

An Evening on The Rock @ Flat Rock Cellars by Diane Love, Event Planner



Niagara Chapter members and guests visited Flat Rock Cellars located on the Jordan Bench in Niagara on September 6th, 2017. It was another sold-out event with a waiting list comprised of several hopeful others. This is an esthetically beautiful winery with a spacious, glass-encased tasting/retail room on the elevated main floor, with a cozy room upstairs featuring huge hexagonal windows providing a super view over their rows and rows of vineyards, with Lake Ontario in the distance.



Upon arrival, we were treated to their prestigious award winning 2010 sparkling wine **Riddled** for the reception. This wonderful wine won Platinum in the 2017 Decanter World Wine Awards - Best Canadian Sparkling Wine. It was a Wow! To complement this our go-to caterer Zooma Caters provided a delightful spread of charcuterie, a nice variety of cheeses, goat cheese with olive & roasted red pepper tapenade served on crostini, and accompaniments of grapes, dates & breads.



When we convened upstairs we were introduced to head winemaker Dave Sheppard, and Retail & Events Coordinator Jacob Glantz, two relatively new faces at Flat Rock, yet very much industry experienced. They both entertained and educated us about the winery, which has been designated one of only thirteen certified sustainable wineries in Ontario, and their signature wines: Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Riesling. Our group also enjoyed becoming better informed about the ins and outs of the many wine industry awards – provincial, national, and international.



The tasting wines.

Jacob led an engaging guided tasting of six wines, starting with two reds: 2013 Gravity Pinot Noir, and 2015 Pinot Noir. Then we moved on to their 2011 white “rogue” Pinot Noir labelled Trademark Infringement, with a hilarious story about the (re) naming of this wine. The next 3 tastings were 2015 Unplugged Chardonnay, 2015 Good Karma Chardonnay, and 2015 Riesling.



For the last part of our evening while socializing and tasting additional wines at the tasting bar if we wished, we enjoyed sampling more creative offerings from our caterer. My favourites were their thin crust pizza with smoked duck breast, pear, asiago, with fig balsamic drizzle, multigrain salad with arugula, cherry tomatoes, fresh herbs, water chestnuts with a teriyaki dressing, and a chocolate board with strawberries. And to top it off, the sunset was magnificent!



Photos by Bruce Jackson. More of Bruce's photos can be seen at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/photoshopplake/albums/72157686314588494>