

WILLOW SPRINGS WINERY

STOUFFVILLE

BY ALISON SCOWCROFT



On a cold day in January, I took a drive to Willow Springs Winery situated atop the Oak Ridges Moraine to meet with the delightful manager, Michael Cheung.

The property, bought by the Testa family in 1958, sits on 25 acres, 11 of them dedicated to the vineyard. The first grapes were planted in 1992 and the first 1998 vintage was 700 bottles of Meritage. The Testa family sold the property to Sheridan Huang in 2010; however, Mario Testa is still the winemaker using traditional Italian techniques. All of the grapes used for their wines are 100% Ontario-grown, making the winery VQA Certified. The wine is bottled on site at Willow Springs.

Although there is no restaurant, the winery is open for special events including showers, birthdays, weddings, meetings and family affairs. They have a private tasting room that can seat 8 to 20 people that was recently renovated to include a frieze on one wall. This would be an ideal place to host a private wine tasting with some of your neighbours. There is also the winemaker's pavilion that can seat 40-130 people and in the summer season they have a marquee overlooking the vineyard that can hold 150-300. They offer an extensive selection of menus including lunches, brunches and dinners and will customize to suit your needs. There is also a villa with five bedrooms, each with its own bathroom, two large seating areas and a kitchen that can be rented in conjunction with an event you are hosting.

At Willow Springs wine tastings, Cheung will explain the different types of wines they make using four kinds of grapes: Baco Noir, Marechal Foch, Vidal and Seyval Blanc.

Along the back of the main building they have a deck with picnic tables where guests who visit the winery may bring a picnic lunch, buy a glass of wine and enjoy it in the vineyard. They will even take you on a winery



tour via their golf cart so you really get the feel of the vineyard. It is recommended you call first to ensure there isn't a special event going on.

At the wine boutique they sell all of their wines and ice wines plus other local products, including beautiful wood cheese boards, honey and maple syrup.

I would highly recommend a trip to Willow Springs Winery, be it on a cold dreary January day or a warm, sunshine-filled spring afternoon.

WILLOW SPRINGS WINERY

5572 Bethesda Road, Stouffville

Tel: 905-642-9463

www.willowspringswinery.com

Hours of Business:

Monday - Saturday 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Sundays Noon to 5:00 p.m.

Closed Christmas and New Year's days

