



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Ontario Wine Awards 2009 Results
Monday, May 11, 2009

Quench Your Thirst in Ontario Wine Country!

The Thirsty Traveler hosts the 2009 awards gala in Niagara-on-the-Lake, proving Ontario wine will satisfy any cravings.

Friday, May 8, 2009 - Niagara-on-the-Lake – Since 1995, the Ontario Wine Awards (OWA) have been celebrating the Ontario VQA Wine industry, and accrediting some of the finest and most respected wines Ontario has to offer. As the Ontario Wine Industry has grown, so has this event. Joined by celebrity Kevin Brauch, the Thirsty Traveler, the 2009 Ontario Wine Awards Gala didn't hesitate to roll out the red carpet.

The evening began with a sparkling wine reception allowing the who's who of the wine world to mix and mingle with each other and gala VIP's. As the guests took their seats, Kevin Brauch took to the mic as the gala MC, and welcomed vintners, winery principals, sponsors and industry professionals alike. During the awards ceremony, a delicious five course meal was served by Queen's Landing's Executive Chef James Olberg, inspired by and created with locally produced, grown and raised Ontario foods. Each course was paired with an Ontario Wine Awards Gold Medal Winning Wine, highlighting and celebrating the abundance of quality flavour available from Ontario.

This year with a record 501 wine submissions from 62 wineries, Tony Aspler, Founder of the Ontario Wine Awards and Order of Canada Recipient, readily announced, "This year has been the best year for both the quantity and quality of entries into the Ontario Wine Awards to date. The quality of the wines in all categories has improved, perhaps reflecting the incredible 2007 vintage. Ontario vintners should be proud of their achievement."

The Ontario Wine Awards recognize VQA varietal quality in 25 different categories such as Dry Riesling and Cabernet Franc, and acknowledge winners in Bronze, Silver and Gold Medal levels. There are also distinctive awards given out honouring the Winemaker of the Year, White Wine of the Year, Red Wine of the Year, Wine Journalism Award, and Best Label Design.

(medal-winners listed on pages 5-7)

Due to Ontario's ever growing wine portfolio, in order to distinguish both red and white varietals, there are now two **'Wine of the Year'** awards. Sponsored by Savour Ontario, a Program of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the **'Red Wine of the Year'** was awarded to Vineland Estates 2005 Reserve Cabernet Merlot, and the **'White Wine of the Year'** was awarded to Thirty Bench 2007 Riesling.

The Vintage Hotels **'Winemaker of the Year'** award, went to the deserving Thomas Bachelder, from Le Clos Jordanne Winery. This award recognizes the winemaker's consistent quality production across his portfolio, successes as demonstrated by additional wine awards, and his overall contribution to the wine industry. The traditional gift of a Montblanc watch accompanied this prestigious award.

Master Sommelier, John Szabo, received the Savour Ontario, a Program of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs **'Wine Journalism Award'**, which recognizes the best article published in 2008 on the Ontario wine industry. His article Napa North, Ontario Wine Country, ran in the Globe & Mail, August 30, 2008.

As the evening MC, Thirsty Traveler Kevin Brauch said, "Nothing beats sharing a bottle of Ontario VQA wine with my friends from around the world. The surprise and the enjoyment they receive from the experience shows what a great job we're doing in Ontario and how we're changing the perception of Ontario VQA wines the world over. As a Canadian and an Ontarian, I'm extremely proud to be involved with the Ontario Wine Awards and I champion our fine wines whenever and wherever I get the chance. It's time to drink Ontario VQA wine! Cheers!"

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sip & Savour Ontario – An evening dedicated to Ontario Wines and Foods

In the traditions of all great culinary regions, there are strong ties between regional wines and foods. Partnering with Savour Ontario, a program of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, we will be showcasing this great tradition here in Ontario with more emphasis than ever before. The public will be able to experience and celebrate Ontario wines and food firsthand at **sip & Savour Ontario** on June 16th at The Distillery Historic District in Toronto. Acclaimed Savour Ontario chefs will bring the best and freshest foods Ontario has to offer and pair them with the award-winning wines announced at this year's Gala event. There will also be restaurant programs running during Ontario Wine Week, which will focus on bringing VQA wine and local food from the field to the table.

Savour Ontario a Program of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

The Savour Ontario dining program is part of Ontario's Pick Ontario Freshness strategy to encourage and assist consumers in choosing locally grown and produced foods. The Savour Ontario dining program promotes the fresh, high quality foods of Ontario by assisting consumers in identifying Ontario foods on menu. The Savour Ontario website at www.savourontario.ca promotes fine and vacation dining restaurants with a searchable index of restaurants from across the province that prominently feature Ontario foods on their menu.

Wines of Ontario

"Experiencing Ontario's wine country is the best way to appreciate Ontario's exceptional wines". Visit one or all of Ontario's 4 wine regions; Niagara Peninsula, Prince Edward County, Lake Erie North Shore or Pelee Island. Each region offers its own unique combination of terroir, charm and personality. "Go Local" and explore the wonderful local culinary and wine experiences that await you; only a short drive from Toronto. For more information and easy trip planning please visit www.winesofontario.ca

For further information, please visit us online at www.ontariowineawards.ca

Contacts:

Sandy Kurbis

Director of Client and Event Services
The Forefront Communications Network Inc.
1698 Avenue Road
Toronto, ON M5M 3Y4
Tel: 416-398-3335 Ext. 2#
Fax: 416-398-6630
sandy@forefrontcom.com
www.ontariowineawards.ca
www.forefrontcom.com

Tony Aspler

Tony Aspler Enterprises
416-488-8597
tony.aspler@rogers.com

About Tony Aspler

Tony Aspler has been active in the international wine world since 1964. He received his basic wine education in London, England at Grant's of St. James' Wine School. As a consultant and wine judge, he makes frequent trips to the vineyards and wine fairs of Europe and the new world and is recognized as the leading authority on Canadian wines.

Tony wrote for The Toronto Star for 21 years and is now concentrating on writing for various magazines and is the author of nine novels. He is also the co-founder of the charitable foundation Grapes for Humanity - www.grapesforhumanity.com. Tony may be reached at tony.aspler@rogers.com, or visit www.tonyaspler.com for further information.

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About The Forefront Communications Network Inc.

Forefront Communications is an acknowledged full-service marketing and communications company specializing exclusively in the beverage alcohol industry. To date, Forefront has served such clients as; Brewers Association of Canada, Fruit Wines of Canada, Pacific NW Wine Coalition, Wines of Chile, SOPEXA, Tetra Pac, Wines of New York, Wine Institute of California, Wines of Ontario, United States Department of Agriculture, Wines of South Africa, Trade Commission of Spain, Distillers Corp. and Pernod Ricard S.A. www.forefrontcom.com

Ontario Wine Week Related Events:

Tuesday, June 16, 2009

'sip & Savour Ontario'

The Distillery Historic District - Fermenting Cellar

55 Mill Street, Toronto

7:00 pm to 9:30 pm

Ticket Price: \$60.00

For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit www.ontariowineawards.ca

Complimentary shuttle is available from approximately 6:30 pm to 10:00 pm between The Distillery and Union Station. Bus departs from the clock tower located in front of Union Station on Front Street. – *sponsored by Niagara Airbus.*

2009 Ontario Wine Awards Sponsors

680News

Vintage Hotels

Allen's

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Crush Wine Bar & Restaurant

Luxor Realty Inc.

The Distillery Historic District

Ottawa Wine & Food Show

The Watering Can Flower Market

The Stonemill Bakehouse Ltd.

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ONTARIO WINE AWARDS 2009 – BACKGROUNDER

Judging of the Wines

Each entry is assessed blind by panels of accredited wine judges from the wine writing and teaching community. The criteria for judging the entries not only involve having an appreciation for wine, but also include a knowledge and expertise of wines from the Ontario region. Included amongst the winning categories; White Wine of the Year, Red Wine of the Year, Winemaker of the Year and the Journalism Award, which recognizes the best article published in 2008 on the Ontario wine industry.

How does the judging occur?

The 14th Annual Ontario Wine Awards wine judging, with the exception of Icewines, was held over two consecutive Saturdays – April 4th and April 11th, 2009 at Crush Wine Bar & Restaurant and was not open to the public.

Icewine Judging took place on April 5th, 2009 at the Fine Wine Reserve Wine Storage and was not open to the public.

Wine Tastings

Since its inception, the awards have grown in both size and stature. This year the Ontario Wine Awards and Savour Ontario, a Program of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, are proud to recognize 'sip & Savour Ontario'. Taking place during Ontario Wine Week award winners will present their wines, alongside acclaimed Savour Ontario chefs, to the public on the evening of Tuesday, June 16th at The Distillery Historic District in downtown Toronto. To find out more, or purchase tickets to this event, please visit www.ontariowineawards.ca.

Restaurant Promotions

sip & Savour Ontario teams up with local restaurants to feature Ontario VQA wines and outstanding seasonal cuisine during Ontario Wine Week, June 14th to 20th. By promoting Ontario VQA wine and local food pairings, specialty menus featuring Ontario foods, Ontario VQA wines by the glass, and more, sip & Savour Ontario encourages the public to visit participating restaurants and take part in the Ontario wine & food experience. More information on participating restaurants will be made available in the near future at www.ontariowineawards.ca.

History

Tony Aspler, one of Canada's most acclaimed wine writers, founded the Ontario Wine Awards in 1995. His vision was to catapult Ontario VQA wines into the most successful, most revered wines available to domestic and foreign markets by recognizing and promoting the top Ontario wineries for the quality product they produce. "Our mission is to provide recognition for outstanding Ontario wines and to the men and women who are dedicated to producing a superior product," explains Tony Aspler. "These awards enhance the profile of Ontario wines in the world market, opening doors to new opportunities for Ontario wineries."

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2009 Ontario Wine Awards – Final Results

Blue Glass Water Company Limited Sparkling Wine Award

Gold: Maleta Estate 2006 View Old Vines Brut

Silver: Henry of Pelham Family Estate NV Cuvée Catharine Brut

Bronze: Hillebrand Estates 2006 Showcase Sparkling Riesling

Bronze: Thirteenth Street Winery 2004 Premier Cuvée Traditional Method Brut

WineryToHome.com Dry Riesling Award

Gold: Thirty Bench 2007 Riesling

Silver: Thirty Bench 2008 Small Lot Riesling Triangle Vineyard

Bronze: Château des Charmes 2007 Estate Bottled Riesling

680News Semi-Dry Riesling Award

Gold: Tawse 2008 Miskew Vineyard Riesling

Silver: Vineland Estates 2007 St. Urban Riesling

Bronze: Thirty Bench 2008 Small Lot Riesling Wood Post

Luxor Realty Inc. Dry White Varietal Award

Gold: Fielding Estate 2007 Viognier

Silver: Château des Charmes 2007 Estate Bottled Sauvignon Gris

Bronze: Château des Charmes 2007 Estate Bottled Aligoté

Potruff & Smith Insurance Brokers Inc. Gewurztraminer and Aromatic Varietal Award

Gold: Tawse 2008 Quarry Road Vineyard Estate Bottled Gewurztraminer

Silver: Rosewood Estates 2008 Gewurztraminer

Bronze: Malivoire Wine Company 2008 Gewurztraminer

Bronze: Magnotta Winery 2007 Special Reserve Muscat Ottonel

VINES Magazine Pinot Gris Award

Gold: Pelee Island Winery 2008 Pinot Grigio

Silver: Inniskillin 2007 Varietal Series Pinot Grigio

Bronze: Malivoire Wine Company 2008 Pinot Gris

Bronze: Creekside Estate 2007 Reserve Pinot Gris

The Wine Establishment Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon Award

Gold: Creekside Estate 2007 Reserve Sauvignon Blanc

Silver: Peninsula Ridge Estates 2008 Wismer Sauvignon Blanc 20 Mile Bench

Bronze: Nyarai Cellars 2008 Sauvignon Blanc

The Distillery Historic District Oaked Chardonnay Award ~ Under \$20

Gold: Mike Weir Estate 2007 Chardonnay

Silver: Hillebrand Estates 2007 Barrel Fermented Trius Chardonnay

Bronze: Cattail Creek Estate 2007 Barrel Fermented Chardonnay

Bronze: Inniskillin 2007 Winemaker's Series Montague Vineyard Chardonnay

Ottawa Wine & Food Show Oaked Chardonnay Award ~ Over \$20

Gold: Peninsula Ridge Estates 2007 Reserve Chardonnay

Silver: Closson Chase 2006 Chardonnay

Bronze: Southbrook Vineyards 2006 Triomphe Chardonnay

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Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce Unoaked Chardonnay Award

Gold: Vineland Estates 2007 Chardonnay Non-Oaked

Silver: Château des Charmes 2007 Estate Bottled Chardonnay Musqué

Bronze: Jackson-Triggs 2007 Proprietors' Reserve Unoaked Chardonnay

VINES Magazine Rosé Award

Gold: Legends Estates 2008 Malbec Rosé

Silver: Peller Estates 2007 Private Reserve Rosé

Bronze: Kacaba Vineyards 2008 Summertime Series Rebecca Rosé

Crush Wine Bar & Restaurant Gamay Award

Gold: Malivoire Wine Company 2007 Gamay

Silver: Peller Estates 2007 Private Reserve Gamay Noir

Bronze: Cattail Creek Estate 2007 Gamay Noir

Grape Growers of Ontario Pinot Noir Award

Gold: Tawse 2007 Cherry Avenue Vineyard Estate Bottled Pinot Noir

Silver: Coyote's Run Estate 2007 Black Paw Vineyard Pinot Noir

Bronze: Pelee Island Winery 2007 Reserve Pinot Noir

Scotiabank Red Hybrid Award

Gold: Malivoire Wine Company 2007 Old Vines Foch

Silver: Pelee Island Winery 2007 Monarch Red

Silver: Sandbanks Estate 2006 Maréchal Foch

NOW Magazine Cabernet Sauvignon Award

Gold: Creekside Estate 2005 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

Silver: Magnotta Winery 2007 Special Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

Bronze: Magnotta Winery 2005 Limited Edition Cabernet Sauvignon

680News Cabernet Franc Award

Gold: Colio Estate 2005 Reserve Cabernet Franc

Silver: Vineland Estates 2007 Elevation Cabernet Franc

Bronze: Lailey Vineyard 2007 Cabernet Franc

Bullfrog Power Merlot Award

Gold: Creekside Estate 2005 Butler's Grant Vineyard Reserve Merlot

Silver: Colio Estate 2005 Reserve Merlot

Bronze: Rosewood Estates 2007 Reserve Merlot

Bronze: Kacaba Vineyards 2006 Merlot

Dairy Farmers of Canada Syrah/Shiraz Award

Gold: Stonechurch Vineyards 2007 Reserve Syrah

Silver: Coyote's Run Estate 2007 Red Paw Vineyard Syrah

Bronze: Jackson-Triggs 2006 Delaine Vineyard Syrah

The Ontario Wine Society Meritage and Cabernet/Merlot Blends Award

Gold: Vineland Estates 2005 Reserve Cabernet Merlot

Silver: Creekside Estate 2005 Reserve Meritage

Silver: Magnotta Winery 2004 Enotrium Gran Riserva

Bronze: Calamus Estate 2006 Meritage

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VIA Rail Canada Late Harvest Award

Gold: Château des Charmes 2007 Estate Bottled Late Harvest Riesling

Silver: Peller Estates 2006 Private Reserve Late Harvest Vidal

Bronze: Konzelmann Estate 2006 Special Select Late Harvest Vidal

Bronze: Creekside Estate 2007 Select Late Harvest Pinot Gris

Vintage Hotels Vidal Icewine Award

Gold: Wayne Gretzky Estates 2005 Vidal Icewine

Silver: Reif Estate 2006 Vidal Icewine

Bronze: Konzelmann Estate 2007 Vidal Icewine

LCBO Vinifera Icewine Award

Gold: Riverview Cellars Estate 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Icewine

Silver: Jackson-Triggs 2007 Proprietors' Grand Reserve Cabernet Franc Icewine

Bronze: Lakeview Cellars Estate 2007 Gewurztraminer Icewine

Bronze: Lailey Vineyard 2007 Riesling Icewine

Niagara Airbus Sparkling Icewine Award

Gold: Inniskillin 2006 Sparkling Vidal Icewine

Silver: Inniskillin 2007 Sparkling Vidal Icewine

Silver: Magnotta Winery 2006 Sparkling Ice Vidal Icewine

Allen's Blended White Award

Gold: Caroline Cellars 2006 Momentum Enchantment

Silver: Creekside Estate 2007 Laura White

Bronze: Jackson-Triggs 2007 Proprietors' Grand Reserve White Meritage

Bronze: Smith & Wilson Estate 2008 Smith's Vidal

Allen's Blended Red Award

Gold: Wayne Gretzky Estates 2006 Estate Series Shiraz Cabernet

Silver: Pelee Island Winery 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Petit Verdot

Bronze: Dan Aykroyd Winery 2007 Discovery Cabernet Shiraz

All Stick Label Limited Best Label Design Award

Gold: Fielding Estate 2008 Sauvignon Blanc

Silver: Colio Estate 2008 Girls' Night Out Chardonnay

Bronze: Dan Aykroyd Winery 2007 Discovery Series Cabernet Shiraz

Savour Ontario – A Program of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Wine Journalism Award

John Szabo

Savour Ontario – A Program of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs White Wine of the Year Award

Thirty Bench 2007 Riesling

Savour Ontario – A Program of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Red Wine of the Year Award

Vineland Estates 2005 Reserve Cabernet Merlot

Vintage Hotels Winemaker of the Year Award

Thomas Bachelder, Le Clos Jordanne