



From the comfort of their own homes, members and guests of the OWS Niagara Chapter enjoyed a private virtual tasting experience hosted by winemaker Gavin Robertson and Manager of Hospitality and Events, Chetan Chandratre from Niagara College Winery. It was a first for the wine club, whose members and guests usually enjoy monthly, in-person events at local wineries throughout the year. The COVID pandemic has pushed the chapter to explore alternate ways to enjoy wine tasting experiences together. Through a virtual tasting event, members and guests had an opportunity to connect with each other and enjoy a wine tasting in a safe and comfortable venue!



Jackie Barrett, President of the Niagara Chapter of the Ontario Wine Society, started the session by welcoming everyone to this first virtual event and introduced our hosts for the evening, turning the presentation over to Gavin and Chetan.



Gavin led the group through a guided tasting focused on the French-German connection in winemaking in the Alsace region of Europe. This provided participants a unique opportunity to learn more about the history of winemaking in this region. He then connected that history to current winemaking experience in the Niagara region specific to the white wines popular in the Alsace region – Gewürztraminer and Riesling. Specifically, Gavin focused on three of Niagara’s white wines –



Balance Gewürztraminer, Balance Riesling and Balance Riesling/Gewurztraminer blend, including useful notes around specific food pairings for each of these wines. Chetan moderated the Zoom session, allowing for participants to ask questions and offer their own thoughts and opinions about the wines and their own unique pairings.

Thank you to Gavin, Chetan and event organizers, Nick and Ingrid Merola, for their work in bringing members and guests this first virtual session. A special thank you as well to the Executive of the Niagara Chapter for their support of this event, and of course, to those members who participated in the event.

The Executive and Planning Committees will continue to explore other possible event options for the chapter in the future, taking into consideration the safety of all members and region-specific guidelines for social gatherings. We welcome any suggestions from members.



More photos of this event can be viewed at
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/photoshoplake/albums/72157715156663651>