

National Capital Sommelier Guild

www.sommelierguild.com

Newsletter – April 2005

April

- 4 Best Values of the General List
- 9 Wine & Dine with Pam Collacott
- 24 Spring Dinner at Bistro 115
- 28 Vintages Pre-Release Tasting

May

- 9 Annual General Meeting
- 15 Seafood Dinner at Lapointe's
- 19 Four Continent Pinot Noir Challenge
- 26 Reality Check: Where Do Canadian Wines Stand?

Life should NOT be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely and in an attractive and well-preserved body, but rather a skid in sideways—Chardonnay in one hand, strawberries in the other, body thoroughly used up, totally worn out and screaming, “WOO HOO! What a Ride!”

~ Unknown ~

Moderation is a sign of good taste

The National Capital Sommelier Guild strongly supports moderate and responsible consumption of wine and spirits. Most 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 Tasting

Thursday, 28 April 2005, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)

Please note the April 7 VPR was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts.

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.

Members and Sponsored Guests: \$25 + \$1.75 (GST) = \$26.75

Best Values of the General List

Monday, 4 April 2005, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)

“Hidden treasures”, “great value”, and “smart buy” might be some of the terms you use when looking for a wine from the LCBO General List and Vintages Essentials. I mean, who isn’t on the lookout for a decent, inexpensive wine?! And how often have your friends asked you to recommend a good wine under \$10, \$15, or \$20? It’s great to have a mental list of great wines at the ready—for that recommendation, to take to a party, or to enjoy after a hard day at work. And what if you find that quintessential wine that costs \$10, but tastes like \$20!

Yes, best values of the General List is back with a whole new line-up of wines to taste. All of the wines selected for this tasting will be recommended as exceptional value by two or more LCBO Product Consultants and/or Guild members, and be value rated in a magazine or website.

Members and Sponsored Guests: \$25 + \$1.75 (GST) = \$26.75

Wine & Dine with Pam Collacott!

Saturday, 9 April 2005, 6:00 p.m. reception, 7:00 p.m. dinner

Trillium Cooking School, RR#2, North Gower

Join Pam Collacott, Teacher/Owner of Trillium Cooking School, and fellow Guild members in a combination hands-on cooking school and dinner matched with various white and red wines. After enjoying a Kir Royale aperitif and hors d’oeuvres in the Collacott’s 160-year-old log home, we will prepare our dinner and then sit down to enjoy the fruits of our labour at a candle-lit table set with linen.

Artichoke Heart Salad

Sauvignon Blanc, 2003, Miguel Torres, Chile

Mushroom, Chèvre, and Walnut Tapenade Appetizer

Pinot Noir, 2003, Twin Islands, New Zealand

Main Course of Balderson Cheddar Cheese Gougère with Herbed Grilled Vegetables

Shiraz/Cabernet Sauvignon, 2002, Greg Norman, Australia

Gigondas, 2001, Domaine Grand Romane, France

Cranberry Poached Pears with Belgian Chocolate Sauce

‘Alambre’ Moscatel, 2000, JM da Fonseca

Wines have been selected by VP Martin Carrière and Director Mark Kilpatrick of the Sommelier Guild.

Please allow appropriate driving time to arrive for 6:00 pm.

Attendance is limited to 14 people.

For directions and a map, please e-mail Martin at martin.carriere@sommelierguild.com.

For more information on the Trillium Cooking School, go to www.pamcooks.com.

Members and Sponsored Guests: \$85 + \$5.95 (GST) = \$90.95

Designated Driver: \$70 + \$4.90 (GST) = \$74.90

Spring Dinner at Bistro 115

Sunday, 24 April 2005, 6:30 reception, 7:00 p.m. dinner
 110 Murray Street, Byward Market

SPRING IS COMING and the surest sign is not a robin or crocuses but our annual SPRING DINNER. This year we've asked Suzanne Lafrance, Co-owner and Executive Chef at Bistro 115, to assemble a five course menu of the finest and freshest Canadian produce available. The Guild brings its expertise to the table by approaching award winning wine-makers in Ontario and B.C. to match each course with a premium Canadian wine. Five courses! Five wines!! Don't miss out!!! This dinner, which offers a vegetarian option available at the time of registering, is limited to forty people. Due to the timing of our newsletter this will be the only notice given.

Reception

Hors d'Oeuvres:

Carpaccio of Alberta Bison

Goat Cheese Crostinis

Mini Cakes of Newfoundland Crab with Chili Aioli

Smoked Wapiti Sausage from the Elk Ranch in Kanata

Served with a Sparkling Wine

Dinner

Veloute of Wild B.C. Mushrooms

Smoked Rainbow Trout from Ste-Foy Stacked with Ile d'Orleans Potato Blinis,
 Adorned with Lumpfish Caviar & Spring's First Chive Crème Frache
 Served with a White Wine

Confit of Mariposa Duck with a Glaze of Last Summer's Rhubarb & Blueberries
 or
 Filet of Veal Grilled and Drizzled with a Rosemary Infused Extra Virgin Olive Oil
 Both Paired with a Julienne of Sautéed Vegetables
 Served with Two Red Wines

Canadian Cheeses with Walnut Fig Bread and Jelly from Bistro 115's Terrace-Grown Agawan Grapes
 Served with a Dessert wine

Truffles & Maple Fudge
 Coffee, Tea

Members and Sponsored Guests: \$90 + \$6.30 (GST) = \$96.30

Designated Drivers: \$75 + \$5.25 (GST) - \$80.25

Wines of South Africa

Sold Out

Thursday, 5 May 2005, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)

Please note the change in date for this event!

NCSG Annual General Meeting

Monday, 9 May 2005, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Room H102, Building H, Algonquin College, Woodroffe Campus (Free parking directly in front of Restaurant International)

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.

The agenda normally calls for reports on membership, finances, Guild achievements, the consideration of any proposed amendments to the By-Laws, and the election of the Board of Directors. By-Law amendments must be submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting. If you have a specific item you would like added to the agenda or if you would like to submit a By-Law amendment, please contact our President, James Bertrand, at james.bertrand@sommelierguild.com or call 830-6994. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Please register for this event.

Members: Free

Guests: \$10 + \$0.70 (GST) = \$10.70

Seafood Dinner at Lapointe's!

Sunday, 15 May 2005, 6:00 p.m. reception, 6:30 p.m. dinner

Lapointe's Restaurant, 499 Terry Fox Drive, Kanata (in the Signature Mall at the corner of Campeau Drive and Terry Fox)

Executive Chef and Co-owner Jeff Parlardg of Lapointe's and Guild VP Martin Carrière are planning a repeat of last September's superb dinner at this location. For those who missed this dinner last fall, please refer to the Passing Scene on page 5–6 of the November 2004 newsletter for details of what to expect.

Reservations will be accepted but menu and pricing are not available at this time. These will be available in the May newsletter.

Members and Sponsored Guests: TBA in the May newsletter

Designated Driver: TBA in the May newsletter

Four Continent Pinot Noir Challenge

Thursday, 19 May 2005, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)

Actually, it's three continents! South America, our Chardonnay Four Continent Challenge champion, had to bow out due to lack of Pinots. Our search continues for the ultimate wine continent with a Pinot challenge. Again, we will compare wines from three continents in three price ranges and you will decide who wins. An extra flight will be added to make up for the missing continent.

Does Burgundy still rule or will the new world win the challenge? You'll be the judge.

Members and Sponsored Guests: \$35 + \$2.45 (GST) = \$37.45

Reality Check: Where Do Canadian Wines Stand?

Thursday, 26 May 2005, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe (at Somerset)

Can Canadian wines compete in an international wine market? Canadian red, white, and sweet wines have won international acclaim, but for day to day drinking can they stand up? Join Guild President, James Bertrand, as we compare wines from Ontario and B.C. against international benchmarks. All the wines selected for this tasting will be current LCBO or Vintages listings. Canadian wine lovers won't want to miss this one.

Members and Sponsored Guests: TBA in the May newsletter

Guild Business

Credit Card Authorizations

If you have authorized the Guild to charge specific events to your credit card, please inform us of any changes to the status of your card, such as a new expiry date. In addition, if your card is overextended, please provide us with an alternate method of payment.

If only your credit card expiry date has changed, please email the new expiry date (and only the expiry date) to Bruno Fioravanti at bruno.fioravanti@sommelierguild.com or leave a message on the Guild line (613-237-7911).

If your credit card number has changed, DO NOT SEND THE NEW CREDIT CARD NUMBER BY E-MAIL. Instead, please complete a new Credit Card Pre-Authorization Form found on the Notes on Registration page at the end of this newsletter or download it from www.sommelierguild.com and mail it to us at:

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

Thank you for helping the Guild run smoothly.

Interested in Assisting at a VPR Tasting?

Have you ever wanted to select wines for a Vintages Pre-Release tasting? Have you thought about presenting a flight? Have you ever wondered how we get the VPRs ready? Now's your chance! We are providing members with the opportunity to assist at the July and August VPRs. VPRs are usually scheduled for the first Thursday of the month. If you're interested, please contact Guild Director Richard Thibodeau (richard.thibodeau@sommelierguild.com), and indicate which month you'd like to help us with.

Looking for a Few, Very Special People!

The lifeblood of the Guild is its membership and its heart is the volunteer Board of Directors. If you are the type of person who seeks out and acts on solutions, works well both independently and within a team, and isn't afraid of a little hard work, this may be a great opportunity for you. It is the membership that votes to put people on the Board, for a one year term, and voting takes place at the Annual General Meeting in May. There are eleven positions to be filled. Some have set responsibilities, such as Treasurer, Secretary, President, and Communications Director, and these positions are decided each term by the new slate of Directors. Others are called Directors-at-large. Those positions with responsibilities, e.g., Treasurer and Membership Director, have set position descriptions to follow. These positions are often, but not always, filled by returning Directors. For most new Directors, their responsibilities include running 4 or 5 events per annum, assisting one of the other Directors with large projects from time to time, and familiarizing themselves with the working of the Board with an eye to taking on more responsibilities in the next term. If you are interested in running for the Board of Directors, please contact our President, James Bertrand, at james.bertrand@sommelierguild.com or call 830-6994.

Items of Special Interest to Guild Members

Wine and Dine with Stacey Metulynsky

Guild member Stacey Metulynsky has been selected to be the co-host of a new wine and food pairing television series called "Wine & Dine" for Food Network Canada. Knight Enterprises is developing and producing the show, and will be shooting the pilot later this month. Upon approval of the pilot from Food Network Canada, the rest of the season will be shot in the spring/summer. The show is scheduled to air in the fall of this year.

Stacey Metulynsky was the recipient of the National Capital Sommelier Guild Scholarship for Wine Education in 2004.

Stacey, I know that Guild members will join me in wishing you the best of luck.

From Mortar and Bricks to Virtual Venue

Why would an increasingly successful retail and service business call closing its doors ‘progress’? Is the Blasted Bottles move from retail outlet to www.blastedbottles.com incredibly risky—or a sign of the times?

“The answer is in the numbers,” says co-owner Wendy Mayhew. “With the growing number of people online and the increased hours they’re spending on the web, it’s not at all surprising that web-based businesses are on the rise.”

Wendy’s referring to a recent study, conducted for the Interactive Advertising Bureau of Canada, indicating that online advertising increased by almost 25% in Canada during 2004—and by a whopping 67.6% over online advertising in 2002. Convinced that online shopping is gradually becoming the norm for individuals and corporations alike, Wendy sees the old jingle ‘Let your fingers do the walking’ morphing into ‘Let your mouse do the shopping.’

“And why not?” Wendy adds, “Our website is our virtual store, and our virtual doors are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week—around the world. The fact is that we’re giving our customers the freedom to shop their way, at their pace, and at their chosen time.”

The greatest challenge facing Blasted Bottles’ customers is deciding among the scores of unique wine-themed gifts and accessories currently available via the website, including the many possibilities offered by the company’s etched and painted glass products—from wine bottles to mouse pads, from stock to custom-created designs.

The Mayhews are finding that they’re now more available for those one-on-one consultations and presentations that set customer-driven and customized service apart. They also find they have more time to bring their etched products across Canada for other customers and corporations to enjoy.

“We haven’t closed our doors,” Wendy quips, “We’ve actually opened them much wider!”

Wendy Mayhew
Blasted Bottles
www.blastedbottles.com
E-mail: info@blastedbottles.com
Phone: (613) 838 7814 or Toll Free: 1 866 838 7814

FREE Wine Newsletters

Nat Decants

Guild member Natalie MacLean, recently named the World's Best Drink Writer, offers a free newsletter with wine picks, tips, articles, and humour. The newsletter was named one of the three best wine and food newsletters in North America at the James Beard Foundation Journalism awards. There are no ads and all e-mail addresses are kept confidential. To sign up, visit www.nataliemaclean.com

Worlds of Wine

Worlds of wine-newsletter is a free monthly e-newsletter hosted by our very own Guild member Rod Phillips, wine columnist for the Ottawa Citizen. His newsletter contains articles and reviews. You can subscribe to it through his web site at www.worldsofwine.com.

Winecurrent.com

Receive analytical and straightforward wine reviews for Ontario wine-lovers. Receive a newsletter prior to every Vintages Release alerting you to the best wines without folksy chatter or clutter. Rod Phillips and Guild Governor Vic Harradine review wines new to the LCBO, Vintages, Ontario wineries, Ontario restaurants, and by consignment. Subscribe at www.winecurrent.com.

Special Offers to Guild Members

For special offers to Guild members, please visit www.sommelierguild.com and click on the Special Offers link.

Passing Scene

Tapas Suzien at l'Orée du Bois

Wednesday, 2 May 2005

Reported by Marc Rollin

Aptly called “the edge of the woods”, l'Orée du Bois' charm was not only accentuated by the recently fallen snow, it was amplified by the convivial nature of this event. In the restaurant's top storey, sometimes used as a billiard's room, other times for staff meetings, 18 guests sat down to a 9-course meal, served in small “tapas-sized” portions, paired with 12 exceptional wines. The goal was neither to decipher the origin of the wine, nor to guess their varietal composition; it was to discuss the food and wine matching principles. “Was it a marriage or a divorce?”

For apéro, Marc Rollin, Guild Director, and Jean-Claude Chartrand, l'Orée du Bois Sous-chef, served a sparkling rosé cider from M. Jodoin. This particular cider's colour comes from the pink flesh of the Geneva apple. The salmon gravlax was paired with a Malvasia Bianca from Bonny Doon, which, as a support, brought out the coriander in the dish. The fennel shrimp was not only an excellent match with the “Libre Expression”, it was, for different reasons, also well paired with the 1997 Savennière. The shrimps were speared with whole fennel, pan fried in the vicinity of the guests, and served with a wonderful beurre blanc. The 2002 Montlouis, much younger than its varietal cousin preceding it, was much less expressive, albeit a good match to the melt-in-your-mouth foie gras. As a fitting end to this phase of the evening, we had a mushroom pâté en croûte served with a Touraine–Amboise, a varietal blend of Gamay, Malbec and Cabernet Franc.

The duck glazed with star anise was served on a bed of rice vermicelli and paired with a Tokay-Pinot Gris from Alsace. The match would have been perfect if the wine had a little residual sugar. The venison was paired with an aromatically intense 1998 St-Chinian, a great example of Mediterranean winemaking mastery, and a heady, chewy, almost piquant, 2000 Bandol. Next we tried a pomme dauphine au Cantonier with a 1998 Châteauneuf-du-Pape white, and excellent vintage. The dish was composed of a semi-melted Québec cheese, similar to Oka, on a bed of crispy potato strands. Lastly, to transition from the main courses to desert, we tasted a mango sorbet with a Vin de Pays des Côte de Gascogne, primarily made of Gros Manseng.

For desert, to keep with the theme of the evening, we had an assorted chocolate plate with Mead. Once again of Québec provenance, the Ferme Desrochers' Hydromel “Cuvée du Diable” is a wonderful example of artisanal craftsmanship. This wine, made of honey, was not only well balanced and expressive, it was aged in oak, therefore showing signs of maturity, and, interestingly, went well with the chocolate.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team at l'Orée du Bois for their efforts in accommodating the Guild and for showing us a truly good time, especially when this event's fate was threatened by the SAQ strike. Santé!

March 2005 VPR

Thursday, 3 February 2005

Reported by Dawn Harvie

Pierre Fournier, Guild Director 2003–2004, was back in fine form offering Bruno Fiorvanti, current Guild Director, a helping hand at the March VPR! Okay, maybe it was a helping hand minus two fingers!

Our first flight of whites took us to Italy, South Africa, and the U.S. The Soave from Veneto, Italy was the favourite of the flight with a light perfumey nose and hints of apricot. A nice wine with the potential to go well with many different dishes! The Sauvignon Blanc from Stellenbosch had lots of frozen peas, grassy, and herbaceous notes—quite typical of the grape. The Sauvignon Blanc from California had floral aromas mixed with some diesel fuel and was quite viscous in the mouth. It had good acid and balance. It was the second favourite and would also do really well with food.

The second flight featured a Cabernet Sauvignon followed by three Pinots! Yes, a strange line-up, but for good reason—the Maculan Cabernet has apparently been fairly light in the past and would have fit in with the medium-bodied red category. Many thought the Cabernet Sauvignon was reminiscent of a Cabernet Franc. It had lots of earthy aromas with green stem, cedar, and toast on the nose. On the palate, it had lots of sweet vanilla oak. Not a bad wine at \$15.95. Of the three Pinots, the first, the Twin Islands Pinot Noir from Marlborough was the favourite. It had a Pinot colour and nose—some earthy notes, lots of cherry, and strawberry, some cloves and cinnamon. On the palate, it had much of the same with good acidity and balance; a very food friendly wine. The Mandolin Pinot from California had aromas described as car wax, rubber, and petroleum. Some tasters also noted coconut and toasty oak. On the palate, it had cherry and strawberry fruit, some mushroom and medicinal flavours, and good body and alcohol. The Joseph Drouhin had a nose of fruit and oak and flavours of earth and cherry. It was a very elegant wine with great structure and complete balance. A nice wine!

The third flight had some great big red wines! The D'Arenberg Grenache was the favourite, not only of the flight, but of the night. It was not the slightest bit subtle with a nose of raspberries and blueberries and lovely spice. On the palate, it was full of fruit, spice, alcohol, and acidity. In the words of one of the tasters, it was a wine that "becomes your friend". All good!! The Greg Norman Shiraz/Cabernet Sauvignon from the Limestone Coast had earthy and toasty notes and was very elegant on the palate. It was a nice wine at a good price point. The Montecillo Gran Reserva had aromas of sundried tomatoes, pickling spices, cedar, and old fruit. On the palate, it was quite elegant, albeit a bit oxidized, with smooth tannins, great acidity, and a lovely finish. The last of the flight, the Château St. Georges was young, with spicy, mocha notes on the nose and was slightly bitter/astringent on the palate. Many people liked it: "It tastes good," someone said.

Unusual for a VPR, but a nice treat, the last flight was of Ports! Looking at the list, it's not hard to guess which was the favourite—yes, indeed, it was the Fonseca 20 Year Old Tawny. What more can I say than "yum"! The Quinta do Noval and the Sandeman LBVs were both rated great value Ports by tasters present. I wouldn't hesitate to put a bottle or two in my cellar, but then I never do!

There really was not a bad wine at this VPR! I would happily purchase and drink any of them. Many thanks to our organizers, Pierre and Bruno, for a job well done!

Flight 1: White

San Vincenzo, 2003, Roberto Alsemi, Veneto IGT, Italy	948158	\$15.95
Hill And Dale, 2004, Stellenzicht Vineyards, WO Stellenbosch, South Africa	595694	\$11.95
Rancho Zabaco Dancing Bull, 2002, E. & J. Gallo, USA	655431	\$15.95

Flight 2: Medium-Bodied Reds

Maculan, 2002, Veneto IGT, Italy	987701	\$15.95
Twin Islands, 2003, Marlborough, South Island, NZ	597682	\$19.95
Mandolin, 2001, California, USA	590596	\$14.95
Joseph Drouin, 2002, Savigny-Lès-Beaune AC, France	986406	\$31.95

Flight 3: Full-Bodied Reds

D'Arenberg The Derelict, 2002, D'Arenberg Vineyard, McLaren Vale, South Australia	598110	\$25.95
Greg Normand Estates, 2002, Limestone Coast, South Australia	586156	\$19.95
Montecillo Gran Reserva, B. Osborn, 1995, Rioja DOC, Spain	239277	\$31.95
Chateau St-Géorges, 2000, AC St-Géorges St-Emilion, France	960310	\$42.95

Flight 4: Ports

20 Year Old Tawny, Fonseca, Porto, Portugal	422022	\$64.95
LBV, Unfiltered, Quinta Do Noval, 1998, bottled 2003, Portugal	744011	\$23.95
LBV, Sandeman, 1999, bottled 2004, Portugal	309047	\$19.95

Japanese & Korean Dinner

Sunday, 13 May 2005

Reported by Hilary Purvis

As many of you know, it is often challenging to match wines with Sushi and spicy foods. At Restaurant Joy, 23 guild members and guests took on this challenge and were delighted with many of the choices selected for this casual evening.

Starting off the evening was the delicious Deinhart German Lila Riesling Kekt from Germany. Lovely crisp acidity and bright fruits tantalized the tongue with this one. Not only was it an excellent sparkler, many found it to be an ideal match with the sushi appetizers that followed. These included individual servings of Dragon (smoked eel, cucumber, avocado), Rolls (salmon, tuna and avocado), and Kimchi Rolls (kimchi, tamago, cucumber, crabmeat) as well as shrimp Nigiri served with a seaweed salad. As one can imagine, there were many flavour contrasts to work with.

The wine flight was comprised of Vina Esmeralda, a Muscat/Gewürztraminer blend from Spain (\$11.95), and Weingut Reinhold Haart's 1999 Riesling Kabinett from the Mosel. The sweetness and acidity of the Kabinett made it the overall favourite, as it worked well with the various levels of saltiness of the fish and the avocado in the sushi.

Washington State's Columbia Crest Merlot (\$19.95) and 3 Californian wines: Firesteed Pinot Gris 2002 (\$17.95), Mandolin Pinot Noir (\$14.95), Rosenblum Zinfandel (\$19.95)—were matched up with generous portions of Chicken Bulgogi. This traditional Korean dish features marinated strips of chicken in a spicy garlicky sauce and was served with a shrimp and vegetable tempura. All of these wines were superb on their own, but many could not stand up to the spiciness of the chicken. However, the fruit forward Pinot Noir appeared to be the best match for this flight. For those who had saved some of the Kabinett, they felt that it was better suited to the chicken.

To cool down our palates and finish the evening, a desert of green tea ice cream with fried bananas was paired with Petalo Il Vino Dell' Amore Moscato Bottega (\$13.65). This light fruity sparkler was a perfect way to end the evening and was a perfect match.

Destination California

Thursday, 17 May 2005

Reported by Dawn Harvie

California, here we come! This tasting was not quite so reminiscent of Sideways as it might have been—there was no drinking from the spit buckets—perhaps because they were so infrequently used! Keith Hearn took us from the south of California to the north and from Pinot Noirs to Cabernet Sauvignons in this tasting.

We started off the evening with a sparkling wine, the Sonoma Brut by Gloria Ferrer. There were lots of yeasty, biscuity, steely aromas and flavours—a pleasant, easy drinking sparkling.

The first flight was a really interesting array of Pinots stretching from Santa Barbera in the south to Sonoma in the north. These Pinots were notably more subtle and refined than one would expect from California. The first wine had lovely notes of earth, fall leaves, cloves, and spices. It had nice cherry fruit and most thought it was smooth and had good balance, although a few people thought the alcohol overran the fruit. This 2002 Calistoga Pinot was the favourite of the flight, although all the wines had at least five fans in the group. The second wine, a La Crema 2002 from Sonoma Coast, had more fruit and a real candy nose. It was smokey and slightly stemmy on the palate with notes of vanilla. The last Pinot, a 2002 from the LaFond Vineyards in Santa Barbera, had some medicinal and green notes and on the palate it had leather and dry tannins. Some found it to have more structure and balance, while others found the tannins too unripe.

The second flight of wine featured a grape California is well-known for—Zinfandel. The first, and the hands-down favourite, was the 2002 Frogs Leap from Napa Valley. It had some earthy notes, some fig and prune, cedar, and lots of cinnamon. On the palate, these aromas were evident. The Lytton Springs from Sonoma had some medicinal and mushroomy notes and was described as full-bodied, chewy and “fat”. The Old Vines Zin from Ravenswood had some raspberry aromas and something described as both medicinal and iodine. It had stewed fruit and lots of dry, unripe tannins that were described as green banana. Several thought the alcohol overpowered the fruit in this wine.

Syrah, not Shiraz, was the featured grape of the third flight. And many found there to be more elegance in the wines of this flight than in the previous Zinfandel flight. The first, the Stag’s Leap from Napa, was a lovely wine with meaty, spicy, menthol, red fruit, and vanilla aromas which all carried through on the palate along with great balance. The 2001 Saralee’s Vineyard Syrah from the Russian River Valley, had lots of black fruit, alcohol, and white pepper on the nose. On the palate, it was a dark, rich, fruity wine, with good acid and tannins, and good balance. Many thought it was more reminiscent of those California fruit bombs. It was the favourite of the flight, but not by much as each wine received almost the same number of votes give or take a couple. The last Syrah from Santa Barbera had lots of black pepper—an absolute giveaway for the flight! It was quite a stylish wine to boot and reasonably priced at \$34.

The first of the Cabernet Sauvignon and blends flight was an amazing wine with lots of fans in the group. It was the Sequoia Grove 2000 Cabernet Sauvignon. It had notes of green pepper, big black fruit, and cedar. On the palate, it was smooth and elegant, drinking well now with great balance—a real classic Cab! Many thought it was showing some cool climate structure not typical of wines from the New World. The 1999 Cherryblock Cabernet Sauvignon from Sebastiani in Sonoma also had some green pepper notes on the nose and, once it opened up a bit, it displayed cherry and chocolate notes. It was a big wine, good fruit, lovely balance. And the last wine, the Black Label Claret from Oakville was oxidized and not showing its best. The good thing in this case was that it was the cheapest wine of the flight!

Aperitif

Sonoma Brut, Gloria Ferrer	192898	\$27.95
----------------------------	--------	---------

Flight 1: Pinot Noir

Cuvaison Pinot Noir, 2002, Cuvaison Vineyards, Calistoga	714519	\$31.95
Pinot Noir, 2002, La Crema Vineyards, Sonoma Coast	719435	\$33.95
Pinot Noir Santa Rita Hills, 2002, LaFond Vineyards, Santa Barbara	998666	\$26.95

Flight 2: Zinfandel

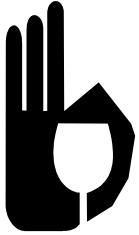
Zinfandel, 2002, Frog’s Leap Winery, Rutherford	593525	\$39.95
Lytton Springs, 2002, Ridge Vineyards, Cupertino	982413	\$44.95
Old Vines Zinfandel, 2001, Ravenswood Winery, Sonoma	732503	\$23.95

Flight 3: Syrah

Syrah, 2001, Stag’s Leap Wine Cellars, Napa	590356	\$49.95
Saralee’s Vineyard Syrah, 2001, Arrowood Winery, Russian River Valley	590281	\$55.95
Melville Vineyards Syrah, 2000, Lafond Winery, Santa Barbara	619759	\$33.95

Flight 4: Cabernet Sauvignon

Cabernet Sauvignon, 2000, Sequoia Grove, Napa		
Cherryblock Cabernet Sauvignon, 1999, Sebastiani Vineyards, Sonoma	602441	\$85.00
Black Label Claret, 2002, Francis Coppola Diamond Series, Oakville	521021	\$29.95



National Capital Sommelier Guild

www.sommelierguild.com

Notes on Registration

Please note that:

- You will not normally receive confirmation of your reservation.
- You will be contacted only if we cannot accommodate you.
- Your cancelled credit card statement will serve as your receipt.

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.

To Register: Send your reservation to events@sommelierguild.com. If you have already submitted a VISA or MasterCard Pre-authorization, you do not have to do anything else. Your credit card will be debited **after** the event.

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, Ontario 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: _____

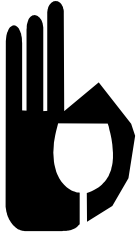
Postal Code: _____

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

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

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



National Capital Sommelier Guild

www.sommelierguild.com

Membership Form

As you may know, all guild memberships run on a calendar year, thus all memberships ended in December 2004. In 2004, Guild members enjoyed a diverse program of over 50 events reflecting the broad perspective and interests of Guild members. The 2005 program will be every bit as rewarding, so please join in and renew your membership. **Note that membership fees remain unchanged for the 13th year in a row.**

For the fastest renewal: If you have a credit card pre-authorized with the Guild, just send an email to membership@sommelierguild.com, specify the type of membership you want and we will bill your card. **Do not include credit card information in an e-mail.** See Notes on Registration (at the end of the newsletter) for Visa or MasterCard Pre-authorization if you have not already established credit card payments with the Guild.

Or: Complete the form, make a check payable to *National Capital Sommelier Guild*, or *NCSG*, and forward to:

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

Membership Renewal Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone:

Home: _____ Fax: _____

Home: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Type of Membership (please circle one):

General (\$50)

Trade (\$75)

Corporate (\$150)

Corporate Members, please identify your Establishment. **Trade Members**, indicate your Occupation or the Field in which you work:

Or indicate (if applicable) if you are a Student or Graduate of the Sommelier or Hospitality Program:

Program: _____ Graduation Year: _____

Other Information: *The Guild is a non-profit, member-run organization. Please indicate below if you can assist in any way—from helping out at tastings to presenting seminars. If you have expertise in a particular wine, food or beverage field, please also indicate below your field of expertise.*