



**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 16<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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](http://www.winesofontario.ca)

For further information, please visit us online at [www.ontariowineawards.ca](http://www.ontariowineawards.ca)

### **Contacts:**

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### **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](http://www.grapesforhumanity.com). Tony may be reached at [tony.aspler@rogers.com](mailto:tony.aspler@rogers.com), or visit [www.tonyaspler.com](http://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](http://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](http://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

Blue Glass Water Company Limited

Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce

NOW Magazine

VINES Magazine

Wines of Ontario

All Stick Label Limited

Bullfrog Power

Dairy Farmers of Canada

Grape Growers of Ontario

LCBO

Niagara Airbus

The Ontario Wine Society

Pottruff & Smith Insurance Brokers Inc.

Scotiabank

The Wine Establishment

VIA Rail Canada

WineryToHome.com

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

Icewine Judging took place on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 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 16<sup>th</sup> at The Distillery Historic District in downtown Toronto. To find out more, or purchase tickets to this event, please visit [www.ontariowineawards.ca](http://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 14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>. 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](http://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