

Splicing the Mainbrace

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Editors' Notes

Once upon a time in Atlantic Canada, wine shows were occasional events. Each of the four provinces has a show once a year. The Californians came to Halifax annually, and the Italian, German and Australian wine producers each used local wine clubs to mount shows annually. In a good year that meant eight public wine tasting opportunities in the region.

What a difference ten years have made! In 2007, our count of wine shows, not including private wine societies or home and school or other small fund-raising events, is over 20. Newfoundland and Labrador has added an NLLC show in Corner Brook: Wine Fest West. The NSLC now offers tastings in Sydney, Port Hawkesbury, New Glasgow, Bridgewater, Wolfville (and perhaps Truro and Yarmouth) in addition to the regular Port of Wines Festival in Halifax, the Beach Party, and a Fall Ceilidh whiskey and rum tasting. And the non-NSLC events in Nova Scotia include the California Wine Fair, an Italian Fair and an Australian tasting (for licensees only). New Brunswick has a FestiVin in Caraquet, the World Wine and Food Festival in Moncton, largish Sackville, Saint John, and Edmunston wine festivals, the Atlantic Beer Festival in Moncton, a sizable Canadian Diabetic Association tasting in Fredericton, and (new this year) a California Wine Fair in Moncton.

All of this means more opportunities for agents like **Mainbrace** to show off their products from around the world, and more opportunities for licensees and wine lovers to taste current and new beverage alcohol products. Life is great!

See you at the fairs!

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New/Coming Soon

Gentle Hills Riesling from Germany's Nahe region. Medium bodied with floral fruit on the nose followed by honeyed citrus fruit on the palate and a touch of sweetness on the finish. Great acidity to balance the fruit.

Croft Original Sherry is about to arrive in Nova Scotia. Croft Original pale cream is a fine blend of the pale dryness of quality Fino Sherry, with the added depth and body of a cream. It is both light and delicate in colour, yet smooth and luxurious in its taste. Like all fine white wines, Croft Original is best served chilled from the fridge, as an aperitif, or as a delicious accompaniment to pate, salmon or a fresh fruit salad. It also makes a tasty alternative to dessert wines.

Three wines from **Gravitas**, the outstanding vineyard in Marlborough New Zealand vineyard, have just been listed in Newfoundland and Labrador:

Gravitas 2004 Sauvignon Blanc One of the most concentrated Sauvignon Blancs from NZ with one of the longest “finishes.” Bouquet evolves over time from predominantly gooseberries to citrus/grapefruit. The palate is long with slight mineral notes not characteristic of Marlborough.

Gravitas 2004 Chardonnay A medium-full bodied Chardonnay with well integrated oak, great complexity from partial malo-lactic fermentation and lees aging, with a long dry citrus finish. A wine to match food, especially white meats and pasta. It is anticipated that these wines will cellar well for 5 or more years.

Gravitas 2005 Unoaked Chardonnay A very crisp and clean white wine – Chablis like in style. A bracingly clean and refreshing palate with a bouquet primarily of citrus. While a classic New World fruit-driven Chardonnay, it has unusually powerful (for NZ) mineral and creamy notes. Great length and a beautiful crisp acid base are hallmarks of this wine. In June 2005 *Decanter* rated it NZ’s Top Unoaked Chardonnay and one of NZ’s Top 20 Fine White Wines (of any style).

Prince Edward Island is adding seven **Mainbrace** wines to its specialty list:

Marques de Cáceres Rioja Reserva Bright, vivid dark ruby colour, intense bouquet that brings to mind jelly made from bilberries and sweet spice. Good concentration in the mouth with delicious tannins that highlight the rich fruit that has become more complex from barrel aging. This is an unctuous wine with a pleasant fullness that lingers on the palate with deep, refined toasted notes. A very elegant wine with superb potential for development

J. Lohr Seven Oaks Cabernet Sauvignon A deep ruby colour with rich purple hues. The aromas are of blackberry and plum with a hint of blueberry, and some chocolate and toasted oak overtones. On the palate, expect berries, chocolate and smoky toasted oak. The flavours are rich and full, with a soft, supple texture and a lingering finish. Serve this wine with your best roast beef, roast lamb, or roast game.

Batasiolo Barolo From Piedmont in northwest Italy, 100% Nebbiolo in its subvarieties of Michet, Lampia and Rosé. The colour is deep ruby-garnet red that turns

brick red with age. The nose is ethereal, intense, with notes of spices and dried fruits. Offers great finesse on the nose and palate, which is dry, full-bodied, imposing-yet-elegant, austere-but-velvety. Ideal for accompanying game, roasts and strong, ripe cheeses.

Sandalford Premium Shiraz Mid-dark cherry red with classic Shiraz nose of lifted clove, nutmeg, pepper and spice. On the palate, sweet spice flavours lead to moderate tannins and nuanced oak on the finish. This is a stylish, classy wine that earned an 87 from James Halliday.

Sandalford Premium Cabernet Sauvignon This wine has all of the intensity, structure and varietal flavour that is expected of a Margaret River Cabernet. The fruit is perfectly ripe and the pleasantly firm tannins suggest a few years cellaring. Roast lamb is a natural here.

Cline Ancient Vines Mourvèdre Deep ruby in colour, this wine shows aromas of cedar, clove and nutmeg, with hints of plum and dark berries. It offers distinct chocolate characteristics and a luscious deep plum flavor. Tannins are soft with a substantial mouth-feel. A delicious and unusually delightful wine. Goes great with Pork Tenderloin and Rack of Lamb.

Cline Ancient Vines Zinfandel Ancient Vines Zinfandel shows wonderful dusty raspberry, blackberry, white pepper and spice, with coffee and chocolate characters. Aging in new and used wood has lent this wine a subtle vanilla quality that nicely complements the explosive fruit notes. Enjoy now or cellar for 5 to 7 years.

Five wines from the **Château de la Rivière** winemakers are now available in New Brunswick:

Château de la Rivière (Fronsac AOC) Deep, almost black colour. Very ripe fruit aromas with a hint of fresh roasted coffee. Rich and long on the palate, underpinned by dense, elegant tannin.

Aria (Fronsac AOC) Opaque, high intensity, dense and deep dried fruit – plum, Kirsch, cassis - spices, tobacco, dry touch of earthiness, full bodied, mildly complex, firm tannins, very well turned persistence and finish, good balance and quality. This is a wine to get now (quantities are limited) and lay down for five years or more.

Les Sources de la Rivière An excellent vintage in Fronsac region, the second wine of the highly regarded

Château de La Rivière.

Prince de la Rivière (AC Bordeaux) 85% Merlot-15% Cabernet Sauvignon, this wine combines power and finesse, the wine is very elegant thanks to its vivacious palate. Generous, rich flavours make it "a Bordeaux wi attitude".

Château Vieux Dominique (Bordeaux Supérieur) 80% Merlot-20% Cabernet Sauvignon Ruby-red colour with dark crimson highlights. Bouquet spicy overtones and mature red fruit aromas. Round, smooth structure with elegant fruit tannin. Very smooth just two years after the vintage, although it can age well for ten years.

Occasions Ads

Look for advertisements in the Summer 2007 Occasions magazine for **Painter Bridge Zinfandel** (in Newfoundland & Labrador), **J.Lohr Riverstone Estate Chardonnay** (in New Brunswick), **Canaletto Pinot Grigio/Garganega** (in PEI), and **Gentle Hills Riesling** and **Warsteiner Premium Verum** beer (both in Nova Scotia).

It's back

Stockouts have plagued a number of **Mainbrace** products over the past year or so. It looks as if the various problems have now been solved so you can look forward to the reappearance of:

Tio Pepe sherry has returned to New Brunswick. This is the classic Amontillado Sherry of southern Spain. Crisp and dry, it should be served chilled for sipping, or with roasted almonds or other *tapas*, or with seafood dishes, especially paella.

Matusalem rums, the Cuban-style rums that won award at the World Rum Festival in Newfoundland in 2004 are now available in Nova Scotia, PEI, and Newfoundland & Labrador. You can now try (or retry) **Matusalem Gran Reserva** and **Matusalem Classico**.

Sandalford Premium Cabernet Sauvignon and **Sandalford Premium Shiraz** will soon reappear on ANBL shelves, to the delight of wine lovers and licensees who value the sophistication and good taste of these Western Australian classics.

Recipes for Spring

Steamed Mussels in Riesling (inspired by Michael Smith)

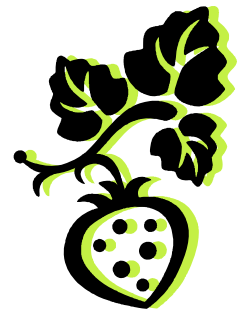
400 ml **Moselland Bernkastler Kurfurstlay Riesling**
(or **Ars Vitis**)
25 ml Dijon mustard
2 onions, sliced thinly
2 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced
2 ½ kg mussels, cleaned and de-bearded
400 ml baby spinach

Put wine, mustard, onions and garlic into a large pot. Add mussels last. Place over high heat and cover with a tight fitting lid. Steam until mussels have opened (about five minutes). Remove mussels from shells, discard shells, and strain broth into a clean pot. Discard any unopened mussels. Reheat broth and add mussel meat back in. When they have heated through, add baby spinach and stir until just barely wilted. Serve with bread for dipping. Pairs well with **Gentle Hills Riesling**.



Sparkling Strawberries

450 gm fresh strawberries
2 egg yolks
250 ml **Castellblanch Brut**
Zero cava
300 gm white sugar
250 gm whipping cream, whipped
to stiff peak stage



Beat the yolks and sugar in the top of a double boiler, slowly beat in the cava. Continue beating for about five minutes until the sabayon is about doubled in volume, then, still beating, continue to heat for another 5 - 10 minutes until the saboyon is light and frothy but thick. Off the heat, fold in the whipped cream. Pour over the strawberries in a shallow baking dish. Brown for a few seconds under a broiler. Serve with well-chilled **Brut Zero**.

Les Vins et Fromages

Le soleil chauffe de plus en plus et très bientôt les préparatifs pour faire de petites réceptions sur la véranda vont débutés. Comment s'assurer d'avoir une réception agréable dans les temps qui viennent et faire bonne impression auprès de nos invités? Nous pouvons prévoir un plateau de crudités et de fromages servir avec quelques produits de la vigne particulièrement bien choisis.

Dans le monde de la crème, double crème affinée et vieilli les saveurs dont des outils pour une aventure gustatives qui dépasseront vos attentes. Chardonnay et Riesling pour les blancs sont rois mais il y a des rouges qui ne céderont pas leurs place du moment que vous leur présentiez de bons comparses.

Pour débiter un choix léger : Brie et le **Segura Viudas Viña Heredad Rosado**. Les saveurs douces du Tempranillo et du Grenache se marient bien avec le coté herbeux végétal pour compléter la légère noix du Brie. Ensuite le Port-Salut, OKA et le Saint-Paulin : en blanc choisissez un Chardonnay californien comme le **Lohr « Riverstone »** ou encore le **Albariño Vionta** à cause d'une structure plus crémeuse. Si vous voulez allez dans le corsé les pates fermes comme les cheddars âgés, les Colby, Provolone et Cheshire les vins à caractères s'imposent comme le **Sherry Tio Pepe** pour le cote noix et astringent mais sans oublier encore le **Albarino Vionta**. Les magasins proposent maintenant différentes variantes de fromages connus du gouda fumé ou parfumé a diverses épices du Havarti aux légumes, au piments forts, ou au fruits. Dans tous cas, un Riesling, par exemple le **Moselland Bernkasteler**, serait un bon choix.

Toutes ces variétés nécessitent alors divers vins; j'essaie de vous donner une vue d'ensemble de ce qui vous ferait le meilleur agencement. Pour tout ce qui précède il y a des possibilités en rouge ce que je toucherait la prochaine fois. N'oubliez pas les règles bases pour une bonne dégustation accompagné de fromage: Ayez l'esprit d'aventure, surprenez vos papilles d'un Blue Danois servi avec une vendange tardive. Lors de mes dégustations les gens veulent le différent et exotique vos invités l'apprécieront aussi.

Si vous avez des questions en rapport avec la chronique n'hésitez pas et écrivez ecritsvinssommelier@gmail.com

- **Marc Paimpec**, Certified Sommelier

NSLC Beach Party

The Beach Party is being held this year on June 8 at Pier 23 in Halifax. Here is what **Mainbrace** will be pouring:

Gentle Hills is the delicious new Riesling from the Nahe region of Germany. Very crisp, very dry.

Warsteiner Premium Verum beer. The taste of summer from Germany. Tasty and refreshing.

König Ludwig Weisbier is Bavaria's answer to hot summer days. Great on its own or with picnic and barbeque fare.

Wine Fest West

Wine Fest West takes place on June 1 and 2 in Corner Brook, Newfoundland & Labrador. **Mainbrace** will be pouring:

Batasiolo Dolcetto d'Alba from Piedmont in northwestern Italy. This wine has an intense, purplish ruby red colour and a fruity nose. Its full rich flavour leads to a slightly bitterish aftertaste. Tannins and acids are in good balance so the wine is ready for drinking early in its life. This is a friendly sipping wine that also pairs well with simple meat, cheese, and tomato dishes.

Cline Cellars Ancient Vines Mourvèdre from Contra Costa, California. offers distinct chocolate characteristics and a luscious deep plum flavor. Tannins are soft with a substantial mouth-feel. A delicious and unusually delightful wine. This juicy wine is delicious now and will improve with age for well over a decade. This flavourful and soft wine pairs well with grilled lamb and pasta puttanesca.

Marques de Cáceres Crianza Tinto (Rioja) Attractive deep garnet colour, very fresh bouquet of ripe red fruit with a delicate depth of oak that gently enfolds a few notes of spice. Full and intense in the mouth with pleasant texture, nice body, and rich flavours. Aging in barrel has resulted in soft and silky tannins that make this wine a pleasure to experience. A fine accompaniment to any dish, especially roast, stewed or braised meats, as well as game, cheese, and foie gras.

Moselland Ars Vitis has a fine, fruity Riesling bouquet, and a well-balanced palate with hints of exotic fruit. This straight forward Qualitatswein is very crisp and refreshing. The "window bottle" packaging features

scenes from the Mosel Valley by artist and wine grower Heinz Ames, so this enjoyable wine also makes an excellent gift. It goes well with salads, chicken dishes and Asian cuisine, and can be enjoyed as an easy drinking summer wine or aperitif.

PEI Show

The annual PEI Wine Festival will be held on June 1 and 2 in Charlottetown. **Mainbrace** will be pouring:

From France:

Fougères Beaujolais Bright, rich red in colour. Strawberries on the nose with a fruity, smooth, well-rounded body. A soft, easy drinking style that can be enjoyed by itself or with food. Goes well with almost any food except, perhaps, very sweet desserts. Serve slightly chilled.

Fougères Pinot Noir Has a full, fleshy body with smooth tannic backbone. An attractive deep purple colour announces a palate with full fruit flavours especially of black cherries. A great accompaniment to Coq au Vin, Boeuf Bourguignonne, or gougère.

From Italy:

Batasiolo Barbaresco DOCG An elegant, medium-bodied wine from the rural hills of the Piedmont region. Beautiful and elegant, with silky, ripe fruit. Medium-bodied, with medium, fine tannins and a caressing finish. Very fine. Excellent value.

Batasiolo Barbera d'Alba "Sovrana" Modern-style Barbera right from the start, with vibrant color and scents of cedar, vanilla and black cherry on the nose. Dried spices and vanilla buttress crisp cherry flavors on the palate, ending long and tangy.

From Spain:

Marques de Cáceres Crianza Tinto (Rioja) Attractive deep garnet colour, very fresh bouquet of ripe red fruit with a delicate depth of oak that gently enfolds a few notes of spice. Full and intense in the mouth with pleasant texture, nice body, and rich flavours. Aging in barrel has resulted in soft and silky tannins that make this wine a pleasure to experience. A fine accompaniment to any dish, especially roast, stewed or braised meats, as well as game, cheese, and foie gras.

Marques de Cáceres Blanco Fermentado en Barrica Intense yellow gold. Apricot nose with a hint of melon. This is a medium bodied wine with good acidity, fresh flavor and a sound end. A fine example of the Viura grape blended with a small touch of Malvasia.

Segura Viudas Brut Reserva 67% Macabeo, 33% Parellada. Straw yellow in colour, with a full delicate taste. It has power, character and delicacy. Best served at 8-9°C. This is a sparkling wine for special occasions and for making any day seem special.

Castellblanch Brut Zero Made from a blend of 30% Macabeo, 60% Parellada, and 10% Zarello, this sparkling wine is well-balanced, with fruity tastes, light body and fresh palate. A fine example of the Spanish cava style. A wine to quaff by itself or to mix in any drink that calls for a sparkling wine. Serve well chilled.

All wines are by their very nature full of reminiscences, the golden tears and red blood summers that are gone.

- Richard le Gallienne

Caraquet FestiVin

The annual FestiVin in Caraquet runs all week, June 2 – 9 with grand tastings on June 8 and 9. **Mainbrace** wines available for tasting include:

Moselland Bernkasteler-Kurfurstlay A fresh white 100% Riesling from the Mosel Valley which has been selected for its crisp character and easy sipping pleasure. Pairs well with slightly spicy Asian foods.

Vionta Albariño from Rias Baixas in northwestern Spain. 100% Albariño, the grape that is taking New York wine bars by storm. The wine is fresh, zesty and citrusy. It has a gorgeous acidity with a variety of breakfast fruit flavors and a sumptuously smooth lingering taste. Great with seafood.

Caves de Charlemagne Prince de la Rivière 85% Merlot-15% Cabernet Sauvignon, this wine combines power and finesse, the wine is very elegant thanks to its vivacious palate. Generous, rich flavours make it "a Bordeaux with attitude".

Caves de Charlemagne Château Vieux Dominique

80% Merlot-20% Cabernet Sauvignon. Ruby-red colour with dark crimson highlights. Bouquet spicy overtones and mature red fruit aromas. Round, smooth structure with elegant fruit tannin. Very smooth just two years after the vintage, although it can age well for ten years.

Canaletto Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Intense purple in colour this is the quintessential Italian red, capturing the intense aromas and rich, robust characteristics typical of the region. Intensely spicy, cherryish flavours.

Canaletto Primitivo di Puglia A modern, up-front wine, with a deep, rich red colour and a bright berry fruit nose. The palate is smooth and ripe, with an attractive spicy character and a long velvety finish.

Canaletto Nero d'Avola/Merlot The wine has a deep, rich red colour and aromas of ripe red berries surge out of the glass. The palate is packed with rich, succulent berry fruit of the Merlot, perfectly complemented by the savory spicy Nero d'Avola, a grape indigenous to Sicily.

And check out the seminar on Italian Wine Regions which will be led by **Mainbrace's Marc Paimpec**.

Visitors

Recent visitors have included Mr. **Fernando Zaratiegui** of **Senorio de Sarria** (Navarre, Spain), Ms. **MaryAnn Yewen** of Spain's **Freixenet Group**, Mr. **Craig Rosser** from **J. Lohr Winery** (San Jose, California), and Mr. **Doug Wagner** representing **Wimbledon Wines** (Napa, California)



The role of **Mainbrace** is to market the beverage alcohol products that we represent to final consumers, to licensees, to private wine stores, and to the Provincial Government agencies. We aim to enhance responsible enjoyment for consumers, to facilitate profitable sales for licensees and private wine stores, and to assist agencies in fulfilling their mandates.

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Check out the **Mainbrace** web site at:

www.mainbrace.ca

for a complete list of products represented by **Mainbrace**, for tasting notes, recipes, recent reviews, and news of wine events in the region.