

Winter 2020

ccovinews

A newsletter from
the Cool Climate Oenology
and Viticulture Institute



Cool
Climate
Oenology &
Viticulture
Institute

Brock University

Award winning wine bubbles from Fizz Club

Adam Pearce, winemaker at Two Sisters Vineyards, hadn't had much experience making sparkling wine before Fizz Club, but now he's crafted a unique bubbly that recently won a big award.

Pearce made the first sparkling Cabernet Franc in Ontario, which is a grape traditionally used for red wine opposed to sparkling.

His "Blanc de Franc" sparkling won Sparkling Wine of the Year at the 2019 All Canadian Wine Championships (ACWC), and he credits Fizz Club for his success.

"I went on the first Fizz Club trip to Champagne and that was really inspirational," said Pearce. "Through all the technical visits we did there, I soaked in as much as I could and came back and applied that."

Fizz Club is a special group for sparkling wine and those who make it, providing a rare opportunity to compare notes and exchange ideas, taste wines, hear the latest research and visit other sparkling wine regions.

The sparkling wine network was created at Brock University in 2013 with a handful of winemakers producing it. Fizz Club, which is organized by the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) and led by Senior Scientist Belinda Kemp, is only open to sparkling winemakers or winemakers considering a sparkling wine program.

Now in its seventh year, Fizz Club has become a national event. More than 40 sparkling winemakers from across Canada travelled to Brock on Wednesday, Dec. 10 to take part.

At this year's event, all the wines tasted were made from non-traditional sparkling wine grapes, including Riesling, Pinot Gris,

Gamay, a blend of varieties out of Québec and Pearce's Cabernet Franc "Blanc de Franc."

"That has been a fascinating journey to watch Adam and Two Sisters with that wine," said Kemp. "To see that wine come out and flourish the way it has is wonderful. Fizz Club has given people the courage to experiment in the winery with regards to this wine style. We are seeing bolder moves from winemakers trying new varieties like Pinot Gris and Cabernet Franc to great success."

Zach Everett, winemaker at Magnetic Hills Winery in New Brunswick, has been attending Fizz Club events and trips for the last two years and has just bottled his first sparkling wines.

"Fizz Club has allowed me to jump start my sparkling wine program by saving me years of trial and error," said Everett. "It's helped me develop my taste buds and confidence and allowed me to stake my claim on the sparkling wine world."

He's doing that by also experimenting with something different. In addition to making wine from grapes, he's also making sparkling fruit wines, using both rhubarb and blueberries. He is one of only a handful of producers of sparkling fruit wines in the world.

"It is something that is very rare, but flavour wise it can really work if done properly," said Everett. "I believe there is a huge future in it. It is not as fruit forward as you would expect. I can make versions that are reminiscent of Prosecco and I can make versions that are reminiscent of Champagne."

CCOVI's Barb Tatarnic, who is the outreach manager and works with Kemp to organize the event said that when Fizz Club



Adam Pearce, winemaker at Two Sisters Vineyards, tastes wine at CCOVI's Fizz Club Wednesday, Dec. 10. Pearce made an award-winning Cabernet Franc sparkling wine and credits Fizz Club for his success.

first started, most of the members were based in Niagara. Now, they're coming from all across Canada.

"For these winemakers, learning about new research developments here at CCOVI and collaborating about the triumphs and challenges of sparkling winemaking has really had an impact on sparkling wine quality in Canada," said Tatarnic.

Kemp said all the winemakers in the Fizz Club network are open to sharing information and seeing their success is rewarding.

"It is pretty amazing to see the profound impact working together through Fizz Club and our research has had, especially if it has given someone an idea to pursue that results in an award-winning wine," said Kemp.

This past summer, Kemp travelled to British Columbia to host a Fizz Club for winemakers there for the first time, and will lead winemakers on a trip to Argentina and Chile in 2021.

Cuvée 2020 to celebrate the best in Ontario VQA wine

Mark your calendars for the most sought-after wine event of the year — the annual Cuvée Grand Tasting has been set for Saturday, April 25, 2020.

The event, which serves as the largest celebration of VQA wine of its kind, will be held at the Scotiabank Convention Centre in Niagara Falls and will feature more than 100 wine selections from Ontario's top winemakers.

Organized by Brock University's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI), Cuvée is a weekend-long celebration of Ontario VQA wine and local cuisine from chefs from across the region.

"Cuvée not only celebrates excellence in our industry, it also supports the next generation of winemakers and grape growers by funding valuable research and providing scholarships to students through the Cuvée Legacy Fund," said CCOVI Director Debbie Inglis.



Cuvée, the most sought-after wine event of the year, is returning to Niagara on Saturday, April 25, 2020.

Cuvée 2020 will see the return of the popular "Winemakers' Favourite Wines" feature, along with gourmet food delicacies prepared by celebrated chefs at live cooking stations. At the Après Cuvée party, guests can look forward to live music and selections from micro-breweries, cideries and VQA wineries.

Cuvée Manager Barb Tatarnic said the 2019 event drew a record crowd to the Grand Tasting event, with nearly 900 guests in attendance.

"This is the largest event of its kind," said Tatarnic. "The strong turnout of guests year after year truly showcases the importance of our grape and wine industry and the strong level of support it garners from our local community and beyond."

During the weekend-long event, the Cuvée en Route passport program allows ticket holders access to exclusive tasting flights at more than 30 Niagara wineries from April 24 to 26.

Passports are included with the Grand Tasting or can also be purchased individually for \$30. Tickets are on sale now, with early-bird prices available. For more information or to purchase tickets to the Cuvée Grand Tasting or en Route passports, visit cuvée.ca.

Brock's first Oenology and Viticulture grad helps next generation



OEVI student Katrina Pukitis pours the wines her group made for Shiraz Mottiar (BSc, '00), winemaker at Malivoire Wine Company.

The students were asked to change one element of the winemaking process and evaluate the impact it had chemically on the final wines.

"This is all applicable in real life and every decision made will have a direct impact on the quality of the wine down the road," Mottiar said.

The students worked in small groups, each making two wines using different styles and techniques. They pressed the grapes in the teaching winery during harvest, fermented the juice and monitored their wines, collecting all the scientific data.

"You can see there's a lot of thought that goes into each project, through their presentations with scientific method and full results," said Mottiar. "But there is also some really nice conversation happening around the decisions they made, and I think it is very indicative of how the industry works in general. We are always trying to share ideas to improve, and if it starts in the classroom, it will last a lifetime."

Katrina Pukitis' group made a Sussreserve — a German style, semi-sweet wine. They kept a portion of the unfermented grape juice separate and added it to the fermented juice, leading

to a sweeter, lower alcohol wine.

"This is a great experience to learn and figure out what works best so that when we do enter the industry, we are much better equipped," Pukitis said. "We have talked so much amongst ourselves about this project, but getting an outside perspective is great. It was really rewarding to have him taste what we made."

CCOVI Senior Lab Instructor Steven Trussler stressed the value for students to have someone from the grape and wine industry come in to provide some context to the work they are doing in class.

"When approaching winemaking from a scientific perspective, as we do in the Oenology and Viticulture program at Brock, it's important for our students to see how that scientific approach will be useful and directly applicable when they enter the grape and wine industry."

This group of students will be making wine again during the winter semester with the opportunity to bottle and brand them.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CCOVI

2020 CCOVI Lecture Series

January 20

Janet Dorozynski, Trade Commissioner, Canadian Wine, Beer, Spirits and Tourism, Global Affairs Canada — "Are you ready to export? Everything you've always wanted to know but were afraid to ask."

January 27

Debbie Inglis, CCOVI Director & CCOVI Researchers, Brock University — "A locally isolated yeast that consumes acetic acid. Is there application in wine production for Appassimento, sour rot infected fruit, ice wine and sparkling."

February 3

Jeff Stuart, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Mathematics and Science, Brock University — "Development and commercial scaling of green extraction method for polyphenols from winter grape pomace"

February 24

Ronald Jackson, Wine Writer and Author — "Sparkling wine, its technological evolution"
March 2: Wendy McFadden-Smith, Tender Fruit and Grape IPM Specialist, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs — "Going Viral: Update on grapevine virus research in Ontario"

March 9

Sudarsana Poojari, CCOVI Senior Virologist, Brock University — "Advances in the diagnosis of grapevine virus diseases"

March 16

Jim Willwerth, CCOVI Senior Viticulturist, Brock University — "A decade of freezing buds and blankets. The trials and tribulations of cold hardiness and freeze protection research."

March 23

Belinda Kemp, CCOVI Senior Oenologist, Brock University — "Effect on honey, dusty off-flavours and acetic acid in sparkling wines made from varying amounts of sour rotten grapes"

March 30

Lester Kwong, Associate Professor of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences, Brock University — "Judging Wines: Preferences, Evaluation, and Aggregation"

Popular CCOVI Lecture Series returns this month



Brock University viticulturist Jim Willwerth works in CCOVI's cold hardiness lab.

The Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) Lecture Series is back for its 13th year, giving people from around the world access to Brock University's leading grape and wine research.

Nine speakers from across CCOVI's network of researchers, scientists, fellows and professional affiliates are participating in this year's series. Topics will span a wide range, from the latest research on grapevine cold hardiness and freeze protection to yeast for appassimento, ice wine and sparkling wines, and preferences and evaluations for judging wines.

The series will begin with a lecture by Janet Dorozynski, Trade Commissioner for Canadian Wine, Beer and Spirits and Tourism at Global Affairs Canada. Dorozynski will give an overview of what it takes to export Canadian products.

The CCOVI Lecture Series began in 2007 and has become a highly anticipated event both locally and for those tuning in remotely through livestreaming.

"Once again, we will bring the latest in grape and wine research into the hands of grape growers and winemakers," said CCOVI Director Debbie Inglis. "Sharing knowledge and providing outreach opportunities like the Lecture Series is an important part of CCOVI's mandate and is of tremendous benefit to our industry and our students."

The free lectures begin Monday, Jan. 20 and take place in room H313 of the Mackenzie Chown Complex at Brock University. The lectures are open to the public and begin at 2 p.m. Paid parking is available in the nearby Lot E. The lectures can be viewed live online here or afterwards on the CCOVI Lecture Series website.

Continuing Education Courses

February 7 to March 13

Online Certificate in Ontario Wines

February 24 to March 22

Online WSET Level 1 in wine

March 16 to April 19

Online WSET level 2 in spirits

April 2 to May 28

WSET Level 2 Award in Wine

April 13-17

Cider and Perry Production - A Foundation

Various dates available

Online WSET level 2 in wine

ICCWS registration now open

With more than 50 confirmed international speakers, registration is now open for the International Cool Climate Wine Symposium (ICCWS) which takes place in Canada from July 12 to 16, 2020. Confirmed speakers include acclaimed international wine academics and experts from around the world. The 10th installment of the symposium will focus on how climate change is driving innovation in the grape and wine industry, with conference sessions including viticulture, oenology, wine business and science communication.

Once-in-a-lifetime experience for Oenology and Viticulture grad



Liisa MacLean will be filtering wine in a cellar halfway across the world instead of walking across the convocation stage at Brock University on Friday.

The 26-year-old from Thunder Bay is working as a cellar hand at Divino Nordheim Thüngersheim eG, a winery in the Franconia region of Germany.

It's her first job in the industry since completing Brock's Oenology and Viticulture certificate program in August. MacLean is working alongside another Brock graduate, Jessy Plante (BSc '16), who has been at the winery for three years.

She describes it as a "once-in-a-lifetime" experience, explaining how the winery has a container village on the property where international workers live in shipping containers complete with bedrooms, a bathroom and kitchen.

"The idea of living in shipping containers and working in Germany sounded so crazy, I had to do it," said MacLean.

As a cellar hand, she's been getting plenty of hands-on experience, cleaning tanks, barrels and equipment, as well as racking and filtering wine.

"I asked to assist the lab technician for a few days and monitored and analyzed the wine ferments," she said. "One day before harvest began, I also got to go out to the vineyards with one of the viticulture workers to take grape maturity samples."

She credits the Oenology and Viticulture certificate program and her volunteer experience with Brock's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) with allowing her to learn quickly on the job.

"My winemaker said he was very impressed with my practical knowledge,"

said MacLean. "When I tell people I studied wine at Brock University, they're impressed with how developed the wine industry in Canada is, complete with having a university to support it. I feel proud to represent Brock, and now I get to demonstrate the knowledge I gained while I was there to winemakers internationally."

Before Brock, MacLean completed an Honours Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from the University of Ottawa and a Master's of Science in Chemistry at the University of Calgary.

"I was drawn to the wine industry because it combines science, art, nature and so much passion," said MacLean. "Studying science always came naturally to me but I have this artistic side as well. I didn't know how to combine them until I saw an infographic on Pinterest, of all things, titled The Chemistry in Wine, and it just clicked."

She said she then did extensive research about how wine is made and how she could study it, which lead her to Brock — specifically, CCOVI's Senior lab Instructor Steven Trussler — and was convinced it was the career path for her.

"Liisa is a great example of the diversity of students that are attracted to the Oenology and Viticulture programming at Brock," said Trussler. "We were able to leverage her strong chemistry background, supplement that with some biology and sensory theory, and provide rich experiential learning in grape and wine labs, projects, field trips and extra-curricular activities."

MacLean said she's currently applying for harvest 2020 jobs in Australia and New Zealand for both cellar hand and winery lab technician positions, and that she'd like to travel more before returning to the Niagara region.

Although she won't make it to convocation this week, she said she wouldn't trade the experience for anything.

"The whole experience has been surreal," she said. "After dinner I can walk in the vineyards to watch the sunset over the hill. I still cannot believe that I am freshly graduated, making wine and living in Germany."

PUBLICATIONS & BRIEFS

- Muysson, J., Miller, L., Allie, R., and Inglis, D.L. (2019) The Use of CRISPR-Cas9 Genome Editing to Determine the Importance of Glycerol Uptake in Wine Yeast During Icewine Fermentation. *Fermentation* 5, 93; doi:10.3390/fermentation5040093.
- Cyr, D., Kwong, L., & Sun, L. (2019). Who Will Replace Parker? A Copula Function Analysis of Bordeaux En Primeur Wine Raters. *Journal of Wine Economics*, 14(2), 133-144
- Richard Marchal, Thomas Salmon, Ramon Gonzalez, Belinda Kemp, Céline Vigneau, Pascale Williams, Thierry Doco. (2020). Impact of Botrytis cinerea contamination on the characteristics and foamability of yeast macromolecules released during the alcoholic fermentation of a model grape juice. *Molecules*.
- Belinda Kemp (2020). Fizz Club: Twenty Valley style. Sparkling wine and food matching masterclass. Twenty Valley Winter Winefest, Jordan Village, Ontario, Canada. 10th January 2020.
- Belinda Kemp & Hannah Charnock. (2019). Sparkling Wine flavour. Guest Lecture for undergraduate Integrated Science students. McMaster University, Ontario, Canada. 8th November 2019.