



Ansnorveldt, Ontario, Canada

September 2012

Holland Marsh Wineries

The Holland Marsh, located in King Township, is among the most fertile land in Canada. Roland Nersisyan recognized this when he began his search for property on which to establish his family winery. In 2007, he purchased 22 acres of sandy soil, ideal for growing grapes for wine, in the south end of the Holland Marsh, on Keele Street just north of Davis Dr. West.



The People

Roland Nersisyan is owner and president of the Holland Marsh Wineries. Born in eastern Europe, he was raised in a culture where wine is a tradition, and is appreciated as a symbol of their lifestyle. Their family vineyard in Armenia continues to operate. The knowledge of winemaking, and the passion for the wine culture, has been passed down through three generations of their family. As a business graduate, and with almost thirty years in the industry, Roland has combined family tradition with modern processes and equipment to create a successful operation where clients can experience the culture of wine.

The entire family, Roland, his wife Suzanne, and their two sons Norie and Narek, are fully involved in operating the business. During the busiest part of the season, they are joined by extended family friends, and employ seasonal workers to ensure that grapes are picked at their peak for quality wine production.

Two full-time staff and one part-time staff are employed by the winery. One of the staff members is assigned to bookings. Roland and Alex handle the production process. Narek, a business student at Ryerson, is very involved on site as a tour guide and sommelier. Approximately eight to ten seasonal workers are brought in from the local farms in the Marsh during the spring, to prepare the plants for the growing season, and during the fall, for the harvest of the grapes.

Everyone multi-tasks and is able to handle a variety of responsibilities in the operation. Mentoring is very important throughout the process, and creates consistency in all areas of the operation from managing the crops, through the production process, to giving the clients a memorable experience of a quality wine culture.



Holland Marsh
WINERIES

The Product

Holland Marsh Wines are made by combining years of tradition with modern technology.

Approximately 11 acres of vines have been planted to date, with the plants coming predominantly from the Niagara Region. The Marquette plants were brought in from Quebec, and were originally from Minnesota. The selection of plant is important, as it must be a good match for the environment in which it grows. The acidity balance of the soil is also an important factor for a quality crop. The grapes are harvested from late August to October, later for ice wines. The location is ideal, with good sandy soil, sufficient elevation for good drainage, and open to the benefits of wind to avoid damage to the plants caused by insects and mold. Persistence and patience are necessary characteristics to successfully operate a winery, as it takes at least 36 months for a vineyard to mature.



The six varieties of wine are named by the geographic location of the Holland Marsh, in recognition of the region.

The wines are a product to enjoy as part of the experience. The area around the vineyard is beautifully landscaped. Pre-booked tours are led by Narek, who shares his knowledge, experience and passion with visitors as he guides them through the facility and grounds.

For Roland, his family and staff, quality is always a priority, for both the experience and the product.



The staff works closely with caterers to provide excellent service for the special events.

The Performance

The family was very particular about the selection of the ideal property. The Holland Marsh Wineries has come a long way since the purchase of their land, late in 2007, which had been leased out for farming. The business was literally created from the ground up, with persistence, confidence, a solid business plan, effective use of technology, and a dream.

“Every challenge will be met, and whatever happens will be handled.” (Roland Nersisyan).

Good working relationships with the governing bodies, service providers, suppliers and clients certainly facilitated the process and progress.

It takes 9500 vines to produce 1500 12-bottle cases of wine. In 2008, the first 5 ½ acres were planted with 4000 vines. The first bottle of wine was sold on December 11 of 2010. An ice wine was added to the list in 2011. Another 5 ½ acres were planted in the spring of 2012. There is always a goal; approximately 6 ½ acres remain to be planted.

During 2009 and 2010, the manufacturing plant, clubhouse, and store front were built. The pine for the interior was brought in from Innisfil, just north of the Holland Marsh.

The carved solid wood doors at the entrance were created as a gift from a close family friend. Landscaping was put in place, with attention to every detail: the garden beds, solid wood benches and rock features welcome guests at the main entrance of the building; the patio, featuring an open brick oven, provides a gateway to the vineyard; the winding flagstone walkways lead to the gazebo overlooking the pond, stocked with fish recently re-located from the Canal; the specially designed waterfall cascading into the pond may be enjoyed while sitting in the Muskoka chairs located nearby; the one-of-a-kind picnic table and a variety of seating areas hewn from logs provide an interesting texture to the visual experience.

Signs on Highway 400 have brought in visitors from many different places, including the United States, as is reflected in the guest book at the entrance.



The Holland Marsh Wineries' business has increased by approximately 30% through a focus on providing a quality Canadian product made in the European tradition.

KING

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