



The results of a recent blind wine tasting in Montreal recalls the legendary Paris Wine Tasting of 1976, which was immortalized on the silver screen in *Bottle Shock* (here).

Tasting True North

Canada's wonderful wines are finally enjoying their moment in the spotlight

In a recent blind Chardonnay tasting in Montreal, Ontario's Le Clos Jordanne winery shocked the judges with its Claystone Terrace Chardonnay 2005, which captured the top spot, beating out the world-famous French and Californian white wines. It was a plot right out of the 2008 movie *Bottle Shock*. (In the film, based on an actual event 33 years ago, it is California wines that win out against the French in a blind tasting dubbed "The Judgement in Paris.") Le Clos Jordanne winery, of Jordan Village on the Niagara Peninsula, has received critical acclaim since its launch in 2006 and at the 2009 Ontario Wine Awards, its winemaker, Thomas Bachelder, was named Winemaker of the Year.

But Le Clos is just one of many bright spots on the Canadian wine scene. We now have more than 430 wineries in Canada producing wonderful wines. Our icewines are justly the most famous and continually win top awards at international events.

Inniskillin Wines captured the top prize this year at the 17th Annual International Wine Competition at Vinitaly, one of the world's largest and most prestigious competitions. "This award is receiving lots of attention in Europe, which helps put Niagara and the Canadian wine industry on the world map," said winery co-founder Donald Ziraldo. **H**

Whites



Sibling Rivalry White 2008
\$13.95

The Speck brothers, who run the family's Henry of Pelham winery, created this blend of three white varieties to be serious wine that is seriously fun. And it is. Rosewater and lychee notes come through from the Gewürztraminer, fruit

from the Riesling and a rounded body from the Chardonnay.



Tinhorn Creek 2Bench White
\$23

Tinhorn is celebrating its 15th anniversary with snazzy new labels and a great new lineup of 2008 whites. This blend of Sémillon, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Viognier and muscat has a fresh floral nose, refreshing acidity and flavours

of green apple, citrus and pear.



Le Clos Jordanne Village Reserve Chardonnay 2006
\$29.95

From organically cultivated estate vineyards on the Niagara Escarpment and in the heart of Jordan, Ont., this Chardonnay, an assemblage of the winery's three vineyards, is packed with flavours and intensity. It's firm and lengthy on the palate with tastes of citrus, vanilla and hints of butterscotch.



Stratus White 2006
\$44.20

This is a complex, full-bodied and majestic mix of Chardonnay, Gewürztraminer, Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, Viognier and more. Each grape variety is vinified separately and aged about two years in barrel. It's

multi-flavoured and multilayered with florals, tree fruits, lychee, spice and creaminess.

THE STORY OF THE GREAT CANADIAN GRAPE

Canada's first commercial winery was established in 1866 on Ontario's Pelee Island. Though little of the original winery remains, vineyards are still on the island, which sits at Canada's most

southerly point – at about the same latitude as Tuscany. The current Pelee Island Winery is located on the mainland in Kingsville and boasts the largest estate vineyard in the province.

TURNING POINTS

• In 1974, Donald Ziraldo cracked open the Ontario wine market when he obtained the first wine retail licence granted since Prohibition ended in 1929. He and partner Karl Kaiser launched Inniskillin in Niagara-on-the-Lake, thus ending the dominance of the big six wineries that controlled the market. At around the same time, in B.C.'s Okanagan Valley European vinifera grapes, such as Riesling and Pinot Blanc, were being planted with good results. Then, Harry McWatters established Sumac Ridge in 1979 in Summerland and successfully lobbied for "estate" licences for small production wineries, thereby further expanding that province's market.

Reds



Girls' Night Out Cabernet Shiraz 2007
\$12.95

The vintage 2007 was a dream one for Ontario yielding wines that speak of the glorious weather. Colio Winery made this lively red blend from Lake Erie North Shore grapes. Medium-light with black currant, hints of spice and earth, it has an easy sweet edge.



Nk'Mip Cellars Pinot Noir 2007
\$20

North America's first Aboriginal-owned-and-operated winery is visitor-friendly and totally unique. Pleasant with sweet supple cherry flavours, this vintage goes down smoothly.



Burrowing Owl Cabernet Sauvignon 2006
\$38

As well as making some of the best reds in Canada, Burrowing Owl has a great inn and restaurant on its scenic property in Oliver, B.C. This red is full-bodied with big structure and sweet ripe fruit that tastes of cassis with hints of mint. The finish is lengthy and smooth.



Mission Hill Select Lot Collection Syrah 2006
\$36

This Okanagan winery delivers top-notch wines that reflect both New World winemaking and Old World elegance. This Syrah is dense with velvety tannins and tastes of bittersweet chocolate and berry with toasted oak.