortably. This is a working farm so you may want to visit the sheep and lambs in their pens. Bus transportation is provided for your safety and enjoyment and will leave promptly at 2:30 p.m. from the RA Centre on Riverside Drive, near Bronson Avenue. Anticipated return is around 10:00 p.m. Cars may be left in the RA Centre parking lot. The event fills very quickly and bus seating is limited to 48 persons. A waiting list will be created to provide replacements should there be cancellations.

**Members and Sponsored Guests: \$70**

---

## Aussie Winemaker Dinner – Fine Wines of Wyndham Estate

**Wednesday, 18 June 2003, 6:15 pm for wine and hors d'oeuvres, dinner at 7:00 p.m.**

*Vittoria Trattoria, 8 Nelligan Lane Unit 1A (just north of Hunt Club and Riverside)*

Another Guild exclusive as Chief Winemaker, Brett McKinnon from Wyndham Estate, Australia, travels halfway around the world to present his wines at a fabulous Guild dinner. You will have an opportunity to interact with Brett as he introduces 7 of his wines including 4 of their top end 'Show Reserves', not yet available in Ontario. Your evening begins with Wyndham Estate's welcoming sparkler S 222 Chardonnay paired with hors d'oeuvres. This followed by 2 Show Reserves, a Chardonnay and a Semillon, appropriately paired with a sit down scallop appetizer. Next up is a lamb dish, paired with the best selling Shiraz in Canada (can you guess?) accompanied by Bin 444, a Cabernet Sauvignon. Their high end Show Reserve Shiraz and Show Reserve Cabernet Merlot will complement the hearty strip loin steak main.

What makes these wines from down under so approachable and popular? Learn the techniques this premiere 173 year old winery from the Hunter Valley uses to keep them in the spotlight and in the hunt for their amazing record of capturing show medals. Brett will share the advantages and spectacular results he gets from open fermenters and historic basket presses. He may even let us in on what all those Bin numbers really mean! This will be the first time that most of us will have tried Vittoria Trattoria's new location. Expect a wonderful new ambience and the same high quality of service and cuisine that you have come to enjoy. Co-owners, Ces (Guild Governor) and Dom Santaguida, send a personal and warm invitation to all.

**Members and Sponsored Guests: \$60**

**Designated Drivers: \$45**

---

## Summer Reds

**Thursday, 26 June 2003 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

*Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)*

Here's the dilemma. It's a beautiful, hot day in July in Ottawa and you've got some plump sausages grilling on the BBQ. But what's the perfect wine to complete this picture? A cool fresh white helps while you're cooking but it won't stand up to the robust flavours of the spicy links. Big, oaky, alcoholic reds are overpowering in the heat and they're anything but refreshing. Do you simply swear off wine for dining in the summer and turn to beer?

Fear not. There are a host of delightful reds that are perfect for the backyard summer scene. Some improve when slightly chilled and most are priced so that you won't even mind serving them to your in-laws or a big gang gathered around the grill.

This will be an informal tasting to give you a chance to chat, compare notes and decide which summer reds are right for you. We'll nibble on some appetizers along the way to assist the assessments.

**Members and Sponsored Guests \$25**

---

# Guild Business

## The Guild—Run by Members for Members

The following members have put their names forward to run for positions as Directors for the 2003–2004 membership year. Any Guild member of more than three months prior to the AGM can run for a Director's position. If you want to

put your name forward at the AGM, nominations will be accepted from the floor.

Please do your part in keeping the Guild a vibrant and successful organization.

James Bertrand  
Pierre Fournier  
Joseph Phelan

Paul Courtice  
Joe Hatz  
Rod Phillips

Mike Cowen  
Keith Hearn

Lori Davis  
Martin Carriere

## 2003 Membership Cards—Part Deux!

The NCSG Membership Cards are being re-issued to all 2003 Members to correct the contact telephone numbers printed on the card. You should find a new card in the envelope in which this newsletter has arrived; please take a moment to transfer your membership information to it.

How do you know if you are using the most up to date Membership Card? Well, if it lists the NCSG contact number as follows, then you have the right one!

Telephone: 613-237-7911

Fax: 613-237-9276

## The Guild Needs You! – 2003 Event Planning

Do you have a special wine interest that you would like to explore and share with other members of the Guild? Perhaps you are interested in discovering the joys of wine and food matching. Well, the Guild needs you!

Your Board of Directors is launching this open invitation to all members who would like to propose, plan, and execute events. Just think of the possibilities: explore wines from regions yet undiscovered, match regional wines and cuisine

at a special restaurant dinner or the definitive showdown of Shiraz vs. Syrah. The opportunities are endless!

Send a brief outline of your idea for an event by e-mail to [Pierre.Fournier@sommelierguild.com](mailto:Pierre.Fournier@sommelierguild.com) or [Mike.Cowen@sommelierguild.com](mailto:Mike.Cowen@sommelierguild.com) or by snail mail to the Guild office. The Board will review each proposal, then move the selected ones forward by assigning a Director to assist you in the planning and execution. So ... what are you waiting for?

## Items of Special Interest to Guild Members

### Free Wine Newsletter

Ottawa wine writer and Guild member Natalie MacLean offers a free bi-weekly e-mail newsletter that covers a wide range of topics, such as restaurant wine lists, food and wine matching, the health benefits of wine, and her top wine picks, including those from the monthly LCBO Vintages releases, which she pre-tastes.

While she tackles each topic to learn something new, she never takes wine—or herself—too seriously, and writes in a highly entertaining way. 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.

Her articles have appeared in the *London Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *National Post*, *Hemispheres (United Airlines)*, *Food & Wine*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Ritz-Carlton Magazine*, among others. You can read more of her work and sign-up for the newsletter at [www.nataliemaclean.com](http://www.nataliemaclean.com). Or just e-mail her at [nataliemaclean@rogers.com](mailto:nataliemaclean@rogers.com).

### 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 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

**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

**Cheese and Wine** Complement your discerning taste for wine with the sumptuous taste for gourmet cheese! The **House of Cheese** in the Byward Market specializes in a variety of Canadian cheeses and gourmet cheeses from around the world. **Guild members are offered a 10% discount** from regular priced cheeses. What better way to

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!

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 (613) 741-8565 for more information.

discover the unique flavours of raw milk cheese or to explore the increasing diversity of Canadian cheeses. Let their experienced staff help you add another dimension to your enjoyment and that of your guests. Open 7 days a week at 34 Byward Market, Ottawa, ON K1N 7A2, tel: (613) 241-4853.

## Passing Scene

### March VPR *Reported by Joe Hatz*

A merry band of connoisseurs, collectors, and wine lovers gathered for the March VPR, the Guild's monthly ritual of discovery to sort the gems from the stinkers in the latest Vintage's release. Words like concentration, persistence, complexity, and even finesse, were used as descriptors during the evening. Of course I'm talking about the people around the table, who were at least of Grand Cru caliber, kindred spirits who made the evening very enjoyable from start to finish. Overall, 14 wines were sampled blind in 5 flights. We experienced a few unexpected taste sensations, and identified a few crowd favourites.

In the first flight of three whites, the Cloudy Bay 2002 Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand was the clear favourite. Consistent with its well-deserved reputation as a varietal benchmark, it showed concentrated aromatics of gooseberry, pineapple, and tropical fruit, with good complexity and length in the mouth. A tough act to follow for the other two whites in this flight. The Bollenberg Gewürztraminer had a typical aromatic profile of lychee, honey, and spice, with some oakiness, but several people found the nose to be too influenced by resin. The Bernkastler Reisling started with a very faint nose followed by delicate flavours in the mouth, but was missing the racy acidity needed to suitably balance the sugars.

Merlot blends were the advertised focus of the second flight, and to make life interesting, we included a wine that probably had no Merlot in it. This was the Catullo Rosso 2001 from the Veneto. It had the earthiness and acidity to make a good match to a mushroom pizza, but it was the least favourite in this flight. It showed no fruit on the nose, just a whiff of toffee and licorice, and uncomplicated grape and caramel flavours. The colour, aroma, fruitiness, and tannins were all medium, so it was drinkable; it just didn't compare favourably to the more concentrated wines in the

flight. We started with the Peninsula Ridge 2000 Merlot which showed very well with aromatics of cherries and barnyard layered over stewed fruit and chocolate. Everyone guessed Pinot Noir and was surprised to find a Canadian Merlot. A favourite with some people, but others found the barnyard to be more reminiscent of "old shoes" and turned thumb's down. The overwhelming favourite in this flight was the Ebenezer, a blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Merlot from the Barossa Valley. Deeply extracted, with a cork that looked like it had been dipped in blue-black ink, the Ebenezer had good concentration of cassis, plum, and mint aromas with pepper, stewed fruit and vegetal/celery notes. With intense fruitiness in the mouth, it was full bodied and well balanced, with a long finish, and enough tannins to support a few years of aging.

By the third flight, the discussion of the wines was growing in intensity. The perfect time to put the most and least expensive wines of the evening into the same flight. Hardly a showdown, since we all know that people prefer and can identify the most expensive wine. No need to take notes? Wouldn't the result be obvious? Not in a blind tasting. The least expensive wine, Les Garriques 2000 from the Languedoc, was the favourite of at least one person who found the tobacco, tar, licorice, and spice attractive. But our table's consensus for the flavour profile emerged in one word—ashtray—and we focused our debate for this flight on the Scaranto and the Brunello. The Scaranto, an Italian Cab/Merlot blend, showed complexity from the start with aromas of plums, cherries, cedar, tobacco, and sweet oak. A few people thought it might be a bit green/stemmy. Overall, it was big and complex, with medium tannins, and plenty of acid making it a lot of wine for the money. The Brunello didn't show as well as expected, probably in need of a few years of cellaring.

By the fourth flight, the table discussion had become so engaging that I pretty much lost my ability to take notes. Luckily this flight consisted of 3 affordable Aussie Shiraz's and the note-taking requirement was minimal. The least favourite wine of the flight was the Taltarni 2000 Shiraz. The flavour profile was mainly stewed fruit, with some unexpected cotton candy/gamy characteristics. About a third of the people liked the Mount Avoca. To its credit, it did elicit from the group a host of ways to describe cooked cabbage and blue cheese in a glass, but this eventually dissipated to reveal a nice wine. Two-thirds preferred

Hardy's 1999 Tintara (and seemed ready to buy it on Saturday). The Hardy's showed a rich Syrah style with mint, cassis, plummy stewed fruit, pepper, tobacco, and chocolate.

The final flight, an LBV Port and a Muscat, were served with some bitter chocolate, to close the evening with a touch of sweetness. The chocolate brought out the cherries in the port, but was less effective with the Muscat. People generally enjoyed them both.

The wines were:

#### Flight One: Whites

Sauvignon Blanc, Cloudy Bay, Marlborough, New Zealand, 2002	304469	\$28.95
Gewurztraminer, Bollenberg, Clos Sainte-Apolline/Mayer, Alsace, 2000	982090	\$16.90
Reisling, Bernkasteler alte Badstube, J. & H. Selback, Zeltinger Himmerlreich, Germany	940866	\$17.80

#### Flight Two: Merlot Blends

Merlot, Peninsula Ridge, VQA Niagara Peninsula, 2000	592261	\$21.95
Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot, Ebenezer, Barossa Valley Estate, South Australia, 1999	990689	\$29.90
Merlot/Corvina, Brentino, Maculan, IGT Veneto, 2000	708297	\$19.75

#### Flight Three: Spot the Old World Ringer!

Les Garrigues, Domaine Clavel, AC Côteaux du Languedoc, 2000	748814	\$14.95
Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot, Scaranto Riserva, Riolite Vin s.r.l., DOC Colli Euganei, 1998	961730	\$25.55
Brunello di Montacino, Fattoria dei Barbi, DOCG, 1997	939397	\$79.90

#### Flight Four: Affordable Aussie Shiraz

Shiraz, Taltarni, Pyrenees, Victoria, Australia, 2000	937219	\$18.95
Shiraz, Tintara, Thomas Hardy & Sons, South Australia, 1999	575704	\$22.95
Shiraz Reserve, Mount Avoca, Pyrenees, Victoria, Australia, 1998	724609	\$24.55

#### Flight Five: Dessert!

Traditional, Quinta de la Rosa, LBV 1996	726885	\$24.95
Moscato, Black Muscat, Rosenblum Cellars, California, 2000	931667	\$39.90

## Trophy Reds of Australia *Reported by Mike Cowen*

Twenty four lucky souls spent a most delightful few hours sampling the very best that Australia has to offer. What can you say about a tasting where the first wine in the first flight (traditionally a cheap white) is Australia's most famous wine—Grange? And things only got better! The criteria used to select the wines? they had to be Aussie, red, expensive and preferably with pretentious international snob appeal. In the end, using these most objective of criteria, ten of the twelve reds turned out to be Shiraz and six were from the Barossa Valley.

After suffering through a barrage of statistics on the exponentially exploding Aussie wine industry from yours truly (export value of Aussie wine has gone up by an average of 25% for every one of the last 11 years), the group got

down to the serious task at hand—could wines that cost so much really be worth the hype? To the surprise of no one, the 1997 Grange was the favourite in the first flight, though many felt the Eileen Hardy deserved that accolade. In the battle of the dueling Cabs, the 1998 Wolf Blass Jimmy Watson Trophy triumphed over what I thought was an equally stunning 1999 Penfold's Bin 707. In the "cheap" red flight (\$59 each) the Elderton Command Shiraz blew away the competition in the court of public opinion. In the last flight, views as to the "best" were all over the map: about a third loved the Torbreck (the winery was founded in 1995) Run Rig Shiraz Viognier (at \$250, it was literally made in a garage!). We finished off the evening with Australia's most delightful 'sticky', the De Bortoli Noble One, which made a heavenly pairing with the Chelsea's famous crème brûlée.

#### Flight A

1. Penfolds Grange 1997 South Australia 14.3%	\$250.00
2. Clarendon Hills Shiraz 1998 Piggott Range Vineyard 14.5%	\$99.00
3. Hardy's Eileen Hardy Shiraz 1998 South Australia 14%	\$95.00

#### Flight B

1. Penfolds Bin 707 Cab Sauvignon Barossa 1999 13.5%	\$89.00
2. Wolf Blass Jimmy Watson Trophy Cab Sauv 98 Barossa Valley 14%	\$84.95

**Flight C**

1. Leasingham Classic Clare Shiraz 1998 Clare Valley 14.0%	\$59.90
2. Rosemount Estate Balmoral Syrah 1999 McLaren Vale 14%	\$59.00
3. Elderton Command Shiraz 1997 Barossa Valley 14.5%	\$59.00

**Flight D**

1. Jim Barry The Armagh 1999 Shiraz Clare Valley 15%	\$115.00
2. Penfolds RWT 1998 Shiraz Barossa Valley 14.5%	\$89.00
3. Barossa Valley Estate E&E Black Pepper 98 Shiraz Barossa 14%	\$89.70
4. Torbreck Run Rig Shiraz Viognier 1999 Barossa Valley 14.0%	\$250.00

**Flight E**

1. De Bortoli Noble One 1999 375ml Botrytis Semillon, Riverina, 10.5%	\$29.00
---	---------

**Greek Food with Greek Wines** *Reported by Dawn Harvie*

I knew that I was going to enjoy the food—after all, I love Greek food; however, the wine was going to be a whole new experience because I have always paired Greek food with ouzo. That is going to change after this sumptuous feast!

We started the evening off with a selection of ten different wines—five white and five red—and trays of hors d'oeuvres. Joannis Paschalis, Counsellor for Economic-Commercial Affairs at the Embassy of Greece, very kindly provided all of the wines and went to extraordinary lengths to acquire some wonderful bottles for the dinner. Chef John LeBlanc prepared the food with the freshest and most Greek of ingredients. It was a fantastic opportunity to taste a wide range of Greek wines. The trick of the evening became trying to pronounce the grape varieties including Assyrtiko, Malagousia, Agiorgitiko, Xynomavro, and Moschofilero. A couple of the favourites from the group of ten wines included the Domaine Constantin Lazaridis Amethystos 2000 (984864 Vintages), the Domaine Spiropoulos Mantinia 2001 (144584 Vintages), and the Tsantali Winery Mount Athos Grenache/Limnio (598987)—well, I assumed they were the favourites because those bottles were empty.

The first sit-down course included a white (the Nikhteri) and a red (the Boutari) to try with grape leaves, smelts and tomato. The Nikhteri used Asirtiko, Athiri and Aidani grapes while the Boutari was made from the Xynomavro grape. The Nikhteri, clean and fresh, paired well with the Fried Smelts with Peppers and the Stuffed Grape Leaves

The wines served with dinner were:

Boutari 2000, Naossa, Macedonia	23218	\$9.10
Nikhteri 2001, Santo Wines, Santorini	870600	not supplied
Antonopoulos 2000, Mantinia	979054	\$12.65
Domaine Gerovassiliou 2001, Epanomi	999714	\$17.25
Domaine Hatzimichalis 1999, Cabernet Sauvignon, Opountia Locris	53874	\$13.75
Chateau Nico Lazaridi 2000, Drama, Macedonia	874131	\$13.95
Tselepos Nemea 2000, Agiorgitiko, Nemea, Mantinia	9555153	\$14.90
Samos Muscat Doux, Appelation controlee, Samos Cooperatives	not supplied	\$13.50
Santorini Vinsanto 1999, Santo Wines	870618	\$27.99

**27 March, 2003 Classics Tasting** *Reported by Rod Story*

Lori Davis led the tasting with her usual panache and to top it off she included a quiz to keep us all on our toes! The tasting consisted of 13 red wines from five different countries (Canada—both B.C. and Ontario, United States, France, Italy, and Australia). The tasting was divided into six flights. It was a great opportunity to taste a diverse

while the Boutari, with its good fruit, acidity, and freshness, brought out the spices in the Pork in Baked Tomato.

The Horta (bitter greens) Pitta with Tzatziki Sauce was paired with two white wines. The whites were nice—good acidity, crisp and clean. The Gerovassiliou was a medium to full-bodied wine with some Muscat-like aromas and went very well with the bitter greens.

The main course of Grilled Leg of Lamb with Rosemary Potatoes and Vegetable Moussaka met a match in each of the three reds. The Tselepos was the favourite with flavours of cherry and spice—it went very well with the food. The crowd also commented on the nice fruit and acidity of the Chateau Nico Lazaridi.

The final course, a dessert of Saraigli with Pistachio, was paired with two wonderful wines: The Samos Muscat Doux was full of nectarines flavours, had good acidity and a wonderful smokiness when paired with the Saraigli. The Santorini Vinsanto was all honey and nuts and was lovely with the Saraigli and its pistachios.

Comments from the group at the end of the evening included: “A wonderful opportunity to try wines we don’t have a lot of experience with” and “A wonderful dinner. My only complaint: too much delicious food.” I think we are all going to be much more willing to try Greek wines.

selection of fine wines that one would not normally buy. All the wines were very good, but this reviewer rated two as good value for money. The first was the Maleta Vineyards at \$25 and the second one was Ebenezer Shiraz at \$39.

The first flight consisted of one wine, the Cabernet Franc from Lailey Vineyards. It had a cherry nose and rim, with good astringency and light tannins. It was medium- to light-bodied with moderate length. Definitely cool climate in its profile.

For the second flight, the two wines were both very nice, but quite different. The Babera had a nose of lovely ripe berry fruit with light smoky oak. On the palate, it was well balanced with good astringency and a long finish—drink it now! The Guado, which was a blend of Sangiovese and Cabernet Sauvignon, was a chunky, musty (in a pleasant way), rustic styled wine.

For the third flight, the Amarone styled wine from Australia had wonderful ripe, jammy fruit on the nose that followed through on the palate. I found it a bit too hot from the alcohol such that it detracted from its overall enjoyment. The Maleta Vineyards Meritage (which is from Niagara) was the best value of the evening. A pleasant smoke and tar nose with a palate of fresh berry fruit. It was well balanced with finesse. Drink it now.

The fourth flight consisted of a Chateauneuf-du-Pape and Henscke Keyneton Estate. The Chateauneuf was a huge wine with tannins to match. It was a big wine built to last but had a little bit of a bitter note that I found a bit off-putting. The Henscke was what you would expect out of a higher end

The wines in the order they were tasted were:

#### **Canada**

2001 Cabernet Franc, Lailey Vineyards, Ontario \$29

#### **Italy**

1999 Babera D'Alba Fides, Pio Cesare \$39

1997 Guado Al Luco, Grevepesa \$39

#### **Bordeaux Blends without the Bordeaux**

2000 Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot, Joseph Moda Amarone, Australia \$48

1999 Meritage, Maleta Vineyards, Ontario \$25

#### **Shiraz/Syrah Blends**

2000 Chateauneuf-du-Pape, Domaine du Beurenard, France \$54

1998 Henscke Keyneton Estate, Australia \$49

#### **Shiraz/Syrah**

1999 Shiraz, St. Halett Old Block Shiraz, Australia \$49

1999 Syrah, Nicole Vineyard, British Columbia \$34

1999 Shiraz, Ebenezer, Australia \$39

1999 Shiraz, E&E Black Pepper, Barossa Valley, Australia \$99

#### **Cabernet Sauvignon**

1999 Cabernet Sauvignon, Cakebread Cellars, Napa, California \$89

1993 Cabernet Sauvignon, Caymus, California, Guild Cellar Selection \$40\*

\* When originally purchased.

## **Lailey Vineyard / Malivoire Wine Company Tasting** *Reported by Dawn Harvie*

It is always an extraordinary opportunity to have the wine maker at a tasting. The Lailey / Malivoire tasting was just another fine example of how the wine maker can shed light on the flavours of their wines. Derek Barnett of Lailey and Ann Sperling of Malivoire were kind enough to offer their comments on each flight and gave everyone in the group the opportunity to purchase the wines right then and there. And, as with most tastings held at Trattoria Caffé Italia, there was a sample of food to try with each flight.

big Australian Shiraz blend. It was a big wine that even at five years of age needed another five more years before it would be truly ready to drink.

The fifth flight consisted of four wines. Three Australian Shirazes and a Syrah from B.C. The B.C. Syrah was from Nicol Vineyard and one would never guess it was a Syrah from its colour or nose. It was very light in colour and had a Pinot Noir nose. It had nice and ripe fruit and was pleasant to drink but at \$34? The three Shirazes were all very good with the E&E being the highlight. It was India ink in colour, huge black pepper on the nose, and heavy concentrated fruit on the palate. Very decadent, but its price was rather steep at \$99. Of the three Shirazes, the Ebenezer gave the best value with its lovely black pepper on the nose and concentrated fruit on the palate.

The sixth flight had a 1999 Cabernet Sauvignon from Cakebread Cellars and 1993 Caymus Cabernet Sauvignon that was a ringer from the guild cellar. The Cakebread was well balanced with silky tannins and drinking very well now, but will improve even more over the next three to five years. The Caymus was a real treat. From its colour and its nose, you immediately knew it was a much older wine than the others. It had soft tannins and a lovely finesse that only comes with a quality Cabernet Sauvignon that is approaching 10 years old.

The favourite of the first flight was clearly the Chardonnay Musqué with wonderful aromatics and rich flavours. Unfortunately, by the time you read this, the Chardonnay Musqué will likely no longer be available—it proved to be just that popular that several people ordered a case of it before the night was over. The Riesling was also well liked by many in the group—it had good tropical fruit, light mineral notes and some lemon on the finish. Flight Two was interesting with the Malivoire Chardonnay 2000 and the Malivoire Moira Vineyard Chardonnay 2000. Ann described

the nose of the Malivoire Chardonnay 2000 as being like “apples that have been in the cellar too long.” The two Malivoire Chardonnays were clearly similar, but the Moira Vineyard Chard was a much smoother, fuller-bodied, better balanced version, and definitely the favourite of the flight. The Lailey Chardonnay, 100% Estate grown, showed its ten months in French Oak barrels (20% new) and nine months on lees—a traditional Chardonnay. The Ladybug Rosé was pale pink in color, had a lightly flowery nose, and was crisp and fruity on the palate.

The Lailey Merlot 2001 was the crowd-pleasing favourite of flight three. It had lovely bright fruit, some spice, and was well balanced. The Lailey Cabernet Franc 2001 was also nice with some earthy, vegetal notes and good dark fruit. 1998

#### **Flight One**

Lailey Riesling 2001	\$14
Malivoire Pinot Gris 2002	\$18
Malivoire Chardonnay Musqué 2002	\$17

#### **Flight Two**

Malivoire Ladybug Rosé 2002	\$15
Malivoire Chardonnay 2000	\$22
Lailey Chardonnay 2001	\$20
Malivoire Moira Vineyard Chardonnay 2000	\$36

#### **Flight Three**

Lailey Zweigelt 2001	\$12
Lailey Cabernet Merlot 2001	\$20
Lailey Merlot 2001	\$35
Lailey Cabernet Franc 2001	\$29
Malivoire Old Vines Foch 1998	\$22
Lailey Cabernet Sauvignon 2001	\$35

#### **Flight Four**

Lailey Vidal Icewine 2001	\$25
Malivoire Riesling Icewine 2001	\$36

Malivoire Old Vines Foch was all earth/barnyard, mushrooms and tobacco. Several tasters noted that they still had a bottle or two (or a case!) of the Foch in their cellar. The Lailey Zweigelt, with its good berry fruit, slight gaminess, and white pepper finish was lots of fun to try, and the Lailey Cabernet Sauvignon had vegetal notes, coffee tobacco, and a touch of sweetness—a nice wine.

The “dessert” flight comprised two wonderful wines with very different aromas and flavours: the Lailey Vidal Icewine and the Malivoire Riesling Icewine. The Vidal was a classic Icewine with lots of sweet honey and good acid/fruit balance. The Riesling Icewine was clearly a Riesling with wonderful petrol and mineral notes, some citrus and good balance.

## **April VPR** *Reported by Iza Morawiecka*

The VPR held on April 3 was, as might be expected, a delightful experience led by the illustrious sommelier Peter Collis. In an unusual move, Peter told us that the first flight would consist of a Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer, Muscadet and a Pinot Grigio. Once we had the flight in front of us, we understood why he had identified the varietals. We had a hard time identifying which one was in each glass. The Olive Grove Chardonnay had an attractive nutty edge to the nose; the palate was smooth, with hints of, you guessed it, olives and a touch of coconut. The Mission Hill Pinot Grigio with a floral and herbaceous nose stumped us all. The Gewurz had typically divine tropical fruit aromas on the nose. The last of this flight was a wonderful Muscadet de Sevre et Maine sur Lie 1999. It was a special cuvée blended from two estate vineyards with vines reaching 70 years of age. The nose had yellow plum, flinty mineral, grapefruit peel scents, with a viscous richness, and a long citrusy finish.

The second flight was as intriguing as the first with some excellent buys as well as five delectable wines. My personal favourite was the Estate Selection, Hawkes Bay New Zealand Merlot Cabernet blend consisting of 75% Merlot, 8% Malbec, 13% Cabernet Franc, and 4% Cabernet Sauvignon. The nose was an aromatic fruity, black currant, and green pepper mix with rich cassis, plum, and spicy flavours, and dusty chocolate notes on the finish. The great buy of the evening was also the Wine of the Month, a

Cabernet Sauvignon from Vin de Pays d'Oc. This full-bodied, long-lingering plummy fruit finish wine had a deep purple colour with aromas of blackberry, mushroom, and a hint of game and was worth every penny at \$17.95. The Notarpanaro was a close second in my estimation with a peppery, ruby port, and toffee nose. What a sensational experience. Not to be forgotten was the Bardolino made in the Ripasso method. It was slightly spicy, cedary, and red pepper nose with a crisp, well balanced medium-bodied finish with hints of chocolate and licorice.

The third flight was as sensational as the first two. D'Arry's Original 2000, a Chateaufeuf du Pape look-alike from Southern Australia, was a 50-50 blend of Shiraz and Grenache. The nose was grapy, fruit sweet with lots of spicy, sneezy, pepper, clove, and bay leaf character; full-bodied, round, and soft on the palate with almost no tannin. The next wonderful experience was a Chateaufeuf-du-Pape 2000, 'La Bernardine' from Chapoutier. It was an appealing Chateaufeuf in a fairly light style. Black cherry, plum, dried herbs, and garrigue were buttressed by well balanced alcohol and acidity with drying tannins on the finish. Robert Parker gave this wine a score of 90-92 and well worth the \$34.80. Last but not least was the Dead Arm Shiraz which had a ripe dark berry and dense cherry nose to it with a fabulous concentration of sweet tannins, low acidity and layers of blackberry and cassis fruit that saturated the palate.