



Mission Hill Family Estate Wins IWC Trophy in UK for Best Icewine in the World
Premium BC Winery Continues Success with International Wine and Culinary Accolades

Westbank, Okanagan Valley, British Columbia – September 2, 2008 – Mission Hill Family Estate, Canada’s Winery of the Year has won the International Wine Challenge (IWC) Trophy for the World’s Top Icewine at Europe’s major wine competition. The Trophy will be presented to Mission Hill Proprietor Anthony von Mandl at a Black Tie awards Banquet in London in front of 800 members of the UK and international wine trade this Wednesday for the Mission Hill Family Estate 2006 Reserve Riesling Icewine. In the past eight years only three Icewines have been successful in achieving this award. This will be the first category Trophy awarded in the past four years with competing wines judged from five countries. (www.internationalwinechallenge.com).

“We were caught by total surprise, as our principle focus at Mission Hill are complex red wines such as Oculus along with whites that express the unique characteristics of the Okanagan,” said von Mandl. “This is the biggest award since winning the International Wine & Spirit Competition in 1994 for Best Chardonnay World Wide. It’s great to see our relentless obsession and commitment to producing great wines paying off and the Okanagan Valley being recognized internationally. I truly believe this is only the beginning of where the valley and Mission Hill Family Estate is going.”

This has been an eventful year for Mission Hill Family Estate having won Canadian Winery of the Year as well as being recognized by Travel & Leisure as having one of the “Top Five Winery Restaurants in the World’.

Mr. von Mandl is receiving the Trophy along with the other eight awards bestowed on Mission Hill Family Estate by the IWC this year including the: 2006 Select Lot Collection Riesling icewine, 2006 Reserve Vidal icewine, 2006 Five Vineyards icewine, 2006 Reserve Chardonnay, 2006 Reserve Riesling, 2006 Sauvignon Blanc, and 2006 Reserve Pinot Blanc. So far this year, Mission Hill Family Estate has received more than 200 wine awards. The UK based International Wine Challenge receives over 9,000 entries from 40 countries which are tasted blind by a team of 400 judges.

“The 2006 vintage was the best season we’ve had since I arrived in the Valley in the early 1990s. We had an outstanding classic Okanagan summer with low humidity and above average heat that enabled us to achieve perfect ripeness levels for the grapes when an earlier than normal cold snap hit us in late November. This early arctic outflow of -15°C gave us a superior combination of abundant fruit with extended hangtime, enabling us to craft an elegant icewine that was over 40 Brix at harvest but yet with well-balanced acidity,” John Simes, Chief Winemaker, Mission Hill Family Estate.

“Receiving an international trophy at the IWC speaks to the high quality of wine being crafted at Mission Hill Family Estate. It also bodes well for Canada, which is a small but serious wine region, and supports the collaboration of the industry and government who are committed to having our cool-climate wines recognized in the international wine market,” Janet Dorozyński, Trade Commissioner, Canadian Wine, Spirits and Beer, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada.

The Okanagan, with only about 7,500 total vineyard acres, is among the smallest wine producing regions (by comparison California is approaching 500,000 acres and the EU is the world’s largest producer with approximately 9.6 million acres). Mission Hill Family Estate is the vision of Proprietor Anthony von Mandl who founded the winery in 1981 with the goal to make the Okanagan Valley an internationally recognized premium wine appellation. At that time there were only five wineries in the Valley, with the total today being approximately 150 wineries. To achieve his vision, Anthony von Mandl seeks out the international wine world for the top expert resources such as Bordeaux’s Michel Rolland and Pascal Chatonnet. Says von Mandl, “The transformation of the Okanagan in the past 20 years is amazing and the sophistication and elegance of the reds we are producing is astonishing sommeliers around the world.”

Icewine first originated in Roman times where grapes were not harvested until after the frost, icewine or “eisenwin”, now must meet highly exacting criteria to be considered the precious liquid that is so widely sought after across the globe. With the highest standards in the world, Canada requires that the grapes be naturally frozen on the vine at a minimum of -8°C and at 35 Brix sweetness level or higher. The long hangtime combined with gently pressing frozen grapes produces small quantities of juice with a rich concentrated fruit flavour, high natural sweetness and well-balanced acidity.

About Mission Hill Family Estate

Mission Hill Family Estate, Canada’s Winery of the Year, is internationally recognized for its award-winning wines, architecture, Cuisine de Terroir-based Terrace restaurant and championing the Okanagan as an international sought after wine region. The von Mandl Family’s 23 vineyard Estates are located in five distinct growing regions of British Columbia’s Okanagan Valley. Reflective of the origin and unique character of the Valley and of the careful ‘pruning to bottle’ program, Oculus, the signature Bordeaux-inspired wine, represents the pinnacle in premium winemaking. Proprietor Anthony von Mandl and winemaker John Simes produce elegant internationally acclaimed wines with New World flavours and Old World refinement from this incomparable lakeside mountaintop winery. Visit www.missionhillwinery.com for more information.

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Note to editors: extensive variety of high resolution Mission Hill Family Estate images available upon request.

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