

Judgement of Kingston 2018

Tasting Notes

*“Wine enters through the mouth,
Love, the eyes.
I raise the glass to my mouth,
I look at you,
I sigh.”*
– William Butler Yeats

*“He who knows how to taste does
not drink wine but savours secrets.”*
– Salvador Dali

A Checkmate Little Pawn Chardonnay 2014, Okanagan, \$110

Winemaker’s notes: Captivating floral nose with hints of rose petal, cinnamon spice and lemon zest. On the palate, subtle richness, hints of cream and beautiful oak integration create a wine of restrained elegance, with substantial length.

John Schreiner: The wine is bold and rich, both in aroma and on the palate. The floral and citrus aromas lead to intense flavours that are buttery, with hints of citrus and vanilla. The finish of this satisfying wine persists. **96**

Tony Aspler: Vanilla oak and apple nose; full-bodied, spicy peachy nose; well-balanced, great length of flavour with a lively acidic finish. **93**

Wine Spectator: Lime blossom & citronella flavours lead off with nut oil and spice notes emerging and gracing the finish. On the lean side and firm in the end. **90**

Anthony Gismondi: The yields are low, the clusters small but the fruit has a beautiful, floral aspect with silky textures. The combination with aromatic, spicy, chardonnay fruits is an elegant feminine version of chardonnay replete with a creamy mineral finish. Impressive. There is no filtering here so the wine is not super clear but the upside is a very impressive array of flavours that tend to fatten up with age and in 2014 that seems certain, albeit with a certain elegance and lots of length. **92**

B Closson Chase Churchside Chardonnay 2016, Prince Edward County, \$45

Winemaker’s notes: Toast, salted caramel, spices, poached Anjou pear, floral tones and wet stone round out the nose. The mouth is fully round and complex, delivering warm white tree fruits, candied citrus peel, toffee, spices, with a great seam of acidity bringing it all together. Finish is long, round and elegant.

Michael Pinkus: This fruit comes from the “north lot” known as Churchside Vineyard - there have been Closson Chase Pinots bearing that name for a while, but this is the very first Chardonnay out of there. 12-16 months in 10% new oak, the rest in older barrels - the wine is one of the best Chards

I've had from Closson and here's why: there's a floral element with a pleasant bit of spiciness, plus butter, vanilla, pineapple, popcorn and a beauty finish with length to spare. Another in the line of great-to-outstanding 2016 Chardonnays from Closson Chase; "new" winemaker, Keith Tyers is really hitting his stride and finding his vinous-voice. **4.5 out of 5 stars**

C Keint-He 'Greer Road' Chardonnay 2014, Prince Edward County, \$40

Sara d'Amato: The Greer Road chardonnay is grown on a gifted strip of land that is home to some of Prince Edward County's most beloved wineries. The 2014 offers a compelling nose that is elegantly lessee with notes of green apple, hay and a kiss of very fine wood. Maturing and beginning to sour but the depth of flavour is impressive as well as the range of flavours offered on the palate. A hint of volatility adds even more dimension to this very authentic and distinctive County chardonnay. Excellent length. **90**

Michael Godel: The premium player in Keint-He's chardonnay stable comes off of the estate vineyard on the Greer Road, a prized and sought after strip of County defining fruit. The vintage 2014 represents the pinnacle of its growth, gifting the ferment with what can only be assessed as near-perfect fruit, phenols in line with extract, balance acquiesced from the start and through the time travels of pitchy acidity and endless length. The orchard is well represented, crisp and then the spicy accents provided by barrel take this to an honoured space. A revelation for the County is spoken through one of its great chardonnay speeches. What a difference 12 months can make. Last tasted April 2017. The specificity of the label conjures up territorial Hillier thoughts for Chardonnay made by Norm Hardie, Dan Sullivan and Paul Battilana. While the Greer thread runs through and keeps it in the family this is all in Keint-He issue. Possessive of a richness shown by few other PEC Chardonnay, there counteracts and stabilizes a cool climate snap, crackle and green apple pop. Tang folds into lovely tart, citrus bitter curd with a wisely executed tumult. And there is no relent. A Chardonnay ripper. Beware the power. **91**

David Lawrason: Greer Road is one of the "main streets" of Prince Edward County viticulture - home to Norman Hardie, Rosehall Run and Casa-Dea. This is a slender, taut yet richly flavoured chardonnay, with complex poached pear fruit, mineral, hazelnut, at touch of butter, wood spice and vaguely custardy aromas and flavours. Love the narrowing "tadpole" finish with classic County stoniness, mouth-watering acidity and excellent length. Some will find it thin, but don't overlook the flavour depth and composure. **91**

D La Frenz Chardonnay Reserve 2015, Okanagan, \$25

Small Winery of the Year Award, Wine Align 2017 National Wine Awards of Canada

Winemaker's note: The 2015 Reserve Chardonnay is a wine that delivers elegance wrapped around a complex and intense core. Its golden colour and aromas of white peach blossoms will entice you. The lush palate of ripe melon, guava and pink grapefruit is kept in focus with its mineral notes of wet river stones and a hint of complexing flint notes. On the palate is rich, honeyed, and textural with a lengthy finish that brings to mind the richer notes of brioche and beeswax. This is an exceptional Chardonnay that will age beautifully for the next five to ten years from release.

The best blocks of Chardonnay fruit were hand harvested and kept separate by clones, then very gently pressed with some portions having a short amount of skin contact. The free run juice was settled for 24 hours and then racked to 100% French barrels for fermentation. The ferments ranged from three to nine months to allow greater complexity. Bi weekly lees stirring was also conducted to build more creaminess and texture. After maturing for 10 months each barrel was tasted, and only the best was selected for the Reserve Chardonnay. After blending, the wine was lightly filtered before bottling and then aged for a further 10 months before release.

E Meyer Family Vineyards Tribute Chardonnay 2016 - Donovan Tildesley, Okanagan, \$33

Winemaker's note: At the winery the fruit was fed directly into the press with an ensuing long gentle pressing employed. Only the finest, purest juice from the early stages of the pressing was used for this wine with the more astringent so called "hard press" kept separate. A long cool fermentation began in stainless steel vessels where it remained for most of the ferment. The must was then transferred to 100% French oak (22% new) to complete fermentation. The wine was left "sur lees" for 11 months without battonage. A natural malo-lactic fermentation occurred in late spring. The wine is unfinned and coarsely filtered.

Treve Ring and Anthony Gismondi: Meyer Family Vineyards have become known for their single-vintage chardonnays and pinot noirs, all set within the distinct MFV style. From the Old Main Road in Naramata the 2016 Tribute Series Chardonnay label honours Canadian Donovan Tildesley, an accomplished blind paralympic swimmer, for outstanding achievement in his field. Each year owners JAK & Janice Meyer donate \$1,000 per year over 5 years toward a not-for profit foundation, endowment or scholarship as a way of encouraging or honouring the legacies of these Canadians. Expect a tight, fine, bamboo strong lemon acidity laced throughout this flinty, reductive-styled chardonnay. Concentrated, but fine, this hums with stony minerality and tight acidity that prolongs the finish. This wine is made similarly to the McLean Creek Road Vineyard Chardonnay (stainless started ferment, French oak finished and rested on the lees for 11 months), however this wine took on a bit more new oak at 22 percent. This wine has the intensity to hold more wood, swallowing rather than wallowing. Impressive drinking now at a streamlined 13 degrees alcohol, and will hold. Impressive. 92

F Morandin Wines County Chardonnay, Sangreal Estate Vineyard 2016, Prince Edward County, \$30

David Lawrason: This is nicely firm, balanced and well-structured County chardonnay made in a reductive/oniony style that is popular with some, and not so much with others. It also shows lemon, fine toasty oak and pear/apple fruit. Good flavour intensity here set within that lighter, delicate County frame. The length is excellent. A solid inaugural effort from Chris Morandin, the newest resident on Greer Road in Hillier. 92

Michael Godel: Sangreal from proprietor Christian Morandin in Hillier is a new project with very old roots. The chardonnay is beautifully reductive and for Prince Edward County a new asset to raise the community profile and the bar. It emits a stony-salty constitution and like the sister

Pinot Gris is quite tannic with a great sense of dry County extract. The style is reminiscent of some other current neighbourhood chardonnay, with skins, lees, closed circuit environments and patience all contributing to character. This focused effort is really impressive and likely just the beginning for better things to come. **90**

John Szabo: From Morandin's first tranche of releases, made from vines planted in 2009 and 2012, this is a highly reductive-flinty-smoky chardonnay in a typical County style, with positive reduction. The palate offers significant depth and structure, and excellent focus - this is really very impressive for a first release. Wood is deftly integrated, a support rather than a crutch, and stony-salinity is on full display. Length and depth, too, are surprising. A terrific new addition to the PEC range all in all, and one which will no doubt continue to build the region's reputation. Welcome to the Ontario wine industry. **90**

G Rosehall Run, JCR Rosehall Vineyard Chardonnay 2016, Prince Edward County, \$35

Gold Medal Winner, National Wine Awards of Canada, 2017

Carolyn Evans Hammond: This stellar example of pure "county" Chardonnay starts with sumptuous scents of apple tart and toasty oak that lead to a seamless entry. It's wooded, yes, but the French oak merely folds into the cool-taut citrus-scented Chardonnay, creating soft allusions of crème brûlée, taffy apple, hazelnut and toast. On the finish, a slight mineral grip tastes gently salty-flinty and lingers. This intense, bone-dry white with great freshness, focus, and finesse is Rosehall Run's top Chardonnay. Instantly captivating. **93**

Rémy Charest: On the nose, this chardonnay from the "county" looks good and shows the distinctive freshness of the region. A touch of lemon, with a touch of ginger, it also offers a texture of seductive roundness, on the palate, with good intensity and a finish that shows a nice balance between maturity and freshness. **92**

David Lawrason: The top Rosehall chardonnay is from maturing estate vines. It shows quite lovely aromas of ripe peach, corn, custard, peat smoke, hazelnut and spice. It is medium weight, lively with tartish lemony acidity yet ripe and sweet-edged. There is some richness due to the warmer 2016 vintage. Excellent length; very good complexity. **91**