



# GROWING A WINE DESTINATION

## WINE COUNTRY ONTARIO

### VQA WINES OF ONTARIO

Michigan Wine Collaborative  
Tuesday, January 18, 2022

Magdalena Kaiser – Director PR – Marketing & Tourism



VQA WINES OF  
ONTARIO



**Magdalena Kaiser** has worked in the wine industry since her teenage years where she started her career at Canada's iconic winery Inniskillin with her late father, co-founder and winemaker Karl Kaiser. In her current role, she regularly hosts international media and sommeliers in Ontario and abroad on behalf of VQA Wines of Ontario to educate them on the wines and the region.

Magdalena will present a brief overview on Ontario wine marketing. She will also provide insights from her experience in both domestic, export marketing and media/trade initiatives.

# History of Ontario Wine



**1811**

Johann Schiller transplants labrusca and hybrid grape vines on 20 acres in Cooksville, Ontario.



**1866**

Kentucky grape growers plant Catawba and Delaware vines on Pelee Island. Ontario's first known winery is established - Vin Villa Winery.



**1873**

George Barnes opens Niagara's first winery, called The Ontario Grape Growing and Wine Manufacturing Company, later renamed Barnes Winery.



**1890**

There are 35 wineries in Ontario, mostly based in Essex County.



Wine  
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**1927**

The Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) is created to regulate distribution and sale of all wine, beer and spirits, and to regulate Ontario wine.



**1952**

Brights Wines removes 600 acres of native vines to plant new vitis vinifera and hybrid varieties and produces Canada's first vinifera wine in 1955.



**1974**

The Wine Council of Ontario is incorporated.



**1975**

In 1975, Donald Ziraldo and Karl Kaiser of Inniskillin receive the first new winery license in almost 50 years (Inniskillin Wines)



**1978**

Early vinifera vineyards are established by Paul Bosc Sr. at Chateau des Charmes and the Pennachetti family on Cave Spring Vineyard.



**1979**

German vintner Herman Weiss buys 50 acres and plants Riesling in the St. Urban Vineyard. Currently part of Vineland Estates Winery.



**1983**

First experimental Icewines are produced at some wineries. The first commercial Icewine is produced in 1984 with "grapes frozen on the vine".



**1988**

Ontario wineries create the Vintner's Quality Alliance (VQA) to set out geographic appellations and introduce strict production standards that became law in 1999.



**1991**

Inniskillin 1989 Icewine wins Grand Prix d'Honneur at Vinexpo, Bordeaux, France.



# History of Ontario Wine



**1996**

The Cool Climate Oenology & Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) is established at Brock University.



**1998**

Karl Kaiser of Inniskillin Wines invents world's first Sparkling Icewine using Charmat method.



**2000**

Niagara College establishes a Winery and Viticulture Technician program and the Niagara College Teaching Winery.



**2001**

The first winery opens in Prince Edward County - Waupoos Estates Winery.



**2005**

After three years of study, VQA designates two regional appellations and ten sub-appellations within the Niagara Peninsula. Currently 75 wineries in Ontario.



**2007**

Prince Edward County becomes a VQA appellation.



**2009**

Ontario is recognized as the global leader of Icewine producing over 90% of Canadian Icewine.



**2010**

New wineries begin to open in "emerging regions" including Norfolk County, Grey County, Huron Shores, and Georgian Bay.



**2011**

The annual International Cool Climate Chardonnay Celebration is launched in Niagara, the first event assembling international winemakers for an event in Ontario.



**2015**

VQA designates a new sub-appellation, South Islands, within the Lake Erie North Shore Appellation.



**2017**

VQA Ontario creates new Skin Fermented White (Orange Wine) category, 2nd in the world.



**2019**

Over 100 Ontario VQA wineries are producing sparkling wine.



**Future**

Ontario has 184 VQA wineries and enjoys continued growth.



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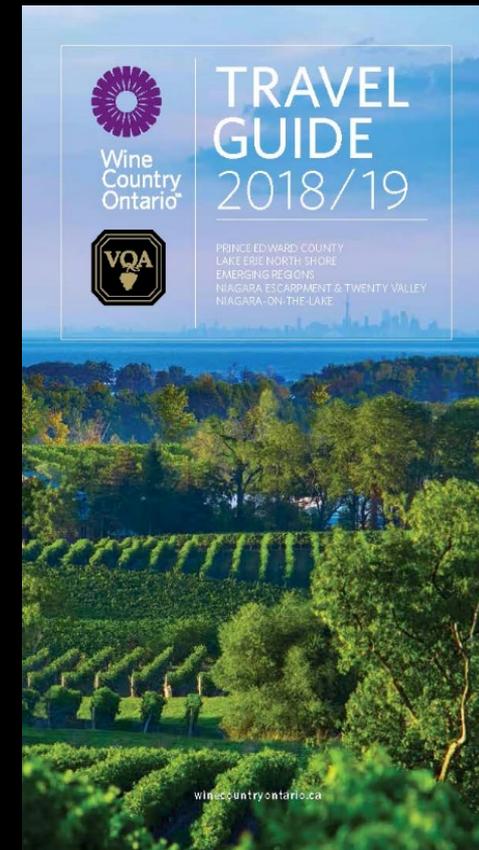


# Ontario's growth as a World Class Beverage Destination

## Two Brands – Wine Country Ontario and VQA Wines of Ontario

Defined what makes Ontario a world class wine growing region:

- situated in the world's fine wine zone
  - appellation system – LENS, Niagara Peninsula, PEC
  - internationally acclaimed “cool climate wines” – now trending
  - exceptional experiences with over 185 wineries
  - highlight core varieties and styles
- 3 million visitors per year x 3 visits = 9 million+ visits each year – wine country travel
  - Every bottle of Ontario VQA wine purchased contributes **\$98.20** to our economy
  - 71% of visitors come to Ontario wine country more than once a year
    - 62% of visitors to wine country eat in local restaurants during their trip
    - 44% stay in a local Hotel, Inn or Bed & Breakfast
    - 37% shop at local retailers



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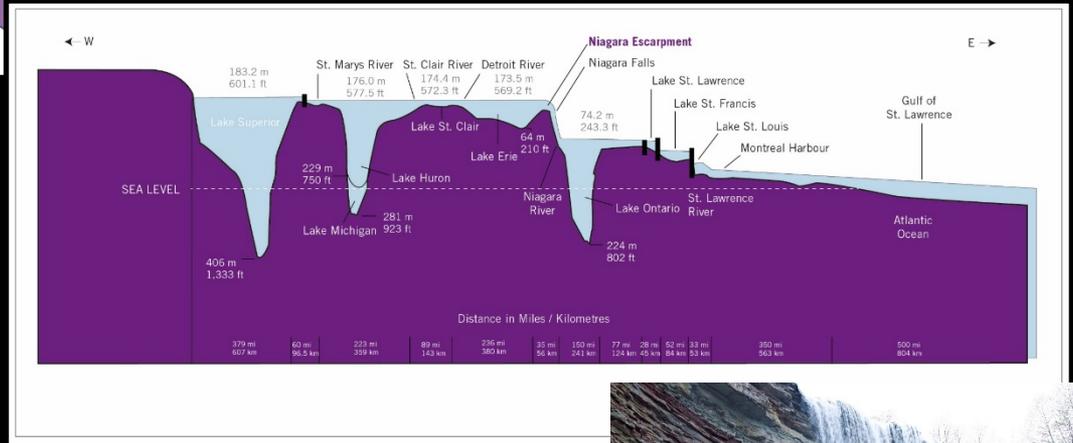
# Create Core Collective Messaging

## Ontario's Unique Story of Terroir

Latitude



Lakes



Limestone



## Influence the influencers – for broad reach

- Host media and trade on FAMS in wine country
- Host media and trade masterclass tastings
- Host trade tastings in key markets

*“Ontario, by the way, is a remarkable wine region” and “if you haven’t been to Ontario yet, you are missing one of the most astonishing wine regions in the world.”*



Matt Kramer,  
*Wine Spectator*

# The Power of Partnerships & Core Activities

- Collaborations
  - Wineries, Restaurants, DMOs, Educational bodies
- Wine Route Signage & Trip Planner (website)
  - Printed Wine Country Ontario Travel Guide – 650,00 printed - 511,000 distributed thru LCBO Food & Drink Magazine
- Social Media – 60K+ followers
- Key Events in Wine Country
  - i4C and Icewine Festival
- Winery Toolkits & Training
- Discovery Pass Programs
- VQA Wine Truck (sampling)
- Key Export Presence & Competitions



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