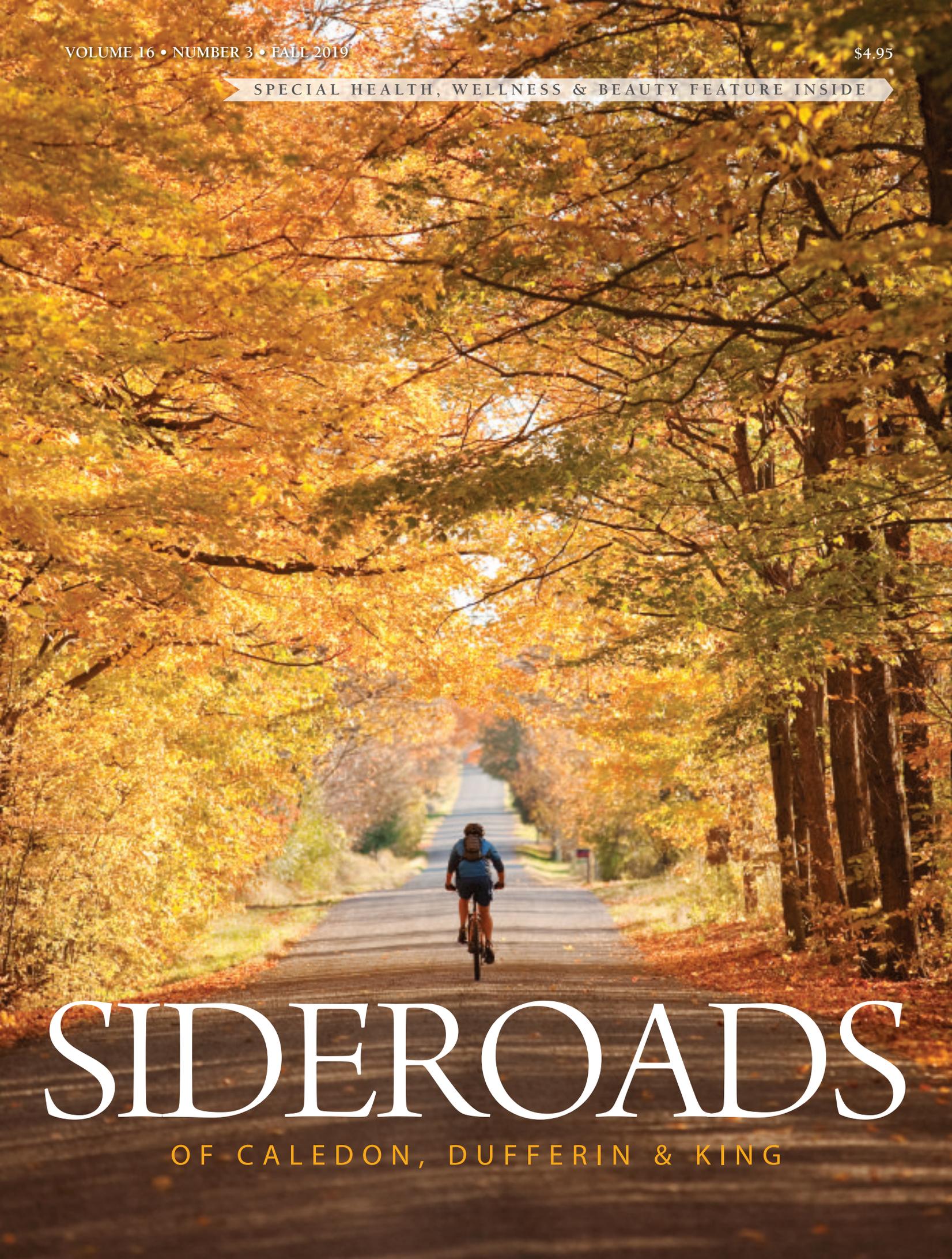


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SPECIAL HEALTH, WELLNESS & BEAUTY FEATURE INSIDE

A person is riding a bicycle away from the camera down a paved road. The road is lined with trees that have vibrant autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and red. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking down the road towards the horizon. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and scenic.

SIDEROADS

OF CALEDON, DUFFERIN & KING





WINDRUSH ESTATE WINERY

Amazing views

AND GREAT WINE

story by **CHRISTINE DAVIS** photography by **BRIAN ROBERTS**

Perched atop the Hockley Valley bench is a place where grapes grow wild. While those native riparian grapes aren't suitable for producing wine, it gave the owners of Chateau Windrush an idea.

In 2016 J.C. Pennie and Marilyn Field spoke with the Adamo family about what they were doing at their new Adamo Estate Winery and realized that they too could grow grapes on their property.

That property, originally purchased by Pennie, Field and some partners as a wind farm, was never able to be such because the value of wind production on the bench is 40 per cent less than in the Grand Valley and Shelbourne plateau. The couple bought out the partners and built their private residence, the Chateau, in 2003. Intended to be a home in which they could entertain – the space can hold upwards of 100 people for receptions – Pennie says the Chateau has hosted numerous events, both personal and for Field's charity DAREArts, from which she's recently moved on.

It's these two pieces, combined with Pennie's entrepreneurial spirit that brought Windrush Estate Winery to existence.

After speaking with the Adamos they went back to consult the soil tests, the weather tracking they had done for three years and the water table drill tests from when they drafted their proposal to the Ontario government to put wind turbines on the property. "We looked at the old reports and discovered we had

the same thing," Pennie says of the sandy soil and the micro climate in which heat plumes from the valley combine with the breeze on the bench to dry off the grapes – a necessity in growing good grapes.

And they had the land to do it too, explaining they can plant 40 acres of vineyard, which would produce some 20,000 cases of wine per year. That's a "profitable size for a winery," Pennie says.

Of course Pennie and Field aren't growing those native riparian grapes for their wine. While they're hearty and tough they simply aren't suitable for making wine. Instead, they're growing a hybrid that's been created and long used in Ontario that features a riparian root with a viniferous vine grafted onto those root stocks. Developed in two large greenhouses in Niagara, they're the result of the success of viniferous grapes grown in California's Napa Valley that produced grapes, and wine, reminiscent of those from Europe.

Currently Windrush has the minimum size vineyard required to become a winery. That's 6,700 vines on a little more than five acres. Ideally those vines will produce grapes suitable for harvesting in three to five years, meaning that by 2022, Windrush would be able to produce wine from their grapes. In the meantime, they're importing grapes from the Beamsville bench, which produce the best quality grapes in Ontario. In fact, Pennie says those grapes have won 18 golds and 17 silvers in wine competitions. »

The music hall in Chateau Windrush is where wine tastings and concerts happen



«Those grapes aren't the only things Windrush has imported from Niagara.

Vintner Jim Warren, a legend in the winemaking world, founder of Stoney Ridge winery – Ontario's fourth winery – creator of Niagara's School of Winemaking curriculum and its first professor is consulting for Windrush and bringing his Classic Chardonnay with him. This Chardonnay will be the top-of-line for Windrush, which is also producing a Pinot Grigio and Pinot Noir with the possibility of one day also producing a Riesling and Gamay.

Warren has also brought one of his former top students to Windrush with chief winemaker Jon Boyle overseeing operations. Boyle, who had been working in the United States, returned to Canada and a chance encounter with Warren lead him to Windrush where he couldn't believe the equipment and was in good company with fellow classmate Shauna White working at nearby Adamo Estate Winery.

That equipment includes the latest state-of-the-art systems, such as a computer controlled tanking system to maintain exact temperatures at all times, chiller jackets that are used during the fermentation process and a lab that provides the winemakers with results in as little as 10 minutes to ensure the wine gets what it needs to be great at exactly at the right time.

“Creating great wine requires intervention and winemakers know what's needed whether it's sugar, acid, etcetera. That can be predicted from how the wine is developing in the tank and knowing that is essential,” Pennie explains of the need to test the wine and get the lab results back in a timely manner.

That technology, along with the existing vineyard, has already required a \$2.5 million investment. »

SELECTIONS

VOA 2018 Pinot Noir

Vintner's Reserve

What's in the bottle. Under the supervision of legendary vintner, Jim Warren, and award winning chief winemaker, Jonathan Boyle, the result is a graceful Pinot Noir with a bright ruby colour and rich berry flavours, accented with hints of violets and raspberries on the palate. Cold soaked before fermentation to extract colour, this wine has been precisely temperature-controlled throughout its fermentation to help preserve its delicateness. Overall, this elegant wine is well balanced between a seam of bright berry fruit and a spicy toastiness from the oak. To bring out the tannin and colour, the winemakers allowed for five days of cold soaking of the fruit prior to ferment. During its time in tank, the must was pumped over via the state-of-the-art automated system, allowing for a greater control of mixing skin with juice.

VOA 2017 Pinot Grigio

Vintner's Reserve

What's in the bottle. A wine that is soft gold in colour, with pleasant reminders of citrus fruits, melon and honey as you gently nose the wine. Complex with dried honeydew giving way to pear and lemon meringue flavours, showing plenty of juicy intensity. This young wine was left lying on fine lees, giving a harmonious finish. The wine was left for a period to mature and develop the richness sought while still retaining a fresh clean acidity. The fruit was sourced from a mixture of Beamsville bench and Lincoln lakeshore vineyards and aged under the supervision of Jim Warren.

2018 Classic Jim Warren's Chardonnay

What's in the bottle. Pineapple notes on the nose begin this classic wine. Throughout the palate there are many layers to its creamy and buttery taste, coaching you to come back for more. Rich and juicy it has an agreeable focus crafted by legendary vintner, Jim Warren. Fermented and aged in new American Oak, the wine holds its intensity and is supported by the oak for structure and complexity with a buttery finish that completes the experience. A limited release of only 100 cases in summer of 2019. Windrush Estate Winery is aging this classic wine in new American Oak barrels. These award-winning grapes were hand-picked at the Wismer Foxcoft Vineyard on the famous Beamsville bench.



"CREATING GREAT WINE REQUIRES INTERVENTION AND WINEMAKERS KNOW WHAT'S NEEDED"

«And while they could rely on their own grapes by 2022, Pennie admits the plan is to continue importing. His goal is to produce 20,000 cases of wine, which would require the full 40 acres of vineyard to be planted, which they might not do. "There's crop risk involved," he explains, going on to say it costs \$100,000 an acre to develop and a substantial amount of money and time to maintain a vineyard. Recently, Pennie and Field had a team of eight Vietnamese-Canadian experts in vineyard husbandry visit the vineyard for assistance with crop maintenance. The team, who work with many Ontario vineyards, worked tirelessly for five days, teaching Pennie and Field much in the process.

Windrush bottled the first wines in May, which are now available for purchase in the retail outlet on Saturday mornings and at a number of local restaurants including Mono Cliff Inn, Mrs. Mitchell's Restaurant, Taste of Freedom Inn, Millcroft's Headwaters Restaurant, Steakhouse 63 and Terra Cotta Inn. You won't find them at LCBO stores and Pennie says you never will.

Instead, they're focusing their distribution to licensees – restaurants that will serve their wine. In August, Windrush wines were on feature at 44 Cineplex VIP theatres and soon they'll be available in such high-end Toronto restaurants as Harbour 60.

That's a win for the couple, who describe knowing their wines are exceptional enough to be served at fine restaurants as "thrilling and encouraging".

Field, the self-proclaimed worrier, goes on to say it helps her see that "we're on the right track and doing the right things," admitting "it's still difficult at the start-up stage."

The couple plan to utilize Chateau Windrush in their endeavours, currently hosting private dinners and tastings in the space they describe as "shared".

"In general our philosophy is that as long as we're living here it's not to be open to the public so to speak. However we want to expand on our original intention of the space, hosting groups for dinner and entertainment."

As Pennie, Field, Boyle and Warren prepare for the upcoming grand opening, Pennie and Field have curated coach trips for city dwellers to spend a day in the country. Tours begin with coffee at Farmhouse Pottery Gallery and Studio, include lunch at Spirit Mono Cliffs Inn, a stop at Breedon sugar bush and sugar shack to see how maple syrup is made, a chance to experience farm life at Sheldon Creek Dairy Farm before ending the day at Windrush for a winery tour, wine, cheese and music from an emerging artist at Chateau Windrush. Art and showcasing local talent is important to Field and is evident in the décor at the gallery-like Chateau.

Those offerings will expand over time with the couple predicting it will be about five years until the Chateau is totally open to the public and they have to live elsewhere. »

ENJOY WINDRUSH ESTATE WINES AT LOCAL HEADWATERS RESTAURANTS

Local restaurant pairings with Windrush Estate Pinto Grigio:

1) Mono Cliff Inn, Mono Cliffs:
monocliffsin.ca

Windrush Estate Pinot Grigio pairs perfectly with the Pan Seared Georgian Bay Pickerel: pickerel served on a bed of Parsnip puree with seasonal local vegetables.

2) Mrs. Mitchell's Restaurant, Mulmur:
mrsmitchells.com/restaurant

Windrush Estate Pinot Grigio is a pleasant pairing with the Seafood Brochette: grilled sea scallops and jumbo black tiger shrimp with a lemon basil beurre blanc; served with basmati rice and steamed garden vegetables.

3) Taste of Freedom Inn, Tottenham:
tasteoffreedominn.com

Windrush Estate Pinto Grigio and Massaman Curry Shrimp pair nicely together: shrimp stewed in traditional thai massaman curry with red pepper, kefir lime leaf, peanut and cilantro served over coconut rice, potato and carrot.

Local restaurant pairings with Windrush Estate Pinot Noir:

1) Millcroft's Headwaters Restaurant:
vintage-hotels.com/millcroft

Windrush Estate Pinot Noir pairs well with the Lamb Tenderloin: asiago watercress stuffing, confit lamb shank hash, spring asparagus, morel mushrooms, espresso and watercress mint gels.

2) Steakhouse 63, Orangeville:
steakhouse63.com

Windrush Estate Pinot Noir is a hit with the unique Prime Rib Yorkies: two Yorkshire puddings stuffed with thinly shaved Triple A Prime Rib, scallions, crispy onions, demi-glace and horseradish sour cream.

3) Terra Cotta Inn, Terra Cotta:
cotta.ca

Windrush Estate Pinot Noir pairs well with the popular Fegato di Provimi: calf liver topped with bacon and pearl onions in a white wine sauce.



J.C. Pennie and Marilyn Field.



Inside the winery.

