



tasting note^S

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“Mission Hill: The Mondavi of the North. Step through the entry gates and you’re transported into an uncluttered, slow-moving universe that echoes the long, slow journey of a grape from the vine to the wine glass. Its wines are of impeccable quality.”

Patrick Desy, Cellier Magazine

In The Belly Of The Feast

BY GUEST EDITOR JAMIE MAW

At Enderby’s North Okanagan Game Meats, rancher Richard Yntema surveys his tract of forest and meadow, where his herd of 140 wild boar roam free and proud. Nearby the fallow deer and sheep that he also raises are grazing.



WILD BOAR AT NORTH OKANAGAN GAME MEATS

Four years ago at a Mission Hill dinner, I first sampled his product. Despite the fact that it was early December, virtually every ingredient was local, but unusually for any dinner party the star guest was the boar. The Mission Hill chefs had taken a former throwaway part of the animal—the cheeks—seared them, then dispatched them for a long, slow braise in the oven in a brunoise of vegetables, stock and, of course, lots of wine, in this case the S.L.C. Syrah.

The result was revelatory. So deeply flavoured, and so unlike factory-raised animals, the dish seemed sponsored both by the earth and an earlier time, when life moved along a little slower. The fruit of

the big Syrah had moved in with the meat and the result was unctuous, tender, each bite drawing on the lengthy steep of vine and hoof.

Mission Hill has a long history of partnering with small, local suppliers, and collaborates each growing season with organic farms such as Suncatcher and Greencroft – their enormous repertoires of vegetables and fruits move across the valley floor daily into the Mission Hill kitchens.

Two hours north of the winery, along the banks of the Shuswap River, Wolf and Gabriele Wesle’s Greencroft Gardens is 20 acres of pastoral bliss that belies their Swiss Army Knife lives—from managing their riding school to organizing the Grindrod Garlic Festival each August to, of course, running their farm. Certified organic since 1988, the Wesles supply garlic, rainbow carrots, beets, sunchokes, potatoes and broccoli to Mission Hill.

WORKING IN THE RYTHYM OF
THE SEASONS, MISSION HILL’S
INTENSIVE COLLABORATION
WITH OKANAGAN FARMERS
AND RANCHERS HAS LIFTED
OUR LOCAL CUISINE YET HIGHER.

Winery chef Matthew Batey extols the virtues of working with vegetables still warm from the earth. “The flavour and nutritional values are off

the charts,” he says, “so our job in preparing this produce becomes a respectful one that requires simplicity, and knowing exactly when to get out of the way.”

Working in the rythym of the seasons, Mission Hill’s intensive collaboration with Okanagan farmers and ranchers has lifted our local cuisine yet higher.

Back at Richard Yntema’s Enderby operation, the slow growing boars (they take a year to gain maturity), wander through a stressless life, a fact he swears shows up in the finished product. I couldn’t disagree. His herd is a hybrid breed of black western European pigs crossed with Russian wild boars, which explains their long snouts, customized for foraging.

Yntema has just finished the punishing two-year, \$400,000 process of upgrading his ranch and processing facility to the new provincial regulations imposed in 2008. Virtually shut down, he lost income and long-term customers and wound up deeply out of pocket. But Okanagan farmers and ranchers are survivors, and on this bright spring morning, the tone of his voice lifts up as he discusses his future. “Mission Hill was one of our best customers,” he says, “and they’ve been very patient and supportive through this difficult time.”

Yntema looks forward to supplying a smoked wild boar schinken product, ideal for winery chef Batey’s charcuterie boards, as well as pork belly, the ‘bacon cut’ that makes for an extraordinary appetizer.

As for me, I’ll be lobbying hard for boar cheeks, seared, then braised.



Five Vineyards Pinot Blanc 2008

"This fresh and flavourful Pinot Blanc has a lot of charm, particularly from its pleasing fragrant aroma. Candied citrus, baked apple and honey notes add to the appeal."

Rating: Best Buys,
Intervin International Wine Awards
Vines Magazine

Five Vineyards Pinot Noir 2008

"This is a very aromatic bright ruby-hued wine with maraschino cherries, vanilla, blackberry and cocoa with hints of hazelnuts. The palate has a lovely silky texture and layers of red fruit, cedar, cocoa and hints of spice. A very easy drinking Pinot Noir great for weekday dinners."

Rating: 89/100
Daenna Van Mulligan, Wine Diva

Reserve Chardonnay 2007

"Just released is the excellent Mission Hill Reserve Chardonnay 2007. Winemaker John Simes, whose trophy room would almost make Sidney Crosby envious, has produced another world-class Chardonnay. There is great aromatic lift to this full-bodied white, which has already taken gold medals at the Chardonnay du Monde competition in Paris and the Selections Mondiales des Vins Canada in Quebec, among other competitions. Ripe stone fruit and tropical fruit flavours mingle with a pronounced flavour of toasted bread; they're held together with a firm spine of acidity."

Beppi Crosariol, The Globe & Mail



Feet In The Ground - notes from the vineyard

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN SIMES-WINEMAKER, JAMES HOPPER-SENIOR VITICULTURIST + GRAHAM O'ROURKE-VITICULTURIST

On this late April morning the air warms quickly. The snow on the mountains opposite Mission Hill is melting away, and now, on the green benches that line the hills, the orchards and vineyards stir. Next week the apple trees—in their thousands—will announce their blossom, and the vines will burst their buds: April, with its warming days but still cool nights is full of anticipation—it's the Friday morning before the long weekend of summer.

The Okanagan Valley is home to weather extremes: notorious wind cells that rip up the funnel of the valley, typically from the south, that can turn the lake from placid calm to a boil of whitecaps in less than a half hour. The often fiercely cold winters and hot, dry summers collude for a climate that sees one of the greatest temperature swings in the world, certainly amongst wine growing regions.

"We benefited from the unusually mild winter after Christmas," says John Simes. "Last year, during the long cold snap, we pruned several weeks late, but this year the winter was gentler on the vines and we were able to start the prune a little earlier. Right now, the plants look very healthy and we're on track for bud burst."

Winemakers and viticulturists are by nature optimists—if necessarily cautious ones—sometimes willing Mother Nature while implementing new practices to guard against her whims and avarices.

As one example, Simes, together with James Hopper, has been busy seeing the installation of the final stages of the new drip irrigation system at the Naramata Ranch estate. "It was a big and often challenging task," says Hopper, "but it's also a tremendous investment in the future."

According to Hopper, the system delivers several benefits. "It improves the quality of the fruit, and

delivers healthier vines into the harsh winters. The drip irrigation also utilizes up to 50 per cent less water, but unlike overhead systems that mist the fruits,

the in-ground system also maximizes heat gain in the vineyards. "If you can buy seven to ten days to advance the maturity of the fruit," Hopper says, "well, that's an enormous advantage in this climate." The new system also reduces the threat of botrytis in grapes—such as Chardonnay, the three Pinots, and Riesling—that can have, at least under the old watering regime, a moderate susceptibility to the fungus.

**"WE'RE JUST GIVING MOTHER NATURE
A HELPING HAND, AND SHE SEEMS
TO LIKE THAT."**

Graham O'Rourke has been working on another environmentally-friendly initiative: composting. This year the Mission Hill estates will return more than 700 cubic metres of 'special recipe' compost, containing a base element of chipped orchard trees, back into the vineyards. "Virtually all our vineyard and winery waste goes back into the vineyards," he says.

In addition to the tree chips and vineyard prunings, which provide the carbon component; the recipe is augmented with grape skins, mar (substandard fruit) and other winery waste. Mission Hill has taken it one step further, however. Since the start-up of its sister operation, Turning Point Brewery, (which produces Stanley Park Amber Ale), hop and other waste can now be added to the mix to organically mulch and fertilize the vineyards.

In the southern estates, where the big reds are grown in sand, the mulched compost helps retain moisture, "a huge issue," according to O'Rourke. "In all of our estates, it means we can reduce irrigation, decrease inorganic fertilizers, and increase overall plant health—these vines are better enabled to sustain the stresses of winter."

Or as James Hopper says: "Healthy vines going into the winter means healthy vines in the spring. We're just giving Mother Nature a helping hand, and she seems to like that."



JOHN SIMES

Sommelier's Corner

JESSE HARNDEN, SOMMELIER



SPRING SELECTIONS

2008 Five Vineyards Pinot Grigio

This unoaked Pinot Grigio boasts a lively bouquet of ripe tropical fruit. Notes of apricot and peach combine perfectly with a crisp, clean and fresh finish. Ideally suited for cream based dishes, shellfish, smoked salmon, turkey, antipasto or subtle Asian spiced foods.

2008 Reserve Viognier

A distinctive new Viognier with an abundance of stone fruit, spice notes, and a lovely fragrance of orange blossom. The palate shows ripe, clean flavours of peach, tangerine and lemon candy. A rich, creamy wine with excellent balance and understated power.

2009 Five Vineyards Rosé

This is a deliciously refreshing dry Rosé. Aromas of pomegranate and sun-soaked strawberries mingle on the palate with notes of vanilla and honey. This Rosé is perfect for sipping or enjoying with many types of food including barbecued chicken or fish, a variety of soft cheeses, or Asian cuisine.

2007 Reserve Pinot Noir

Rich and open-textured with complex black cherry aromas, our 2007 Reserve Pinot Noir features gentle plum notes and a touch of spicy oak that come together on the finish and lingers softly. This ripe Pinot Noir has warmth, charm and appealing depth, making it a most versatile food-friendly wine.

2005 Select Lot Collection Merlot

Concentrated aromas of blackberry, licorice, black olive and espresso mark the S.L.C. Merlot from the outstanding 2005 vintage. The rich, full-bodied palate continues to show dark fruits along with spice and cedar notes, tobacco and dark chocolate. Big, chewy tannins give this wine an immense mouth feel and rich, satisfying finish.



Sweet Pea Nage, Dungeness Crab Salad

WINERY CHEF MATTHEW BATEY

*Enjoy with our
Pinot Grigio*

This is one of our signature spring dishes on the Terrace. The delicate sweet pea and rich flavour of the crab are ideal with the refreshing crispness of Pinot Grigio, one of our most popular wines.

Yield 1.5 L

SWEET PEA NAGE

PART ONE

1L	chicken stock
1	onion – sliced
2	shallots – sliced
1	celery stalk – diced
1	fresh fennel – diced
1	leek whites – washed, sliced
1	lemongrass – bruised
1/4C	ginger root – peeled, chopped
2	garlic cloves – peeled, crushed
2	tarragon sprigs
5	parsley stems

PART TWO

1/4C	butter
1	fennel – diced 1cm
1	onion – diced 1cm
1/4C	Mission Hill Family Estate Pinot Grigio
1L	sweet peas – frozen
	sea salt to taste

METHOD

Prepare fortified stock by simmering all ingredients in PART 1 together for 1 hour. Strain and reserve.

Sweat the onions and fennel in the butter in PART 2 until onions have begun to soften.

Deglaze with wine and reduce by half.

Add fortified stock, bring to a simmer and cook until fennel is soft. Remove from heat.

In a large high speed blender, fill half way with the liquid and then add some frozen peas.

Pass through a fine sieve and reserve the pulp from the straining. Return it to the pot and repeat process until all is blended. Season.

CRAB SALAD

1/2C	Dungeness crab meat
2tbs	sour cream
1tsp	tarragon – chopped fine
1	lemon – zested and juiced

METHOD

While working over a cold bowl on ice, check crab meat for bones. Add sour cream and tarragon, combine until evenly mixed. Add lemon zest and mix well. Add enough lemon juice to desired taste. Serve with the Sweet Pea Nage.

“Food without wine is a corpse; wine without food is a ghost; united and well matched they are as body and soul, living partners.”

- André Simon

Complements to the Chef

AN INTERVIEW WITH JONATHAN CROFTS, PROPRIETOR CODFATHERS

FISHMONGERING IN WINE COUNTRY

We caught up recently with Jonathan Crofts, the owner of Codfathers, Kelowna’s largest seafood market, to discuss his sustainable fish and shellfish practices which parallel Mission Hill’s Ocean Wise philosophy.

Jonathan’s goal when he took over Codfathers, was to develop a traditional fishmongering operation rather than just a seafood store, with the variety and quality that you might expect in a big city environment. Jon enjoys an extensive background in fresh foods in the UK—with a major in fish—and had always wanted to have his own store.

What drew him to great seafood was the beauty and simplicity of the product, and the way that its physical quality correlates so closely to the flavour of the finished dish. As he says, “When I open a box of really lovely fish, I get excited about it, I want to share it with people who will appreciate it, and I love that I often get to see the final result of what they have prepared. In my earlier fishmongering days back in England, I would often arrive an hour or two ahead of my scheduled start so that I could devise new ways of cutting and displaying product to show off their best qualities. So when I landed here near the Pacific coast, I was like a kid in a candy store when I started to experience fish like line-caught spring

salmon, still gleaming and bright silver, amazing giant halibut, and even a run of fresh sardines.”

Codfathers has recently initiated a new traceability program to highlight their new section of premium sustainable seafood. Information is available regarding each product, including who caught it, where and when it was caught and what method was used. Crofts feels this is the next logical step to promote sustainability in the food that they sell, and also to ensure top quality.

Mission Hill has been supporting Codfathers since the early days of Jonathan’s ownership. He concludes: “We developed a relationship with the chefs at Mission Hill, who have always been very encouraging and supportive of what we are trying to achieve, and I’m pleased to say that this relationship continues to thrive with Matt Batey. It’s certainly given us the confidence that we are on the right track with our business.”

**“WHEN I OPEN A BOX
OF REALLY LOVELY FISH,
I GET EXCITED
ABOUT IT”**

“Wine has been a part of civilized life for some seven thousand years. It is the only beverage that feeds the body, soul and spirit of man and at the same time stimulates the mind.”

- Robert Mondavi

Sommelier Saturdays

SOMMELIER SATURDAYS WITH MISSION HILL



Hone your taste buds and refine your palate. Taste Mission Hill wines alongside international counterparts of various regions and styles in an informal setting and experience the world of wine. Our Sommeliers Jesse Harnden and Mike Lee lead these Saturday afternoon sessions, where we encourage fun and focus in an interactive environment.

Book online at www.missionhillwinery.com

- Pinot Noir, April 17
- Shiraz or Syrah, April 24
- Pacific Northwest, May 15
- Exotic Blends, May 22
- Riesling, May 29
- The Grapes of Bordeaux, June 5
- The World of Whites, June 12

A Formal Wine Education

INGO GRADY, DIRECTOR OF WINE EDUCATION

Wine culture immersion can be both enlightening and fun. Whether you play music, cook seriously, or garden with passion, these pursuits enrich our lives: Passion is always worth the effort. That's why wine lovers learn to taste. We call it 'attentive drinking'! Deliberate tasting versus casual imbibing adds a deeper dimension to the daily routine of eating and drinking. Yes, it's all about the pursuit of pleasurable moments and turning a banal repast into a celebration of life.

Whether you're starting to learn about wine (or would like to), or you've been collecting wine for years, there are a number of wine courses available that will raise your enjoyment of wine to the next level. Here's where you can learn to get more out of each sip and share the fun within a convivial and wine-savvy atmosphere.

Wine Spirit and Education Trust and International Sommelier Guild courses are offered throughout the Okanagan Valley during the year. Mission Hill offers ISG classes and UBC Okanagan and Wine Plus offers WSET courses.

For more details please visit www.missionhillwinery.com/ISG_Courses, www.wineplus.ca or www.ubc.ca/okanagan/continuingstudies



INGO GRADY, MISSION HILL'S DIRECTOR OF WINE EDUCATION

Out & About

JOIN US ACROSS CANADA...

Edible BC Market Dinner
Vancouver – April 14

Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival
Vancouver – April 19-25

Winnipeg Wine Festival
Winnipeg – April 25-May 1

Okanagan Spring Wine Festival
Okanagan – April 30-May 9

BCWI Spring Bloom Tasting
Calgary – June 2

Indulgence by Slow Food Edmonton
Edmonton – June 14

Toronto Wine & Spirits Festival
Toronto – June 17

Back In The City: Feature Restaurant

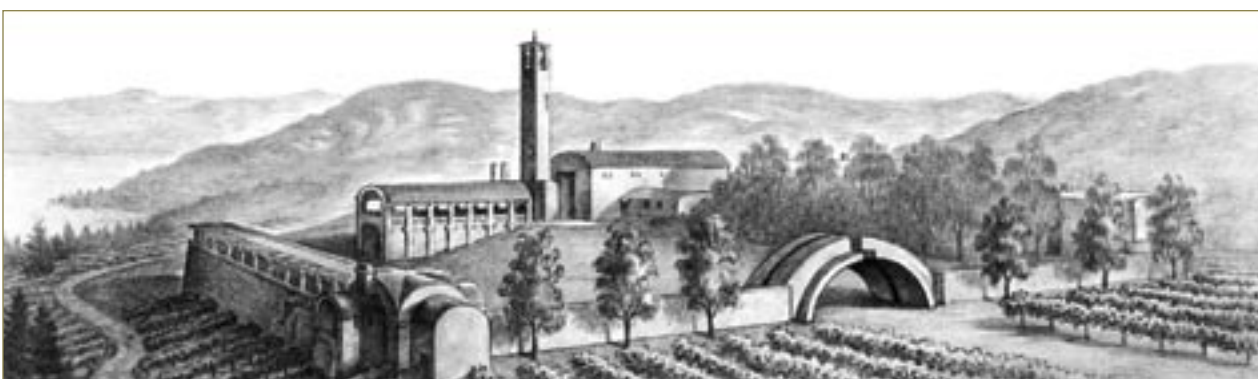
LUPO RESTAURANT

Y A L E T O W N

Nestled between Yaletown and the heart of Vancouver's theatre district, Lupo Restaurant is a marriage of sleek, modern vibes and character charm. Their contemporary kitchen serves fresh reinventions of Italian classics in a cozy, neighbourhood environment. "It's not your parent's

Villa del Lupo", quips Wine Director Michael Mameli in a recent visit to this inviting establishment. Instead guests find a vibrant atmosphere and great food with masterful touches at affordable prices.

Of their wine selection, Mameli states, "Mission Hill wines are a 'must have' on our wine list. They beautifully represent the BC wine industry and customers know that across all the varietals, a glass of Mission Hill wine will be terrific. In particular, the Five Vineyards Pinot Noir flies out the door, it's such an excellent value and of great quality. The wine is very food friendly, which of course is key for us as a restaurant and really captures the distinctive essence of the Okanagan terroir while amply demonstrating what a Pinot can be."



From Our Cellar To Yours

Join our Wine Club and enjoy the convenience of fine wine delivered directly to your door. Members have access to library and pre-release wines as well as invitations to exclusive dinners, concerts, and member-only events hosted by our chief winemaker and sommelier.

Visit www.missionhillwineclub.com