

WINES IN NIAGARA

Exploring the spring wine releases from B.C.'s Tinhorn Creek, Evolve Cellars and 40 Knots

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Tasting through a wide range of B.C. wines, as I am fortunate to do on a semi-regular basis, I am always excited by the sky's-the-limit attitude of winemakers in the "can-do" province.

There's not much that can't be grown in the fertile soils and terroirs of the various B.C. wine regions and virtually everything is attempted — usually with delicious results.

As the regions mature, with the Okanagan Valley leading the way, the wines are getting better and better and winemakers are realizing their full potential.

I am looking forward to judging the 2016 British Columbia Wine Awards (conducted by the Okanagan Wine Festivals Society) this fall to get a complete picture of the province's winescape. With an estimated 600 wines, from 100% B.C. grapes, the competition is the oldest of its kind in the province. I urge all B.C. wineries to get their wines submitted to this competition.

Today we look at the spring portfolios from three B.C. wineries — the Golden Mile Bench winery, Tinhorn Creek, the Summerland winery, Evolve Cellars (top photo), and the Comox winery, 40 Knots.

Tinhorn Creek



Tinhorn Creek Oldfield Series Rosé 2015 (\$20, 89 points) — From Cabernet Franc sourced grapes from the Black Sage Vineyard, this lovely rosé shows notes of strawberry, light cherry and vanilla ice cream on the nose. There is underlying sweetness on the palate with expressive red fruits, cranberries, subtle herbs and a creamy, but fresh, note on the finish.

Tinhorn Creek Golden Mile Bench Gewurztraminer 2015 (\$16, 90 points) — Tinhorn's Gew is always on the fresh and lively side with a nose of lychee, grapefruit, ginger and tropical fruits. Though slightly drier than the 2014 vintage there is still some sweet notes to go with ripe fruit, grapefruit, peach, honey and pear with just a squirt of citrus zest on the finish. Note the sub-appellation designation, Golden Mile Bench, on the label. It's the first to be named a sub-app in B.C.



Tinhorn Creek Pinot Gris 2015 (\$17, 90 points) — Rocking aromatics of peach, mineral, melon and lemon zest notes. This is no simple Gris, with plenty of interesting complexity on the palate and layers of citrus, melon, peach and hints of herbs through a zesty finish.

Tinhorn Creek Oldfield Series Golden Mile Bench Chardonnay 2014 (\$35, 92 points) — A rich, golden hue and an elegant nose of poached pear, citrus, toasted vanilla and spice with a gorgeous subtle honeycomb accent. Perfectly dry on the palate, with ripe pear, apple, grilled pineapple and integrated vanilla spice notes. A lot to love about this Chard that will show even better with a bit of time in the cellar.



Tinhorn Creek Pinot Noir 2013 (\$22, 88 points) — A bright, perky and vibrant nose of raspberry bush, cherry, some herbs and spicy undertones. It shows structure on the palate with a complex array of fruit and spice to go with silky tannins and an earthy note on the finish.

Tinhorn Creek Oldfield Series Pinot Noir 2012 (\$32, 91 points) — An attractive nose of savoury cherry, dried herbs, earth, bramble, anise and stylish oak spice notes. Plenty of red berries on the palate but also earthy/loam, herbs and elegant oak spices. This is serious Pinot that's caressing on the palate and delivered on a bed of silky tannins.