

FROM THE CELLAR... ROSEWOOD ESTATES WINERY

YOU HAVE TO VISIT OUR WINERY BECAUSE...

“We’re the only dual-licensed winery and meadery in Niagara.”

Matt Finn, Hospitality
Manager, Rosewood Estates
Winery

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

August 8, 2019

We discovered Rosewood wines during a delectable meal at one of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s outstanding hotels. While perusing the wine list to select a suitable red pairing for grilled steak, our server, much to our surprise, suggested Rosewood’s Estates Cabernet Franc. Although we wouldn’t have typically gone with a Cab Franc with our choice of entrees, we were more than impressed with the complexity and balance of this offering. With that as a first impression, we simply had to visit the estate...



THE LAY OF THE LAND

Rosewood Estates Winery dates back 80-plus years and has its origins in the Ukraine. As the story goes, R.W. Roman, who developed a passion for beekeeping and mead as a young man, traveled to Canada, where he and his son, Eugene, saw the enormous potential of the Niagara region.

Eugene and his wife, Renata, subsequently began the winery, which produced its first vintage in 2003. At the same time, they carried on the Roman family’s tradition of keeping bees and producing mead. Today, the wine is only one of a handful of wineries certified for both wine and mead production.

The estate has two vineyards, Renaceau in Beamsville Bench, and Black Jack in Twenty Mile Bench, both holding VQA designations. The Renaceau vineyard, with sloping hills and plenty of sunlight, produces Riesling, Chardonnay, Semillon, Pinot Noir, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Gamay Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Petit Verdot. The Black Jack vineyard, by way of comparison, has a slightly higher elevation and long, gentle slopes. Riesling, Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, and Cabernet Franc are grown on this site.

In total, the estate produces approximately 6,500 cases of wine per year, a small-sized production in the Niagara region. In terms of honey, the estate keeps bees in hundreds of hives along the Niagara



Bee-ware of the sculpture (top), part of the pristine Rosewood Estates grounds (middle), and the Wax Hut (bottom)

Escarpment, with each hive containing between 50,000 and 125,000 bees. They produce about 1,500 cases of mead annually.

Aside from the fantastic wines and meads, the warm, hospitable reception we received at the hands of the knowledgeable sales staff left the greatest impression, one of the reasons we already look forward visiting again the next time we travel to the area.

WINEMAKING PHILOSOPHY

Ryan Corrigan, Head Winemaker, leads the dedicated, hard-working winemaking team at Rosewood Estates Winery. Consistent with the winery's philosophy and Eugene and Renata's vision, the team strives to produce the best possible wines from their fabulous terroir. For them, low intervention leads to greater (varietal) expression and complexity. Environmental sustainability, intensive vineyard management, as well as hand cropping and picking represent three of the key "ingredients" that go into every wine Rosewood produces. On the bee-side of things, the team carefully chooses cover crops to ensure the bees have high-quality, natural sources of nectar.

"Honest wine. Innovative mead. Local Honey." – Rosewood Estates Winery

ONE-ON-ONE WITH MATT FINN, HOSPITALITY MANAGER AT ROSEWOOD ESTATES WINERY

Q: What do you like most about wine?

A: It's a funnel and focal point for geography, history, people, culture, and food. You can taste the story in the wine, which is a "snapshot in time."

Q: Of all the wines you produce, which one is your favourite and why?

A: Anything with Gamay Noir. For \$20, you can take it any number of directions from Nouveau (as in Beaujolais Nouveau) to more complex and expressive versions.



The awesome team at Rosewood Estates Winery, with Matt, Mitchell, Kimberly, and Megan

Q: What's your ultimate favourite wine and why?

A: Grand Cru, Blanc de Blanc from Champagne Gaston Chiquet. You can eat it with potato chips, just as you can savour it with foie gras.

Q: What's the best part of your job?

A: Talking about wine. Where else would I get to stand and talk about something I love all day? And every day is different.

Q: What's the worst part of your job?

A: There's nothing I don't like about my job.

Q: What's your most embarrassing wine moment?

A: In my first winery job, when I was fresh out of university, I was working weddings and functions. As I was pushing a rickety cart with sparkling wine along a bumpy path, some of the corks came loose. When the officiant said, "Do you take this woman...", all the bottles exploded, resulting in a champagne shower.

Q: Tell us one thing about you or your winery nobody else knows.

A: We have a bee keeping and honey side of things, and we make it all. When people see the bee on the logo, they almost always ask about it.

THE TASTING...

As part of our tasting, we had the privilege of trying both wine and mead. We began with the 2016 Viognier (price: \$30 CAD) and ended with the 2017 Legacy Cyser, a mead made by co-fermenting apple juice and estate honey (price: \$20 CAD).

In between, we tasted the:



A big part of the romance and allure.

- 2017 Night Moves Gamay (price: \$22 CAD)
- 2017 The Looking Glass (price: \$20 CAD; a right-bank, Bordeaux-style blend comprised of 34% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Merlot, 26% Cabernet Franc, 8% Malbec, and 4% Petit Verdot)
- 2015 Lock, Stock and Barrel (price: \$50 CAD; a left-bank, Bordeaux-style blend consisting of 40% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Petit Verdot, and 5% Malbec)
- 2017 Mead Royale (price: \$20 CAD; a barrel fermented offering)
- 2018 Mead Blanc (price: \$25 CAD; a blend of Gewurztraminer juice and estate honey)

We particularly enjoyed the complexity and vibrancy of The Looking Glass, a superb red blend of outstanding value. But for us, the 2017 Night Moves Gamay took the cake, so to speak. Medium purple-ruby in colour, this single varietal Gamay Noir offered up red cherry, blueberry jelly, red peppercorn, charred wood, and a hint of cedar in the nose. Light bodied with medium-high acidity and grippy, but not overbearing tannins, we enjoyed sour red cherries, cranberries, cedar, wet wood, and wet stone on the palate. More wet stone and sour red berries lingered in the medium-long finish. We can't wait to drink it at Thanksgiving dinner, especially with turkey, mashed potatoes, and cranberry sauce. We could also see it pairing beautifully with grilled pork or chicken, as well as quiche and aged cheddar cheese.

FINAL NOTES

Of all the wineries we have visited in the Niagara Region, Rosewood Estates Winery offered one of the friendliest and most interesting experiences, especially with its honey and mead. On that note, if you have never tasted mead, do yourself a favour and give it a try. Like us, you might be(e) pleasantly surprised.

Contact Rosewood Estates Winery

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