

# FROM THE CELLAR... 13TH STREET WINERY



## YOU HAVE TO VISIT OUR WINERY BECAUSE...

“For the experience, for the little things you find here, for the differences with the big wineries, for the tranquility.” – Jean-Pierre Colas, Winemaker.



*Jean-Pierre pouring (above) and a selection of wines for sale (below).*

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016

Harmony reigns on the grounds of 13th Street Winery, an estate with an artistic flair. The blending of elegance with the natural environment makes for a beautiful and cozy experience. The wines reflect the winery’s atmosphere, with their balanced, elegant, and structured Jean-Pierre Colas-signature style.

## THE LAY OF THE LAND

Two couples, Doug & Karen Whitty and John & June Mann, own the 40-plus acre estate. Doug is a third-generation farmer, with his family having established themselves in St. Catharines in 1908. In a similar vein, John’s farming experience spans several decades.

The couples’ desire to create a place, not only to escape and relax, but to discover, experience, and learn about wine shines through in multiple ways from the farmhouse turned wine boutique and art gallery to their award-winning French winemaker, Jean-Pierre Colas.

## WINEMAKING PHILOSOPHY

The winery strives to produce a range of high quality wines, all of which are made in a classic style. The different wine bottle labels (there are five in total – from the Burger Blend all the way to the exclusive, creative license line, Essence) reflect different levels of quality and price, so there is something for everyone’s taste and budget.

Jean-Pierre, being Jean-Pierre, unabashedly puts his touch on all the wines he produces. This stems from three decades of experience on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as both hemispheres.

As part of his decorated past, Jean-Pierre won the 1998 Wine Spectator Magazine's White Wine of the Year for his Domaine Laroche Grand Cru Les Clos 1996, whereas his 1996 "La Réserve de l'Obédience" Grand Cru Chablis Les Blanchots received 99 out of a possible 100 points and the Best Wine award from Wine Enthusiast.

We even know of people who have kissed the grounds on which Peninsula Ridge's Sauvignon Blanc grapes are grown (no joke), a tribute to the exceptional wines he produced as Peninsula Ridge's winemaker.

You can identify his wines by their elegance and finesse, especially in his signature Essence line. He prefers fresh, harmonious, and dry wines, all of which can be cellared. He likens the 13th Street wines to affordable French haute couture.

## ONE-ON-ONE WITH JEAN-PIERRE COLAS, WINEMAKER AT 13TH STREET WINERY



*A look at some of the art displayed at the winery.*

Sitting in the impressive Gallery Room at 13<sup>th</sup> Street Winery, with its wall-to-wall windows and huge harvest-style wood table, Jean-Pierre opened up about himself and his wines. His passion for winemaking shone through from the moment he began sharing his wealth of knowledge.

### **Q: What do you like most about wine?**

A: The balance, the whole package. When you're really intrigued, excited, you go back to it (his wines). You then think about it, and after, you don't think about anything else. What attracts me is when I want to open a second bottle, it's the product.

### **Q: Of all the wines you produce, which one is your favourite and why?**

A: My favourite wine is the wine I'm doing next year. That's what inspires me. But a specific bottle? It depends on the moment, the time, the attire.

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*"When people want a second bottle of my wine, that's pleasure, that's satisfaction." – Jean-Pierre Colas*

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### **Q: What is your ultimate favourite wine and why?**

A: It's often linked to situations and individuals. I love Côte-Rôtie Syrah. I love Sancerre. I have great memories of Chablis. After that, I have memories of meals with wines that go 'poof'! I'm more white than red, but it depends. Pinot and Syrah, more than Bordeaux.

### **Q: What's the best part of your job?**

A: When I'm alone in my cellar, when I'm scratching my head trying to figure out how I'm going to go about doing it, or during harvest, when we make decisions. I love that. During three months, you're not allowed to make mistakes. It's only you, you're alone in this.

**Q: What's the worst part of your job?**

A: When you repeat the same thing during shows, knowing how to respond politely when people say stupid things.

**Q: What is your most embarrassing wine moment?**

A: There was a journalist from Toronto who was doing an article on Chardonnay. We spent two or three hours tasting my Chardonnays, and the last wine, the only wine I did not taste, was corked.

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*“Sensibility, that’s art. Control, that’s science... It’s about assembling, complexity, and finesse.” – Jean-Pierre Colas*

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**THE TASTING...**

*13th Street's beautiful Cuvée Rosé Brut.*

Jean-Pierre treated us to three hours of wonderful wines. In his characteristic *je ne sais quoi*, a blend of charisma, self-confidence, honesty, and playfulness, he explained each wine's rationale. We learned a great deal, not only about 13th Street's wines, but about the entire winemaking process. Our journey began with the Cuvée Rosé Brut and ended with the 2012 Syrah from the Essence line.

In between, we tasted:

- 2007 Grand Cuvée Blanc de Noir
- 2015 Burger Blend (white), a blend of Riesling and Pinot Gris
- 2013 Pinot Gris (cream label)
- 2014 Riesling
- 2011 Chardonnay (black label)
- 2015 Viognier (cream label)
- 2015 Pink Palette, a blend of Pinot Noir, Gamay, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2012 Pinot Noir (cream label)
- 2014 Gamay (cream label)
- 2015 Burger Blend (red), a blend of Gamay and Pinot Noir
- 2010 Essence Pinot Noir
- 2011 Essence Cabernet Franc
- 2012 Méritage (black label), a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Merlot in equal parts

Picking a favourite wine proved challenging, but, in the end, the Essence Cabernet Franc and Gamay earned our top marks. Of particular note, all the wines had a long, refined finish, which we adored. This part of the wine tasting experience made us reflect, taking notice of subtle nuances and, more broadly, various life experience. These wines made you want to sit and ponder life (we realize this might sound odd, but give 13th Street wines a try, so you can see what we mean).



*Some of the artistically-placed bottles and wine paraphernalia available for purchase at the winery.*

## FINAL NOTES

Jean-Pierre's wines have a particular style, which could be likened to an old world approach in a new world setting. 13th Street offers plenty of choices for every level of wine drinker, from the beginner to the expert, and each carries Jean-Pierre's personal touch. Even the Burger Blend, an entry-level, BBQ-style wine is typical Jean-Pierre in its atypical blend of varietals. Still, it's clear these wines are a success, as indicated by the half-empty Burger Blend display at a local LCBO store we visited.

In closing, 13th Street is a must-visit for the ambiance, the art, and, of course, the winemaker and his impressive array of wines.

### Contact 13th Street Winery

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