



# TORONTO VINTNERS CLUB Inc.

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## 2002 CHARDONNAYS

Tuesday, May 9, 2006

**NEW Reception: 6:00 PM, Tasting: 6:20 PM**

The Ontario Club, 5th Floor, Commerce Court South  
(Northeast Corner of Bay & Wellington Streets)  
Toronto, Ontario Tel: (416) 862-1270

What better way to celebrate the beginning of spring than drinking the Queen of white wine – Chardonnay! We have chosen to compare 3 high end, prominent Chardonnays from Ontario with their peers from California and Australia, all from the 2002 vintage.

Our Ontario lineup includes 3 wineries: Henry of Pelham, Status, and Tawse. **Henry of Pelham** Family Estate Winery's 2002 Chardonnay, Speck Family Reserve was entirely fermented in French oak, 40% in new Allier barrels and 60% in one-year old barrels. The vines were 14 years old and astonishingly, the yields were less than 35 hL/ha) or approximately 1 bottle per vine! Winemaking at **Stratus** is led by J-L Groux, a native of the Loire Valley and formerly of Hillebrand. His 2002 Reserve Chardonnay is their top white wine, of which only 4 barrels were made. **Tawse** is a new winery, led by a prominent member of Ontario's winemaking community, Deborah Paskus who established a reputation for excellence with her Burgundian-style, Temkin-Paskus Chardonnay several years ago. Her goal is to match the best that Burgundy has to offer.

From California we have 3 wines from the established area of Sonoma. **Sonoma-Cutrer's** blend of traditional Burgundian winemaking methods and individual technological innovation are its modus operandi. Only select lots of grapes from the Les Pierres Vineyard are used to make The Le Pierres Chardonnay. This is a benchmark Chardonnay from Sonoma. In 2001 Pierre Lafond opened **Santa Rita Hills** at the western end of the Santa Ynez Valley which became recognized as a separate and distinct viticultural area (AVA). This is the part of California that the movie 'Sideways' was set in. Fewer than 200 cases of '02 Lafond 'Sweeney Canyon Vineyard' Chardonnay were produced, barrel-fermented and aged in 60% new French oak. The third wine is from **Iron Horse Corral Vineyard**. The grapes for Corral Vineyard Chardonnay come from 18 acres planted and a production of a mere 530 cases, in only its third vintage. Interestingly the grapes are pressed as whole clusters before being barrel-fermented. This is a full-bodied, rich style of Chardonnay.

We'll taste 2 wines from Australia: Penfolds and Petaluma. **Penfolds** launched the 'Yattarna' a local indigenous word meaning 'little by little' in 1995. Sourced mostly from the cooler climate area of Adelaide Hills, their Chardonnay, which commands \$90/bottle here in Ontario, was barrel-fermented before being aged in nine months in 55% new and 45% one year old French oak and bottled unfiltered. The wines of **Petaluma** are based on distinguished vineyard sites for each specific variety. For Chardonnay, the Piccadilly Valley in the centre of the Adelaide Hills has long been identified. The Piccadilly Valley is the highest rainfall at 45 inches per annum (1143mm) and coolest viticultural region in South Australia. This is not the caricature of 'Aussie Chardonnay'. The average heat summation (total heat over the growing season) of the Piccadilly Valley is 1176°C days. Compare this to Niagara Peninsula at between 1240°C and 1376°C degree days!

**NOTE:** After checking in, join us at 6 PM for a glass of reception wine prior to the formal tasting which will begin at about 6:20. Remember the Ontario Club has a dress code of business casual – please no jeans!

*Only paid-up members in good standing can attend at members' rates. As always, members have preference. First come basis; no telephone or e-mail reservations. **Deadline for reservations/cancellations without penalty is May 5, 2006.** To cancel, call 416-209-1442 or email [events@torontovintners.org](mailto:events@torontovintners.org). Cheques payable to Toronto Vintners Club.*

Names:		
Bus Tel:		Home Tel:
Email:		
_____ Member's assessment -	<b>\$45.00 pp</b>	\$
_____ Guest / non-member assessment -	<b>\$53.00 pp</b>	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>		\$
____ I would like to sit at the Newcomers' table with an experienced taster or to meet other members.		

**May 2006  
'02 Chardonnays**

**Mail to:**  
Toronto Vintners Club  
c/o S. Dorosh  
PO Box 1023  
TDC Postal Station  
77 King St. West,  
Toronto, ON  
M5K 1P2

I understand & accept my personal safety responsibilities when attending a Toronto Vintners Club event.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## THE BACK PAGE

**1. '02 Stratus Vineyards Chardonnay Reserve \$55**

"Anyone who knows me can tell you that I rarely get excited over Chardonnay these days, but with one swirl, sniff and gulp, I was knocked over. The wine had a delightful nose of rich fruit, with oak just adding the right amount of complexity. The length just carried on and on." Score – 93. (Evan Saviolidis, Tidings, May/June 2005)

**2. '02 Tawse Winery Chardonnay Reserve Beamsville**

**Bench \$42** Morey: Tawse has put a lot of love and care into building his winery in Vineland, Ontario. The beautiful and functional design allows the juice to be gravity fed from one level to another. Tawse is a long time fan of Burgundy, so it is not surprising that two of the grapes he is most enamoured with are Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Ontario Winemaker extraordinaire, Deborah Paskus built her reputation on Chardonnay, so expect to be impressed with this, the first release of Tawse Winery products through VINTAGES. Tasting note: [Memories of Temkin-Paskus Chardonnay] came flooding back to my palate when I sipped the new Tawse 2002 Beamsville Bench Chardonnay with winery manager Brad Gowland. Here was that rich chard signature, butternut and hazelnut and lime peel, a blend of elegance and power. It was definitely a Paskus déjà vu. Score – 91. (Gordon Stimmell, Toronto Star, July 20, 2005)

**3. '02 Henry of Pelham Chardonnay Speck Family**

**Reserve \$35** Tasting note: Speaking of big almost Meursault-like rich chardonnays, .. don't forget the potent Henry of Pelham 2002 Speck Family Reserve Chardonnay with its lavish buttery finesse. Score – 91. (Gordon Stimmell, Toronto Star, July 20, 2005). Tasting note: A lovely example of Niagara Chardonnay, the Speck Family Reserve has real drive and intensity. Classy and concentrated fruit flavours marry with some Christmas spice and vanilla notes. The finish is fresh and long. Although a bottle like this is worthy of cellaring, it's hard to pass up the opportunity to savour that fresh flair and depth right now. Chalk it up to instant gratification. Score – \*\*\*\*\* (out of 5). (Vines, May/June 2005)

**4. '02 Sonoma-Cutrer 'Les Pierres' Chardonnay Sonoma Valley \$55**

Sonoma-Cutrer is a benchmark Chardonnay producer and 'Les Pierres' is the pinnacle of their portfolio. Well-structured and expansive, it is invariably compared to Puligny-Montrachet. Les Pierres Vineyard, located on the eastern side of Sonoma Mountain, possesses a distinctive terroir: the soil is mixed with rock and cobblestones deposited over the past two million years by the Sonoma Mountain volcano.

**5. '02 Lafond 'Sweeney Canyon Vineyard' Chardonnay Santa Rita Hills \$38**

Robert Parker Jr. awarded this full-bodied Chardonnay 91 points (Wine Advocate, Aug. 2004) describing its characteristics as "big, buttery, orange, citrus and mineral", and comparable to Bâtard-Montrachet from Burgundy.

**6. '02 Iron Horse Chardonnay, Sonoma County, Green Valley, Corral Vineyard \$47**

Wine Enthusiast gave this single vineyard classic 91 points calling it "A superb Chard, and versatile at the table." Lightly oaked, it has tart green apple, pear spicy cedar-vanilla notes and crisp acidity.

**7. '02 Petaluma Piccadilly Valley Chardonnay Piccadilly Valley \$35**

A vibrant, cooler year Chardonnay whose slightly greenish aromas of tropical, grapefruit and quince precede a forward, juicy palate with a fluffy, relatively light texture. There's pleasing freshness, length and balance, although there's a sweet-sour aspect about its lightly herbal finish. Score - 93. (Jeremy Oliver, [www.onwine.com.au](http://www.onwine.com.au), Mar. 2005)

**8. '02 Penfolds Yattarna South Australia, \$90**

Medium straw. Spicy peach, Golden Delicious apple, tangerine and grainy oatmeal aromas with a licorice accent. Sweet flavors of fresh pineapple and passion are complicated by suggestions of clover honey and lichee. A supple, intense chardonnay that's nicely firmed by fresh citric notes. Score - 91 (Josh Reynolds, International Wine Cellar, Jul/Aug 2005)

**Our next event is our annual Bordeaux tasting on June 13.**

If I wake up to live another day,  
please God, make mine a  
chardonnay!