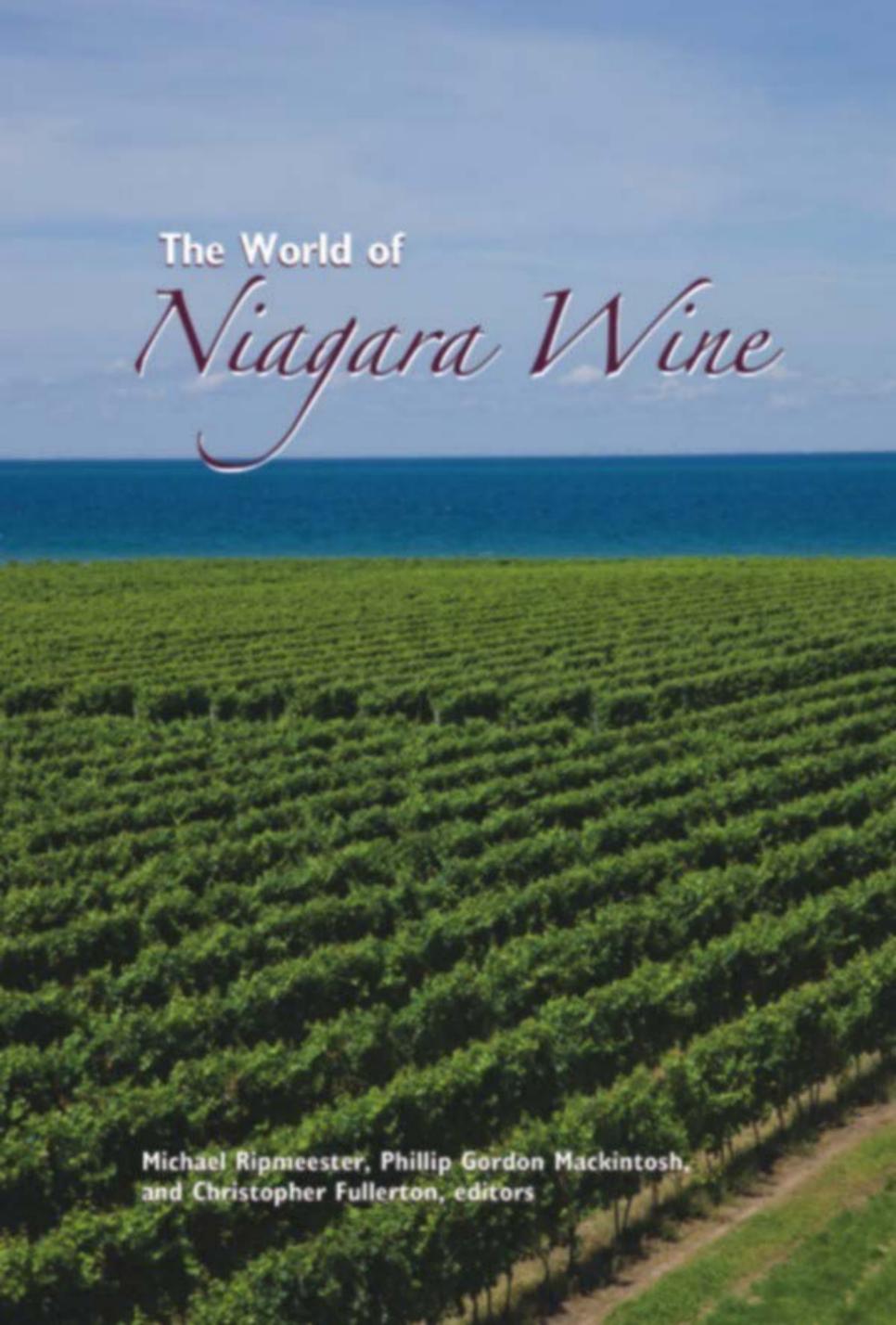


Wine as heritage across Niagara

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The World of
Niagara Wine

Michael Ripmeester, Phillip Gordon Mackintosh,
and Christopher Fullerton, editors

⦿ Previous Research

1. Wine Top of Mind
2. Identity Narratives Tied Up with Wine
3. Sagging economic fortunes
4. Identity narratives (blue collar) faltering
5. Vernacular Identity
6. Ambiguous Relationship with grapes and wine as heritage
 - Grape and Wine Festival
 - Local production of food products
 - Local agricultural traditions

The New Research

- ⦿ Does this hold for the rest of the Niagara Region? How important is the escarpment in residents' attitudes towards wine?
- ⦿ The Model (Roy, 1998)
 - ⦿ Interested parties find a useful attribute
 - ⦿ This attribute is marketed to outsiders
 - ⦿ The attribute is promoted locally
 - ⦿ Residents internalize the attribute as part of identity

Place Branding

- ⊕ The key to disarming local skepticism of place-based brands is authenticity. By pinpointing the most meaningful cultural and heritage differentiators of a place, cultural mapping breathes credibility and genuine character into a the community's brand story. Immersing the brand proposition in the “real deal” reconnects people to their roots boosts local pride, and engages supporters in re-envisioning their future Hanna (2010, 93).

Place Branding

- ❁ **NIAGARA**, The name conjures many diverse images – a majestic falls, a rugged river, surging rock faces, orchards, agricultural hamlets, quaint lake-side villages and bustling urban centres. People the world over visit Niagara every year in vast numbers to experience these remarkable riches.
- ❁ Rolling vineyards and the fine wines crafted from their bounty are included in these riches and contribute to Niagara's lure as an international destination.
- ❁
- ❁ The purpose of this Study is to develop a strategy to energize Niagara's Wine Country communities. A variety of economic development opportunities have been identified to stimulate investment. A number of community infrastructure improvements have been identified to enhance Wine Country as a recognizable place and destination (Energizing Niagara, 2007)

Place Branding

- ⊕ Agriculture is one of the pillars that built Niagara's economy, and it continues to be a significant contributor to the overall GDP of the region. The growth of Niagara's wine industry and the emergence of value-added agricultural production processes has created more opportunities for growth in this sector (Niagara Chamber of Commerce, Blue Print for Economic Future).

The Data: Top of Mind

	Above the Escarpment		Below the Escarpment	
	Grimsby n=35	Virgil n=24	Port Colborne n=43	Welland n=39
Athletics			2.3	
Farms	14.3	29.2	7	12.8
Geography	11.4	4.2	7	10.3
History			2.3	5.1
Industry				2.6
Negative Factors			4.7	10.3
Niagara Falls	20	4.2	48.7	28.1
Positive Factors	5.7	0	2.3	7.7
Tourism	0	8.3	4.7	2.6
Welland Canal			14	5.1
Wine	48.6	54.1	7	15.4
Total	100	100	100	100

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The Data: Location

Is wine part of your daily routine?

	Above the Escarpment		Below the Escarpment	
	Grimsby n=35	Virgil n=24	Port Colborne n=43	Welland n=39
Yes	54.1	100	41.9	25.6
No	40.5	0	55.8	71.8
No answer	5.4	0	2.3	2.6
Total	100	100	100	100

How do wine or wine activities fit into your daily routine?

	Above the Escarpment		Below the Escarpment	
	Grimsby n=35	Virgil n=24	Port Colborne n=43	Welland n=39
Consume	40	15.8	61.9	60
Grow Grapes	5	5.3	0	0
Live near Winery	15	28.9	0	0
Make Wine	0	0	0	0
Visibility	20	47.4	28.6	10
Work at Winery	10	0	0	0
Other	10	2.6	9.5	30
Total	100	100	100	100

The Similarities


1. Agriculture is important to Niagara Heritage (95%)
 2. Most (over 90%) participated in agricultural pursuits (Fall Fairs, Markets).
 3. Wine is part of Niagara Heritage (93% below; 84% above)
- **Key despite “top of mind” results, wine is still integrated into heritage narratives**

	Below the Escarpment		Above the Escarpment	
	Virgil n=113	Grimsby n=67	Welland n=54	Port Colborne n=60
Brochures	4.4	7.5		3.3
Employment	1.8	1.5	13.0	3.3
Festivals	2.7	3.0	5.6	
Internet	12.4	7.5	9.3	18.3
LCBO	6.2	4.5	5.6	3.3
Magazines		4.5	3.7	
Newspaper	14.2	19.4	13.0	13.3
Radio	7.1			6.7
Television	0.9	10.4	5.6	6.7
Visibility	5.3	7.5	1.9	3.3
Wineries	19.5	14.9	26.5	23.5
Word of Mouth	24.8	19.4	14.8	15.0
Do not Know			1.9	3.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Personal Sources of Knowledge about Wine

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Personal Sources of Knowledge about Wine

“Food and Drink; all I know comes from that magazine.”

- ⦿ Advertising is a very important source of information
 - ⦿ 84% below the escarpment
 - ⦿ 83% above the escarpement

Significance of advertising in acquiring knowledge of wine and wine-related activities.

	Below the Escarpment		Above the Escarpment	
	Virgil n=52	Grimsby n=37	Welland n=39	Port Colborne n=43
Significant	32.7	54.1	20.5	44.2
Minor	51.9	35.1	61.5	39.5
None	15.4	10.8	10.3	2.3
Negative			2.6	
Opinion			5.1	14.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The role of Media

- ⊗ the media can loosen the bond of local experience and can dislocate local memory (Lipsitz, 1990)
- ⊗ Prosthetic memories are neither purely individual nor entirely collective but emerge at the interface of individual and collective experience. They are privately felt public memories that develop after an encounter with mass cultural representations of the past, when new images and ideas come into contact with a person's own archive of experience (Landsberg, 2004, 19).

The role of Media

- ⊕ In Niagara, we believe that the media are fostering prosthetic memories of the region for residents who have forgotten, or never known, the details of its past. Following Roy's prescription, this is a decidedly usable past for those who accept it.

BUT!

⦿ Understanding of Heritage

1. An intrinsic part of the Region

- “Wineries are here. It’s in the soil.” Another opined: “Wine – there are wineries everywhere. The environment is perfect for wine.”

2. Synonym for History

- “Grapes have been here for many years... Vineland!! Grapes seem everywhere.”

3. Connection to Personal Narrative

- “I grew up with it, wine is in my soul, it is part of my heritage.”
- “I used to cut grapes when I was a kid. The whole family worked for farms (1960s) and I also had a hobby farm (1990s).”

BUT!

⦿ Understanding of Heritage

4. Every Day Cultural Activity

- “It seems that wine is part of local heritage. It’s local. My family drinks wine everyday as do our friends. It’s part of the culture.”

5. Ethnic Connection

- “Well... there are lots of Italians.”

6. Local Importance

- Wine is one of the things we’re known for, something to be proud of and we deserve to be proud of it, because we make great wine.”
- “Yes... because of the extreme number of wineries.”
- “Because it draws people here. It’s one of the two things that bring people here (the Falls is first).”

BUT!

7. Is it really heritage?

- “It’s grand what they’ve done with Ontario wines. Because of the improvements we’ve been able to make it a part of our identity. I think heritage is a tricky word because it brings up history, but identity or an identifier is probably more accurate for me.”
- “What is the length of time it needs to be heritage. It has become prominent in the last twenty-five years, but it started well before that.”

“It’s part of our identity although it borders on gimmicky sometimes because the idea is so marketable.”

1. the wine industry provides economic and employment benefits in the face of a declining economy
 - “The wine is important at a global scale. It’s beginning to make as stronger connection between wine and the Region. We used to be known for soft fruit, but it good for marketing and good with the tourists.”
 - I’m very proud of it. It makes you feel good that we recognize it and promote it. VQA and local wine is promoted across Canada and it is a good product.”

“It’s part of our identity although it borders on gimmicky sometimes because the idea is so marketable.”

1. participants suggested that the growing grape and wine industry bolsters sagging local identity
 - “I wish more people would realize and appreciate how grape growing and wine have shaped this area. But, we still have a long way to go. We need to shake this underdog or lower class image.”
 - “Labels can be improved upon. Grimsby does not have a lot of wineries or advertising. Highway 8 needs to be more user friendly and designed better. It could be a new Niagara Parkway.”
 - “It’s not at the forefront. Unless it’s right in front of you. We need to educate and spark interest in to participate. People all across the peninsula should embrace it.”

“It’s part of our identity although it borders on gimmicky sometimes because the idea is so marketable.”

1. A poor trade-off for soft fruits.

- “I just feel bad that we have to get rid of a lot of the fruit and processing plants. It’s unfair to farmers. It seems like wine is the only solution around here for good or bad.”

“It’s part of our identity although it borders on gimmicky sometimes because the idea is so marketable.”

1. Niagara is NOT wine country.

1. “Bull Shit... We wanna be a place [that we’re not]... everything suffers because of it... I know it’s B.S. so I don’t listen to it. It becomes propaganda.
- “Wine caters to a rich demographic. It’s a huge f*****g sham. VQA does not mean local.”
- “Yes, by extension. People don’t drink wine here. This is a region of beer drinkers. It’s not part of people’s lives like it is in other places. In Europe even men drink wine.”

Conclusion

- ⊗ Rebranding is succeeding
 - ⊗ Wine is a top of mind identifier for the Region both above and below the escarpment
 - ⊗ Wine has become linked to heritage narratives both above and below the escarpment
- ⊗ Branding does not reflect the full character of a region
 - ⊗ Local life is more complicated
- ⊗ What are long term consequences?
- ⊗ The role of social media?
 - ⊗ The information available to tourists now readily includes the opinions, images and videos of locals as well as professional marketers Lozano (2011)