

# National Capital Sommelier Guild

[www.sommelierguild.com](http://www.sommelierguild.com)

## Newsletter – May 2006

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*I think a tax on wine is a tax on the health of our citizens.*

~ Thomas Jefferson ~

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### Moderation is a sign of good taste

The National Capital Sommelier Guild strongly supports moderate and responsible consumption of wine and spirits. 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, 8 June 2006, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

*Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe St. (at Somerset)*

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**

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## **Wine, Cheese, & Rod Phillips' latest book, *Ontario Wine Country***

Friday, 5 May 2006, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

*Nicholas Hoare Bookstore, 419 Sussex Drive*

Rod Phillips has just released *Ontario Wine Country*, an illustrated look at the past, present, and future of Ontario wine, with an overview of each Ontario winery.

Rod will speak briefly about "Ontario in the World of Wine," and answer questions, beginning at 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$10 (payable at the door), but you must register beforehand by sending an email to [events@sommelierguild.com](mailto:events@sommelierguild.com).

Rod Phillips is the weekly wine columnist for the *Ottawa Citizen*. He is also the author of *A Short History of Wine*, and has written for *Wine Access*, *Tidings*, *Wine Spectator*, and *World of Fine Wine* (UK). He was named "Wine Person of the Year" by the National Capital Sommelier Guild in 2000. He also judges at Canadian and international wine competitions, and writes two newsletters, [worldsofwine.com](http://worldsofwine.com) and [winecurrent.com](http://winecurrent.com).

Register by emailing [events@sommelierguild.com](mailto:events@sommelierguild.com) or leaving a message at (613) 241-7155.

**Everyone Welcome: \$10/ person**

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## **Seafood Dinner With Henry of Pelham Wines!**

Sunday, 7 May 2006, 6:00 p.m. reception, 6:30 p.m. dinner

*Lapointe's Seafood Grill, 194 Robertson Road, Bells Corners*

Mark the 7th of May on your calendar for an Ontario wine extravaganza. Henry of Pelham Winery principal Daniel Speck will be your host for the evening as he presents some of Ontario's best wines. The dinner will highlight the wine varieties and styles that perform consistently well in Niagara. Joining Daniel for the evening is event organizer and Guild VP Martin Carrière. Your matchmaker for the evening is James Bertrand. Don't miss this incredible line-up:

Reception

*Cuvée Catharine Brut (NV)*

1st Course

Fresh Shucked Malpeque Choice Oysters on the Half Shell  
Served with a Horseradish Cocktail Sauce and a Spicy Garlic Chili Sauce  
*Sauvignon Blanc 2005*

2nd Course

Marinated Jumbo Tiger Prawns with a Citrus Salsa  
*Riesling Reserve Off-Dry 2004*

3rd Course

Pan Fried Dungeness Crab Cakes with a Fire Roasted Red Pepper Coulis  
*Barrel Fermented Chardonnay 2004*

Main Course

Oven Roasted Sesame and Bread Crumb Encrusted Fresh Atlantic Salmon Fillet  
Topped with a Triple Sec Infused Orange Leek Sauce with  
Mixed Fresh Vegetables, Sautéed Spinach and Roasted Mini Red Potatoes  
*Speck Family Reserve Chardonnay 2002*  
*Speck Family Reserve Pinot Noir 2002*

Dessert

Lemon Mango Crunch  
Lemon Mousse with Pieces of Ripe Mango and  
Lemon Sponge Crumble on a Pistachio Shortbread Crust  
*Riesling Icewine 2004*

This event was made possible by the generous sponsorship of Henry of Pelham.

If directions are required, please call the restaurant at 596-9655.

**Members and Guests: \$95 + \$6.65 (GST) = \$101.65**

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

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## NCSG Annual General Meeting

Monday, 15 May 2006, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
*Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe St. (at Somerset)*

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@sommeliorguild.com or call 830-6994.

As always, wine and appetizers will be served after the meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

*Please register for this event.*

**Members: Free**

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

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## Scuola Italiana – A la Piero!

Thursday, 18 May 2006, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. *Please note the change of date for this event!*  
*Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe St. (at Somerset)*

It is said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery – join Guild Director Pierre Fournier as he borrows Antonio Mauriello's celebrated tasting series to share his passion for Italian spirits.

In addition to its wines, Italy has a rich heritage of distilled and infused alcohols. Our journey will touch upon some of the lesser known gems which capture the "sapora" of Italy and its regions. Weaving a tapestry of flavours and moods, we will be sampling these alcohols in four tableaux:

- afternoon refreshment at the sidewalk caffè
- l'aperitivo al trattoria
- il digestivo in the ristorante
- caffè at the bar

**Members and Sponsored Guests: \$40 + \$2.80 = \$42.80**

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## New Zealand Wine Show

Thursday, 25 May 2006, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
*Government Conference Centre*

Details can be found at [http://www.nzwine-events.ca/nzwines\\_content.html](http://www.nzwine-events.ca/nzwines_content.html) by clicking on the Ottawa icon.

**Register directly with the New Zealand Wine Fair.**

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## Sumac Ridge Dinner with Harry McWatters

Monday, 29 May 2006, 7:00 p.m. reception, 7:30 p.m. dinner  
*Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe St. (at Somerset)*

This just in! Harry McWatters, President of the Sumac Ridge Wine Group, will host a dinner for Guild members. This exclusive dinner will be limited to 24 people and will be prepared by Sean Murphy, the new chef at Chelsea Club. Details of the dinner will be released soon.

**Members and Sponsored Guests: TBA**

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## 12th Annual Méchoui with Natale Lofaro

Sunday, 4 June 2006, 2:30 p.m. (Departing by bus from the RA Centre)

*La Ferme Cavalier, St-Sixte, Québec*

Celebrate summer's return with fellow Guild members and friends, sip fine wines in the great outdoors, and enjoy delicious foods prepared by the Cavalier family. This Moroccan style feast begins with mouth watering lamb pâté flavoured with Madeira wine, followed by farm raised lamb slowly roasted on a spit over a bed of hardwood coals. There are salads, vegetables, and, of course, great desserts all prepared at the farm. As at all Guild events, you will be pleasantly surprised with the selection of fine wines.

After the 11th year that Mark and Karen have organized this event for our enjoyment, they have turned the job over to founding Guild member and Algonquin College instructor Natale Lofaro. Please dress casually and comfortably. This is a working farm so you may want to visit the sheep and lambs in their pens.

Mandatory 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.

Register for this fabulous event early as it fills up quickly.

**Members and Sponsored Guests: \$80 + \$5.60 (GST) = \$85.60**

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## Dinner with Spain and Portugal at El Meson!

Sunday, 18 June 2006, 6:00 p.m. reception, 6:30 p.m. dinner

*El Meson, 94 Beechwood Avenue, New Edinburgh*

Join Guild VP Martin Carrière and owner José Alves of El Meson restaurant where they feature authentic Spanish and Portuguese food in the splendor of a Victorian Mansion. To complement this wonderful cuisine, wines will be exclusively Spanish and Portuguese selections from the Vintages catalogues. Expect the following:

- A white Port spritzer with appetizers
- A white wine with a seafood soup
- Two red wines with the main course
- A third red wine with a cheese plate
- A fortified Moscatel de Setubal will accompany dessert

We will try to give you the best possible choices of premium wines from Spain and Portugal for this evening. The average price of the three red wines presently being secured is approximately \$30. Menu and wine list are almost complete and they will appear in the June newsletter.

For those wishing to do something for a special father, please remember that June 18th is Fathers' Day.

A vegetarian option is available for this evening. Please specify at time of registering.

Space is limited, please reserve early. For directions call El Meson at 744-8484.

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

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

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## Scuola Italiana – The Italian Northeast Wine Regions

Monday, 19 June 2006, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

*Chelsea Club, 236 Metcalfe St. (at Somerset)*

Antonio Mauriello continues his educational series on Italian wines. He is back from Vinitaly in Verona, and next on his blackboard, is the kingdom of notorious grapes such as Corvina, Rondinella, and Molinara. Learn more about Veneto and the Northeast regions and find out why they are among the "new world regions" of Italy.

As usual, Antonio will challenge you to practice your Italian and learn the correct pronunciation of words such AmaronE (and not AmaronI).

By the way – why is AmaronE not a DOCG?

**Members and Guests: \$45 + \$3.15 (GST) = \$48.15**

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# 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 2006–2007 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 Founier
Richard Thibodeau	Burt Riverso
Mark Kilpatrick	Robert White
Antonio Mauriello	Jay Hunt
Joe Hatz	Natale Lofaro
Martin Carrière	Rutha Astravas

## 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](mailto:bruno.fioravanti@sommelierguild.com).

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](http://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.

## Items of Special Interest to Guild Members

### 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.winecurrent.com).

## Special Offers to Guild Members

For special offers to Guild members, please visit [www.sommelierguild.com](http://www.sommelierguild.com) and click on the Special Offers link.

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# Passing Scene

## The Wines of Mountain Road

Sunday, 2 April 2006

*Reported by Jim Gallivan (with help from Mark Kilpatrick)*

In a somewhat unusual event – at least in terms of timing, a group of guild members gathered on a Sunday afternoon for a tasting of Mountain Road Wines with owner/winemaker Steve Kocsis. Although Steve has been growing grapes for many years, Mountain Road Winery is a relatively new, small volume winery that produced its first wine in 1999. Steve decided to try winemaking after watching his carefully tended grapes end up in whatever at the larger wineries. It was obviously a good decision given the quality of the wines, and an even better decision given the price points.

The first flight featured four whites from the 2002 vintage, a Dry Riesling, an Unoaked Chardonnay, a Barrel-Fermented Chardonnay and the Reserve Barrel Fermented Chardonnay. The Riesling was floral, ripe pear/honey, and petrol on the nose with a bracing acidity. It was drinking well now, but will probably last a few years. The Unoaked Chardonnay was aromatic with some floral notes and a ripe apple nose. After the Riesling it was quite soft, but still had good acid and a clean finish – a nice light quaffing wine. The oaked Chardonnays were both complex. The Barrel Fermented was a combination of American and French oak, while the Reserve was French oak. The “regular” had a more forward caramel and tropical fruit aromas, but was well balanced with good acidity and a long finish – perfect for drinking this summer with a grilled chicken salad. The Reserve was more austere with noticeable oak and high acid still dominating the fruit – this one will take a few years to integrate, but will be a very impressive wine when it does.

The second flight featured the “lighter” reds, at least that’s what we were told. The first two wines were from the 2001 vintage, a Baco Noir and a Marechal Foch. Both were big, complex wines with lots of ripe dark fruit and definite oak – 34 months in barrels will do that. Behind it all was good acid and fine tannins. These were definitely not typical wines for these grapes. Now we know why the Marechal Foch won a medal at the Ottawa Wine and Food Show. The second pair of wines were 2002 Barrel Fermented Gamays, the regular and the Reserve. They were noticeably lighter than the first pair of wines, but both had loads of fruit with a ripe sour cherry nose and earthy, smoky notes. The Reserve was more complex with some candied notes as well and greater body. Both had high acid and were slightly disjointed, probably because they were only bottled a few days before. Given some time to settle, these wines may have the depth and character to challenge the top Crus of Beaujolais.

The second flight was matched with three cheeses, a Madawaska from the Ottawa Valley, a Fondu artisanal production from the Quebec City region, and a Pecorino con Tartufo. The Fondu was an interesting match with the Baco Noir and Marechal Foch. The truffles in the Pecorino complemented the earthy, smoky tones in the Gamays while the Pecorino tamed the acid.

The third flight was the Cabernet flight, featuring the 2001 Cabernet Sauvignon, the 2001 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve, the 2001 Cabernet Franc Reserve, and the 2002 Cabernet Blend, a 50/50 blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. All had loads of dark ripe fruit. Apparently Steve is a bit of a gambler and likes to leave the grapes on the vine as long as possible. Obviously the risk paid off. Both Cabernet Sauvignons had earthy/herbal notes, with bell pepper and vanilla. The regular Cab Sauvignon tended more to ripe sweet cherry, while the Reserve was more complex with plum and dark fruit. Both had soft tannins, good balance, and a long finish. The Cabernet Franc Reserve had some smoke, chocolate, bell pepper, and loads of dark fruit. This was a well balanced wine with loads of ripe tannin and good acid, suggesting it may live for a few more years. The Cabernet blend was complex with dark fruit, chocolate, vanilla, a hint of cassis, and ripe tannins. However, it had a high acid content and was somewhat disjointed as it had only been bottled a few days before. Like the Gamays, this one needs time to settle, then it can wait several years before drinking.

The third flight was matched with two sausages, a Hungarian Csaby and a Rosette de Lyon with walnuts. Both worked with all of the wines, but the Csaby was probably better with the Cabernet Sauvignons and the Rosette with the Cabernet Franc and the blend.

The final flight was the sweet wines. The first was a 2004 Botrytis Affected Riesling with a floral, honeyed nose, good acid, and a long finish. The second was the 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon Icewine with a light rosé colour, and a candied strawberry nose. The 2001 Cabernet Franc Icewine that followed was a marked contrast, dark brown with a nutty, raisiny, almost sherry-like nose. Both had good acid, and were well-balanced. The last wine was the 1999 Vidal Icewine, Steve's first wine. It had a ripe peach/apricot nose with lots of fruit and good acid. This was a well-made wine that will last for a few more years.

Based on the wines tasted, Mountain Road Winery is a "must-visit" on future trips to Niagara. Given the price/quality ratio, it is a definite "must-visit". Hopefully, Steve's trip to Ottawa was also successful, and some of these wines will be featured in local restaurants.

#### **Flight 1: Whites**

2002 Dry Riesling	\$13.95
2002 Unoaked Chardonnay	\$14.95
2002 Barrel Fermented Chardonnay	\$15.95
2002 Barrel Fermented Reserve Chardonnay	\$25.95

#### **Flight 2: Reds**

2001 Baco Noir	\$11.95
2001 Marechal Foch	\$12.95
2002 Barrel Fermented Gamay	\$12.95
2002 Barrel Fermented Reserve Gamay	NYR

#### **Flight 3: Cabernets**

2001 Cabernet Sauvignon	\$21.95
2001 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve	\$23.95
2001 Cabernet Franc Reserve	\$22.95
2002 Cabernet Reserve Blend	NYR

#### **Flight 4: Sweet Wines**

2004 Botrytis Affected Riesling	\$17.95
2002 Cabernet Sauvignon Icewine	\$89.95/375 ml
2001 Cabernet Franc Icewine	\$79.95/375 ml
1999 Vidal Icewine	\$34.95/375 ml

## **Champagnes, Sparkling Wines, and Fine Dining! *Part Two***

Sunday, 23 April 2006

*Reported by Steven Elder*

A group of 20 or so Guild members and friends braved a blustery Sunday evening to attend the Guild's second Champagne Dinner. There was a keen edge of anticipation, not just at the prospect of a whole evening of bubbly, but also because this is one of the city's most talked-about restaurants, Beckta Dining and Wine. Guild VP Martin Carrière had worked closely with owner/sommelier Stephen Beckta, and chef Stephen Vardy, to build a menu around four Méthode Champenoise sparkling wines and one Sauternes.

The aperitif wine was a Canadian entry from BC: 'Steller's Jay' Brut 2001 by Sumac Ridge. This was a very pleasant surprise. Quite deep in colour with a fine mouse, it had an attractive nose of apples, pears, and flowers. Apples showed up strongly on the pallet as well, giving almost a sensation of sweetness, but a nice zip of acidity kept everything in balance. A range of canapés was served alongside, including tuna tartar topped with a tiny beet chip, and sweetbreads in a honey glaze.

The first course was a remarkable duck consommé, flavoured with Banyuls. Clear, and fragrant, this soup was a lovely light start to the meal. The three little foie gras "bon bons" floating on top gave just a little hint of richness. Paired with this was Taittinger's Domaine Carneros Brut 2000 from Napa. This had a yeasty and spicy nose, reasonable complexity, and just a hint of sweetness. Although only a year older than the Steller's Jay, it seemed not nearly as lively, and had a hard time standing up to the noticeable pepper in the consommé.

The next pairing, however, was a match made in heaven: rich house-smoked salmon with a fine champagne, Saint-Gall Brut Premier Cru. The very noticeable acid of the Saint-Gall was the perfect foil to the fat of the salmon. And unlike much smoked salmon, the smoke here was done with such a light hand that it did not overwhelm the delicate flavour of either the salmon or the wine, with its ginger notes and good minerally character. This champagne was one second-pour that was enthusiastically received.

The main course was certainly the most interesting and unorthodox pairing of the evening. Champagne is not usually the first wine to pop to mind when roast veal is on the menu. Yet there were elements to this dish that made it work, and put an end to any longing for a big tannic red! The veal was served with a tomato confit and a brown-butter champagne-vinegar

jus, both of which imparted a slight sweet-and-tart taste that complemented the citrus flavours of the Duval-Leroy 'Cuvée Design Paris' Brut Champagne.

Dessert was an occasion for something completely different (as it should be) and presented us with another revealing match: Sauternes paired with a scrumptious Peanut Butter Praline Dome, layers of crunchy praline sandwiched between a very peanuty mouse. The Château Partarrieu, from the great 2001 vintage, had an intense botrytis nose, with lots of pineapple. Medium-bodied, well balanced and not overly sweet, it offered great refreshment value; it could have been dessert all on its own. Peanut is usually the death of most wines, yet this wine had such intensity of flavour that it paired very well.

Although Stephen Beckta had a prior engagement and could not join us, we were all very pleased to be introduced to Janet Fletcher, a member of the Beckta team and one of this year's recipients of the Guild's Scholarship for Wine Education. The attentive service of Janet and the whole Beckta crew helped ensure a relaxing and memorable evening.

## The World of Big Reds

Wednesday, 19 April 2006

*Reported by Mike Cowen*

We tried something new during the course of the evening. Each taster was provided with a quiz sheet where they were required to determine whether the wine was new world or old and then take a stab at identifying the varietal, country of origin and appellation. Points were assigned for each correct answer. A "winner" was determined for each flight and then the grand taster of the evening was determined. It should come as no surprise that we have some fine palates in the Guild. At the top of the heap reigns the champion—Steve Elder, followed by Rutha Astravas and Lucie Guay. It did add an extra element of fun to the evening and caused us to focus our senses and brains to the task at hand.

And, what about the wines? Fourteen reds, fourteen appellations, ten different countries with an average retail value of \$65—what was there not to like? In the first flight, the surprise favourite was from Niagara, the Hillebrand Trius Gand Red 2000 that showed rich fruit interlaced with dill and green pepper. Of note, the only wine that garnered not a single vote as 'best of flight' was the \$79 Burgundy, again highlighting the difficulty in selecting wines from this region. In flight two, it was a battle between a Barolo, a Chateauneuf-du-Pape, and a South African wine. Again, a bit of a surprise in that the Rust en Vrede Estate 2001 from Stellenbosch reigned supreme showing luscious dark fruit and a finish that went forever. In flight three, a BC Shiraz and a wine from Portugal based on the traditional Port grapes were at the top of the heap, out distancing the Bordeaux Fifth Growth Clerc-Milon 2001. In the end, the most votes went to the Prats and Symington "Chryseia" which really did echo the basic "port" profile of the underlying grapes. In the concluding flight, the two favourites were the Aussie Mitolo Shiraz and the Nicolas Catena Malbec/Cab blend from Argentina. The Nicholas Catena may have been the "wine of the evening" judging from the effusive comments from the audience. It had superb balance with dark, rich fruit, fine tannin, tart acid, and a finish that went on and on—proof that the Argentinian wine industry is making great strides in the premium wine category.

### Flight 1

Bouchard Pere and Fils les Cailles Nuits Saint Georges, 2001, Burgundy, France, 13% alc.	\$79.00
San Felice, Poggio Rosso, 2000, Chianti Classico Riserva, Italy, 13.5% alc.	\$55.00
Hillebrand Trius Grand Red, 2000 Niagara 12.5% alc.	\$63.00
Verite Archipel, 2001, Napa Sonoma California, 14.1% alc.	\$58.00

### Flight 2

Chateau La Nerthe, 2001, Chateauneuf-du-Pape France 13.5% alc.	\$59.00
Rust en Vrede Estate, 2001, Stellenbosch, South Africa, 14% alc.	\$45.00
Rivetto, Barolo Leon, 2000, Piedmont, Italy, 14.5% alc.	\$75.00

### Flight 3

Chateau Clerc-Milon, 2001 5th. Pauillac, France, 12.5% alc.	\$69.00
Jackson-Triggs Okanagan Estate Shiraz Sun Rock Vineyard, 2003, 14.6% alc.	\$30.09
Prats and Symington Chryseia, 2003, Douro, Portugal, 14% alc.	\$75.00

### Flight 4

E. Guigal Brune at Blonde, 2001, Cote-Rotie, Rhone Valley, France, 13% alc.	\$79.00
Vina Sena, Sena, 2001, Aconcagua Valley, Chile 13.5% alc.	\$75.00
Nicolas Catena Zapata, 2001 Mendoza Argentina 14% alc.	\$80.00
Mitolo Shiraz Savitar, 2003, McLaren Vale, Australia, 15.5% alc.	\$75.00

## Vintages Pre-Release

Thursday, 27 April 2006

Reported by Dawn Harvie

VPRs are bang for your buck! No doubt about it. I don't know how many VPRs I've missed over the past couple years, but I'm sure I could count them on one hand. We know, first-hand, which wines are worth buying and which are not because we're the only group in all of Ontario that has the opportunity to taste up-coming release wines. If you taste one wine that you were planning on purchasing and decide that it's not worth the purchase price, you've saved yourself some money. On the other hand, if you find something that's great value or something that is worth cellaring, you've put your money to good use. I have very few wines in my cellar that haven't passed the test of the VPR. And I've had lots of fun to boot. Tonight's tasting was no exception. We tasted a lot of big reds presented by Pierre Fournier, Guild Director.

As a change of pace, all of the wines served were red. The first flight featured four different varietals. The Mongrel by Hugh Hamilton (85% Sangiovese, 10% Merlot, 5% Tempranillo) was bubblegum and juicy fruit—the aromas of carbonic maceration, but it didn't have the big oomph of fruit on the palate. The Pirramimma Shiraz had a lot of coconut from the oak, some cocoa, methol, and vegetal notes. With its pale colour and earthy nose, the Nepenthe Pinot Noir was a dead giveaway. On the palate it had bright cherry fruit and good acidity. A decent Pinot at its \$18 price tag. The favourite of the flight was the John Zilm Craneford Merlot with its jammy fruit, however, several thought that it didn't have enough acidity to cellar.

Flight two featured various blends. The Medley (Grenache, Shiraz, Mouvèdre) had a nose of blueberry, floral, and pepper with the same notes on the palate and good tannin and acidity to back it up. The Penfolds Bin 138 (Grenache, Shiraz, Mouvèdre) was rather closed, but in the mouth it had big fruit and spice, but it was a little too hot and had too much acid. The Elderton CSM was full of pepper on the nose and on the palate along with blackberry fruit. With its nose of cherries and strawberries, tobacco, and vanilla, the Euphonium (Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot) was the favourite. Several felt that the wines in this flight were not worth their price tags given that the wines lacked real interest and dimension.

We had the opportunity to taste four different Shiraz ranging in price from \$20 to \$65. The Footbolt Shiraz had lots of black fruit, peppery spice, and eucalyptus that all followed through on the palate, however it was very hot. The McRae Wood, the favourite of the flight, was very complex with lots of mint, stewed fruit, blueberry, and chai-like aromas of cardamom and sweet spice. The St. Peters Seppelt had vegetal, meaty, and floral notes on the nose. In the mouth, it had lots of fruit and was quite easy going. The Balmoral Shiraz was disappointing—many noted that this was not typical of this usually outstanding wine. There were hints of eucalyptus and fruit compote, but the fruit was just too ripe.

Dark chocolate and dessert wines! A very nice way to finish the evening. The Rasteau VDN had a nose of sweet raisin with a little smoke. The Old Tawny was full of honey, caramel, and raisins, with a bit of a salty sherry-like note. On the palate, the caramel and toffee came out. Nice price for the wine! The Muscat was full of orange, cloves, and honeysuckle. A little too sweet on its own, it went very well with the dark chocolate. Very nice!

As per usual, a wonderful evening! Thanks, Pierre for a really interesting tasting.

### Flight 1: Varietal Discovery

The Mongrel, Hugh Hamilton, McLaren Vale, South Australia, 2005	\$16.95	675603
Charleston, Nepenthe, Adelaide Hills, South Australia, 2003	\$17.95	682054
Syrah, Pirramimma, Barossa, South Australia, 2002	\$21.95	986572
John Zilm, Craneford, Barossa, South Australia, 2004	\$39.95	662809

### Flight 2: GSM, CSM, SCM, Whatever!

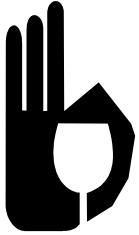
Medley, Kilikanoon, South Australia, 2002	\$24.95	675256
Bin 138, Penfolds, Old Vine, Barossa, Australia, 2003	\$29.95	468637
CSM, Elderton, Barossa, South Australia, 2001	\$39.95	976423
Euphonium, Henschke Keyneton Estate, Barossa, South Australia, 2002	\$49.95	720433

### Flight 3: You Can Never Have Too Many Shiraz

The Footbolt, D'Arenberg, McLaren Vale, South Australia, 2003	\$20.95	984021
The McRae Wood, Jim Barry, Clare Valley, South Australia, 2002	\$42.95	737817
St-Peters, Seppelt, Great Western Vineyards, Victoria, Australia, 2004	\$54.95	493080
Balmoral, Rosemount, McLaren Vale, South Australia, 2003	\$64.95	388918

### Flight 4: Spot the Non-Aussie!

Signature, Cave de Rasteau, Rasteau, VDN, France, 2000	\$21.95	675801
Old Tawny, Angove's Anchorage, South Australia, NV	\$19.95	678672
Muscat, Pfeiffer Rutherglen, Rutherglen, Victoria, Australia, NV	\$18.95	675637



# National Capital Sommelier Guild

[www.sommelierguild.com](http://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](mailto: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.

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### 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 130-99 Fifth Ave., 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: \_\_\_\_\_

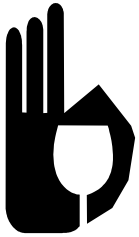
Visa Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_      Expiry Date:      Mo. \_\_\_\_\_      Yr. \_\_\_\_\_

MasterCard Number: \_\_\_\_\_      Expiry Date:      Mo. \_\_\_\_\_      Yr. \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# National Capital Sommelier Guild

[www.sommelierguild.com](http://www.sommelierguild.com)

## Notes on Registration

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](mailto: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  
130-99 Fifth Ave.  
Ottawa ON K1S 5P5

### Membership Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership *(Please circle one)*:

*General (\$50)*

*Trade (\$50)\**

*Corporate\*\* (\$150)*

**\*\*Trade Members**, indicate your Occupation or the Field in which you work:

**\*\*Corporate Members**, please identify your Establishment:

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.*

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