

— News Release —

Repeat win at Chardonnay du Monde for Mission Hill Family Estate

Reserve Icewine brings home Canada's only Gold medal

Westbank, British Columbia – March 19, 2002: Mission Hill Family Estate proprietor Anthony von Mandl and winemaker John Simes are very proud to announce the winery's 2000 Reserve Chardonnay Icewine has won the only Canadian gold medal at the 9th annual Chardonnay du Monde competition in Burgundy, France. This year's gold medal is the second in a row for Mission Hill Family Estate. Last year, the prestigious competition awarded it North America's only gold medal for its 1999 Estate Chardonnay.

Judging took place March 14th to 17th at the Chateau des Ravatys, the wine estate of the Pasteur Institute, in France's Burgundy wine region. The competition is an international comparison of wines produced from the Chardonnay varietal. An expert judging panel of 250 members tasted, scored and ranked 1127 wines from 34 countries to determine this year's medallists. In the end, only 30 per cent of entrants received a medal. Of those, only 33 or three per cent, were gold.

"Winning such an important award is very gratifying," says winemaker John Simes. "Making Icewine from Chardonnay surprises a lot of people. It's unexpected and we're delighted to see the wine being singled out."

The 2000 Icewine was harvested under a full moon on Sunday, December 10th, 2000 in temperatures of -15° centigrade. Winemaker John Simes decided to go with Chardonnay for the 2000 Icewine after walking the vineyard and sampling the fruit. It was later in the season and the Chardonnay was riper than anything else left on the vine. The winery's first and only Chardonnay Icewine, it registered a record 44 brix at picking. The wine was fermented in barrels.

"The night we picked the Chardonnay for Icewine followed a weekend of special significance at Mission Hill Family Estate," says proprietor Anthony von Mandl. "We rang the four bells in our 12-storey tower for the first time, on December 10th. Today's recognition brings that incredible memory back for all of us at the winery."

Of the 818 cases produced, there are just over 400 cases of the 2000 Reserve Chardonnay Icewine left. The wine is available at the winery and in select private wine stores in British Columbia. Each bottle retails for \$64.00. It has taken top honours in its last two competitions, also winning the only gold at BC's Sun Peaks Icewine Festival, in January.

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For more information on Mission Hill Family Estate or to schedule an interview, please contact us via e-mail at: media@missionhillwinery.com

