



ONTARIO *Wine* AWARDS  
2022  
RESULTS

A CELEBRATION OF ONTARIO WINES



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Press Release – embargoed till 4.30pm Thursday, June 16th

## RECORD NUMBER OF ENTRIES FOR ONTARIO WINES AWARDS 2022

After a three-year hiatus due to COVID, the Ontario Wine Awards (presented by Swiftpost) was back with a vengeance this year. Competition founder Tony Aspler said: ‘Seventy-four wineries from Niagara, Prince Edward County and South West Ontario entered 600 wines in the competition.’

The judging by twelve panels took place at George Brown College in Toronto on Saturday, May 7th. The results (see below) were released at the awards ceremony, held at Niagara College where the medals for best in category were presented to the winemakers. The quality of winemaking was exceptional: Thirty wines received GOLD medals; 39 SILVER and 30 BRONZE.

A special award was inaugurated this year to honour the memory of a much-loved winemaker who died tragically in February: The Paul Pender Memorial ‘Rising Star’ Award.

The winner was Alec Baines. He received a trophy of a mounted Blundstone boot (Paul favoured footwear) and a citation that reads:

‘The inaugural Paul Pender Memorial Award celebrates the achievements and legacy of an outstanding leader in the Canadian wine industry. The recipient of this ‘Rising Star’ award - selected by a committee of their peers - has demonstrated the qualities that made Paul Pender a winemaker’s winemaker - talent, selfless generosity, mentorship and innovation.’

(For more information contact Deborah Benoit at 416-948-1823.)

## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

PAUL PENDER

Rising Star Award Winner: **Alex Baines**

Originally from the UK, I first arrived in Niagara in August of 2012, after spending two years in Australia, where I was introduced to the wine industry. When I arrived at Tawse for harvest, my plan was to be in Ontario for 3 months and then travel Canada for the rest of my 1-year visa. Quite quickly, after working with Paul and the team, I realized that this job wasn't just a means to travel but an industry that I wanted to pursue a career in. Paul recommended the Niagara College Program to me, wrote me a letter of recommendation and the rest is history.

I learned from Paul how important a sense of place was in winemaking and that the best wines were those that truly transported you to a location, a place in time and made you reflect on what you were doing the year the fruit was harvested. He really inspired me to follow organic farming practices and terroir focused winemaking. This philosophy still holds true today and I have focused my career on producers that follow these practices. My goal is to continue to make thoughtful, sustainable, terroir focused wines in Niagara, a place that I am now very proud to call home. This was something that Paul instilled in me in the years that I knew and worked for him, and I am very lucky to have found a home at Hidden Bench where I truly believe this is possible.

Outside of the winery, I like to stay fit and active. For the last 9 years I have played soccer for the Grimsby, now Lincoln, team in the Peninsula soccer league. I have been the captain of this team for the last 7 years



Rising Star Award Winner: Alex Baines

and have led the team to many league titles. I spend a lot of time renovating my 100-year-old home in St Catharines. Growing up in the UK has given me a great love of historical architecture and I really enjoy restoring my home to its former glory and seeing the historical elements preserved. I have several friends doing the same right now, so as well as working on my own house, I help with their projects as much as I can.

For the last 3 and a half years, as well as working full time at the winery, I took on a part time job at the LCBO. I wanted to get more experience on the sales side of wine and have the opportunity to share my knowledge of VQA wines with as many people as possible to raise awareness of the great wines we are making in Ontario. I just recently left this part time job with my promotion to winemaker at Hidden Bench.



## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

### WINE MARKETING ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO Journalism Award

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Carolyn Evans Hammond

Carolyn Evans Hammond is a long-standing wine critic. She hosts 'The Wine Find Talks' on YouTube and The Wine Find travel TV show on ROKU. She contributes a weekly syndicated column to the Toronto Star. As a seasoned wine educator, judge and media personality with 20+ years of journalism experience, Carolyn believes living well doesn't have to be pricy or pretentious. It just takes a little know-how--and maybe a corkscrew. She has appeared on CNN International, BON TV (China), GoingGlobalTV.com, CHCH TV, Canada AM, and CITY-TV. She has been a guest on radio stations in the U.S. and has written for top publications including Decanter, Wine Spectator, Wine & Spirit International, The Times, Maclean's and others. She is a longstanding member of the Circle of Wine Writers, holds the Diploma from the Wine & Spirit Education Trust in the UK, and is passionate about wine.



(photo by Tim Leyes)

## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

### The Winemaker of the Year Award

#### Paul Pender

Father, Carpenter, Winemaker, Hedonist, Lover of Life

Our hearts are broken by the sudden death of our own Paul Pender, who died on February 3rd in a senseless and tragic act of violence.

Paul was known for his peaceful nature and his easy-going attitude. He was someone who always offered a helping hand. In his last moments, Paul was doing just that – being a good Samaritan, and it is unjust that this led to his death. Allison (Findlay), the love of his life, was at his side on this fateful night.

Paul, who packed so much living into one life, who was often the last to leave a party, was taken from us far too soon.

Paul was family to so many touched by his gentle and kind way. Only a man as frustratingly likeable as Paul could unite his life-partner and ex-partner and all their friends and loved ones into a family that bucks up against every definition of ‘normal’ in its brilliant blends. People, children and animals have all come into the family in the most adventuresome and unexpected ways – each one worthy of a story over a glass of wine. A family where kids call their parents by their first names, where outsized ambitions in cooking and eating are just another Tuesday night, where love tumbles out of several different houses into everyone’s hearts. Paul’s people are his people because of who he was: kind, accepting, and loving.

Paul was born to Mary and Mike Pender on December 25th, 1967. Paul entered this world the same way he moved in this world – late! Mary had been waiting very patiently for her second child to be born. A week over-due, she finished her Christmas dinner and was having a splash of sherry when the contractions started. And in typical Paul fashion, he wanted to make an entrance that would be noticed. A little more than two hours after that glass of sherry, Paul was in his mother’s arms.

Mary and Mike were world travellers. Mike’s work took the family to many places including Nigeria and Egypt for extended periods of time. Paul’s sense of adventure was fostered through these experiences. He loved telling his own kids the stories of his shenanigans, which included spending the entire day with his brother, Mike, on their bicycles riding through Nigerian jungles and visiting city markets, their parents unaware of the distances they covered. Paul used his allowance to buy a jar of Nescafe at these city markets.

Paul’s path in life had lots of turns and twists – never one to follow a straight line. Niagara was the place where Paul lived the longest. It was here that he raised his family and worked as a carpenter and cabinet maker. Paul had the opportunity to go back to school at age 36. He was accepted into the second cohort of the Winemaking program at Niagara College. It was in winemaking where Paul truly discovered his passion. Tawse was the place where Paul honed his skills and talents as a winemaker. With the support of Moray Tawse, Paul crafted beautiful wines and spirits. Together they were a wonderful team.



Paul’s life was more than winemaking. It was vintage VW vans and camping trips. It was starting a coffee roasting business. It was impromptu beers with friends and pulled together shared meals. It was cycling and conquering the Niagara escarpment many times in one ride. In recent years it was buying a lakeshore cottage with his partner, Allison. This was Paul’s favourite place. The cottage became his place to gather community. Many of the pictures we have shared in recent days have centered around the cottage. These pictures are full of life.

Paul was incredibly proud of his children: Jamal (Telesford), Finn and Reuben (Pender-Chapman). Each one of them made Paul a better person and he would be the first to say that. In recent years, Paul became a grandfather and as much as Paul hated aging, he embraced the title of “Grandpa.” Some of our favourite pictures are Paul playing with the kids at the beach, always with a drink in his hand.

Paul’s legacy is love. He was our skinny-dipping, winemaking, bike-riding, deep-talking lover of life. Each time we feel the sun on our faces and the wind in our hair we will think of Paul. We will love life and each other in his memory.

Paul is survived by his life partner, Allison (Findlay). His children, Jamal (Amie Telesford), Finn and Reuben (Pender-Chapman). His co-parent, Pilar (Chapman). His parents, Mary and Mike. His siblings Mike and Kathleen (BJ Wray). His beautiful grandchildren Jayce, Miles, and the dynamic duo Addison and Blakely. His father-in-law Ron Findlay. Mother-in-law Marilyn Findlay. His sister-in-law Katie (Mike Grant) and brother-in-law Daron (Kelsey White). Paul and Pilar created a beautiful, blended family and Paul will be deeply missed by his bonus kids, nieces and nephews and his Grenadian second family. And the one who will miss Paul the most, the true love of his life, is his four-legged confidante, Maeve.

*credit: This eulogy of Paul Pender was taken from Tawse Winery’s website.*

## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

### SWIFTPOST White Wine Of The Year

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Domaine Queylus  
La Grande Réserve Chardonnay 2020

Deep golden colour; intense apple and pear bouquet with oak spicy and a thread of minerality; medium to full-bodied, with richly extracted yellow apple and pear flavours carried on lively lemony acidity to a long, lingering finish.





## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

### SWIFTPOST Red Wine Of The Year

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Peninsula Ridge  
Reserve Syrah Ridge Reserve Syrah 2016

Deep purple-ruby in colour; cedary, toasty, meaty nose of blackberries and vanilla oak; medium to full-bodied, dry, spicy, well-structured and harmonious black fruit flavours. Reminiscent of Syrah from the northern Rhône.



## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

### SWIFT POST

#### Sparkling Wine (traditional method) Award

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Gold: Malivoire Bisous Rosé N/V

Gold: Pelee Island Empress II 2019

Silver: Huff Estate Cuvee Janine 2018

Bronze: Huff Estate Cuvee Peter F. Huff 2018

Bronze: Queenston Mile Vineyard Blanc de Noir 2017

#### Sparkling Wine (Cuve Close)

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No Gold Medal awarded

Silver: Megalomaniac Wines Sparkling Personality Sparkling Riesling

Bronze: Lighthall Vineyards The Fence 2021

Bronze: 180 Estate Winery Gamay Rosé Sparkling

### QUENCH MAGAZINE

#### Riesling Dry Award

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Gold: Wending Home Estate Vineyards Riesling 2020

Silver: Niagara Teaching Winery Balance Dry Riesling 2020

Bronze: Strewn Winery Terroir Riesling 2019

### BENCHMARK

#### Semi-Dry Riesling Award

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Gold: Vineland Estates St. Urban Elevation Riesling 2021

Gold: Thirty Bench Winemakers Small Lot Riesling Wild Cask 2019

Gold: Tawse Quarry Road Riesling 2019

Silver: Redstone Redstone Limestone Riesling 2020

### NIAGARA AIRBUS

#### Pinot Gris Award

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Gold: Dim Wine Co. Forged Pinot Gris 2017

Gold: Big Head Wines Pinot Gris Select 2017

Silver: Lakeview East Dell Pinot Grigio 2020

Bronze: Konzelmann Estate Pinot Grigio 2019



## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

### VINTAGE ASSESSMENTS

#### Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon Award

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- Gold: Creekside Estate Backyard Block Sauvignon Blanc 2021
- Gold: Burnt Ship Bay Estate Winery Sauvignon Blanc 2021
- Silver: Palatine Hills Estate Wild & Free White Meritage 2020
- Silver: Ravine Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc 2020
- Silver: Peller Estate Signature Series Sauvignon Blanc 2019
- Bronze: Trius Showcase Wild Ferment Sauvignon Blanc 2019
- Bronze: Vineland Estates Sauvignon Blanc 2021

### A.O. WILSON

#### Unoaked Chardonnay Award

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- Gold: Peninsula Ridge Inox Chardonnay 2020
- Silver: Kacaba Unoaked Chardonnay 2020
- Bronze: Ravine Vineyard Unoaked Chardonnay 2021

### COGECO YOUR TV

#### Oaked Chardonnay (Under \$20) Award

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- Gold: Konzelmann Estate Barrel-Aged Chardonnay 2020
- Silver: North 42 Degrees Chardonnay 2020
- Bronze: Trius 'Distinction' Barrel-Fermented Chardonnay 2020

### J. DAVID HARDNER INSURANCE

#### Oaked Chardonnay (Over \$20) Award

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- Gold: Domaine Queylus La Grande Réserve Chardonnay 2020
- Silver: Bachelder Wismer-Foxcoft Chardonnay 2019
- Silver: Magnotta Limited Edition Chardonnay 2020
- Bronze: Henry of Pelham Estate Chardonnay 2020

## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

### Gewurztraminer Award

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No Gold Award

Silver: Jackson-Triggs Grand Reserve Gewurztraminer 2020

Bronze: Stoney Ridge Estate Gewurztraminer 2019

### Dry White Varietals Awards

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No Gold Award

Silver: Redstone White Meritage 2020

Silver: Niagara College Dean's List Viognier 2020

Bronze: Reif Estate Semillon 2020

### ASL PRINT FX

#### Roses/Blanc De Noir Award

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Gold: Malivoire Wine Moira Rosé 2021

Silver: 13th Street Winery Gamay Vin Gris 2021

Bronze: Henry of Pelham Speck Three of Hearts Rosé 2020

Bronze: Inniskillin Wines Reserve Cabernet Franc Rosé 2020

### GEORGE BROWN CENTRE FOR HOSPITALITY AND CULINARY ARTS

#### Gamay Award

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Gold: Bachelder 52% Whole Cluster Wismer-Foxcroft Gamay 2020

Silver: 13th Street Gamay 2020

Silver: Byland Estate Gamay Noir Owner Signature 2020

Bronze: Niagara College Balance Gamay Noir 2018

### NIAGARA BENCHLANDS (TOWN OF LINCOLN)

#### Pinot Noir Award

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Gold: Domaine Queylus Pinot Noir Tradition 2019

Silver: Closson Chase South Clos Pinot Noir 2019

Silver: Le Clos Jordanne Jordan Village Pinot Noir 2019

Bronze: Locust Lane Estate Winery Pinot Noir 2019

## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

### VINES TO VINTAGES Cabernet Franc Award

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Gold: Tawse Winery David's Block Cabernet Franc 2019

Gold: Domaine Queylus Cabernet Franc Réserve 2020

Silver: Inniskillin Wines Reserve Cabernet Franc 2018

Bronze: Ravine Vineyard Estate Lonna's Block Cabernet Franc 2019

### VINES TO VINTAGES Cabernet Franc Award

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Gold: Tawse Winery David's Block Cabernet Franc 2019

Gold: Domaine Queylus Cabernet Franc Réserve 2020

Silver: Inniskillin Wines Reserve Cabernet Franc 2018

Bronze: Ravine Vineyard Estate Lonna's Block Cabernet Franc 2019

### Merlot Award

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No gold award

Silver: Konzelmann Merlot Barrel-Aged Reserve Series 2020

Silver: GreenLane Estate Christine's Block Merlot 2017

Bronze: Jackson-Triggs Grand Reserve Merlot 2019

### BLUNDSTONE CANADA Cabernet Sauvignon Award

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Gold: Strewn Winery Cabernet Sauvignon 2017

Silver: Waupoos Estates Winery 2019

Bronze: Peninsula Ridge Estate BV Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2016

Bronze: Trius Showcase East Block Cabernet Sauvignon 2019



## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

### SWIFT POST

#### Meritage And Cabernet Blends Award

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Gold: Southbrook Poetica Red 2019

Gold: The Foreign Affair Temptress 2018

Silver: Magnotta Legacy Limited edition 2018

Silver: The Foreign Affair Dream 2018

### WINE MARKETING ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

#### Syrah/Shiraz Award

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Gold: Big Head Raw Syrah 2020

Gold: Kacaba Proprietor's Block Syrah Escarpment 2019

Gold: Peninsula Ridge Reserve Syrah 2016

Silver: Rockway Syrah 2018

### COGECO

#### Hybrid Red Award

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Gold: Henry of Pelham Speck Family Reserve Baco Noir 2020

Silver: Wayne Gretzky Estates No. 99 Signature Series Baco Noir 2020

Bronze: Riverview Cellars Baco Noir 2020

### FINE WINE RESERVE

#### Late Harvest Whites & Reds

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Gold: Thirty Bench Special Select Late Harvest Vidal 2019

Silver: Trius Showcase Late Harvest Vidal 2019

Silver: Konzelmann Select Harvest Cabernet Sauvignon 2019

Bronze: Strewn Ice-Breaker Select Late Harvest Vidal 2014

## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

### Appassimento Red Award

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No Gold Award

Silver: Dim Wine Co. Field Select Red 2016

Silver: Rennie Estate Winery 'G' Assemblage 2016

Bronze: The Foreign Affair Apologetic 2018

### GRAPES FOR HUMANITY Other Red Wines Award

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Gold: Lakeview Cellars Grand Reserve Red 2017

Silver: Lakeview Cellars Malbec 2017

Silver: Green Lane Estate Malbec 2018

Bronze: Creekside Red Tractor Cabernet Shiraz 2019

### Orange Wine Award

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No Gold Award

Silver: Maenad Wine Co. Skin-Fermented Chardonnay 2020

Silver: Southbrook Skin-Fermented White (Vidal) 2020

Bronze: Big Head Amber 2021

### LCBO Vidal Icewine Award

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Gold: Kittling Ridge Vidal Icewine 2019

Gold: Riverview Cellars Vidal Icewine 2019

Silver: Inniskillin Oak-Aged Vidal Icewine 2019

Silver: Magnotta Vidal Icewine Limited 2019

Silver: Sue-Ann Staff Estate Winery Vidal Icewine 2018

Bronze: Lakeview Wine Co. Lakeview Cellars Vidal Icewine 2019

## 2022 ONTARIO WINE AWARDS RESULTS

### NIAGARA AIRBUS Vinifera Icewine Award

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Gold: Redstone Cabernet Sauvignon Icewine 2019

Silver: Jackson-Triggs Cabernet Franc Icewine 2019

Silver: Wayne Gretzky Riesling Icewine 2019

Bronze: Inniskillin Cabernet Franc Icewine 2019

### THE BRANDER Label Design Award

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Megalomaniac To Be Franc Franc Cabernet Franc





# ONTARIO *Wine* AWARDS

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## GOLD SPONSORS



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# TORONTO STAR

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FOOD & DRINK

ADVICE

## These Ontario producers make wine with the planet in mind

Plus bottle recommendations including one orange wine.

By **Carolyn Evans Hammond** Contributing Columnist

Thu., Feb. 3, 2022 | 4 min. read

### READ THE CONVERSATION

The planet is under threat. And almost everything we do — what we eat, how we shop and even which wine we choose — affects the situation. Conscientious consumers make sustainable choices. And when it comes to buying local wine, those choices have never been easier.

13 Ontario wineries are now Sustainable Winemaking Ontario Certified. That means they've completed a rigorous, third-party audited program that verifies that they practice sustainability in the vineyards and the wineries under the three core pillars — environment, economy and community. Individual sustainability practices differ winery to winery, but they all dedicate themselves to those values in meaningful and verifiable ways to earn the certification.

Hidden Bench Estate Winery installed a 105 panel/23.5kW solar array on its storage building to reduce its reliance on the electrical grid and be energy cost neutral each year. Southbrook enjoys 95 per cent natural daylight in all its work areas to limit its use of electricity. And a five-level, gravity flow system in Flat Rock Cellars' production facility lets wine flow naturally between fermenters and barrels rather than relying on pumps, thereby reducing energy consumption. These are just a few of the many sustainability measures at certified wineries.

From a consumer perspective, certification guarantees the wine they drink is made by producers actively taking care of the land, giving back in meaningful ways and supporting a healthy future for generations.

And of course, all certified wineries must be VQA-focused, meaning they produce wine from 100 per cent fresh Ontario-grown grapes and do so in accordance with a strict quality assurance program.

While 13 wineries are now certified, others are working toward it. So the program, which began in 2007 and became third-party audited in 2017, is gaining ground.

For a more sustainable option, consider a bottle by one of the wineries noted in the sidebar. Here are a few recommendations, starting with a smart red.

The **2018 Château des Charmes Gamay Noir 'Droit', VQA St. David's Bench** (available at [chateaudescharmes.com](http://chateaudescharmes.com) \$19.95) is a light-bodied, quenching red with subtle smoky, cedary, nutty charm and lots of plum-and-muddled berry stuffing. Each sip streams in with elegant, lifted fruit before tapering toward a long finish that leaves hints of bitter chocolate, charcoal, cassis and toasted tobacco. Great balance, finesse and versatility. Score: 92

Gamay Noir Droit is a clone of the Gamay grape that was discovered in Château des Charmes vineyard, and the winery now has proprietary rights to this vine — and its name.

The **2020 Southbrook Triomphe Skin Fermented White Orange Wine, VQA Ontario** (available at [southbrook.com](https://southbrook.com) \$29.75) delivers a clean, complex version of this wine style.

[Orange wine](#) is made from grapes, of course. But, because it's a white wine that has fermented on its skins, it takes on an orange hue. Such is the case here with Southbrook's 2020 Triomphe, which is a blend of 45 per cent Vidal and 55 per cent Chardonnay Musque, an aromatic clone of Chardonnay.

In the glass, this unfiltered, tangerine-coloured wine is hazy, which is of course intentional. The fragrance suggests iced tea and ginger, white peach and orange peel, honeydew melon and a touch of white pepper. And the attack is dry and slightly saline with a slight prickle of effervescence. The entry brings the aromas into clearer focus. Salinity turns to orange peel then shifts toward iced tea and ginger before tapering toward peach pit and finishing with a ripe little tannic tug that holds the flavours in place. Exciting stuff. Score: 93

For those who prefer a glass of dessert wine to a big, fluffy dessert, there's the **2017 Pillitteri Estates Team Canada Vidal Icewine, VQA Niagara-on-the-Lake** (available at [pillitteri.com](https://pillitteri.com) \$29.95/200 mL). In fact, for the duration of the Beijing Winter Olympic Games— Feb. 4 to 20 — Pillitteri is offering a six-pack of this wine for \$99 to celebrate and support Canadian athletes. And one dollar from each bottle will still go to the Canadian Olympic Foundation.

The 2017 Pillitteri Estates Team Canada Icewine starts with marmalade and candied citrus scents as well as a touch of nut and cream. Then, it beams in and fans out with spiralling complexity. Flavours suggest poached peach, candied orange, perfectly ripe pineapple with a drizzle of caramel and a squirt of lemon. And the mouthcoating goodness of this rich sweetie is impeccably balanced by palate-cleansing acidity. Score: 94

While these three bottles overdeliver, they're only a few of the many sustainable wines now made in Ontario.

### **Sustainable Winemaking Ontario Certified Wineries**

Cave Spring

Château des Charmes

Flat Rock Cellars

Henry of Pelham Family Estate

Hidden Bench Estate Winery

Malivoire Wine Company

Pelee Island Winery & Pavillion

Pillitteri Estates Winery

Reif Estate Winery

Southbrook Vineyards

Stratus Vineyards

Strewn Winery

Vineland Estates Winery



**Carolyn Evans Hammond** is a Toronto-based wine writer and a freelance contributing columnist for the Star. Wineries occasionally sponsor segments on her YouTube series yet they have no role in the selection of the wines she chooses to review or her opinions of those wines. Reach her via email: [carolyn@carolynevanshammond.com](mailto:carolyn@carolynevanshammond.com)

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