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MISSION HILL FAMILY ESTATE STUNS THE WINE WORLD BY WINNING 'WORLD'S BEST PINOT NOIR' AT DECANTER WORLD WINE AWARDS – THE WORLD'S LEADING WINE COMPETITION

Prestigious Award Puts Canada on the World Pinot Noir Map

London, England – October 3, 2013 – Mission Hill Family Estate took on the best in the world and won top honours as **'World's Best Pinot Noir'** in the under £15 category at the Decanter World Wine Awards in London, England.

More than 14,000 wines from 61 regions around the world were entered in the competition in 2013. **Mission Hill 2011 Martin's Lane Pinot Noir** won a coveted *International Trophy* – the competition's top award, the first time a single wine variety (red or white) from any region in the world has won both a *Regional Trophy* for 'Best Wine' and an *International Trophy* for 'World's Best Wine' at the Decanter Awards.

The Decanter Trophy was presented at a black-tie affair in front of 1,000 wine luminaries at the Royal Opera House in London by the legendary Steven Spurrier, Chairman of the Decanter World Wine Awards. Ironically, his 1976 *Paris Wine Tasting* (as portrayed in the award-winning movie *Bottle Shock* which premiered at the 2008 *Sundance Film Festival*), put Napa and California on the world wine map for the first time when they won out against legendary French wines. Now he has done the same for the Okanagan Valley with Pinot Noir, considered to be one of the most difficult wines to make from what is called “*the heartbreak grape*”.

“This is a ground-breaking achievement for Mission Hill,” said Steven Spurrier. “To receive an award at this level is quite an achievement and an important recognition for the quality of Pinot Noir produced in British Columbia’s Okanagan Valley.”



Steven Spurrier, Chairman of the Decanter World Wine Awards presents the coveted International Trophy to Rick Bonitati, President of Winery & Vineyard Estates at Mission Hill Family Estate.

Mission Hill Family Estate Wins 'World's Best Pinot Noir' Award 2013 Decanter World Wine Awards

"I was totally shocked when I learned that our Pinot Noir was named best in the world," said Mission Hill's Proprietor Anthony von Mandl, O.B.C. "I am still in awe that a wine from the still emerging Okanagan Valley could win against the best Pinot Noir in the world from Burgundy, Sonoma Country, Oregon, and New Zealand. This is a seminal moment for the entire Canadian wine industry!"

In 1994 Mission Hill Family Estate put the Okanagan Valley on the map by winning the International Wine & Spirit Competition in London for '**Best Chardonnay in the World**' and at the time the Master of Wine Judges were in such disbelief they re-tasted all of the wines and Mission Hill won a second time.

"I never could have imagined that lightning would strike twice," continued von Mandl. "This is an incredibly proud moment for my family and the realization of my life-long dream to produce wines of exceptional quality right here in the Okanagan Valley that could stand alongside the best in the world."

Rick Bonitati the recently appointed President of Winery & Vineyard Estates for Mission Hill Family Estate accepted the Trophy at the Royal Opera House in London on behalf of the von Mandl Family. Bonitati joined the von Mandl Family from Jackson Family Wines in California where he was responsible for several ultra-premium wineries, including La Crema, Cambria, Arrowood, and Kendall-Jackson.

"This is a defining moment for Mission Hill Family Estate and the entire Okanagan Valley," stated Bonitati. "Martin's Lane Pinot Noir was the first wine I tasted when I came to the region. I was totally impressed at the calibre of Pinot Noir produced at Mission Hill Family Estate and this was instrumental in my decision to join the von Mandl Family in their quest to produce wines of distinct character and unprecedented quality."

Commenting on accepting the '**World's Best Pinot Noir**' trophy in London, Bonitati added, "I was completely overwhelmed with congratulations from many of the wine luminaries in attendance that had no idea Canada was producing top quality Pinot Noir. This international recognition and the recent WineAlign '**Canadian Winery of the Year**' award have made for a phenomenal beginning to my time with the von Mandl Family. This is only the start!"



Mission Hill Family Estate Wins ‘World’s Best Pinot Noir’ Award 2013 Decanter World Wine Awards

The Decanter World Wine Awards are judged by 219 individuals from 27 countries, including 75 Masters of Wine and 13 Master Sommeliers. The Decanter Trophy follows Mission Hill’s recent ‘**Canadian Winery of the Year**’ win at the **2013 WineAlign National Wine Awards**. A complete listing of all recent awards can be found at missionhillwinery.com

About Mission Hill Family Estate

Established in 1981 by Proprietor Anthony von Mandl, Mission Hill Family Estate is located in the heart of British Columbia's pristine Okanagan Valley. This family-owned winery is known for its award-winning wines and spectacular setting. Majestic mountains, scenic lakes and lush orchards encase the winery's dramatic architecture and culminate in a setting that celebrates wine, food and the arts. New Zealand born Chief Winemaker John Simes, in his 22nd harvest with the winery, leads the winemaking and viticulture teams in their pursuit of quality as they farm several distinct estate vineyards throughout the Okanagan Valley. As a result, Mission Hill’s elegant, internationally-acclaimed wine portfolio celebrates the unique character of one of the world’s most exciting, emerging wine regions. With sustainable practices that ensure care for the environment, and a timelessness that respects the von Mandl Family’s European heritage, guests experience the height of winemaking in an incomparable location. For more information visit missionhillwinery.com; Twitter [@MissionHillWine](https://twitter.com/MissionHillWine) and Facebook [Facebook.com/MissionHillWine](https://www.facebook.com/MissionHillWine)

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* Video and photography of the award presentation is available for media.



Martin's Lane Vineyard overlooking Lake Okanagan at Mission Hill Family Estate winery.