

Between the Vines

Wine, food, and travel musings...straight from the heart.

March 27, 2009

Organic B.C. wine and rugby: who knew they'd be such a fit?

Well, they've done it. [Donna Bernard](#), [Douglas Okero](#), and [Summer Dhillon](#) have managed to tie rugby to two of my most favourite things: wine and food. And with the help of sponsors like [BluStone Bistro & Lounge](#) and [Chandra Estate Winery](#), along with food-and-drink partner The Esposito Group, how can they help but be successful?

The tie-in started Thursday evening when the trio formally launched their newest project, the **International Rugby Sevens**, a world-class international rugby tournament to take place this summer in the heart of B.C.'s Fraser Valley—[Abbotsford](#). Festivities begin July 23 and carry on until July 25, when we get to the main event, a full day of games followed by awards and an after party.

At the launch, not only were we introduced to dignitaries, rugby players, and other VIPs, but we got to nibble the goodies provided by BluStone and sip Chandra Estate wines, which happen to be lovely, certified organic, and a product of the Okanagan Valley, right in Oliver, B.C. What luck!



I sipped on both the pinot gris and merlot—one at a time, of course. The Chandra Estate pinot gris, named **O**, is a medium-bodied wine with a bit more acidity than I had expected (I happen to like that, by the way). It presents aromas of peach and nectarine, followed quickly by rose petal and honey. On the palate, this wine is refreshing with flavours of peach, pear, and a hint of honey. I'd pair this wine with my grilled boneless chicken breasts that I serve with a salsa of mango, garlic, lime, and cilantro.

Besides the aromas of plum, ripe blueberries, spice and something vegetal that others described as black olive, the Chandra Estate merlot, named **Halo**, gives a definite floral scent reminiscent of violets. On the palate, this wine is lush and full of the fruity goodies and easy tannins you'd expect from a merlot. I sipped while chatting and then had more with dinner, a very generous serving of BluStone's slowly braised pork ribs. Yum!

Salut!

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March 24, 2009