

National Capital Sommelier Guild

www.sommelierguild.com

Newsletter – June 2004

June

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July

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Compromises are for relationships, not for wine.

Sir Robert Scott Caywood

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, 8 July 2004, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. (Annual Pizza Night)

Trattoria Caffè Italia, 254 Preston St. (at Gladstone)

Join those who have made this Guild Signature Event a regular feature of their wine life. VPRs 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. VPRs 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.

Note: On July 8, for only \$5 more, you can sample fine Italian pizzas after a blind tasting of carefully selected wines from the Vintages Catalogue (July 10th release). With the Chelsea Club closed for annual staff holidays, we are holding our fifth traditional pizza night. We will have a chance to socialize, taste great wines and enjoy gourmet Pizza. This may be the time to introduce a friend to one of the Guild's events.

Members and Sponsored Guests: \$30

National Capital Sommelier Guild

99 Fifth Avenue – Suite 130, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5P5

Tel: (613) 237-7911

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The Lighter Side of California

Wednesday, 9 June 2004, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)

California does France? That's one way of looking at this early summer tasting. Half a dozen great California Pinot Noirs together with a few highly-rated Chardonnays will naturally draw us to make comparisons with Burgundy. A French Champagne house creating a top-tier California sparkler will demonstrate the hard commercial links between

the two wine areas. Of course, California also produces some fine versions of southern Rhone white varieties so we will sample some of these as well. Finally, we will taste some of those unique aromatic whites that the sunshine state is so well known for. This will be a great way to start the summer.

Members and Sponsored Guests: \$45

10th Annual Méchoui

Sold Out

Sunday, June 13, 2004, 2:30 p.m. (Departing by bus from the RA Centre)

La Ferme Cavalier, St-Sixte, Québec

Gems of BC's Okanagan Valley

Sold Out

Thursday, 17 June 2004, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe St. (at Somerset)

Items of Special Interest to Guild Members

Accounting for Taste B&B Open for Business

Michael Botner, Ottawa wine writer and Guild Governor, has taken to tasting the wines of B.C.! Michael and his wife, Rosemary, have opened the **Accounting for Taste B&B**, a B.C. Tourism approved accommodation on Mount Boucherie, Kelowna, B.C. There are plenty of things to do year round: skiing, golfing, bicycling, yachting, walking around the botanical gardens and in nearby provincial parks as well as wine tasting! Michael can even provide custom wine tours. Visit www.accountingfortaste.ca or call 1-866-769-2836 for details.

The Best of Canada 2004

The Best of Canada 2004 wine tasting event will take place on June 24 at the Panorama Room of the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Fourteen select Canadian wines will be presented by wine expert Phil Nicholson, accompanied by six mini-courses. Proceeds will benefit Project Upstream, a charitable organization providing mental health services in the community. Tickets are \$95/person (\$40 tax receipt). For information and tickets call Sylvia Cuhaci at 234-9131 or send an e-mail to sylviacuhaci@aol.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 a member of the NCSG and enjoy the savings.

Vines Magazine Guild Director Rod Phillips is Editor-in-Chief of *Vines Magazine*. *Vines* is an up-scale, glossy wine magazine, published six times a year, that covers the world of wine with particular attention to Canada. Each issue contains wine reviews written by the *Vines* team of critics across the country, and features articles on food and wine, wine travel, and wine regions. Look for a forthcoming feature on Port written by former Guild President, Vic Harradine. Guild members may purchase a **one-year subscription for only \$8.50**, which is half the normal subscription and much less than the store price (\$3.95 an issue). Just send a cheque to Vines Magazine, 159 York Street, St Catharines, Ontario L2R 6E9, with a note saying that you are a member of the Guild. Good wine reading!

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 on regular priced cheeses.** What better way to 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

Spring Dinner at the Luxe Bistro *Reported by Joseph J. Phelan*

The National Capital Sommelier's Guild annual spring dinner was held April 25 on a rather blustery, cold, wet spring evening at the Luxe Bistro in Ottawa's Byward Market. This bleak backdrop turned to delight as we were treated to a panoply of flavour combos with an all Canadian food and wine menu. The evening started with a lovely sparkling wine—Cuvee Catherine Brut from Henry of Pelham. The nose was of apple and bread dough, and once on our taste buds, the crisp acidity and apple and lime tones came to fore.

The dinner started with a delightful spin on the classic gazpacho. In this case the tomatoes were the hydroponically grown "Heirloom" variety. The cool soup was beautifully seasoned with a mixture of wonderful surprises but what grabbed my attention was the island of succulent Nova Scotia crab and crisp cucumber (Timbale) that rested in the center of the oversized soup bowls.

The second course was a treat to read on the menu but what mattered more was the incredible taste. Not just mere crustaceans on greens but "garlic flower roasted Nova Scotia lobster tail and shell-on swimmer scallops served on a bed of local micro-greens with Champagne vinaigrette". The kitchen in this case displayed a remarkably restrained hand. The lobster tail and Quebec swimmer scallop served in its own shell were a delicate if not a sublime combination. The micro-greens are just that, mere wisps of fresh fine herbs and greens lightly covered with a subtle champagne vinaigrette. To accompany this salad dish was the full-bodied Sauvignon Blanc "Triomphe", 2001 from Southbrook Winery. This wine pairing was quite appropriate since the grassy/grapefruit crispness counterbalanced the richness of the seafood and stood up very well against the mild vinaigrette.

The third course was a choice of either truffle roasted Alberta beef tenderloin served with a forest mushroom fricassee and an assortment of spring vegetables and roasted fingerling

potatoes with a Madeira wine sauce or a skillet roasted, Yukon gold potato crusted artichoke with braised chicory and wild rice pancake drizzled with sorrel and chive oil. The wine choices were Colio Estate's Bronze award winning (Canadian Wine Awards 2002) Merlot Reserve 2000 and the Meritage 2000 from Thomas & Vaughan. The Merlot was brimming with complex, well-proportioned blackberry fruit with definite chocolate and leather nuances. The tannins were quite soft. Excellent with the beef tenderloin this ripe merlot also married well with the skillet roasted artichoke. The full-bodied Meritage worked better with the beef delivering excellent fruit wrapped around ripe tannins.

The fourth course was an assortment of three Quebec cheeses. A Chèvre Noir—a subtle cheddar-like firm goat cheese, a soft camembert-style cheese from St. Basil, and an Oka-style stinky cheese called Kegami from St. Adele. I enjoyed the balance of the two red wines with these cheeses though the Select late Harvest Vidal 1999 from Vineland Estates was offered to accompany these cheeses. I preferred to enjoy the Vidal on its own as this wine was the top overall award winner at the 2003 VinItaly competition held in Verona, Italy. This complex full-bodied wine showed high aromatic notes of apricot and pineapple. Delicious. Of course if you could resist enjoying the Vidal on its own it was a quite lovely with the dessert which was a fig and wild blueberry tart with nutmeg gelato.

If the laughter and buzz around the tables was an indication of the wine and food appreciation, the evening was certainly a success. The warm hospitality, the inspired cuisine from Chef Derek Benitz and his talented kitchen staff, and the professional and efficient "front of the house" service from Luxe Bistro's waitstaff ensured that the evening went off without a hitch. Thank you Luxe Bistro and Guild Director and *bon vivant* Keith Hearn.

The Best of the General List *Reported by Lucie Guay*

The room buzzed with energy on this unusually hot spring night. The eager Guild members were awaiting the third tasting, a continuation of last years' Best of the General List. Joe Hatz and Dawn Harvie selected these wines based on recommendations from LCBO product consultants, Guild directors, and Guild members.

In the first flight the favourites were the Santa Rita Reserve 2003 Sauvignon Blanc with its fresh, balanced citrus fruit and the Cave Spring Reserve Riesling 2002 with its complex petrol character. Close on the heel of the previous

two was the Pierre Sparr Gewürztraminer with its exotic flavour of lychees and heavily scented roses. The Mad Fish came in last, overpriced and boring.

The second flight was exclusively Pinot. I love this heartbreak grape, as it's so food versatile. Mondavi Coastal 2001 and the Wolf Blass Yarra 2001 were the favourites. The Mondavi, my favourite, displayed complexity and finesse with ripe but elegant fruit and silky tannins found in a classic Pinot. The Wolf Blass displayed bigger fruit, more tannins and alcohol, all in balance. Mission Hill Bin 99

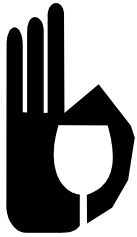
2001 came in third. Though it did not have the abundance of fruit of the previous two it was a delicious and balanced light wine. A disappointing Oregon, the Amity 2001 was pungent, reminiscent of tainted Ontario wines, disliked by all.

The third flight was a bit disappointing with many non-voters. The favourite was the Masi Amarone 1999, imparting oxidized and botrytised flavours of Ripassos with dry ripe fruit and high alcohol. The Primitivo was recognised by many as a “good buy” with its nice fruit and tannic grip.

The last flight, the heavy reds, had an overwhelming winner, the Vina Carmen Carmenère/Cabernet Sauvignon 2001. A definite New World wine with its full body, eucalyptus, menthol character, and abundance of fruit, charred wood, and alcohol. My favourite and second of the group was the Peter Lehmann Clancy Red 2002. Displaying definite youth it has good ageing potential with length, lots of blackberries, tannins and acidity to balance it.

I'm looking forward to the next Best of the General List. This is an event that benefits us all in finding great inexpensive wines.

	LCBO #	Price
Flight 1		
Santa Rita Sauvignon Blanc Reserve, 2003, Chile	275677	\$12.30
Masi Serego Alighieri Bianco del Conte, 2002, Veneto, Italy	409862	\$12.95
Mad Fish Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon, 2003, Western Australia	588863	\$14.95
Cave Spring Reserve Riesling, 2002, Niagara	VE286377	\$16.95
Pierre Sparr Gewurztraminer Carte d'Or, Alsace, France	373373	\$15.10
Flight 2		
Mission Hill Pinot Noir Bin 99, 2001, B.C.	118844	\$12.95
Amity Vineyards Pinot Noir, 2001, Oregon	124594	\$17.00
Wolf Blass Yarra Pinot Noir, 2001, Australia	611509	\$16.95
Mondavi Coastal Private Selection Pinot Noir, 2001, California	465435	\$19.95
Flight 3		
Martini Zinfandel Primitivo di Manduria, 2002, Southern Italy	612754	\$9.15
Bodegas Piqueras Castillo de Almansa Reserva, 2000, Spain	270363	\$10.05
Masi Amarone, 1999, Northern Italy	317057	\$34.95
Flight 4		
Lurton Chateau Bonnet, 2000, Bordeaux	99044	\$16.30
Vina Carmen Carmenère/Cabernet Sauvignon, 2001, Chile	439166	\$16.90
Peter Lehmann Clancy's Red, 2002, Barossa, Australia	611467	\$17.95



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Registration – June 2004

Please note that:

- You will not normally receive confirmation of your reservation.
- You will be contacted only if we cannot accommodate you.
- Your cancelled cheque or credit card statement will serve as your receipt.
- If paying by cheque, send a separate cheque for each event with name of event on the cheque.

Cancellation Policy

- Cancellations must be made by informing the Registrar at least 5 days before the event. If you do so within this time frame you will not be charged for the event.
- If you cancel less than 5 days before the event, you will be charged for the event and you will be responsible for finding an alternate to fill your seat and for advising the registrar of your alternate's name at least 12 hours prior to the event.

The Lighter Side of California

Wednesday, 9 June 2004

Attendee's Name(s) (please print):

Members & Sponsored Guests @ \$45 = _____
Total _____

July VPR

Thursday, 8 July 2004

Attendee's Name(s) (please print):

Members & Sponsored Guests @ \$30 = _____
Total _____

Preferred method by E- Mail with credit card: Send your reservation to events@sommelierguild.com. If *VISA or MasterCard Pre-authorization* has been submitted, no cheque or registration form is necessary. Your credit card will be debited **after** the event. Otherwise immediately mail **one cheque per event** with your registration form.

By Phone: Call the Guild's answering machine at (613) 237-7911. Please speak clearly, identify the event(s) you wish to attend, the persons attending and immediately mail the registration form and **one cheque per event**. If *VISA or MasterCard Pre-authorization* has been submitted, no cheque or registration form is necessary. Your credit card will be debited **after** the event.

By Mail: Mail the registration form and **one cheque per event**.

Cheques are to be made out to: National Capital Sommelier Guild or NCSG

Mail to:

National Capital Sommelier Guild, 99 Fifth Avenue – Suite 130, Ottawa, On K1S 5P5

Visa or MasterCard Pre-authorization

Members who wish to make charges against their Visa or MasterCard must complete this *pre-authorization*. Please fill out the form below so that it is identical in all respects to that of the billing address used by your financial institution. Mail it to the Guild's address at 99 Fifth Avenue - Suite 130, Ottawa, On K1S 5P5. Visa or MasterCard information will not be accepted by phone or by e-mail. This authorization will remain in effect until the expiry date or rescinded by you.

I authorize the National Capital Sommelier Guild to charge my event registrations and membership to my Visa or MasterCard Number provided below.

Name: _____

Address: _____
Apt. No. Street No. Street

City & Province: _____

Postal Code: _____

Visa Account Number: _____ Expiry Date: Mo. _____ Yr. _____

MasterCard Number: _____ Expiry Date: Mo. _____ Yr. _____

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____
