



Vinland har kommet tilbake til Norge

by

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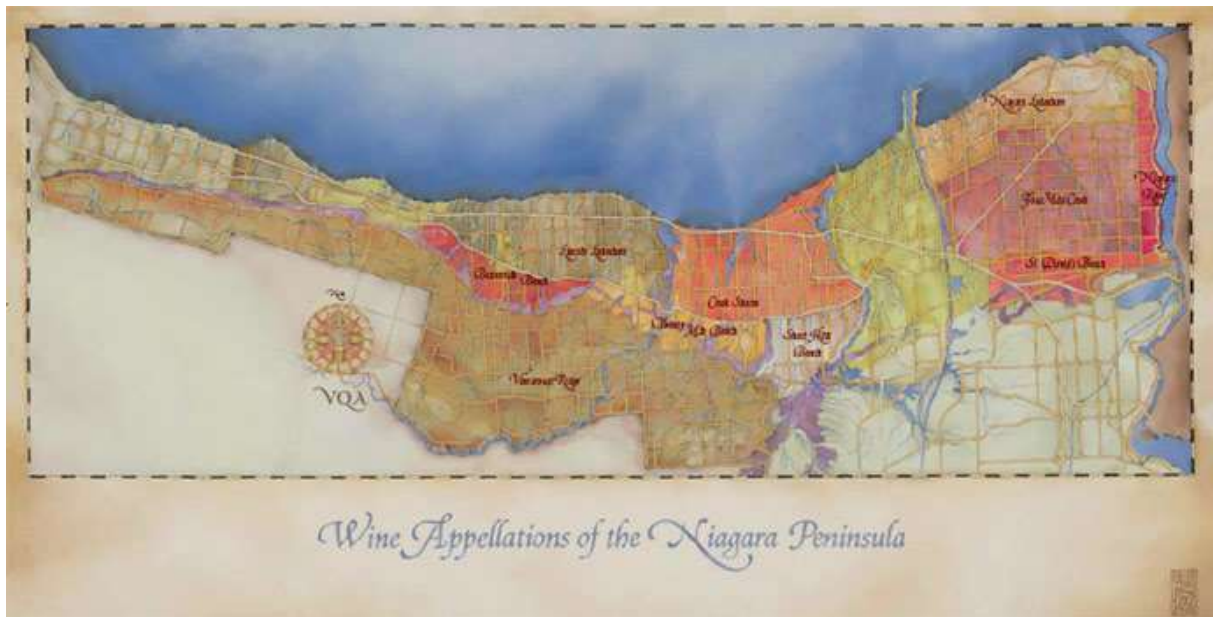
Du visste ikke at Canada smakte så godt! This article is the first in a series wherein you will discover what you may not know about Canada and its award winning viti and viniculture. Herein you will discover enology, or “the science of winemaking” along with the cultural ethos that supports wine production in Canada.

Why do the wines of this rugged northern land pair so well with Norsk mat? There has been a tradition of wine making in Canada for over 200 years, however, its origins are fairly humble. The first Vikings to see the east coast of Canada called this wild place, “Vinland”. In this article we will learn why “Vinland har kommet tilbake til Norge”. Early Canadian settlers attempted to cultivate *Vitis vinifera* grapes from Europe but found it necessary to focus on the native species of *Vitis labrusca* and *Vitis riparia* along with various hybrids that were more conducive to the Canadian climate.

It was not until the 1970's that Canadian grape growers successfully began to cultivate *Vitis vinifera*. The industry had discovered that wines of exceptionally high quality could be produced if *Vitis vinifera* vines were grown at lower yields than in Europe by utilising new trellising techniques along with appropriate canopy management. By the 1990's Canadian vintners had successfully demonstrated that European varietals grown under cooler conditions produced more complex, delicate wines with longer aging potential than those of their counterparts grown in warmer regions.



The Climate



The Niagara Peninsula is bounded by Lake Ontario to the north, Lake Erie to the south and the Niagara River to the east. Its main geographical feature, the limestone bluffs of the Niagara Escarpment <http://www.escarpment.org/home/>, is designated by UNESCO as a world heritage biosphere. Unique appellations rank Niagara among the finest in the world for producing Icewine. Its winters are much harsher than those of Germany; however the region's growing season enjoys a higher number of sunshine hours, higher peak temperatures during the vine's most active vegetative growth in July, and temperature fluctuations during the autumn. These unique climatic conditions produce grapes with a higher sugar reading than in Germany. In Canada, Walter Hainle, a German immigrant and vigneron in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley, was the first to produce an Icewine in 1973 that was similar to those he remembered tasting in his youth. Soon J. Pohorly, the founder of Newark Winery, now Hillebrand, and K. Kaiser, the co-founder and winemaker of Inniskillin, started experimenting successfully with fruit available to them. Since initial production of Icewine began in the Peninsula, many prestigious international and domestic gold medals have been awarded to Niagara's wineries for their outstanding Icewines.

Niagara Region's temperatures are moderated by Lake Ontario raising winter temperatures from its summer-warmed waters. Vineyards benefit from the lakes' offshore breezes, which are then reflected back to the lake when they reach the Niagara Escarpment, thus maintaining a constant and active airflow. This circulating activity prevents cold air from settling in lower-lying areas during threatening periods of frost, and maximizes the moderating effect of the warm waters of the lake.

In spring, breezes from its winter-cooled waters help to hold back the development of fruit buds until the danger of late spring frosts have passed. Lake Ontario also cools the summer air so that grapes do not ripen too quickly, and then keeps the fall air comparatively warm so that the first frost is delayed, thus extending the growing season. The length of the growing season varies. As in other temperate growing regions, each vintage varies depending on the season. Rain, humidity, cold, and drought can all limit the ripening period.

The vines begin to bud from late May to early June while the harvest generally begins in mid-August for French hybrids such as Baco Noir to mid-September through to October for varietals such as Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Riesling and Cabernet Franc.

Late picking varietals are usually harvested mid-November, with Icewine harvests occurring between mid-December and the beginning of January, depending on the weather.



The Soil



Terroir refers to the type and quality of soil, and more broadly to microclimates and the environmental conditions of vineyards and/or viticulture regions. These factors impart a

unique flavours and bouquets to the wine. Most soils in the grape-growing areas are composed of glacial till or sediments left in glacier-covered rivers and lakes, and clay-loam.

Ontario extends below the 49th parallel more than any other part of Canada. The Ontario growing region lies between the 52° and 41° placing it the middle of the northern grape growing belt at roughly the same latitude as Bordeaux, France and the northern wine regions of California. This growing region of Southern Ontario lies between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie in the east and Lake Huron to the west. Its fertile soils and moderate climate combine to produce orchards and vineyards yielding fruits of unique character and supreme quality.

There are three official growing regions in the province recognized and regulated by the Vintners Quality Association (VQA) <http://www.vqaontario.com/Home>.

The Niagara Peninsula, with the most area under vine and a series of recognized sub-appellations, is Canada's largest wine growing region and is blessed by a unique micro-climate facilitated by the interaction of the Niagara Escarpment and Lake Ontario.

In the Niagara Peninsula there are ten sub-appellations which each have unique growing conditions suited to different grape varieties. They are: Niagara River, Niagara Lakeshore, Four Mile Creek, St David's Bench, Creek Shores, Lincoln Lakeshore, Short Hills Bench, Twenty Mile Bench, Beamsville Bench, and Vinemount Ridge.

In addition, two regional appellations have been created: Niagara Escarpment for the bench area west of St. Catharines (Short Hills Bench, Twenty Mile Bench, Beamsville Bench) and Niagara-on-the-Lake for the four sub-appellations east of St. Catharines.

The Grapes



Niagara's wine is usually made from one or more varieties of the European species, *Vitis*

vinifera. Wine can also be made from other species or from hybrids, created by the genetic crossing of two species.

Varieties and styles

The most prominent varieties of grapes grown in Ontario are:

For red wine and rose production:

- Cabernet Franc
- Merlot
- Pinot noir
- Gamay noir
- Cabernet Sauvignon
- Syrah
- Marechal Foch
- Baco noir
- Petit Verdot
- Malbec
- Zweigelt

For whites:

- Riesling
- Chardonnay
- Pinot gris
- Gewürztraminer
- Viognier
- Sauvignon blanc
- Semillon
- Pinot blanc
- Vidal
- Kerner
- Muscat Ottonel

For Icewines and late harvest dessert wines:

- Vidal blanc
- Riesling
- Cabernet Franc
- Cabernet Sauvignon

When one of these varieties is used as the sole grape the result is a varietal wine, as opposed to a blended wine which is made from more than one grape type. Blended wines are in no way inferior to varietal wines; some of the world's most valued and expensive wines from the Bordeaux and Tuscany regions are blends of several varietals of the same vintage. A number of these grape varieties are fermented alone to produce wines of single character or in combination. In each case, the wines will age in either French or American oak barrels

between six months to several years before the winemaker decides that the wine is ready for bottling.

Industry Overview

- Ontario is the country's leading grape producer, accounting for about 2/3 of Canadian production.
- The Niagara Peninsula accounts for over 93% of Ontario's grape-growing volume.
- Grapes are the highest-ranked fruit in Ontario, representing 43% of the farm gate value of Ontario commercial fruit production in 2012.
- The total farm gate value of Ontario grapes exceeded \$88.6 million in 2012.
- In 2012, there was a total of 17,000 acres of vineyards.
- In 2012, winemaking was the dominant use for Ontario grapes. Over 97% of production was used for wine products and under 3% for juice, jams and other grape products.

Economic Impact

- The wine industry generates \$662 million in retail sales in Ontario (2012).
- More than 14,000 jobs are created in Ontario as a result of the Grape and Wine Industry.
- In 2012, the wine industry generated \$602 million in tax revenues and mark-ups.
- On average, 1 bottle of Ontario wine generates \$39.67 of economic impact in the province.
- \$3.3 Billion is the total economic impact of the Ontario Grape and Wine Industry.
- As a tourism destination, Ontario wineries welcome over 1,900,000 visitors generating \$644 million of tourism and tourism employment related economic impact.
- Grape production enhances the environmental beauty of the province and preserves our rich agricultural heritage. This is priceless.

List of Niagara's wineries

<http://www.wine-searcher.com/merchants/canadax-niagara+peninsula,winery,134>

2013 Ontario Wine Awards – List of Winners

http://www.ontariowineawards.ca/pdf/OWA-2013_WINNERS_ONLY.pdf

Canadian wines cash in at international competitions - article from the Calgary Herald

Canadian wines fared well in two of the world's biggest, most prestigious wine competitions. Results were released Monday from the International Wine and Spirit Competition and the Decanter World Wine Awards.

At the International Wine and Spirit Competition, France received the most medals — 833 — among the entries from the Northern Hemisphere. (The competition is split between the northern and southern hemispheres.)

Canadian wines collected 208 medals, more than the United States, which earned 164. In total, Canadian wines took home one gold-outstanding medal, five golds, 15 silver-outstanding medals, 77 silvers and 110 bronze. The Canadian gold medallists were all icewines except for one, a syrah from See Ya Later Ranch.

Canada's top performer was the Mission Hill Family Estate 2011 Reserve Vidal Icewine, earning a gold-outstanding medal.

Also receiving gold medals were:

- Peller Estates 2011 Oak Aged Icewine, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario;
- Inniskillin Okanagan 2011 Riesling Icewine, Okanagan Valley, British Columbia;
- Jackson-Triggs Niagara 2008 Grand Reserve Riesling Icewine, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario;
- Mission Hill Family Estate 2011 S.L.C. Riesling Icewine, Okanagan Valley, British Columbia;
- See Ya Later Ranch 2010 Rover (Syrah), Okanagan Valley, British Columbia.

At the Decanter World Wine Awards, 219 wine experts from 27 countries worked through 14,362 entered wines. Of those entries, 229 received gold medals. Wines from Canada took home seven gold medals, 24 silver and 53 bronze.

Earning gold medals were:

- Fielding Estate Winery 2010 Vidal Icewine, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario;
- Hidden Bench 2011 Felseck Vineyard Riesling, Beamsville Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario;
- Hidden Bench 2011 Riesling, Beamsville Bench, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario;
- Jackson-Triggs 2008 Proprietors' Grand Reserve Riesling Icewine, Niagara Peninsula, Ontario;
- JoieFarm 2011 "En Famille" Reserve Chardonnay, Okanagan Valley, British Columbia;
- Quails' Gate 2010 Stewart Family Reserve Chardonnay, Okanagan Valley, British Columbia;
- See Ya Later Ranch 2011 Riesling, Okanagan Valley, British Columbia.

For full results from the competitions, go to www.iwsc.net/search2013/wine and www.decanter.com/dwwa/2013/.

Centec Norge AS represents the following wineries in Scandinavia;

Konzelmann Estate Wineries <http://www.konzelmann.ca/>



Niagara College Teaching Winery <http://www.niagaracollegewine.ca/index.cfm>



Thank you for reading. I sincerely hope you found this article informative and, more importantly, that it has peaked your interest in exploring with me the divergent yet common cultural realities of our two northern lands. Of course I also hope you will taste the superb wines from a region you may not have associated with wine production. The next article in this series will feature pairing Canadian wines with Norwegian cuisine. Both our cultures are closely linked by our love of the great outdoors, hunting and fishing. We will also investigate how the wine industry has created greater cultural awareness through Canada's oldest wine and food festival, The Niagara Wine Festival <http://www.niagarawinefestival.com/page/home> as well as our plans for the creation of the first annual Canadian Norwegian Cultural Festival tentatively scheduled for the early summer of 2014.

On Centec Wine and Travel; www.centec-as.com www.facebook.com/centecvinferier

