



Eleanor Cosman, President  
South African Wine Society  
Box 37085, 6478 Yonge St  
Willowdale ON M2M 4J0  
289-597-9261  
[www.southafricanwinesociety.ca](http://www.southafricanwinesociety.ca)  
[sawsinfo@rogers.com](mailto:sawsinfo@rogers.com)

## Pinotage From Around The World With Peter May

Tuesday, August 26, 2014  
University of Toronto Faculty Club

Peter F May is the founder of The Pinotage Club, an international cyber-based fan club for wines made from the pinotage varietal. Peter was awarded Honorary Membership of the producers Pinotage Association in 2004 and has been a judge at the annual Pinotage Top 10 Competition. Peter is a wine writer, educator and author. He wrote *PINOTAGE: Behind the Legends of South Africa's Own Wine and Marilyn Merlot and the Naked Grape - odd wines from around the world*. Both may be ordered from [amazon.ca](http://amazon.ca). Peter comes to us from his home in the UK.



We have gathered pinotage wines from as far afield as Australia, Israel and New Zealand, the US and Canada – and South Africa too. Twelve wines will be served for the tasting gathered over a period of six years.

*This tasting has never been done before and may never be done again due to the difficulty of acquiring the wines.*

Not only do you have the opportunity to taste and compare but also to hear from **Peter May**, a renowned industry expert based in the UK. As usual, a tasting plate will be served.

This is an event “not to be missed” and most certainly “not to be repeated”.

**Where:** University of Toronto Faculty Club, 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1C7  
The Spadina streetcar stops at the corner of Willcocks and Spadina. Paid parking is available on the streets or in the underground parking garage of The Bahen Building, entrance located on Huron St., just north of College St.  
**When:** Promptly @ 6:30 Tuesday August 26. No reception.  
**Price:** **\$72.50** members **\$87.50** non-members. *Non-members who join the club at the event will receive a credit of \$15.*

**Closing date:** Your booking or cancellation must be **received** by **Friday, August 22**. If registering/paying by mail, please phone or email to let us know to expect your letter and to confirm your booking.

Your cheque payable to **South African Wine Society** or **Visa credit card** information will reserve your place at the event. If we have your credit card information on file, you may book by e-mail (without the form) to [sawsinfo@rogers.com](mailto:sawsinfo@rogers.com)

\* Visa charges will appear as Pushka Holdings.

# Historical Notes

**Note:** As a courtesy to other members, please refrain from wearing any scented products, including perfumes, colognes, after shaves or hand lotions. These products interfere with enjoyment of the wines.

Pinotage is a grape variety that was created in South Africa in 1925 by **Abraham Izak Perold**, the first Professor of Viticulture at Stellenbosch University. Perold was attempting to combine the best qualities of the robust hermitage with pinot noir, a grape that makes great wine but can be difficult to grow. Perold planted the four seeds from his cross in the garden of his official residence at Welgevallen Experimental Farm and then seems to have forgotten about them.

In 1927 he left the university for a job with KWV co-operative and the garden became overgrown. The university sent in a team to tidy it up, just as Charlie Niehaus happened to pass by. He was a young lecturer who knew about the seedlings, and rescued them from the clean-up team.

The young plants were moved to Elsenburg Agricultural College under Perold's successor, CJ Theron. In 1935 Theron grafted them onto newly established Richter 99 and Richter 57 rootstock at Welgevallen.

Meanwhile Perold continued to visit his former colleagues. Theron showed him the newly grafted vines, and the one that was doing best was selected for propagation and was christened pinotage. The first wine was made in 1941 at Elsenburg, with the first commercial plantings at Myrtle Grove near Sir Lowry's Pass. Also in 1941 pinotage vines were planted at the Kanonkop Estate, the wines of which have risen to great fame and can mature up to 25 years.

The first recognition came when a Bellevue wine made from pinotage became the champion wine at the Cape Wine Show of 1959. This wine would become the first wine to mention pinotage on its label in 1961, when Stellenbosch Farmer's Winery (SFW) marketed it under their Lanzerac brand. This early success, and its easy viticulture, prompted a wave of planting during the 1960s.

Despite the reputation for easy cultivation, the pinotage grape has not escaped criticism. A common complaint is the tendency to develop isoamyl acetate during winemaking which leads to a sweet pungency that often smells like paint.

Throughout its history, the grape has seen its plantings rise and fall due to the current fashion of the South African wine industry. In the early 1990s, as Apartheid ended and the world's wine market was opening up, winemakers ignored pinotage in favor of more internationally recognized varieties like shiraz and cabernet sauvignon. Towards the end of the 20th century, the grape's fortunes began to turn, and by 1997 it commanded higher prices than any other South African grape. Despite this, there remains a segment of South African winemakers, such as André van Rensburg of Vergelegen, who believe that pinotage has no place in a vineyard.

Oz Clarke has suggested that part of some South African winemakers' disdain for pinotage stems from the fact that it's a distinctly New World wine while the trend for South African wine is to reflect more European influences and flavors. Despite being a cross from a Burgundy and Rhône grape, pinotage reflects none of the flavors of a French wine. While not a criticism itself, outside of small plantings most notably in New Zealand and the United States, pinotage has yet to develop a significant presence in any other wine region.

In addition to South Africa, Pinotage is also grown in Brazil, Canada, Israel, New Zealand, United States and Zimbabwe. In the US, there are plantings in California and Virginia.

# The Wines

Swartland Bush Vine 2010 – South Africa / Swartland

Black Elephant The Back Road 2012 – South Africa / Wellington (*old vine, single vineyard*)

J Vineyards Estate RRV 2010 – USA / California (*vines predate 1986*)

Fort Ross 2007 – USA / California (*root stock imported in 1995*)

Melrose Vineyards 2009 – USA / Oregon

Lovingston 2011 – USA / Virginia (*vineyard planted in 2008*)

Lake Breeze Seven Poplars 2010 – Canada / B.C. (*14 years*)

Stoneboat 2010 – Canada / B.C. (*12 years*)

Barkan Reserve 2010 – Israel / Judean Hills (*8 year vines / started planting in 1995*)

Muddy Water 2011 – New Zealand / Waipara (*non grafted vines, 18 years*)

Soljans 2010 – New Zealand / Gisborne

Topper's Mountain 2010 wild ferment – Australia / New England NSW (*non grafted vines, 7 years*)

# Event Registration

## Pinotage From Around The World With Peter May

Tuesday, August 26

University of Toronto Faculty Club

When registering by mail, please phone or email to let us confirm your booking promptly.

**Mail to:**

SAWS

BOX 37085, 6478 YONGE ST

WILLOWDALE ON M2M 4J0

Enclosed find our cheque payable to *South African Wine Society* or **Visa\* credit card** information for:

\_\_\_\_\_ member(s) @ \$72.50 \_\_\_\_\_ non-member(s) @ \$87.50 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your cheque payable to *South African Wine Society* or **Visa credit card** information will reserve your place at the event. If we have your credit card information on file, you may book by e-mail (without the form) to [sawsinfo@rogers.com](mailto:sawsinfo@rogers.com)

- Visa charges will appear as **Pushka Holdings**.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

For future events, you will be able to book by e-mail if paying by credit card.

Visa Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

We will make every effort to accommodate your food allergies or special dietary needs if you let us know in advance.

### ***WAIVER, RELEASE AND INDEMNITY***

By attending a SAWS Event, you agree to the following WAIVER, Release and Indemnity.

The South African Wine Society will take pictures at events and post some on our web site, or use them in other Society promotional material. I consent to such use for my guests and myself.

Participation in any South African Wine Society (SAWS) event acknowledges that I, for myself, my heirs or assigns, and my guests for whom I accept complete responsibility, hereby release and forever discharge and indemnify The South African Wine Society, its executive, all members and their guests, from any and all damages, claims and actions relating to SAWS activities, at society functions or on society venue grounds. I also certify that I, and any guests that I bring to events, are 19 years of age or older.