



H E S T E R C R E E K
E S T A T E W I N E R Y

Hester Creek Estate Winery Celebrates Its Next Milestone
New winemaking facility and guest centre focus on quality and luxury

Oliver, B.C. (September 24, 2009)

In Short:

At a time when others have been facing challenging economic times, Hester Creek Estate Winery, located in the Golden Mile region in Oliver, BC, has completed its new state-of-the-art winemaking facility and spacious guest centre. Thanks to the vision and investment from owner Curt Garland, the winery team celebrates the beginning of a new era where quality and luxury are the focus. A private ribbon cutting to mark this milestone is on September 29 and the new winery will be open to the public September 30. The winery is open year-round from 10:00 am daily. Full details are available at www.hestercreek.com.

More detail:



Located just south of Oliver, BC in the Golden Mile winegrowing district, Hester Creek Estate Winery has a long history in the BC wine industry. After three previous owners, the winery was purchased in 2004 by Curt Garland, who became enamoured with the property during a visit. Since then, Garland has created a series of milestones in the Hester Creek history: new plantings, the construction of a Villa, and now, a new winery and guest centre.

With harvest underway, friends, family and wine industry leaders will join Garland and his team at the winery - winemaker Rob Summers, and winery managers Robin and Lee Ann Openshaw - to celebrate

the opening of their new state-of-the-art winemaking facility and spacious guest centre at the site that is one of the oldest vineyard sites in the Okanagan Valley.

“Rob, Robin and Lee Ann are eager to show off the new facilities and I invite everyone to come and see what we have done here,” says Garland. “Much hard work has taken place, and we have been anxiously waiting for this day.”

History of Hester Creek Estate Winery

The first vineyards were planted on the site in 1968 and were one of the earliest plantings of European grape varieties in the Okanagan Valley. Landowner Joe Busnardo had brought dozens of varieties to try, including some from his native Italy. One of the original varieties planted by Busnardo, Trebbiano, is now more than 40 years old and remains, unique in BC to Hester Creek.

The original winemaking facility, called Divino Estate Winery, was built in the early 1980s. Since Busnardo, the winery has undergone several changes and owners, but has found new drive and purpose since Garland’s purchase in 2004.

Three Steps Set the Stage

When Garland assumed the winery operation, he was new to the wine industry. He quickly assessed the property's needs and set out to refurbish the vineyards and transform the "Hester Creek" brand.

The first public changes became visible with the launch of the winery's new packaging, which, in logo format, has created tribute to Hester Haynes, for whom the creek was named.

The second major change was the arrival of winemaker Rob Summers from Niagara. A seasoned industry professional with experience at some of the best known wineries in Ontario, Rob quickly set about putting his mark on the wine style which places an emphasis of fresh fruit flavours and the gentle use of oak.

The third major change to the property was the addition of a villa with six luxurious guest suites high on the western hillside above the winery, all of which offer a majestic view of the vineyards, the Golden Mile and valley floor below. Since opening in 2007, the luxury villas have garnered a reputation for offering a world-class guest experience.

The Next Milestone

Curt's vision for the property and his inspiration for its purchase came from his recognition that the "Golden Mile Bench" was indeed a unique terroir. The Golden Mile region reminded him of articles and stories of the Tuscan/Mediterranean with its dry grasslands, olive trees, orchards and vineyards.

The look of the new winery and surroundings evoke this Tuscan/Mediterranean inspiration.

This week the wine shop staff will move from their quaint little space to a new 4,000 square foot guest centre complete with a large tasting bar, wine library, demonstration kitchen and VIP lounge. While quadruple the size of the previous tasting room, the charm and cozy feeling has been maintained. A covered piazza faces east and offers a spectacular valley view and a shaded place to soak up the atmosphere while savouring Hester Creek's wine offerings.

This summer, in time for harvest, the winemaking team moved into their new 23,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility. The 35,000 case capacity winery is partially buried to take advantage of the natural temperature control of the earth and thereby reduce the need for energy. The cellar room is completely underground and the site's natural vegetation is in the process of being restored on the top of the building.

The brand new and improved Hester Creek Winery experience is top-notch and rivals the very best the Okanagan has to offer: state-of-the-art winery, an accomplished and experienced winemaker, and luxury guest villas, combined with the arid mountain and vineyard setting with lake view backdrops, Hester Creek is ready to invite the world.

About Hester Creek Estate Winery

Hester Creek Estate Winery is situated within some of British Columbia's oldest vineyards in the bountiful Golden Mile region. The 95-acre, Mediterranean-influenced grounds, winery, and guest villas evoke an old-world sense of tranquility that take you back to a more simple, unhurried era: a time when a young girl named Hester pondered life and daydreamed by the edge of the creek that would later take her name. Discover winemaker Rob Summers' fresh, lively wines that truly convey the extraordinary place where they were grown. Relax on the patio, among the vines, or browse in the new wine shop for local artisan foods, glassware and accoutrement to accompany your wine purchases. Visit one of the world's most recent and exciting wine discoveries. The Okanagan Valley's "Golden Mile Bench" and Hester Creek await your arrival.

For more information visit www.hestercreekwinery.com.

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Hester Creek Estate Winery Background Information

Winemaker Rob Summers

Hailing from the Niagara region, it seems natural that Rob Summers figures prominently in the Canadian wine industry. After acquiring his Bachelor of Food Science with Honours (BSc Hons) from the University of Guelph, he worked at Hillebrand Estates, Henry of Pelham, Cave Spring Cellars, and Peller Estates. While at Peller Rob directed VQA winemaking for two vintages in the Okanagan, where he saw the vast potential that the Okanagan Valley held, and was inspired to relocate his family to Osoyoos. He joined the team at Hester Creek Estate Winery in 2006 and his signature winemaking style has since gained accolades from his fellow winemakers and seasoned wine experts alike since.

The Villa at Hester Creek

The six Mediterranean-style Villa suites opened in August 2007. The units provide sumptuous accommodation high on the hill with private patios offering incomparable vineyard and orchard views in the valley below. Each suite features luxurious amenities and a delicious breakfast.

For reservations call 250.498.4435 or Toll Free 1.866.498.4435 or e-mail thevilla@hestercreek.com

The Winery's Mediterranean influences

When owner Curt Garland first visited the South Okanagan he was struck by the similarities with Spain, parts of Italy and other Mediterranean wine-growing regions where he had travelled. He is not alone in drawing this parallel. The South Okanagan has a temperate, semi-arid climate, similar to the Mediterranean, featuring warm summers and short winters. Garland's long term goal to build a Mediterranean-inspired guest villa and winery will come true with the official opening of a spectacular guest centre and winemaking facility on September 29, 2009.

Hester Creek Estate Winery Logo

The Hester Creek logo depicted on the wine label features a stylized image of a female swimmer paddling behind a fish. The swimmer is dedicated to the memory of Hester Haynes who grew up in the area on the family's sprawling cattle ranch, and, according to legend, whom the creek is named after. It references an older era, where life moved at a slower pace, enjoying simple pleasures like nature, swimming and the beautiful landscapes of this area. Hester Haynes died on November 15, 1963, though many of her descendents continue to live in the area.

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