

# Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## RECORD NUMBER OF WINES JUDGED FOR 24<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CUVÉE AWARDS

### Winemakers take the lead in determining 2012 award winners

St. Catharines, ON, January 20, 2012 – When it comes to peer pressure, Ontario’s winemakers say, “Bring it on!” 51 winemakers gathered in Niagara yesterday to swirl, sniff and sip their way through 264 sparkling, white, red and dessert wines, a record-setting number that have been entered for the annual Cuvée Awards. The intense day of blind tasting saw the winemakers judge the work of their peers from a total of 64 wineries, another record for the annual “Oscars” of the Ontario wine industry.

The winning wines won’t be revealed until Friday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual Cuvée Gala, taking place at the Niagara Fallsview Casino Resort. Awards include Best Dessert Wine, Best Red and White Wine and the LCBO Award for Best LCBO Red and White Wine. The award-winning wines, as well as all of those designated by the winemakers with the Cuvée Standard of Excellence at yesterday’s tasting, will be poured for the guests attending the Cuvée Gala.

The Cuvée Awards are Canada’s only awards where the winning wines are chosen by the winemakers. It is this component of peer recognition that makes the Cuvée Awards particularly meaningful for both the winemakers and the wineries. According to Ilia Suter, Assistant Winemaker at Cave Spring Cellars, “As winemakers, we’re immersed in this industry, so we see and hear about what’s changing on a daily basis, but the Cuvée judging day allows us to experience what that tastes like. This year there was a lot of buzz about the sparkling wines and Rieslings. The tasting reinforced that our traditional method sparkling wines and Rieslings can show with the best anywhere.”

The judging process requires the work of 25 volunteers who dedicate a total of over 1,000 hours of their time to the event. The volunteers fulfill the roles of pourers, servers and tabulators and are responsible for coordinating the 12,000 wine glasses and over 1000 bottles of wine that are used during the tasting.

Cuvée Weekend tickets are available to the public at [www.cuvee.ca](http://www.cuvee.ca) or by calling 905-684-8688. Cuvée en Route admission can be purchased separately for \$30.00 per person, via the same outlets or at participating wineries throughout Cuvée Weekend. Ticket and event information, details about each winery’s Cuvée en Route tastings, overnight accommodation packages, and announcements about participating wineries and chefs can all be found on the Cuvée web site, [www.cuvee.ca](http://www.cuvee.ca).

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