



Cool Chardonnay Lives On

i4C+

International Cool Climate
Chardonnay Celebration

THE STORY OF THE i4C

Summer 2009: A handful of winemakers lounge in lawn chairs around a summer fire celebrating the success of one of their own. They gathered to raise a toast to the Ontario wine that had just triumphed at the 2009 Cellier Wine Awards in Montreal. In Canada's own version of Bottle Shock – the *Claystone Terrace Chardonnay 2005 from Le Clos Jordanne* in Niagara, won the prestigious award, surpassing Burgundian and California Chardonnays in a blind taste test.

The significance of this win wasn't lost on those celebrating, and the wheels were turning as the glasses were swirling. These winemakers have long believed that Chardonnay - one of the most widely cultivated varieties in Ontario – is deserving of a revival... It's resilient and refined. It can be steely or floral, complex or focused. It expresses terroir better than any other grape we grow. And when Chardonnay is complemented with a bit of cool - cool by altitude, by latitude, by marine influence or by climatic conditions – it can create magical wines that can easily refute the already waning "ABC – Anything but Chardonnay" movement.

The outcome of that impromptu backyard celebration is a much bigger one – the International Cool Climate Chardonnay Celebration (the "i4C"). Twenty-eight Ontario wineries started the not-for-profit group in April 2010, devoted to reinstating the dignity of Chardonnay. Over the past ten years, this group has invited premium cool climate Chardonnay producers from across the globe to join the cause, presenting some of the finest examples of cool climate Chardonnay in the world at the annual event. In this short time, the i4C has created a home for excellence in Chardonnay – a casual but in-depth weekend celebration of wine, food and learning, with an eye to reinvigorating a seriously cool wine.

QUICK FACTS ABOUT THE i4C:

- 2023 is the 13th Anniversary of the International Cool Climate Chardonnay Celebration (i4C)
- **62** Ontario wineries are members of the i4C Association
- **Since 2011**
 - **262** wineries have participated
 - From **85** cool climate wine regions
 - **1150+** different cool climate Chardonnays and Blanc de Blancs have been poured
 - **17,000 +** consumers have celebrated in the heart of Ontario's wine country
- Past participating international wineries include: **Louis Jadot, Drouhin, Taittinger, Champy, Laroche, Torres, Kistler, Ramey, Kumeu River, La Crema and Hamilton Russell**
- Industry support from all key stakeholder groups in the industry: **VQA Wines of Ontario and Wine Country Ontario, Wine Marketing Association of Ontario, Grape Growers of Ontario, LCBO VINTAGES, CCOVI at Brock University, White Oaks Resort**, and numerous industry suppliers
- The i4C is not a competition; rather it is a celebration of exceptional cool climate wines
- The i4C mandate states that a minimum of 50% of the annual participants are from outside of Ontario to ensure a true exploration of the nuances of cool climate Chardonnay

* The "i4C" is:

i – International

4 C's – Cool, Climate, Chardonnay, and Celebration



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THE EVOLUTION OF THE i4C

After five years of celebrating the coolest grape on earth, the Chardonnistas decided it was time to invite some other “cool characters” to share the spotlight...

In 2016, the i4C launched its “i4C+” Campaign. Pinot Noir, Cabernet Franc and Gamay - varietals selected for their shared “coolness” - are now poured at select events throughout the weekend.

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MARKETING IMPACT

Previous internationally known keynote speakers of the i4C:

- I4C 2023 will have Michelle Cherruti-Kowal MW as keynote speaker for the School of Cool this July 22, 2023
 - i4C 2022 - Andrew Jefford, Columnist at Decanter and World of Fine Wine Magazine and Academic Advisor to the Wine Scholar Guild
 - I4C 2021 – Virtual Edition – Michelle Cheruti-Kowal MW, François Chartier, Jamie Goode
 - I4C 2020 – Virtual Edition - Andrew Jefford, Columnist at Decanter and World of Fine Wine Magazine and Academic Advisor to the Wine Scholar Guild, with special guests, past keynote speakers:
 - Matt Kramer
 - Karen MacNeil
 - Ian D’Agata
 - I4C 2019 - Julia Harding, author, journalist and Master of Wine
 - I4C 2018 - Jon Bonné, Writer, Author & Journalist
 - I4C 2017 - Karen MacNeil (The Wine Bible)
 - I4C 2016 - Ian D’Agata (Decanter, vinous.com)
 - I4C 2015 - Matt Kramer (Wine Spectator)
 - I4C 2014 - Tim Atkin (Master of Wine and journalist from London)
 - I4C 2013 - Steven Spurrier (Decanter)
 - I4C 2012- Stephen Brook (Decanter)
 - I4C 2011 - Matt Kramer (Wine Spectator)
- **Special guests Christy Canterbury (MW), Jamie Goode, and Chef Vikram Vij joined us in 2013.
- **Past School of Cool seminar moderators include:**
 - **John Szabo**, Master Sommelier, Principal Critic at WineAlign.com and Author of *Volcanic Wines: Salt, Grit and Power (2016)*
 - **Jamie Goode**, Wineanorak.com, Author of *I Taste Red: The Science of Tasting Wine (2016)*
 - **Peter Rod**, Program Coordinator Canadian Food and Wine Institute, Niagara College.
 - This event has garnered over 150 million traditional media impressions in nine years including coverage in Decanter, Wine Spectator, La Revue du Vins de France, The Boston Globe, Dallas Fort-Worth Star-Telegram, Food & Drink and Cellier Magazine, The Globe & Mail, Toronto Star, National Post, Montreal Gazette, Vancouver Sun, Ottawa Citizen and key market dailies. In addition, over 50 million social media impressions have been earned.



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TESTIMONIALS

"i4C is a great opportunity to showcase your Chardonnays amongst the best in the world. The consumers who attend are engaged wine lovers, interested in learning about the products they are trying. All of the events are well attended, so provides an opportunity to interact with a large number of people over the course of the 3-day event."
Linda Sinclair, Director of Retail Operations, Noble Estates

"As South African Chardonnay producers, one of the highlights of a wine year for us, is the i4C. We have been privileged to have attended this beautiful event for long enough to witness not only the incredible rise in the quality of Ontario Chardonnay, but the increasingly clear stylistic identity of the wines, with their bright minerality and elegance. This is brought into focus with tastings of other top Chardonnays from around the world. What we find uplifting about the i4C is that we are able to immerse ourselves in the winelands. It is always motivational being where wine is made, when so much of our travel involves being where wine is sold. The panel discussions, the tastings and the vineyard visits give us many new things to think about and we always learn something valuable. Enjoying the company and insights of enthusiasts, winemakers and wine writers in wonderful settings with great Chardonnay and a variety of excellent food choices is hard to beat."
*Anthony & Olive Hamilton Russell, Proprietors, Hamilton Russell Vineyards,
Hemel-en-Aarde Valley, South Africa*

"My earliest memories of Niagara as a wine region were courtesy of my Father and Grandfather who regularly purchased Niagara grown grapes destined for their home-made wine. Niagara and my Italian heritage are the foundations of my wine career so to be asked to be the keynote speaker for i4C 2023 is an honour. I look forward to meeting fellow Canadian wine lovers in July 2023. "
Michelle Cherutti-Kowal MW, i4C 2023 Keynote Speaker

"i4C is the best thing that's happened to the Canadian wine industry since the introduction of the VQA appellation system in 1988" *Tony Aspler, Quench Magazine*

"Events like i4C (International Cool Climate Chardonnay Celebration) prove we have what it takes to make serious wines that can compete on a world scale." *Wes Wiens, Grape Growers of Ontario*

"Over the course of 3 days, I tasted a slew of chardonnays and sparkling wines that blew me away. Our neighbors to the north are making some of the most vibrant wines in the New World. For the most part the chardonnays are wines with lift and elegance; wines with a vibrational core of crispness; wines that are mouth-watering and fresh."
Karen MacNeil, Author of "The Wine Bible"



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WHY CHARDONNAY?

Chardonnay is one of the most widely produced white wines in Canada and the world; yet, there are a number of stereotypes about Chardonnay within the wine world and amongst consumers. For some, it is an over-planted grape and one that is most familiar because it has reached the status of having its own acronym amongst its detractors – ABC, or “Anything But Chardonnay”. Among its fans, there are a large number of wine drinkers that love it for its ability to inexpensively deliver ‘easy’ white wine; wine not requiring much thought on the part of the wine drinker. The descriptors for this easy Chardonnay are: ‘fat but bland fruit, low acid, an alcoholic and a slightly sweet finish.’

The i4C event is designed to celebrate the appreciation of and appeal of Chardonnay as a wine that comes from the noblest of white grapes. The clear distinction between the characteristics of cool and warm climate Chardonnay is not necessarily understood by most wine drinkers. Warm climate Chardonnay represents much of the wine sold of this variety; however, it does not always present an elegant and complex product. Cool climate Chardonnay, on the other hand, is celebrated for its myriad characteristics and notable versatility. The i4C event is designed to educate consumers so that they might distinguish between cool and warm climate Chardonnay.

The event will feature Chardonnays that are:

- From warmer climates, yet **‘Cool by Coastal Effect’** (including inland fresh water)
- From some hotter climates – areas that make Chardonnays that are **‘Cool by Continental Effect’** – really the flip-side to Coastal
- Some Chardonnays that are **‘Cool by Altitude’**
- Chardonnays that, like Burgundy, are **‘Cool by Latitude’**

What will unite all these wines at i4C is the fact that they are all ‘Cool by Attitude’. No matter where one grows Chardonnay, the attitude of the wine grower affects the grape. The management of the vineyards’ soils and the grapevine canopy, the picking date, the handling in the winery and cellar can all contribute to the retention of freshness of acidity, and that minerality and dense yet silky texture that mark all of the world’s truly great Chardonnay wines.



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ONTARIO MEMBER WINERIES

1. 13th Street Winery
2. 2027 Cellars
3. Adamo Estate Winery
4. Angels Gate Winery
5. Arterra Fine Wines
6. Bachelder Wines
7. Big Head Winery
8. Broken Stone Winery
9. Cave Spring Vineyard
10. Château des Charmes
11. Closson Chase Vineyards
12. Cloudsley Cellars
13. Creekside Estate Winery
14. De Simone Vineyards
15. Domaine Queylus
16. Ferox Estate Winery
17. Flat Rock Cellars
18. GreenLane Estate Winery
19. Henry of Pelham Family Estate Winery
20. Hidden Bench Estate Winery
21. Honsberger Estate Winery
22. Huff Estate Winery
23. Icellars Estate Winery
24. Inniskillin Wines
25. Jackson Triggs
26. KIN Vineyards
27. Lailey Winery
28. Leaning Post Wines
29. Le Clos Jordanne
30. Lighthall Vineyards
31. Malivoire
32. Magnotta Winery
33. Niagara College Teaching Winery
34. On Seven Estate Winery
35. Organized Crime
36. Palatine Hills Estate Winery
37. Pearl Morissette Estate Winery
38. Pelee Island Winery
39. Peller Estates Winery
40. Pillitteri Estates Winery
41. Pondview Estate Winery
42. Queenston Mile Vineyard
43. Ravine Vineyards
44. Redstone Winery
45. Redtail Vineyards
46. Reif Estates Winery
47. Rockway Vineyards
48. Rosehall Run Vineyards
49. Rosewood Estate Winery
50. Southbrook Organic Vineyards
51. Stoney Ridge Winery
52. Stratus Vineyards
53. Strewn Winery
54. Tawse Winery
55. The Farm
56. Therianthropy Inc.
57. Thirty Bench Winemakers
58. Trail Estate Winery
59. Trius Winery
60. Two Sisters Vineyards
61. Vineland Estates Winery
62. Westcott Vineyards



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THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE COOL

The i4C is fuelled by a dedicated Board of Directors:

- ❖ Mark Torrance (Andrew Peller Ltd.), Co-Chair /Marketing Committee member
- ❖ Anne Weis-Pennachetti (Cave Spring Cellars), Co-Chair/Treasurer
- ❖ Suzanne Janke (Stratus Vineyards), Past Chair/Director, Marketing Committee
- ❖ Mary Delaney-Bachelder, (Bachelder), Director/Winery Relations
- ❖ Scott Wilkins (Dancing Swallows Vineyard), Director & Educational Committee member
- ❖ Elsa Macdonald MW (Arterra Fine Wine), Director & Educational Committee member
- ❖ J.J. Syer (Rosehall Run Vineyards), Director/Winery Relations
- ❖ Rob Power (Queenston Mile Vineyard), Director & Educational Committee member
- ❖ Magdalena Kaiser (Wine Marketing Association of Ontario), Media Relations & Educational Session Director
- ❖ Trisha Molokach, Event Director
- ❖ Jen Feschuk, Artistic Director
- ❖ Elena Galey-Pride, Social Media
- ❖ Kim Auty, Guest Services

I4C 2023 Event Sponsors – as of June 2023

GRAND CRU & PRESENTING	❖ VQA Wines of Ontario and Wine Country Ontario The Wine Marketing Association of Ontario – <i>Founding Sponsor</i>
GRAND CRU	❖ Black River Cheese ❖ Grape Growers of Ontario ❖ White Oaks Resort & Spa
MEDIA SPONSOR	❖ Toronto Life
PREMIER CRU	❖ George Brown College Centre for Hospitality & Culinary Arts
FRIENDS OF i4C	❖ Arterra Wines Canada Lakeview Vineyard Equipment ❖ AO Wilson Vinetech Canada Coventry Transportation ❖ WineAlign LM creative design Niagara College Canada ❖ CCOVI Trilogen Technologies Winestains Cherry Lane ❖ 270 Bench Kitchen Special Event Rentals City of St. Catharines